

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM NOTES FOR FESTIVAL CONCERTS

AUGUST 21 • ASPEN FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA

WHO IS PERFORMING TODAY?

Aspen Festival Orchestra
Robert Spano *conductor*
Amanda Woodbury *soprano*
Matthew Plenk *tenor*
Noel Bouley *baritone*
Colorado Symphony Chorus
Duain Wolfe *chorus director*
Colorado Children's Chorale
Deborah DeSantis *artistic director*

WHAT IS BEING PLAYED TODAY?

BERLIOZ: Selections from *Roméo et Juliette*
ORFF: *Carmina burana*

LEARN ABOUT THE MUSIC!

BERLIOZ: Selections from *Roméo et Juliette*

French composer Hector Berlioz wrote this "choral symphony," a piece of music intended for orchestra and choir, after seeing Shakespeare's play *Romeo and Juliet* for the first time. He was so moved by the play that he had to use the story to compose this work. Berlioz loved Shakespeare and even fell madly in love with an actress after seeing her in *Hamlet*. The love scene from Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette* was his favorite composition. You won't hear the whole piece today, but selections will be performed.

Roméo et Juliette was almost universally loved as soon as it premiered in 1839. This piece fits in with the Aspen Music Festival and School's season celebration of Shakespeare in Music, corresponding with the 400-year anniversary of the playwright's death.

- Do you know the story of Romeo and Juliet? What do you know about it?
- Romeo and Juliet is a story of two young lovers and their family conflicts. How does this music express the love and the conflict of the story?

ORFF: *Carmina burana*

Carmina burana is a cantata, or a piece of music written for singers with music, by German composer Carl Orff. Written in 1935 and 1936, *Carmina burana* is based on a collection of poems by the same name from the Middle Ages (approximately the 1200s). Orff's masterpiece deals with some of the same themes as these poems, including the happiness of springtime and the basic pleasures of life. Beyond all the storytelling, though, *Carmina burana* is just great music. The sound is huge with a full orchestra and multiple choirs, and it's one of the most dramatic works the Aspen Music Festival and School programmed this summer – a perfect way to close out the season!

- Do you like hearing a choir sing along with an orchestra? Why or why not?
- Listen carefully to the rhythms in this piece. They are easy to hear because there are so many drummers in this orchestra! Do some of the rhythms seem irregular and hard to dance to?
- Do you like really loud, big music?

music is what feelings sound like