

MSO

MEET THE ORCHESTRA
WITH TRIPOD: *INCONGRUOUS*

Teacher's Guide Secondary (7–12)



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 (7–12)** 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*

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

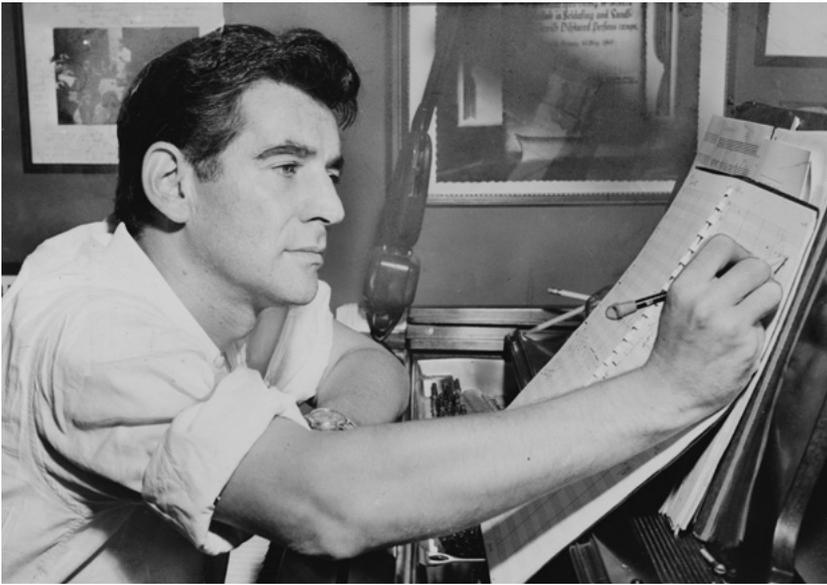


Image courtesy of the Leonard Bernstein Office



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

Links to Curriculum

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM 7–10:	Lesson
Critical and Creative Thinking (capability)	1, 2, 3, 4
Personal and Social (capability)	1
Music (learning area)	
Respond and Interpret	1, 2, 3
Explore and Express Ideas	4
English (learning area)	
Reading and Viewing	
Language	
Expressing and developing ideas	4

VCE MUSIC SUBJECTS: KEY KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS	Lesson
Music Performance (Units 1/2 and 3/4)	
Musicianship skills	1
Strategies used to optimise performance outcomes	1
Effective instrumental practice routines	1
Improving personal performance ability	1
Performance contexts	2, 3, 4
Interpretation	2, 3, 4
Music language	2, 3, 4
Critical listening and interpretation	2, 3
Communicating artistic intentions to an audience	2, 3
Comparing the treatment of elements of music	2, 3
Compositional devices	2, 3
The manipulation of elements of music, compositional devices, techniques and conventions	4
Music Style and Composition (Units 1/2 and 3/4)	
Using compositional devices to create unity and diversity	2, 3, 4
Use of appropriate music terminology and language	1, 2, 3
Using musical examples to support discussion	1, 2, 3, 4
Forming and presenting a critical response	1, 2, 3
Manipulation of elements of music and their contribution to style and character	4
Music Investigation (Units 3/4)	
Music terminology and language	1, 2, 3, 4
Technical and expressive mastery	1
Performance practices	1, 2, 3
Historical and contemporary performance conventions	2, 3, 4
Stylistic characteristics of music	2, 3, 4
Technical and expressive mastery	2, 3
Create short compositions and improvisations	4
Stylistic characteristics of music	4

IB Syllabus Components:	Lesson
Music perception	1, 2, 3, 4
Solo performing	1
Creating	2, 3, 4

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

Each lesson plan indicates suggested links both within and across learning areas of curricula (Victorian Curriculum 7–10, VCE, and IB). Wherever possible, 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 (Victorian Curriculum). As each lesson plan includes options for extension, the plans are designed to be adapted in order to differentiate content according to the specific level at which students are working.

LESSON PLAN 1: MEET THE MUSICIANS AND THEIR INSTRUMENTS

LEARNING INTENTION:

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

MATERIALS:

- Interactive whiteboard (with visuals and sound)
- Student workbooks and access to pens, pencils etc., or
- Laptop/desktop computers

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 – you may also like to split students into groups according to their instrument families, and have them watch the correlating video:
 - 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?*](#)

**It is suggested that option 'e' will be a useful resource for older students*
4. Ask students to write a personal reflection on the video using prompts such as:
 - a. What did you learn by watching this video?
 - b. What in this video did you already know?
 - c. If you met [MUSICIAN'S NAME] in person, what other questions would you ask them?
 - d. What did I observe that I could apply to my own personal practice/warm-up routine?
5. While students prepare their reflections, you may like to play some of the music from our *Meet the Orchestra with Tripod: Incongruous* [Spotify set list](#)
6. Have a class discussion regarding students' reflections focusing on linking students' experiences with the experiences of MSO musicians as elicited in the video resources

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Check out this lesson's curriculum links in more depth: why not ask students to undertake an analysis task using our suite of on-demand MSO concerts, listed by repertoire – simply head to [this page](#) and check out what's available under the 'extend' heading

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

LESSON PLAN 2: AMERICAN MUSIC

LEARNING INTENTION:

To explore the idea of an 'American sound'.

MATERIALS:

- Whiteboard markers
- Interactive whiteboard (with visuals and sound)
- Student workbooks, or
- Laptop/desktop computers
- Handouts (see point 3 below)

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. Start by playing the students opening excerpts from Bernstein's *Mambo!* (featured in concert), George Gershwin's *An American in Paris* (featured in concert), and the third moment of Copland's *Symphony No.3* (feat. Fanfare for the Common Man tune, not featured in concert) – you may like to use an adaption of the following table as a class handout for the exercise:

Element of music	BERNSTEIN <i>Mambo!</i>	GERSHWIN <i>An American in Paris</i>	COPLAND <i>Symphony No.3, mmt III</i>
General notes: style and character			
Rhythm			
Melody			
Harmony			
Timbre			
Form			
Texture			
Dynamics			
Other observations			

4. Have a class discussion, and list students' ideas on the whiteboard – you may like to use the following prompts:
 - Were there any similarities between works?
 - What were the main differences you observed?
 - What kind of styles/genres do you think influenced each composer? How do you know? (use evidence recorded in your table)
 - What compositional devices, if any, did you observe?
5. Introduce this idea to students: If there is an American sound, what is it? [and then continue on as is] If so, what is it? Ask students to undertake some personal research on either of the two composers (and others, if time permits), their life, times, compositional styles and influences (internet, library, etc.) in order to explore this question
6. Have a group reflection session – is there an 'American sound'? What is it?

EXTENSION IDEAS

- You may like to further explore the idea of an 'American sound' by using the following resources with your class:
 - o Video ([Part 1 of 4](#)) and [transcript](#): Leonard Bernstein with the New York Philharmonic in his seminal Young People's Concerts series – *What is American Music?*

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

LESSON PLAN 3: HUMOUR IN MUSIC

LEARNING INTENTION:

To explore the concept of humour in music.

MATERIALS:

- Whiteboard markers
- Interactive whiteboard (with visuals and sound)
- Laptop/desktop computers

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. Watch this [Introduction Video](#) prepared by Tripod and conductor, Benjamin Northey – it introduces students to the key themes and concepts of the concert
4. Watch Part 1 of 4 (or a predetermined excerpt) of Leonard Bernstein's 1959 Young People's Concert with the New York Philharmonic: [Humour in Music](#) [15min duration]
5. Brainstorm with students using the whiteboard:
 - What are some elements or compositional devices that function to help make music humorous?
 - What are some contexts in which humorous music would be used? (e.g. a cartoon, theatre/stage production, in a movie to enhance the effect of humorous visuals etc.)
6. Have students undertake some personal research to find examples of humorous music.
7. Undertake a group reflection session:
 - What examples of humorous music did you find?
 - Do we need to return to our ideas regarding what makes music humorous? Did we discover other factors/elements/compositional devices?

EXTENSION IDEAS

- Have students undertake further analysis exercises on distinct, pre-determined excerpts from the concert repertoire listed on page 6 of this guide – what is it about these excerpts that make them humorous?

SECTION 6 – LESSON PLAN SUGGESTIONS

LESSON PLAN 4: LET'S GET CREATIVE!

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

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 the concept of 'incongruity' – you may like to use the following script:

So, we've discussed what makes music humorous. Who remembers? [ASK STUDENTS FOR IDEAS] There's another way of looking at this too, and we saw this concept in the footage we watched of Leonard Bernstein. It's a weird word: 'incongruous' – can you say that with me? [STUDENTS RESPONSE] Great! So, something is 'incongruous' when it doesn't quite fit. A lot of the music we'll hear in the MSO concert is 'incongruous'. Today, we have a great project: to write silly lyrics to a serious piece of music, and then send our lyrics in to Tripod!
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
 - Conducting with a hotdog for a baton
 - Someone dancing in a chicken costume
 - Alternatively, can they think of a recent hilarious happening that they could use to inspire some lyrics?
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. 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.
7. Use the interactive whiteboard to brainstorm words, ideas and phrases about the topic, and try these with the tune – the writing process is up to you (check our extension ideas below for suggestions).
8. 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!
- Secondary schools are strongly encouraged to consider how they might add more complexity to their lyrics – can you, for example, add a countermelody or bass line to your composition, with extra incongruous lyrics?
- Have students work in small groups to complete different parts of the lyrics – this could make them even more funny and incongruous!

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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