

# GLOSSARY OF MUSICAL TERMS

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**Concerto:** Music that is written for a solo instrument with an accompanying *orchestra* (see below). You will hear part of the Mendelssohn Violin Concerto at *Celebrate Pittsburgh*.

**Dynamics:** How loud or soft the music is.

**Harmony:** When two or more *notes* (see below) are played at the same time to create a pleasing sound.

**Melody:** The main tune of the music—the one that often gets stuck in your head!

**Note:** The symbol used to represent the *pitch* (see below) or length of a musical sound.

**Orchestra:** A group of musicians who perform on a variety of instruments in sections of strings, brass, woodwinds, and percussion.

**Overture:** Music an orchestra plays at the beginning of an opera or musical play. The *William Tell Overture*, which you will hear at *Celebrate Pittsburgh*, is part of the opera *William Tell*.

**Pitch:** How low or high a note is.

**Rest:** A musical symbol that tells the musician to “rest” or not play for a specific length of time.

**Rhythm:** A regular pattern made up of notes and rests of different lengths. It's what we tap our feet to!

**Tempo** (Italian for “time”): The speed of the music.

**Texture:** How complex the music is.

**Timbre** (pronounced “tamber”): The unique sound each instrument makes. For example, if a tuba, flute, and viola were to all play the same note, each one would sound different.