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the Ames International Orchestra Festival Association

presents

## **ISU SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA** **Tuesday, February 20 at 10am** **Stephens Auditorium**

### **THE IOWA STATE ORCHESTRA**

The Iowa State University Symphony Orchestra continues a performing tradition which is more than 100 years old. The orchestra is an integral part of the University's musical tradition with performances of symphonic repertoire, operas, oratorios, and musical theatre productions. The 80-member orchestra is an auditioned ensemble chosen from the entire ISU student body and includes students who are studying music, of course, but also engineering, agriculture, education and a host of other subjects. Former members of the University Symphony Orchestra are now performers and teachers in the finest orchestras and schools across the country. Their conductor is Dr. Jacob Harrison.

Check out the ISU Symphony on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#), and or listen in on their [YouTube Channel](#).

### **BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE**

Is this your first symphony concert? Are you nervous? Don't be! Music is meant to be enjoyed. Here are a few hints to help you.

When you enter Stephens Auditorium, notice your surroundings. Once you are seated turn around and look up into the balconies. Is the curtain up or down? Perhaps the musicians are tuning their instruments.

Should you applaud? Of course! Just before the concert begins, the Orchestra members will all be seated on the stage, except for the Concertmaster—the violinist who sits in the first chair of the first row of the Orchestra. Applaud when he/she comes onstage. A few moments later, the Conductor enters and you will applaud to greet him. And naturally, you will applaud when the piece is finished. Sometimes there are several parts to each piece—called movements--and

there might be brief moments of quiet between them. You will know when the piece is finished when the Conductor lowers his baton and turns around. Musicians love to know you liked their performance!

### **How does attending a live performance different from listening to a recording?**

Audiences are not passive observers of what happens on stage, but play an active role in what happens on stage. The performers are keenly aware of audience mood and response. They can tell if audience members are talking or moving and that affects their performance. Watch and listen as the orchestra plays, so as not to miss anything.

To be a good audience member, a person needs to:

- Be open to new sights and sounds
- Let go of expectations and preconceived notions
- Be willing to suspend belief
- Focus attention on the stage

### **Pre-performance questions**

1. Why does an orchestra need a conductor?
2. How does the orchestra know what the conductor wants? Would you like to be a conductor?
3. Do you suppose the music we think of as modern today will still be listened to 100 years from now? What will they think?
4. What comes to mind when someone says "classical music?" Does everyone think of the same thing when they hear the term?
5. Why do musicians play on stage before the concert begins?
6. Why does the orchestra use the oboe to tune?



## What instruments will I hear?

The symphony is made up of several families:

- ♦ **String** family: Violin, viola, cello, double bass and harp. The string section is the largest family in the orchestra, comprising more than half the players.
- ♦ **Woodwind** family: Flute, piccolo, oboe, English horn, clarinet, bass clarinet, and bassoon. These instruments were all originally made of wood and played by blowing into them
- ♦ **Brass** family: French horn, trumpet, trombone, tuba. Brass instruments are really just long metal tubes that flare at the end. They are bent into more compact shapes so they can be held more easily.
- ♦ **Percussion** family: Timpani, snare drum, bass drum, tambourine, triangle, cymbals, xylophone. There are two types of percussion instruments: those with a definite pitch and those of indefinite pitch.

## What will they play first?

Notice all the sounds the musicians make when the concertmaster asks the players to tune their instruments. The oboe plays an “A” and each section takes a turn making sure they get just the right pitch. Once everyone is ready the conductor walks on stage and the concert can begin.



### Patterns in music:

You look for patterns of color and shape when building with blocks; choosing which block to

use next in creating castles and towers is part of the fun. Music is made of building blocks, too. A musical building block might be a pretty melody or a toe-tapping rhythm. It might be the sound of a sad violin or a jazzy trumpet.

The best way to enjoy any musical concert is to pay attention. Classical music tends to be complex (Going back to our building blocks - think of the difference between a small house and a big castle). Much of the classical music you'll hear has no words or sometimes the words are in a foreign language. So listen carefully and look for patterns to get more from the music.

## Practice “active listening”:

- ♦ Imagine yourself on stage as one of the performers. Imagine yourself on stage as the conductor!
- ♦ Look for and identify the instruments you see and hear. Who sits where and why?
- ♦ Some things to think about:
  - ♦ **Mood** – sad, happy, exciting, dream-like, makes you want to dance, etc. What do you think the composer is trying to get you to think about or feel?
  - ♦ **Tempo** – Is the music fast or slow? Does it change? Chart it mentally...
  - ♦ **Volume** – Is the music mostly quiet or very loud? Does the loudness (dynamic) change a little or a lot?

## Cultural influences:



This concert features music by a well-known Russian composer. How much do you know about Russia and its history? The culture, countryside and politics heavily influenced this composer. Do you think these things influence the music of today, too?

### Game/Theory/History/Listening Websites

There are many excellent sites with interactive activities, composer biographies, program notes, and much more. Here are a few for you to explore and enjoy:

[www.sfskids.org](http://www.sfskids.org)

[www.nyphilkids.org](http://www.nyphilkids.org)

[www.datadragon.com](http://www.datadragon.com)

[www.teoria.com](http://www.teoria.com)

[www.homeworkspot.com/theme/classicalmusic.htm](http://www.homeworkspot.com/theme/classicalmusic.htm)

**THE PROGRAM**  
(subject to change)

**Symphony No. 5 in E Minor, Op. 64**

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)**

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)**  
(pronounced chai-KOFF-ski)

Tchaikovsky is one of the most important musical composers in history. You probably have heard his music; it's been used in lots of movies, like Disney's *Maleficent* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Although he lived a long time ago, Tchaikovsky's music is still immensely popular today.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky wrote several works very well-known among the general public—*Romeo and Juliet*, the *1812 Overture*, and, of course, *The Nutcracker Ballet*. These, along several concertos, operas and symphonies (we'll hear the 5th Symphony) are his most familiar works.

Born in Vyatka, Russia, in 1840, Tchaikovsky was one of six children. His father worked as a mining inspector. His family wasn't rich, but they lived comfortably; he even had a governess who taught him at home. His mother was from a French and Russian background, so Tchaikovsky learned to read in French, German and Russian.

His parents allowed him to take piano lessons when he was five years old, but they didn't want him to be a musician. It is said that he learned to enjoy music because his mother sang and played the piano.

Tchaikovsky started attending a law school in St. Petersburg, Russia, in about 1850, and became a government clerk when he was 19 years old. Although he worked as a clerk, he was still more interested in music.

In 1861, Tchaikovsky gave up his job to attend the Russian Musical Society. Later, he became one of the first students to study musical composition at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He also studied flute, piano and organ. Tchaikovsky was such an excellent musician that by 1863 he was a music professor at the Moscow Conservatory.

Because of the patronage of Nadezhda von Meck, Tchaikovsky was able to quit teaching in 1877. She was a very wealthy widow who gave money to Tchaikovsky so that he could spend all his time composing. Strangely enough, she supported his work but didn't ever want to meet him.

**Symphony No. 5 in E Minor, Op. 64**

Tchaikovsky began work on this symphony in the summer of 1888. He wrote of his work to his patroness von Meck, "At first progress was very arduous, but now illumination seems to have descended upon me. We shall see!"

It had been ten years since the fairly unsuccessful premiere of the Symphony No.4 – admittedly punctuated by the composition of the Manfred Symphony in 1885 – and Tchaikovsky worked very hard to ensure that his latest symphonic creation received a favorable response. He conducted the first performance in St Petersburg on November 17 of that year. The score calls for three flutes and piccolo, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, and strings.



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

2 **Symphony No. 5**  
(Finale)

CONDUCTOR SCORE  
Duration - 6:15

Andante maestoso (♩ = 86)  
Play 2nd time only

Flute *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Oboe *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

I *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

II *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

E♭ Alto Saxophone *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Bassoon (B♭ Bass Clarinet) *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

F Horn *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

I *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

II *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Trombone *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Tuba *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Timpani (G-B♭-D) *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Percussion (Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Crash Cymbals) *p* *ma marcato*  
S.D. Play 2nd time only  
B.D. *p* *ma marcato*  
Play 2nd time only

Andante maestoso (♩ = 86)  
Play 2nd time only

Violins I *p*  
Violins II *p*

Viola (Violin III) *mf*

Cello *mf*

String Bass *p*

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Sadly, the reaction to the four-movement Symphony No. 5 was, at best, muted. Tchaikovsky felt incredibly dejected, even going so far as to distance himself from it for quite some time. After his death, however, the work grew in popularity, with audiences and critics alike acknowledging Tchaikovsky's great skill as an orchestrator and his powerful depiction of the idea of fate throughout the symphony. Today, it stands as one of his most loved large-scale creations.

Like all his symphonies, Tchaikovsky's Fifth is deeply personal and is characterized by a sense of yearning. It is unified by thematic elements that return in every movement, and we can associate these with Tchaikovsky's contemplation of personal fate.

In the symphony's first movement, which moves from an andante to an allegro pace, the "fate" theme comes at us with intensity and a sound that somehow combines sorrow with suspense about what might come next. The symphony progresses from this somber opening through an andante second movement that is full of Tchaikovsky's poetic melancholia. But there is also a feeling that the sadness we have heard so far, for all its brilliance, need not inevitably prevail. Movement three, dominated by three waltzes, allows us further opportunity to relax, breathe and contemplate the emotional journey on which Tchaikovsky is taking us. When we reach the final movement, it is clear that the music is reaching for resolution. Are you convinced by this expression of triumph? Once it comes, it has taken us from the symphony's ominous opening in E minor to E major.

Whether it ranks among the canon's great symphonies is for each listener to decide. Whether or not we are persuaded, there seems little doubt of Tchaikovsky's sincerity of feeling. Among the many doubts that tormented him were those raised by critical opinion; he seems to have been so credulous and insecure that he believed his harshest critics and declared the symphony a failure. Modern audiences and musicians have overruled him and his critics, making Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 one of his most popular works.

## THE WORLD in 1888

- Wilhelm II was crowned German Emperor
- Benjamin Harrison was elected president of the United States even though Grover Cleveland won the popular vote
- Jack the Ripper was terrorizing London
- Louisa May Alcott died of a stroke
- Vincent Van Gogh famously removed a portion of his ear
- Susan B. Anthony organizes a Congress for Women's Rights in Washington, D.C.
- [And much more...](http://worldhistoryproject.org/1888) (worldhistoryproject.org/1888)

## Musical terms

### Accent

An emphasis or "punch" at the beginning of a musical sound.

### Adagio (Italian)

Meaning a slow tempo or slow speed. Sometimes it is the name of a work like Mozart's Adagio for Violin and Orchestra.

### Andante (Italian)

Meaning a walking tempo or walking pace; a moderate speed.

### Movement

A large unit within a symphony or concerto. It usually is comprised of many themes or musical ideas.



## Petting Zoo

Please join ISU Symphony Orchestra members in the main floor lobby areas following the performance for a chance to see and hear their instruments up close.