

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM NOTES FOR FESTIVAL CONCERTS

JULY 2 • ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

WHO IS PERFORMING TODAY?

Aspen Festival Orchestra
Robert Spano *conductor*
Garrick Ohlsson *piano*

WHAT IS BEING PLAYED TODAY?

MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 9 in E-flat major, K.271, "Jeunehomme"
MAHLER: Symphony No. 1 in D major

LEARN ABOUT THE MUSIC!

MOZART: Piano Concerto No. 9 in E-flat major, K.271, "Jeunehomme"

This piano concerto was written by Austrian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and is considered a masterpiece. Famous pianist Alfred Brendel called it "one of the greatest wonders of the world."

This concerto, which is a piece written for a soloist playing with an orchestra, is often referred to by its nickname, "Jeunehomme," which means "young man" in French. There is still a bit of mystery around the nickname and where it came from. Some people believe it was named after a young pianist passing through town while others believe it refers to the daughter of a family friend. Wherever it came from, the nickname has stuck with the piece.

There are many musical surprises in this piece that were uncommon for the time that it was written. For example, there are the unexpected interruptions that the piano makes when the orchestra is playing. This creates a kind of personality for the piano and keeps the audience from knowing who is going to play next.

- Do you hear the piano and orchestra replying to each other, as if they were talking? Do you hear when they interrupt each other? What do you think of when you hear it?
- Do you have a nickname? Who calls you by your nickname? Do you know where the name came from?
- What works of art would you consider to be the "greatest wonders of the world?"

MAHLER: Symphony No. 1 in D major

Gustav Mahler's First Symphony was not popular at its first few performances. Audience members were confused and offended by the different emotions the Austrian composer's symphony caused, particularly the odd combination of funny and sad sounds in the four movements. By the end of the piece, listeners were not sure if they should laugh or cry!

Do you hear a familiar tune in the third movement? The famous French lullaby "Frère Jacques" is played by a solo double bass while the rest of the orchestra plays very quietly in the background.

- How do you feel when you hear this piece? Do you think it's happy or sad—or both?
- Do you hear "Frère Jacques?" Can you find the double bass in the orchestra? What does it look like?
- "Frère Jacques" is played with notes on a scale called a minor key. Does this make it sound happy or sad?
- Do you know the words to the song? Here are the words in original French:

"Frère Jacques, Frère Jacques / Dormez-vous? Dormez-vous? / Sonnez les matines, sonnez les matines / ding ding dong, ding ding dong."

In English, this translates to, "Are you sleeping, are you sleeping? / Brother John, Brother John? / Morning bells are ringing, morning bells are ringing / ding ding dong, ding ding dong."

music is what feelings sound like