

MSO

MEET THE ORCHESTRA
WITH TRIPOD: *INCONGRUOUS*

Teacher's Guide Primary (K–6)



mso.com.au/education

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SECTION 1 – HOW TO USE THE RESOURCES

USING THESE RESOURCES

We are excited to provide this set of online pre-concert resources for MSO's 2018 Education Week concert, **Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: *Incongruous***. We can't wait to welcome you to Hamer Hall!

WHY PROVIDE PRE-CONCERT RESOURCES?

The MSO aims to provide exciting, engaging and meaningful educational experiences that extend well beyond the concert hall. That's why we've designed this special resource pack for you and your students to use in the lead up to the concerts, as well as to reflect on your experience post-concert.

While developing this resource pack, we focussed on the creation of content that is adaptable, inspiring, and linked to curriculum. The MSO's Education and Community Engagement concerts and pre-concert resources are intended as a method of supercharging curriculum, using learning to inspire a love of and deep-seated passion for music.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE ON OFFER FOR THIS CONCERT?

1. **Teachers' guide (K–6)** with information about artists, repertoire, and lesson plan suggestions (including links to a variety of concert-related digital resources)
2. **Resource videos** including:
 - o [Introductory video](#) (concert content, theme, repertoire etc.)
 - o [Interactive component video](#) (introducing the interactive component for the concerts)
 - o [General videos](#) (use these to introduce your students to the concept of the orchestra and its musicians)
3. [Spotify playlist](#) – use this to introduce your students to full-length versions of the featured repertoire for this concert

HOW SHOULD I USE THE RESOURCE PACK?

We suggest you use this document in conjunction with the video resources to design and execute a pre-/post-concert learning sequence crafted to suit your students and their particular interests and needs. How much time you spend working with and discussing each resource is up to you – you are the expert!

MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Established in 1906, the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO) is an arts leader and Australia's longest-running professional orchestra. Chief Conductor Sir Andrew Davis has been at the helm of MSO since 2013. Engaging more than 3 million people each year, the MSO reaches a variety of audiences through live performances, recordings, TV and radio broadcasts and live streaming. Its international audiences include China, where MSO has performed in 2012, 2016 and again in 2018, Europe (2014) and Indonesia, where in 2017 it performed at the UNESCO World Heritage Site, Prambanan Temple.

The MSO performs a variety of concerts ranging from symphonic performances at its home, Hamer Hall at Arts Centre Melbourne, to its annual free concerts at Melbourne's largest outdoor venue, the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. The MSO also delivers innovative and engaging programs and digital tools to audiences of all ages through its Education and Outreach initiatives.

Sir Andrew Davis gave his inaugural concerts as the MSO's Chief Conductor in 2013, having made his debut with the Orchestra in 2009. The MSO also works with Associate Conductor Benjamin Northey and Assistant Conductor Tianyi Lu, as well as with such eminent recent guest conductors as Tan Dun, John Adams, Jakub Hrůša and Jukka-Pekka Saraste. It has also collaborated with non-classical musicians including Elton John, Nick Cave, and Flight Facilities.

The MSO reaches a wider audience through regular radio broadcasts, recordings and CD releases, including the February 2018 release of a collaboration with Chinese violin virtuoso Lu Siqing.



SECTION 2 – ARTISTS



BENJAMIN NORTHEY ASSOCIATE CONDUCTOR, MELBOURNE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Benjamin Northey is Chief Conductor of the Christchurch Symphony Orchestra and Associate Conductor of Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

Northey appears regularly as guest conductor with all major Australian symphony orchestras, Opera Australia (*Turandot*, *L'elisir d'amore*, *Don Giovanni*, *Così fan tutte*, *Carmen*), New Zealand Opera (*Sweeney Todd*) and State Opera South Australia (*La sonnambula*, *Les contes d'Hoffmann*). His international appearances include concerts with London Philharmonic Orchestra, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and Mozarteum Orchestra Salzburg.

An Honorary Fellow at the University of Melbourne Conservatorium of Music, his awards include the 2010 Melbourne Prize Outstanding Musician's Award and multiple awards for his numerous recordings with ABC Classics.



TRIPOD FEATURED ARTISTS

Tripod are comedy/cabaret writer/performers who make theatre, record albums and DVDs and constantly tour; it's their job and, yes, they make a living out of it.

In the twenty-plus years since they first appeared on the Melbourne live pub scene, the “boys” have delighted audiences from comedy clubs to symphonic concert halls and everything in between. They have also created numerous narrative musicals for the stage, as well as for children's cartoons and global videogame properties, picking up multiple awards and, through their constant work on television and radio (and, more recently, their popular podcast), becoming a much loved household name along the way.

Three-part harmony arranged with extraordinary complexity – accompanied by guitars and often piano – make the backbone of a live Tripod concert; a loosely choreographed, expertly timed comedy show, with dynamics that change on a whim and snap back in the blink of an eye. Twenty one years of playing onstage together has galvanised the boys into a world-class comedy show biz juggernaut with whip-smart writing and musical chops to match.

SECTION 3 – SET LIST (REPERTOIRE)

Need some music for classroom transitions or a wet day timetable, and want to prepare your students for their concert experience at the same time? We've got you covered – we've even prepared a special [Spotify playlist](#) for you to use!

For the piece of repertoire not available on Spotify, we've included YouTube link below.

TRIPOD/WINTORY *Jokes Jokes Jokes*

RIMSKY KORSAKOV *Flight of the Bumblebee*

GERSHWIN *An American in Paris*

RAMEAU *Le Poulet*

RESPIGHI *Gli Uccelli – 3: La Gallina*

HAYDN *Symphony No.94 'Surprise' – 2: Andante*

PROKOFIEV *Classical Symphony – 1: Allegro*

MAHLER *Symphony No.1 – Third movement*

TRIPOD *Sponge Farmer*

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Swan Lake Suite, Op.20a – 1: Scene*

[TRIPOD *Dawn of Time*](#)

BERNSTEIN *Mambo!*

Please note that the concert order of the repertoire is subject to change.

SECTION 4 – CONCERT THEME: A FOREWORD BY TRIPOD

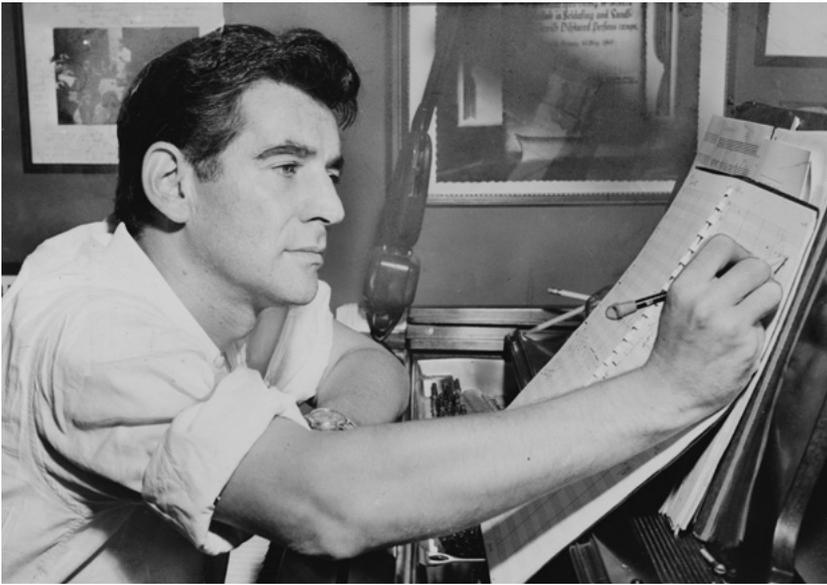


Image courtesy of the Leonard Bernstein Office



Photo credit: James Penlidis

MEET THE ORCHESTRA WITH TRIPOD: *INCONGRUOUS*

For Education Week at the MSO this year, as part of a program of events celebrating the work of legendary conductor, composer and educator, Mr Leonard Bernstein on the hundredth anniversary of his year of birth, **Tripod** will take on the great man's lesson of highlighting the ways in which humour works in music.

In collaboration with our friends, maestro Ben Northey and the wonderful MSO we'll do this by performing **our own version of Bernstein's seminal 1959 Young People's Concert, *Humour in Music***. Check out parts [1](#), [2](#), [3](#) and [4](#) of this concert on YouTube today!

The title of our concert is *Incongruous*. Why? Well, there are two ideas, inspired by Bernstein, that are central to our concert. The first is an exploration of humour in music, and the second is 'incongruity', the central point being that oftentimes, it's what 'fits' and what 'doesn't fit' in the music that crates hilarity.

We'll be looking at a few big questions:

- What makes music funny?
- How does music fit together, or not fit together?
- What choices have been made by the composer in order to evoke humour?

Essentially, we're asking students to think – from an aesthetic perspective – about the choices that have been made by the composer, and by inference, apply coherent intent to their own decisions going forward, whether it be in comedy, in music, or whatever activities students engage in.

It's the perfect storm: the program is utterly thrilling and full of fun, and includes a bunch of fascinating pieces that lead into interesting and illuminating lessons on the basics of both humour and music. As a topic, it seems there are few people more qualified in the country than **Tripod** to have an immediate relationship with Bernstein's proposals on the topic (even if we may say so ourselves), and to be able to react in a thoughtful, credible and – when necessary – stupid manner to the original content.

Perfect!

Comedy is – at least in part – about the gap between a person's aspirations and their achievements. This will be the line Tripod will take as we attempt this seemingly simple task. Week look at:

- What happens when 'Mr Bernstein' proposes something we don't all agree with?
- What happens when Scod wants to stick to the script that Bernstein wrote, but the other boys want to improvise a bit?
- What happens when Ben conducts a piece, but Gatesy wasn't ready, forgot to listen, and asks Ben to do it again?
- How does Yon feel about the idea that comedy relates to 'not fitting in' (aka 'incongruity')?

The concert's take-away lessons and underlying themes will remain rock solid. **We'll be keeping the young audience a priority at all times as we put this show together.** It's likely to be a hairy (funny) ride, but you will absolutely leave the theatre having understood Bernstein's point.

So what else can you expect?

The program of works has been inspired by both the ideas and repertoire featured in the original concert. We've really enjoyed the challenge of working with Bernstein's ground-breaking approach and ideas to adapt them for the contemporary context by subbing in some post-1959 pieces too.

As you may know, Tripod is also known for our three-part harmony singing, and we'll be looking for opportunities to sing some of our own works in collaboration with the orchestra. This will happen in much the same spirit as when Mr Bernstein sat down at the piano in his own Young People's Concerts with the New York Philharmonic.

Finally, with a light touch, **we'll be projecting and interacting with moments from the original concert itself,** the overall point of which will be to make it very clear what we're trying to do; and that is, to explore and feel the legacy of Mr Bernstein at all times.

So... we'd better get this right!

SECTION 5 – INTERACTIVE COMPONENT

MSO's Education Week concerts are characterised by their trademark interactive component.

This year's component is directly linked with the theme and central ideas of the concert ('humour in music' and 'incongruity') and is formulated in the style of a classroom learning intention:

To create and perform lyrics to the theme from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake*.

*That's the section of the theme at "0:09-0:20" of [this video](#) – also in notation below:



Yes, that's right: in the lead-up to the concerts, you'll be assisting students to write and perform their very own silly lyrics to one of the most well-known (entirely instrumental – until now) themes in the classical canon. Best of all, you get to send your ideas in to share with **Tripod** (see Section 6, Lesson Plan 4 for further information). Those deemed by Tripod to be funniest and – importantly – most *incongruous* will be incorporated into the show.

Section 6 of this Teaching Guide contains some ideas for getting students involved in this activity. We can't wait to hear your ideas!

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

Each lesson plan indicates suggested links both within and across learning areas of the Victorian Curriculum. These links are listed in hierarchical order (learning area, strand, sub-strand etc.) and in the interest of level-related flexibility do not include specific content descriptions. As each lesson plan includes options for extension, the plans are designed to be adapted in order to differentiate content according to the level at which students are working (K–6).

LESSON PLAN 1: MEET THE MUSICIANS AND THEIR INSTRUMENTS

LINKS TO VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

- Critical and Creative Thinking (capability)
- Personal and Social (capability)
- Music (learning area)
 - Respond and Interpret

LEARNING INTENTION:

To meet the musicians and instruments of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

MATERIALS:

- Whiteboard markers
- Interactive whiteboard (with visuals and sound)
- Scrap paper
- Grey lead pencils
- Coloured pencils and markers

1. Remind students they'll soon be attending a performance of *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.
2. Introduce the learning intention.
3. Choose one of our general video resources to watch with students:
 - a. [Interview with Prudence Davis, Flute](#)
 - b. [Interview with Shane Hooton, Trumpet](#)
 - c. [Interview with Brent Miller, Percussion](#)
 - d. [Interview with Freya Franzen, Violin](#)
 - e. [How do musicians prepare for a concert?](#)
4. Have a discussion with the students using varying types of comprehension questions such as:
 - a. What did you see in the video?
 - b. What is [MUSICIAN'S NAME]'s instrument called?
 - c. How do you think [MUSICIAN'S NAME] would feel when preparing for a performance?
 - d. What was the most interesting thing you just saw, and why?
 - e. How do you think you would feel playing the [INSTRUMENT] (e.g. happy, sad, excited etc.)
 - f. If you met [MUSICIAN'S NAME] in person, what other questions would you ask them?
 - g. What do you imagine the Hamer Hall backstage area might look like? What would musicians need in the backstage area?
5. Ask students to draw a picture of themselves at the concert focusing on how they think they'll feel when they arrive at the performance (you might like to ask them to visualise this with eyes closed).
6. While students draw, play some of the music from our *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* [Spotify set list](#).
7. Have a show-and-tell session at the end of the lesson.

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Revisit the drawings when you arrive back from the performance – how did the music make them feel? Is it the same or different to how we first imagined we'd feel?
- Want to explore the concept of musicians, instruments and the orchestra with your students? Why not play our [full schools concert](#) during a wet day timetable or as a special treat at the end of a long week?

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

LESSON PLAN 2: WHO IS LEONARD BERNSTEIN?

LINKS TO VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

- Critical and Creative Thinking (capability)
- Music (learning area)
 - o Respond and Interpret

LEARNING INTENTION:

To get to know the composer, Leonard Bernstein.

MATERIALS:

- Whiteboard markers
- Interactive whiteboard (with visuals and sound)
- Scrap paper
- Grey lead pencils
- Coloured pencils and markers

1. Remind students they'll soon be attending a performance of *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.
2. Introduce the learning intention.
3. Explain that the concert the students will attend will feature music and ideas made famous by Leonard Bernstein, a composer (and prolific educator).
4. Have a class discussion, and list students' ideas on the whiteboard:
 - a. What is a composer? (*Someone who writes music*)
 - b. What is a conductor? (*Someone whose job it is to keep all the musicians playing together as a group*)
 - c. Explore the students' ideas: if we don't know, any ideas what these terms *might* mean?
 - d. What might a composer use to write music? (e.g. instruments, paper, pens etc.)
 - e. What might a conductor need to conduct a piece of music? (e.g. baton, use their hands to gesture etc.)
5. Ask students to return to their tables and draw a picture of what they imagine Leonard Bernstein might look like when he's composing or conducting.
6. Ask students to return to the floor with their picture, and then watch [this clip](#): Part 1 of Bernstein's 1959 *Humour in Music* concert, on which *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* is based.
7. Have a group show-and-tell and reflection session in order to explore students' ideas and questions re: conducting and composing.

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Here's a list of [prominent female conductors](#) you may wish to discuss with your students, as well as a list of [prominent female composers](#) – you may wish to remind students that although this program is based around the work of Bernstein, *anyone* can be a conductor or composer

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

LESSON PLAN 3: WHAT MAKES MUSIC FUNNY?

LINKS TO VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

- Critical and Creative Thinking (capability)
- Personal and Social (capability)
- Music (learning area)
 - Explore and Express Ideas

LEARNING INTENTION:

To understand what makes music funny.

MATERIALS:

- Whiteboard markers
- 3x pieces of A3 coloured poster paper
- Interactive whiteboard (with visuals and sound)
- Post-it notes (or small squares of scrap paper)
 - three or four for each student
- Grey lead pencils

1. Remind students they'll soon be attending a performance of *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.
2. Introduce the learning intention.
3. Use our Spotify set list to play to students the opening two minutes (or so) of BERNSTEIN *Mambo!*
4. Create three posters (or three sections of the whiteboard) centred on the following questions:
 - a. How would you describe this music?
 - b. Did you notice any funny sounds?
 - c. What does the music make you think of?
5. Tell students about the piece and its link to the concert theme – you may like to use this script:

Thank you for all your wonderful ideas. This piece is called Mambo!, and it was written by a composer – someone who writes music – called Leonard Bernstein. Leonard Bernstein was an American man who was born 100 years ago. He isn't alive anymore, but we'll soon be celebrating his birthday with MSO and Tripod. Do you know who Tripod is? They are three very funny people – a comedy group – who are going to teach us about what makes music funny.
6. Watch this [Introduction Video](#) prepared by Tripod and conductor, Benjamin Northey.
7. After watching the video, decide with the students if there are any further thoughts you could add to your posters.

EXTENSION IDEAS

- If capable of doing so, students could work in small groups (e.g. at their tables) to brainstorm ideas on each of the three questions listed at point 4.
- Encourage students to spend 20 minutes doing individual or small group research on Leonard Bernstein, Benjamin Northey, and/or Tripod – share results in a class discussion.
- Further discussion: what's some other funny music we know? Why is it funny?

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

LESSON PLAN 4: LET'S COMPOSE SOME LYRICS!

LINKS TO VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

- Critical and Creative Thinking (capability)
- Music (learning area)
 - Explore and Express Ideas
- English (learning area)
 - Reading and Viewing
 - › Language
 - » Expressing and developing Ideas

LEARNING INTENTION:

To write our own lyrics to the main theme from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake.

MATERIALS:

- Interactive whiteboard (no visuals required) or sound system
- Whiteboard markers
- A recording of the main theme from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake – you may wish to use our [Spotify playlist](#), or section "0:09-0:20" of [this YouTube clip](#)
- Student workbooks or scrap paper
- Grey lead pencils

1. Remind students they'll soon be attending a performance of *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* by the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.
2. Introduce the learning intention.
3. Explain to students:

So, we've discussed what makes music funny. Who remembers? [ASK STUDENTS FOR IDEAS] There's something else that makes music funny: it's a very strange word: 'incongruous' – can you say that with me? [STUDENTS RESPONSE] Great! So, something is 'incongruous' when it's really strange, or weird, or doesn't quite fit. A lot of the music we'll hear in the MSO concert is 'incongruous' – it's funny because it doesn't quite fit. We're doing to do something incongruous today and write some very funny lyrics ("lyrics are the words to a song") to a very serious piece of music that's not meant to be funny at all! We're going to make it funny!
4. With the students, brainstorm things they think are incongruous (i.e. things that are funny because they don't make sense) e.g.:
 - Someone playing a banana instead of a violin
 - A dog dressed in a tutu
 - Someone eating a telephone
 - Conducting with a hotdog for a baton
 - Someone dancing in a chicken costume
5. Use the interactive whiteboard or sound system to play for students the first passage of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake theme (e.g. "0:09-0:20" of [this YouTube clip](#) – you can also access a recording via our [Spotify playlist](#)).
6. Explain to students that you're going to be writing some funny lyrics to this melody, which will then be sent to Tripod – there are lots of other schools doing this too, and the funniest lyrics will be sung at the concert!
7. Take a vote on a funny topic for the song – remind students that the crazier and more 'incongruous' the lyrics, the better – we want lyrics that are hilarious because they don't make sense.
8. Use the interactive whiteboard to brainstorm words, ideas and phrases about the topic, and try these with the tune.
9. Finalise different lines/verses of the song and document the class' work.

EXTENSION IDEAS

REMEMBER

- Email your school's name and a copy of the lyrics you have written to education@mso.com.au so they can go into the draw to be performed by Tripod at the concert!
- Continue working on the lyrics over the course of several lessons, or write only as much as you can manage.
- Have students work in small groups to complete different parts of the lyrics – this could make them even more funny and incongruous!
- Perform your lyrics at an assembly.

SECTION 7 – FURTHER INFORMATION

MSO'S 2018 SCHOOLS' SEASON

There's plenty more where this came from. Check out our full range of exciting, engaging, curriculum-linked products at mso.com.au/education/schools-and-teachers

RESOURCE LIBRARY

Engage with the MSO from the comfort of your classroom. Explore our [full range of online resources today!](#)

WANT TO BOOK TICKETS OR CHECK DETAILS OF YOUR CURRENT BOOKING?

Great! Please contact the friendly [MSO Box Office](#).

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra

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