Vermont Symphony Orchestra: “Carnival of the Animals”
2011-12
Study Guide
Flynn Student Matinees
Welcome to the 2011-12 Flynn Student Matinee season!

Today’s scholars and researchers say creativity is the top skill our kids will need when they enter the work force of the future. We at the Flynn couldn’t agree more, and we salute YOU for valuing the educational and inspirational power of live performance. By using this study guide and the On Your Feet! Matinee Activities you are taking an even greater step toward implementing the arts as a vital and inspiring educational tool.

[Please note that in an effort to make this guide even more user-friendly all of the internet links provided are live and you may now click to any section of the guide from the table of contents (at right).]

We hope you find this guide useful and we hope you will take a moment with your class after the performance to fill out the response forms at the back of the guide. Your feedback is a necessary part of keeping the student matinee series fresh and relevant.

Enjoy the show!

Education Staff

VT Standards:

Seeing any Student Matinee at the Flynn and reflecting upon the experience afterward addresses the following standards:

- Critique (1.14)
- Aesthetic Judgment (5.4)
- Point of View (5.5)
- Audience Response (5.7)

Seeing this particular performance and doing any of the activities in this study guide or having a companion workshop also addresses:

- Teamwork (3.10) Students perform effectively on teams that set and achieve goals, conduct investigations, solve problems, and create solutions (e.g., by using consensus-building and cooperation to work toward group decisions).
- Times and Cultures (5.2) Students demonstrate how literature, philosophy, and works in the arts influence and reflect their time and their local and regional culture.

Thank you!

The Flynn Center gratefully acknowledges the support of the Forest and Frances Lattner Foundation, Bari and Peter Dreissigacker and the Vermont Community Foundation, the Lintilhac Foundation, the Golub Foundation, the Walter Cerf Community Fund through the Vermont Community Foundation, Comcast, and an incredibly generous anonymous donor.

Special thanks to the sponsors of this show: Bruce and Ruth Ann Beers, Burlington City Arts, Peoples United Bank, the Turrell Fund, and the Vermont Community Foundation’s Concert Fund.
It takes all sorts of animals to make the world colorful, amazing, and amusing.

Camille Saint-Saëns

“The Carnival of the Animals” is a series of short musical satires, written by French composer Camille Saint-Saëns while he was on vacation in 1886. The piece was originally written for two pianos but Saint-Saëns later re-orchestrated it for an instrumental ensemble of strings, flute, clarinet, xylophone, bells, and two pianos. The musical suite was performed only once during Saint-Saëns’ lifetime, at his home, with Saint-Saëns playing one of the piano parts. After that premiere, Saint-Saëns locked the score away, as he was afraid the “Grande Fantasie Zoologique,” as it is subtitled, would harm his reputation as a serious composer.

Saint-Saëns wrote The Carnival of the Animals for a group of his musician friends including cellist, Charles Lebouc. The cello solo, “The Swan,” is the climax of the set of movements, and has become one of the most beloved short pieces in the concert and ballet repertoire. Carnival had its first public performance in 1922, shortly after Saint-Saëns’ death, and it is now perhaps his most recognizable composition.

Further Exploration...

ACTIVITY: Comprehension and Expression

Camille Saint-Saëns’ music conjures visions of animals swimming, leaping, running, and flying through our imaginations. He uses different sounds, rhythms, patterns, and tempos to create these images. The following two books build upon the music by adding poetry and visual art to each of the musical movements. Read and explore one or both of these books with your class. Discuss the different ways that animals are pictured, discussed, and imagined in the music, artwork, and poetry. Then give your students a chance to listen to the music and write their own short poems about one of the animals/movements OR draw pictures of what the music makes them see in their minds’ eye.


An illustrated collection of animal poems, written to accompany composer Camille Saint-Saëns’ “The Carnival of the Animals.” Includes an audio CD of author Jack Prelutsky reading the poems with the musical accompaniment.


A collection of fourteen poems inspired by Saint-Saëns’ “Zoological Fantasy,” accompanied by a fifty-five-minute CD featuring a reading of the poems and music performed by the Apollo Chamber Players.

http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Camille_Saint-Sa%C3%ABns

This online encyclopedia entry about the composer is a good place to start for more in depth biographical information and for a bibliography of other works about the composer’s life.
The Vermont Symphony Orchestra

The VSO is one of the oldest orchestras in the country; in fact, it is the oldest state-supported orchestra. It was founded in 1934, at which time the musicians in the northern part of the state and those in the southern part used to rehearse separately and then join forces for concerts! The VSO is now a fully professional, although part-time, ensemble, with musicians drawn mainly from the New England area. Although based in Burlington, the VSO plays all over the state.

Educational concerts are an important part of the Vermont Symphony Orchestra’s mission. Last year the VSO gave a total of 248 youth presentations for over 30,000 schoolchildren and VSO programs served 199 schools in 168 different communities! Check out the VSO’s website to learn more: http://www.vso.org/

The Conductor: Anthony Princiotti

Because our music director, Jaime Laredo, is often traveling, the VSO also has a Principal Guest Conductor. Anthony (“Tony”) Princiotti was born in Connecticut, where his dad was a music teacher. He began playing the violin when he was four, and studied at the famous Juilliard School in New York City and at Yale University. He knew by the 10th grade that he wanted to be a conductor. In 1987 he received a conducting fellowship to study at Tanglewood with Leonard Bernstein.

Tony has been the music director and conductor of the Dartmouth Symphony Orchestra for nine years, and is also music director of the New Hampshire Philharmonic. As a violinist, he was for years a member of the renowned Apple Hill Chamber Players.

His favorite composers are Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, and Mahler. (“Too hard to choose just one!”) In his spare time, he runs (45-50 miles a week), plays basketball, and does Tai Chi. He is a huge Patriots and Red Sox fan. In the summer, it’s not unusual to see Tony come riding up to a concert on his motorcycle! His pet peeve is people that are self-centered.

Tony enjoys lots of different kinds of music besides classical: swing, rock and roll, soul, some folk music, and some old-time country music. He lives in Walpole, NH.

Further Exploration...

What does a Conductor Do?

Playing and/or singing large works of music is a complicated business and involves many different parts working together. The conductor’s job is to keep all of those parts moving and working as a team. The conductor leads an orchestra, band, music ensemble, or chorus and makes sure that everyone in the group is playing or singing at the appropriate time, at the same tempo, and with the same kind of musical expression.

Discussion: Have students observe Anthony Princiotti as he conducts the VSO. Ask students to think about how he helps the musicians to know when and how to play their music. What might happen to the music if there was no conductor in front of the orchestra?


When an orchestra conductor misplaces his baton and feels he can not work without it, he learns that it is his own talents, not a little stick, that make him famous.


The musical prodigy Farkle McBride tries a number of instruments before discovering that conducting the orchestra makes him happy.

http://www.classicsforkids.com/teachers/lessonplans/

Check this website for lesson plan ideas to help students explore classical music in the classroom.
The VSO’s Presentation of *Carnival of the Animals*

“Carnival” is sometimes performed with a narration consisting of verses by Ogden Nash but because some of this poetry feels dated and/or geared more to an adult audience, this production does not use the Nash verses in its performance. Instead, the VSO has created narration which is geared towards a younger audience—introducing the instruments and talking about things to listen for in the different sections of the piece. The VSO narration also encourages audience participation in some parts, soliciting answers or feedback from the audience. In this way, *Carnival of the Animals* becomes an introduction into a well-known and beloved piece of orchestral music as well as an introduction to the instruments that make up an orchestra and what types of sounds and tones each one can create.

The VSO production also includes a number of excerpts from other orchestral works:

- “Entrance of the Queen of Sheba” (introductory piece) - George Frideric Handel
- “Intermezzo” from the *Carmen Suite* (flute demo) - Georges Bizet
- Clarinet Concerto (3rd movement) (clarinet demo) - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
- “Mother Goose Suite” (xylophone demo) - Maurice Ravel
- “Sorcerer’s Apprentice” (glockenspiel demo) - Paul Dukas
- “Playful Pizzicato” from *Simple Symphony* (pizzicato demo) - Benjamin Britten
- Piano Concerto No. 12 (3rd movement) - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Further Exploration...

[http://www.dsokids.com/listen](http://www.dsokids.com/listen)

Students can use this link to browse a list of composers by era and find quick summaries about the life and work of each.

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**The Narrator: Janet Polk**

Janet Polk earned her Bachelor’s degree in music education at the University of Massachusetts and her Master’s in music history at the University of New Hampshire. She taught K-6 classroom music in the Montague, Massachusetts, public schools for five years. Currently, Janet is the principal bassoonist of the Portland (Maine) Symphony and Vermont Symphony Orchestras. As a member of The Block Ensemble, she was a prize-winner in the 1988 International Concert Artists Guild Competition. In addition to her performing career, Janet teaches bassoon at the University of New Hampshire and Dartmouth College and is a guest artist on an instructional video for beginning bassoonists through Warner Brothers Publications. She lives in Nottingham, NH, with her husband Keith, a French horn player. Janet enjoys gardening, bird-watching (they live on a lake with swans!), and mystery novels.

**The Youth Soloist: Charles Wu**

Charles Wu, a junior at Essex High School, began playing the piano in the third grade, and has studied with Barbara Williams and Elaine Greenfield. In addition to piano, Charles also plays the alto saxophone, which he picked up in the sixth grade. In his freshman year, he was a member of the District III Wind Ensemble. In sophomore year, he was the principal saxophonist in the District III Wind Ensemble, as well as a member of All State band and a recipient of an Honorable Mention in the piano category of the All State Scholarship Competition. In junior year, he was the principal saxophonist in both the District III Wind Ensemble and the All State Band, a recipient of scholarships in both the woodwinds and piano categories of the All State Scholarship Competition, and the second chair saxophonist in the All New England’s Band. He has many interests outside of music, including playing tennis, reading, eating, hanging out with friends, and academically challenging himself.
**The Art Form: Orchestral Music**

Simply put, orchestral music is music played by an orchestra. But what does that mean? An orchestra is an ensemble of instruments including the wind, brass, string, and percussion instruments. Sometimes an orchestral piece also includes music for a choir so voice is then added to the list of instruments. Why would someone write music for an orchestra as opposed to just a few instruments (like a chamber ensemble) or a chorus? The answer is simple, really: versatility. With an orchestra the composer has the ability to choose from a variety of sounds from the watery tones of a flute to the regal and bright tones of a trumpet or the lyrical, sing-song of the strings and the impressive power of the bass drum. Put all of these sounds together and you end up with the ability to express many different feelings and ideas through the music—plus there is a wide range to play with. The orchestra may take on a gentle and small sound or it may create an enormous wall of sound. This flexibility added to the sheer number of musicians in a full orchestra allows for pieces of music to be longer and to have more variety in the themes and emotions expressed in one piece of music.

**An Introduction to the Instruments You Will See**

**Strings:** The string instruments are played by drawing a horsehair bow across the metal or nylon strings of the instrument. The strings of the instrument can also be plucked by the musician’s fingers—this produces a very different type of sound. Have students listen for moments when the strings are played with a bow versus the times when they are plucked in the concert. The string instruments you will see on December 1st are: violins, violas, cellos, and basses. Violins make the highest-pitched sounds in this family and the basses make the lowest. (The bigger the instrument, the lower the sound!)

**Woodwinds:** As the name suggests, this family of instruments makes sound through the use of wood and wind. Originally all of these instruments were made of wood but some are now made of metal or other materials. The wind is actually the breath of the musician blowing into the mouthpiece of the instrument. As the player sends breath or wind through the instrument, a sound is produced (sort of the way you can make a sound by blowing across the mouth of a bottle) and the sound and pitch can be changed by pressing or covering the various holes along the length of the instrument’s body. The woodwind instruments used in this concert are flute and clarinet.

**Percussion:** Percussion instruments are a huge family with lots of members. There’s a lot of diversity among this family as well—some percussion instruments are quite small like a triangle, others are very large like timpani. Some percussion instruments are tuned and can play different pitches like the xylophone and others do not have a pitch like the snare drum. Percussion instruments make sounds by a player striking or beating the instrument either with a hand, mallet, stick, or some other part of the instrument. The percussion instruments serve several important purposes including keeping the tempo, creating texture, and making special sounds. Have students listen for the different kinds of percussion used in this concert. They will see: Timpani, Xylophone, Glockenspiel, and two grand pianos (Yes, the piano is generally classified as a percussion instrument!)

**Note:** There are no brass instruments on this list! Saint-Saëns wrote *The Carnival of the Animals* for a chamber orchestra which is a smaller ensemble than a full orchestra and does not include the brass instruments.

**Further Exploration...**


This interactive site is a great place for students to learn more about the different families of instruments and the individual members of each family—students can even click to hear samples of how each instrument sounds!
Bonus Activity: Orchestral Music True or False

Test your students’ knowledge with this fun true/false quiz—find out what they already know and what surprises them!

- Famous music cannot be written by children.  
  **False**
- Orchestral instruments can produce special effects.  
  **True**
- A choreographer writes music.  
  **False**
- A section of a piece of music is called a movement.  
  **True**
- Italian words are often used in music.  
  **True**
- Snakes live in an aviary.  
  **False**
- Melody is another word for tune.  
  **True**
- A mallet is a kind of duck.  
  **False**
- Classical music can come in a lot of different styles.  
  **True**
- A duet is a piece for two instruments or voices.  
  **True**
- A concerto is a showpiece for orchestra and (usually) one “star” or solo instrument.  
  **True**
- The xylophone is a woodwind instrument.  
  **False**
- Talking at a concert is okay as long as you whisper.  
  **False**

Vocabulary for Orchestral Performances

Aviary – a space where birds are kept and cared for
Concertmaster – the leader of the string section in the orchestra; the principal first violinist. He/she sits closest to the conductor, and signals the musicians to tune
Concerto – a composition normally for one solo instrument accompanied by orchestra.
Duet – a composition for two instruments or voices.
Glissando – sliding swiftly up or down, playing all the tones. (On the piano keyboard, this is done by playing all the white keys, using the fingernail or the first finger or thumb.)
Glockenspiel – a pitched keyboard percussion instrument with metal bars; informally called “bells.”
Grand piano – Distinct from an upright or a spinet, the grand piano is horizontally oriented (table style). A baby grand has a shorter case; the largest “grand” is 9 feet long.
Harmonic – overtones in the harmonic series. Playing harmonics on stringed instruments refers to the manner of playing in which a string is touched lightly so that only a portion of it is set vibrating rather than the whole length, resulting in a thin, silvery tone.
Mallet – a special stick with a cloth or yarn-covered head designed for striking percussion instruments
Melody – a succession of pitches arranged to create a tune or theme. Leonard Bernstein once described melody as the singing side of music just as rhythm is the dancing side.
Movement – a portion of a larger composition; like a chapter in a book.
Orchestration – the art of combining instruments of the orchestra in order to communicate the composer’s ideas.
Pizzicato – “pinched:” refers to a method of plucking stringed instruments rather than using the bow.
Solo – by oneself, to play alone; a piece written for one featured instrument.
Sustain pedal – the pedal on the piano which allows the vibrations to keep sounding without being dampened.
Symphonic – pertaining to “symphony,” which in Greek means “sounding together.” A symphony is a large work for orchestra, usually in four movements.
Tremolo – “trembling:” the quick repetition of the same tone or tones.
Vibration – the oscillation of an air column creates a sound wave that is perceived as pitch or tone.
Xylophone – a pitched keyboard percussion instrument with wooden bars, usually equipped with metal tubes acting as resonators. The early form of the xylophone, which originated in Africa and Asia, consisted of wooden blocks resting on hollow gourds for resonators.
Note: These tips may be old hat for regular music teachers, but perhaps homeschool parents or classroom teachers will find them of value. We hope you have all been able to obtain a recording of “Carnival of the Animals” to share with your students. (Just remember that the accompanying verses, if any, will not be heard at the VSO concert.)

Prior to presenting the music to your students, become familiar with the recording you are going to play. Develop a “working acquaintance” with the music: its tempos, dynamics, moods, rhythms, melodies, etc. Listen to the music several times and note what in the music is particularly interesting to teach. Following this preparation, introduce the music to the children as quickly as possible. Remember, enthusiasm is contagious! Follow a cyclical sequence that challenges the students to move from the obvious and known to the subtle and unknown. In general, the sequence for a music listening lesson should be:

• Introduce the music, presenting some brief background material.

• Pose a question: Ask the children to listen for the overall musical effect (such as its mood, rhythmic flow, impact on the listener), and to discover the more obvious musical elements within the work. Some suggestions might be: How does the music make you feel? What do you hear in the music? What is the composer trying to describe in the music? These open-ended questions allow the children to think about and create their own answers. No answer will be better or worse than another.

• Play the music, or an excerpt if the selection is too long.

• Discuss the responses to the questions asked above.

• Reset the stage for further listening and discovery by asking the children to listen for more specific things in the music and/or respond through movement. You might encourage students to see if they can listen to the music and tap its beat on their knees, or see if they can think about why the music sounds so joyous and happy. Encourage students to listen for different instruments and raise their hands when they hear those instruments come in. You might also replay the music and have students move their hands with the beat as if conducting an invisible orchestra.

• Replay the music, with the children listening, observing, and responding through movement; discuss, set the stage for further discovery, and replay. Each time have the children develop increasingly broader understanding about the music.

Through this cyclical approach you encourage discovery and active response through the mind and the body. You help the children to direct their attention to the music. And you guide them to learn that there is much to listen for. Replay the music often in the lesson and throughout the month, since this will increase the children’s familiarity with the music and heighten their aesthetic/musical response to the experience.

Guidelines for Teaching Music Appreciation

Honing in on Listening Skills

Because our environment is so cluttered with sounds, we learn at a very early age to block out many of the sounds around us. The following activities can help students focus on sounds and strengthen their listening skills.

Start by having the class sit very quietly in their seats. Ask them to listen to the following sounds (allow about 20 seconds for each area):

• sounds outside the building
• sounds inside the room
• sounds inside their bodies

Make a list of the sounds heard and discuss:

• what was the loudest sound in each area?
• what was the funniest sound?
• what sounds are regular sounds?
• what sounds are unusual?

Making Sound Maps

Composers use symbols to visually represent sounds. The musical score or sound map that they create shows which instruments can play at what time and what kinds of sounds they produce. By following these instructions you and your students can make a sound map of your classroom:

On a blank sheet of paper, have your students draw boxes in the following places: teacher’s desk, their own desk, door, windows, blackboard. You may want to draw the map on the blackboard as your students do it at their seats.

Listen very carefully for 20 seconds to the sounds inside the classroom. List them on the blackboard. (Sounds may include: clock ticking, radiators hissing, students coughing, etc.)

Give each sound on the list a symbol (^, *, ~, etc.) and have the students place those symbols on their maps in the appropriate places. Include a key.

Discuss:

• what is the noisiest area?
• which area has more than 5 sounds?
• which area has the oddest sounds?
• which area has the most pleasant sounds?
A few years ago, the VSO performed *Carnival* at a First Night celebration and used some poetry that is a combination of inspirations by Peter Schickele and VSO staff. Those verses are shown below. These verses are NOT a part of the matinee that you and your students will see on December 1; they are simply available for you and your students' enjoyment. Please note that some of them might be inappropriate for certain age levels, so use your judgment if you decide to share them with your class.

**The Lion**
The lion is the king of beasts
And husband of the lioness.
Gazelles and things on which he feast
Address him as "Your Hioness."

**Hens & Roosters**
Clucking, crowing, laying, pecking:
Hens and roosters, rubber-necking!

**Wild Donkeys**
The jackass named Jack in his prime
Every mountain and mesa could climb.
He climbed like a monkey
Though he was a donkey—
Same spelling, why don't they rhyme?

**Tortoises**
The beaver builds his house in days,
And where he builds it, there it stays.
The turtle however, likes to roam,
Which is why he lives in a mobile home.

**The Elephant**
Elephants are useful friends
Equipped with handles at both ends.
They have a wrinkled, mothproof hide;
Their teeth are upside down outside.

**Kangaroos**
When a check bounces, it's bad news.
The same is not true of kangaroos.
Their bounce, their pouch, their nickname "roo"
Are reasons to like them — and we do!

**Aquarium**
An aquarium is a fish zoo.
Now don't you sometimes wish you
Were a denizen of the ocean,
Where your world's in constant motion
And you float instead of walking
And you have no use for talking
And you don't keep track of hours
And you don't take baths or showers?
Don't you wish
You were a fish?

**Personnages with Long Ears**
Horses and donkeys, if not chaperoned,
Are apt to make mules, to whom they have loaned
Their composite strengths.
And yet mules are in peril—
Because they are sterile.

**The Cuckoo**
These animals live in mansions they don't build and no rent do they pay.
They work one minute, maybe two, out of every livelong day.
By now you've probably figured it out, these creatures live in clocks.
If cuckoo birds are crazy, man, they're crazy like a fox.

**Aviary**
Birds are the first to notice just where
We guys are beginning to lose our hair.
And notice they do — there's a good reason why:
A patch of bare skin makes a better bulls-eye.

**Pianists**
One rule our duo pianists must learn
A place in our carnival of animals to earn:
Practice makes perfect, so correct those mistakes,
Depend on your scales like armadillos and snakes.

**Fossils**
Dinosaurs were real unknowns
Until we ran across their bones.
A has-been in a pit of tar;
Diplodocus is now a star.
Most people think of death and blight
When skeletons are in their sight.
Composers, though, when they see bones,
Are apt to think of xylophones.

**The Swan**
Though swans can sing beautifully, it's rare that they choose
To crane a long neck to see the reviews.
Listen to the rhythms around you that are in your home, on the street and at school. Keep a Rhythm Journal by first naming the sound and giving it a description. Then make up your own words that sound like the rhythm.

Here are two examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sound</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Rhythm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>alarm clock</td>
<td>high-pitched beeping</td>
<td>beedabeedeeep beedabeedeeep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wind in trees</td>
<td>a whistling sound and rustling of leaves</td>
<td>shhhweeeoo shhhhweeeoo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can you imagine your rhythmic creations as a piece of music? Gather family members and your friends and see if they can guess what sounds you are performing. Invite them to make up their own rhythm pieces and see if you can guess their sounds!
Listening for Mood and Emotion

Play a piece of music from the list of pieces being excerpted in the VSO concert or play a movement from The Carnival of the Animals itself. Ask students to describe what they heard. Was the music fast, upbeat, slow, melodic, quirky? Have students share how the music made them feel. Listen to other selections and ask for ways the pieces were similar or different.

Explain that there are many instruments used in an orchestra, and each instrument has its own important role in communicating mood, lending to the tempo (beat), supplying melody, etc.

Ask students: What instruments did you hear? What role did certain instruments play in communicating mood in the piece(s) you heard?

Rhythm Circles

Ask students to form a standing circle and tell them that each is going to spontaneously contribute a rhythm to create an improvised piece. Encourage them to use their hands, their feet or their mouths. Ask for a volunteer to create a simple base beat to begin. Once students have heard the base beat, ask for another to make a rhythm to complement the base beat. Then ask for students to come in, one by one, to add to the rhythm, either by doing the same rhythm as another student or by creating a new one. When all students are making sounds, act as an orchestra leader signaling them to raise and lower the volume, stop for pauses and start up again, etc.

Ask students: What did the music make you think of? How did the rhythm you created contribute to or complement that idea? What did you learn about working together?

Music With Sound Effects

A musician can create musical instruments out of almost anything. Ask your students to look around your classroom to see what instruments they can create from the materials there. Consider the sound of a closing door, the rustling of a piece of notebook paper, the clicking of a pen, and the squeak of sneakers on a floor. Create a list of all the sounds that the students find.

Then ask students to carefully select a few of the sounds from the list that they think might sound good together. Then ask a student to make each of the sounds that were chosen and follow the process laid out in “Rhythm Circles” above to create an improvised piece of music, while others listen. When done, ask the players and the audience: What sounded good in your improvisation? What sounds work well together? Create a running order for a piece of music, list the different noises and the order in which they occur. Ask the students to perform the piece again and see if it has improved.

Then divide students into smaller groups and ask them to create their own compositions with classroom sounds of their choice. If possible, record the different musical improvisations to play back for the students.

After listening to them, ask the performers: What title would you give to your piece of music? Ask the students who listened to the piece: What words would you use to describe the sounds made?
On November 26, 1930, the Flynn Theatre opened its doors. People swarmed to see Vermont’s newest and biggest “entertainment palace.” The entrance had exciting, new art deco designs on the walls and the lighting fixtures, still visible today. Art deco took its inspiration from Aztec and Mayan ruins, recently discovered, from nature, and from electricity, newly arriving in Vermont. Encourage your students to look for designs that reflect these sources.

The new entertainment complex—built at a cost of $500,000—was the brainchild of entrepreneur (and theater namesake) John J. Flynn and his investors in Queen City Realty. The original plan was to create a stage for visiting vaudeville troupes—companies with a variety of acts by comedians, singers, and dancers.

But after building the largest proscenium in the state with a sophisticated “fly” system for set changes, John J. Flynn recognized the public’s growing interest in “talkies”—films where you could hear the voices—and therefore opened the Flynn as a movie theatre instead. Because the old silent films had live music, a Wurlitzer organ was installed and played by local musical legend Art Brown between the short films and feature films. Often the words of the songs appeared on the screen accompanied by a tiny bouncing ball, to encourage the audience to sing along. Though the organ is long gone, the organ grills are still there. Encourage your students to find them.

In 1981, the Flynn Theatre re-opened its doors as a performing arts center. By then movie theaters of the Flynn’s size were no longer financially viable. Instead, movies were being shown at “multiplex” cinemas with many screens.

The Flynn Theater would no doubt have been demolished like hundreds of others across the country if it did not have remnants of the stage and fly system from the vaudeville era. But when Lyric Theater Company, founded in 1974, performed a musical on the Flynn stage, people woke up to the potential of this important resource. Dedicated community activists (among them Andrea Rogers, the Flynn’s executive director since 1981), raised the money to purchase and restore the then-faded Flynn Theatre to its original luster. Upon re-opening, the Flynn began showcasing local groups as well as artists of national and international renown.

In 2000, we added two studios to provide theater, dance and music classes to children, teens and adults. Today, the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts not only houses its original Main Stage but also FlynnSpace, a black box theater below ground, and enjoys a national reputation for its innovative presentations in both venues. Our educational outreach extends beyond the Flynn with workshops in schools for teachers and students. Where would we be without this vital community resource?
Etiquette For Live Performance

Because of the vital importance the audience plays in live performances, we suggest that you discuss the guidelines below with your students before bringing them to see the show.

Unlike television or movies, live events depend very much upon the contribution of the audience. Some performers feel that the quality of the audience is 90% of what determines the quality of the show! The more the audience gives to the performer, the more the performer can give back to the audience. The performer hears the audience laughing, senses its sympathy, and delights in the enthusiasm of its applause. A good live performance is nothing less than an intense communication between audience and performer. Furthermore, each audience member affects those sitting near him or her, in addition to the performers onstage.

Give your energy and attention to the performers. Laugh when you think something the performer is doing is funny. Clap after a song or section you particularly enjoyed. Your response really matters to the performers. If you are bored, think to yourself about what would make the show more interesting for you and remain quiet, so as not to distract the performers or the people around you.

At the end of the show, clap to show respect for the performers' time and energy. If you were disappointed in the show, clap softly; loud expressions of disapproval are not appropriate. If you think the show was fabulous, give the performers a standing ovation!

Unlike in movie theaters, eating, drinking, and chewing gum are not okay. These activities create noises and smells that distract other audience members and soil the very elegant environments in which live performance occurs.

Talk only before and after the performance. By all means, talk to your friends while you are waiting for the show to begin. And talk after, compare your favorite parts. But when the lights go down in the house and up on the stage, it’s time to stop talking and start watching. Check out the lighting, props and costumes, watch for the choices that went into everything you see onstage. Talking during the show will cause you and the people sitting near you to miss these moments that you can’t witness again. There are no pause buttons, rewind options or volume controls in live performance. What you miss cannot be recaptured!

Enjoy the Show!
Teacher Response Form

Show: Carnival of the Animals: December 2011

School name: _____________________________
Grade(s) of student: ________________________

What made this a valuable experience for your students? (If it wasn’t, why not?)

How did this live performance add to your curriculum?

Did you use the study guide? (circle one)  Yes  No  I didn’t know about the guide..

If you used the guide...Did the study guide help you in preparing for and reflecting upon the performance with your students? Why or why not?  OR  If you knew about the guide but opted not to use it, tell us why you chose not to use it.

(We want to design the guides so that they are helpful tools for teachers—your feedback is key!)

Tell us about planning the trip:  How was the ordering process?  Were you able to make necessary changes?  How accessible was Flynn Staff when you had questions?

Tell us about the trip itself: How was the arrival and dismissal process?  Were all of your specified seating needs met?

What types of performances would you like to see in the future (topics/themes, genres, specific artists, etc.)?

A number of generous individuals and organizations make it possible for us to offer student matinees at extremely discounted rates. Is there anything you’d like them to know in terms of your matinee experience or its impact on your class?

Please sign below if the Flynn Center has your permission to use any of your comments in future promotions.
Show: Carnival of the Animals: December 2011

School name: ________________________________

Grade: ________________________________

What did you think of the show? (Circle One)

 Excellent!  Good  Boring  Other:

Tell us why you felt that way about the show:

Did this performance make you think about anything in your life, in another performance, or in the rest of the world?

Was there anything you really liked or really disliked about the show? What was it and why did it stand out for you?

Do you think other students your age would like this show? What would you tell them about the show?

Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Please sign and print your name below to give the Flynn Center permission to use any of your comments in future promotions.

Print your name here ________________________________

Sign your name here ________________________________
Dear Parents,
Today our class traveled to the Flynn Center for the Performing Arts to see a performance by the Vermont Symphony Orchestra entitled Carnival of the Animals. Use this worksheet to jump-start a conversation with your child about the performance – not only will you get to learn about what your child experienced at the Flynn, but it will also help him or her to process and reflect upon the onstage material.

If talking with your child gets you curious about the show and you’d like to find out more about it you can check out the Flynn’s Study Guide online at:
http://www.flynncenter.org/education/student-matinees/study-guides.html

What type of art form did you see onstage? (Theatre? Dance? Music? Puppetry? Was there more than one art form?)

What was the performance about? (Did you learn about any new instruments, composers, or styles of music?)

What did you learn from the performance? (Did it spark any new thoughts you hadn’t had before?)

Can you remember something about the set, lights, sound, or music, or movement that you particularly liked or disliked? If so, what was it and why did it stand out to you?

Did you have a favorite moment in the performance? Tell me about it.