Welcome to this season’s third Young People’s Concert!

Music is color — a kaleidoscope of sound surrounds us every day in the life of our city.

Timbre—the particular way an instrument sounds, bright or dark, smooth or rough—instantly identifies a character. Harmony—the way notes sound together, warm or cool, sweet or sour—creates a mood. In their infinite colors, harmony and timbre are essential for telling stories in music. Whether by itself or for ballet, opera, or plays, music has rare power to conjure up images and stories. Prepare to be amazed!

THE PROGRAM:

PROKOFIEV Selections from Romeo and Juliet

VERY YOUNG COMPOSERS Suite of New Works

R. STRAUSS Till Eulenspiegel’s Merry Pranks

Delta David Gier, conductor

Tom Dulack, scriptwriter and director

Spencer Aste, Zach Bandler, Steven Eng, Keira Keely, actors

Very Young Composers

In William Shakespeare’s play Romeo and Juliet, two families, the Montagues and the Capulets, have been quarreling for so long no one can even remember how it started or why it still continues. Romeo is a Montague and Juliet is a Capulet. They meet at a dance in Juliet’s house that Romeo attends in disguise. They fall instantly in love and want to run away together. Juliet is only 14 and Romeo a couple of years older. Because their parents hate each other, Romeo and Juliet are forced to tell lies to conceal their romance. But, they get tangled up in their lies, and their story ends in tragedy. Do they die? Well, there are different ways to tell the story. In his ballet, Sergei Prokofiev originally wanted them to live happily ever after.

What kinds of musical colors do you hear in your mind’s ear when you think about...

- A SWORDFIGHT
- A MASQUERADE
- YOUNG LOVERS
- AN ENDLESS QUARREL
- A GLOOMY NIGHT
- A RISING SUN
about the composers and their music...

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Russian composer of symphonies, film music, operas, and ballets, Sergei Prokofiev wrote vibrant music often considered ahead of its time. He composed from the age of 5, and at 13 was the youngest student ever admitted to the St. Petersburg Conservatory. He ignored disappointing reviews from his teachers and critics, who at times referred to his music as “noise,” and continued to write different-sounding music with strange harmonies and strong rhythms. When the effects of revolution made it difficult for Prokofiev to stay in the Soviet Union, he spent many years in Paris and the Bavarian Alps, and toured the United States as a pianist five times. He spent the last two decades of his life in the Soviet Union and wrote some of his greatest works there. He died on March 5, 1953—the same day that the Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin died.

Very Young Composers  Suite of New Works (2007)

Rajon Herbert (MS 447, Brooklyn)
The Fairy Mount

I am now in the sixth grade and I started composing this piece about a year ago while I was a student at PS 39. I really like my piece The Fairy Mount because it has a one-of-a-kind sound—I haven’t heard many songs like this one. The one thing that inspired me to write this and call it The Fairy Mount is my desire to read. Reading is exciting. It takes you to another place, and so does music. I also like drawing and collecting stuff. Sometimes I draw a picture in my head of what the music could be like. My favorite instruments are the double bass and the clarinet and I have played them both before. I am very happy for this opportunity to learn something like this because it is fun. Most of all, this will take me very, very far in life.

Edward Pichardo (PS 165, Manhattan)
The Wild Glissando

I’m a fifth grader in Ms. Stevenson’s class and my favorite time at school is being with my friends at gym class. I like all sports. I am really into music, especially the Very Young Composers program because I can create something new that’s never been done before! I like being imaginary and wild. In my piece, The Wild Glissando, I want people to listen for surprises. Some of them are funny, and some are scary. I like people to laugh at themselves, too. My favorite instruments are the harp, cymbals, and timpani.

Claire Wegh (Center School, Manhattan)
Instrumental Conversation

When I began writing I used the recorder and then the piano to improvise. I had no idea what I was doing! The main rhythm of the second theme came from Seussical Junior’s Horton Hears A Who. I was upset because I was not in the number, so I chose to put it into my piece. I like the idea of adapting the rhythm to my own melody. Some of the techniques I used were canons, effects such as slides, and, as the piece progresses, more instruments are added to the conversation. The title came after I heard my final piece because the instruments sounded like they were having a conversation. I hope you enjoy listening to this piece as much as I enjoyed writing it!

Richard Strauss (1864–1949)

Considered the last great Romantic composer, Richard Strauss was also an acclaimed conductor. His father was principal French horn at a local opera house and the young Strauss often attended his rehearsals. Strauss wrote his first music when he was 6 years old and by the time he was 18, he had written some 140 pieces. He fell in love with “programmatic” music—music that tells a story or paints a picture in sound. Strauss created a complex musical language using innovative combinations of instruments, expressive leaps in melody, and bold dissonances to portray characters, their actions, and their moods in music.

Selections from Romeo and Juliet (1935–36)

Montagues and Capulets, Death of Tybalt, Romeo at the Grave of Juliet

With Shakespeare’s timeless tragedy, Prokofiev set out to explore lyricism and color in his music. The Kirov Ballet, which had commissioned the score, feared that Prokofiev’s complex and modern music would anger government officials, and unfortunately declined to produce it. After five years of political and artistic pressure, Prokofiev significantly revised his ballet. He reinforced the orchestration to please the choreographer, inserted solo dances to please the theater, and switched from a happy to a tragic ending to please the dancers. At the ballet’s premiere, Prokofiev commented that he hardly recognized his own music!

Edward Pichardo

Abraham Pagan (MS 167, Manhattan)
Storm

I am 11 years old and in the 6th grade at Robert F. Wagner Middle School. I wrote this piece while I was a student at PS 59. I like to play and listen to music. I enjoy playing the alto saxophone and keyboard. I had a great experience participating in the New York Philharmonic Very Young Composers program. I named my piece Storm because in life things are not always that easy. You have to work hard for what you want.

Created by Associate Principal Bassist and noted composer Jon Deak, Very Young Composers enables students with limited musical backgrounds to compose music for performance by members of the Philharmonic. Very Young Composers culminates in astonishing works revealing the power of children’s imaginations, played by ensembles of Philharmonic musicians, or the full orchestra on Young People’s Concerts. Teaching Artists: Richard Carrick, Paola Prestini, and David Wallace.
One of the most famous artists in the 20th century, Wassily Kandinsky was celebrated for creating the first truly modern paintings. Like Prokofiev, he spent many years away from his native Russia, in Germany and Paris, and his art works were challenging and highly expressive. He was deeply inspired by music. Kandinsky wrote, “music is the ultimate teacher,” and he created a series of paintings titled “compositions.” Kandinsky heard tones and chords as he painted. Not only did color represent specific pitches (for example, yellow = middle c), but also timbres (yellow = a brass blast; blue = the melancholy tones of a cello).

At first glance, this painting looks like a chaotic symphony of color. But let’s take a closer look.

Which side of the painting do you think evokes rough and jagged timbre and harmony?
Which side of the painting suggests warmth and richness?

Can you find:
- Boats with oars
- Three soldiers with red hats holding tall spears
- Two lovers reclining
- A castle atop a blue mountain
- Two soldiers mounted on horseback engaged in a battle
- Two serene figures observing from a hillside

What kind of story can you imagine based on the mix of colors, shapes, lines, and images?
What's coming up this season?

Really got us hearing color!
In three concerts we've learned about rhythm, melody, and color—how do they all come together?

Saturday, April 5, 2008
Music is a world unto itself
Explore how all music's elements inspire imaginings beyond words with the music of Shostakovich, Beethoven, Steven Stucky, Mozart, and Sibelius.

Meet the artists

The New York Philharmonic

The New York Philharmonic is by far the oldest symphony orchestra in the United States, and one of the oldest in the world. It was founded in 1842 by a group of local musicians, and currently plays about 180 concerts every year. On December 18, 2004, the Philharmonic gave its 14,000th concert — a record that no other symphony orchestra in the world has ever reached. The Orchestra currently has 106 members. It performs mostly at Avery Fisher Hall, at Lincoln Center, but also tours around the world. The Orchestra's first concerts specifically for a younger audience were organized by Theodore Thomas for the 1885–86 season, with a series of 24 “Young People's Matinees.” The programs were developed further by conductor Josef Stransky, who led the first Young People's Concert in January of 1914. The Young People's Concerts were brought to national attention in 1924 by “Uncle Ernest” Schelling, and were made famous by Leonard Bernstein in the 1960s with live television broadcasts.

Delta David Gier

Delta David Gier is music director of the South Dakota Symphony Orchestra, and has been a cover conductor of the New York Philharmonic for the past 10 seasons. He first conducted the Philharmonic in 2000, during the Concerts in the Parks. After completing his studies, he was invited by Riccardo Muti to spend a year as an apprentice at The Philadelphia Orchestra. As a Fulbright Scholar, he has led many performances in Eastern Europe. Mr. Gier has served as visiting professor at the Yale School of Music, the College-Conservatory of Music in Cincinnati, San Francisco Conservatory, and SUNY-Story Brook.

Spencer Aste

Spencer Aste last played Scapin in a new translation of Moliere's Scapin. His Off-Broadway credits with The Acting Company include the title role in Richard III, Edgar Allen Poe in Murder by Poe, and Iago in Othello. Other Off Broadway credits are the New York Theatre Workshop, the Century Center for the Performing Arts, and La Mama, among others. Some of Spencer's film work includes Ted (principal) in 200 American, and the voice of Scratch in Toy Story. He's been honored to have worked with writers such as Adam Rapp, Mark Schultz, Kirk Wood Bromley, and Marc Palmieri. Currently he is developing new projects with James Stovall. Spencer received his MFA from the National Theatre Conservatory in Denver, Colorado.

Steven Eng

Steven Eng is thrilled to be a part of this exciting project. As an actor, highlights include King John, Richard II, As You Like It, The Cardinal, Porcelain, Pacific Overtures (IRNE-nom Best Actor) and Miss Saigon. He has performed in London's West End, Paper Mill Playhouse, Cincinnati Playhouse, Dallas Theater Center, North Shore Music Theatre and with the Alliance Theatre Company, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Pan Asian Rep, Barrington Stage Company, and Shakespeare NYC, Shakespeare Festival of Dallas, and Seattle Children's Theatre. Steven has worked as a directing assistant on Broadway, Off-Broadway, and for the New York City Opera and national tours. He is a proud graduate of the Academy for Classical Acting, and received his MFA from George Washington University. Love and thanks to NAS.

Keira Keeley

Keira Keeley's credits include New York City theater credits include: Adam Bock's Obie Award-winning The Thugs and Kristen Palmer’s Local Story and Departures; New York City readings: New York Stage and Film’s The Alarm by Frank Pugliese, New York Theater Workshop, Signature Theatre, New Dramatists, Naked Angels, Phoenix Theatre Ensemble, Intar Theatre, Queens Theatre in the Park and Clubbed Thumb; regional: Humana's Three Guys and a Brenda by Adam Bock, Neon Mirage (Wanda the Goth) by Julie Jensen, the Actors Theatre of Louisville’s The Crucible, The Madwoman of Chaillot, and training with Neo-Futurists and SITI Company, Rollins College: Proof, The Shape of Things, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, Waiting for Godot, and The Blue Room. New York City film credit: A Night Out by Matthew Kargas.

The Young People’s Concerts’ and Kidzone Live! are made possible with generous support from the Rose M. Badgley Residuary Charitable Trust, and The Theodore H. Barth Foundation. Tune Up! is made possible by an endowment in the name of Lillian Butler Davey.

MetLife Foundation is the Lead Corporate Underwriter for the New York Philharmonic’s Education Programs.