



The Orchestra at Work



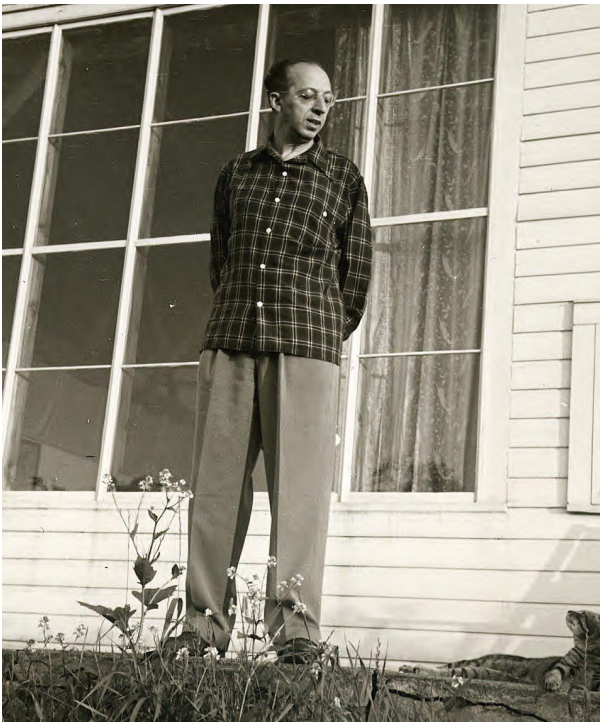
Schooltime: The Orchestra at Work

Listening Guide

The modern American orchestra is a multifaceted being that requires a wide range of skills to function. Some of those skills are on full display from the stage – conducting, performing, lighting, stage design. Many more of those skills are hidden offstage, in the nooks and crannies of the venue an orchestra calls home. From finance professionals to educators, marketing executives to building engineers, running a professional orchestra is truly a team endeavor.

Schooltime: The Orchestra at Work explores and celebrates the many different jobs required to run a professional American orchestra. You will meet, see, and hear some of the people right here in Pittsburgh who do those jobs.

Use this listening guide either before or after your field trip to Heinz Hall. Click on each link in the document or use the full playlist on [YouTube](#). Listen carefully to each piece of music. Discuss what you hear and what you think each composer is trying to express. If you want, guess what job each piece of music is going to be paired with at the concert – or reflect afterward on what you learned about each job and what you still want to know!



AARON COPLAND

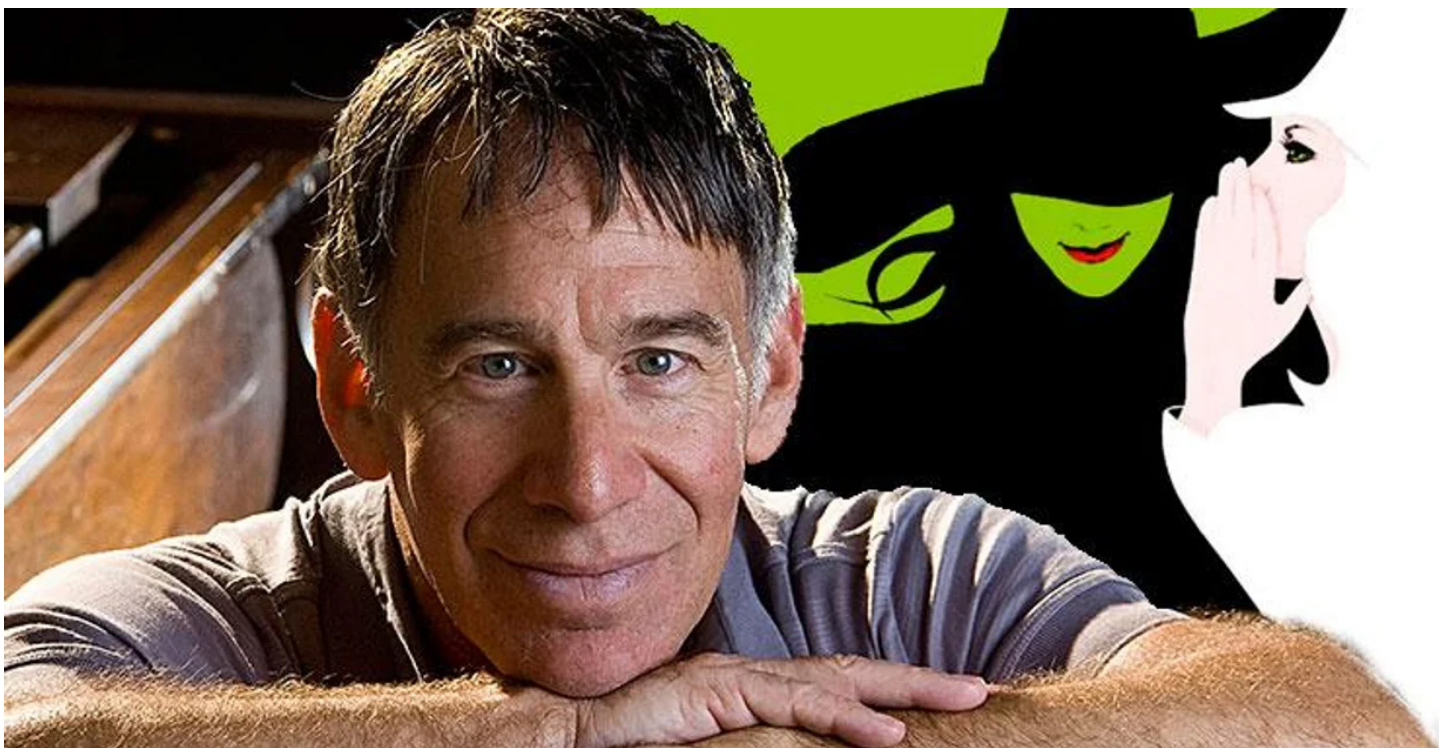
"Buckaroo Holiday" from Rodeo

Buckaroo Holiday is the opening scene of the ballet *Rodeo* (pronounced roh-DAY-oh), written by the groundbreaking American choreographer Agnes de Mille. It tells the story a strong, young cowgirl who has a crush on the head wrangler – except he pays her no attention because she is “just one of the guys.” Set on a ranch in the American Southwest, the ballet follows the cowgirl as she remains true to herself and eventually finds her own path to happiness.

Listen to [“Buckaroo Holiday”](#) performed by the New York Philharmonic with Leonard Bernstein.

- How does the music begin?
- Listen for the first **tempo change**, about 40 seconds into the music. This is the cowgirl’s **theme**. It will return various times throughout the ballet. How would you describe the theme? What do you imagine might be happening on stage during this section of music?
- Agnes de Mille asked Aaron Copland to write the music for *Rodeo*. She specifically requested that he include lots of American folk songs to convey the setting of the story. Listen for the next **tempo change**, immediately following the cowgirl’s theme, at about 1:45 in the music. This melody is the work song “Sis Joe,” an old railroad holler. It is used to introduce the ballet’s ensemble of cowboys and ranch hands. Do you think “Sis Joe” is a fitting musical reference for these characters? Why or why not?
- Listen for the **trombone solo**, which introduces the next folk song “If He’d Be a Buckaroo.” What instruments repeat the **melody**? How would you describe the character of the music?
- What **musical choices** create a sense of motion throughout Buckaroo Holiday?





STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

"Popular" from *Wicked*

Popular is from the award-winning musical, and movie, *Wicked*. It has been performed by countless performers around the world, from prestigious stages to humble home living rooms. In the song, Glinda tells her roommate Elphaba how she will help Elphaba to become more popular, from what to wear to how to act.

Listen to ["Popular"](#) from the original Broadway cast recording, performed by Kristin Chenoweth.

- Listen for **internal rhyme** – the rhyming of a word in the middle of a line with the word at the end of that line or in the middle of the next line. Make a tally of how many times you notice internal rhyme throughout the song.
- How would you describe the **feeling** of the song? What musical choices create this feeling?
- Count how many times the word "popular" is said throughout the song. Is the **emphasis** of the word the same each time or does it change? Draw the shape or shapes of how Kristin Chenoweth sings the word "popular" throughout the song.
- Listen to the version of "Popular" from the movie, **performed by Ariana Grande**. How does it **compare** to the stage recording? What is the same? What is different? Do you prefer one version more than the other?



FLORENCE PRICE

Piano Concerto

Florence Price wrote her piano concerto in 1934, one year after becoming the first Black woman to have a composition performed by a major American orchestra. While most concertos are written with three separate movements, Price wrote her concerto to be played as one continuous piece – though it does contain three distinct sections.

Listen to the third section of Price’s Piano Concerto, Allegretto, performed by Karen Walwyn and the New Black Music Repertory Ensemble.

- Listen to the **introduction** of the third section (timestamp 14:40-15:05). How would you describe it? What musical choices create this effect?
- Listen for the solo piano entrance. Does the orchestra play the melody with the piano (**in unison**) or does it play something different? What happens when the piano repeats the melody?
- Price layers multiple musical lines together to create thick **musical texture**. Listen for these layers. Write down two instances of the thick musical textures you hear:

EXAMPLE	1	2
<u>Piano</u> + <u>Upper Strings</u> + <u>Brass</u> + <u>Cymbals</u>		
15:32-15:40		

- Price composed the third section of her piano concerto in the style of **Juba dance**. Juba originated among enslaved Africans as a way to communicate without words. Instead, it uses **call and response** patterns made by clapping and slapping. Listen for examples of call and response in the music. Write down two instances of call and response you hear:

Call: _____ Response: _____
(instrument/section) (instrument/section)

Call: _____ Response: _____
(instrument/section) (instrument/section)

- What **musical choices** let you know the concerto is coming to an end?



ANTHONY PLOG

Scherzo for Trumpet and Orchestra

The Pittsburgh Symphony is proud to be the first orchestra to perform this work by American composer Anthony Plog. Originally composed for trumpet and piano, the PSO premiered the orchestral version of Scherzo with Principal Trumpet Micah Wilkinson in October 2021. When you hear Micah play the piece during *Schoolltime: The Orchestra at Work*, you will be part of a very select group of people, as no recording of this piece exists!

Listen to the original version of [Scherzo](#) for trumpet and piano, performed by Anne McNamara.

- The trumpet solo uses a variety of **articulation**. Listen for **staccato** (separated), **legato** (smooth), and **accents** (emphasis). What other articulation do you hear?
- Even though the Scherzo is fairly short (about four minutes), it has several clear sections. How many are there? What **expressive marking** would you give each section? An expressive marking is a short word or phrase that indicates how to play the music, like "sweetly" or "energetically, with great force."
- Listen carefully to the piano **accompaniment**. How do you think the orchestral version of the accompaniment will sound? What instruments would you use?
- What do you think of how the piece ends? Do you like it? Would you change anything? Why or why not?



PSO Principal Trumpet Micah Wilkinson as a student with composer Anthony Plog.



FERDE GROFÉ

"Sunrise" from Grand Canyon Suite

Ferde Grofé was an expert orchestrator. He knew how to combine and layer instruments to create myriad colors and specific musical effects. He famously demonstrated this expertise when he orchestrated a jazzy piano piece by George Gershwin, *Rhapsody in Blue*. A few years later, Grofé began to work on a five-movement tone poem, *Grand Canyon Suite*, depicting the splendor of this natural wonder in vivid musical detail.

Listen to "[Sunrise](#)" from *Grand Canyon Suite* performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra.

- How does the music begin? Name what you hear. Why do you think the composer chose to start a piece called "Sunrise" this way?
- Listen for the violins. When do they first play the **melody**? What else happens to the music at this point?
- What **colors** do you imagine when you listen to the music? How do you feel?
- Listen carefully to the beginning (0:00-0:40) and the end (6:01-6:41) of Sunrise. How do they compare? What has changed? What **musical choices** create this effect?

