

School Matinee Series Study Guide

2019/20



Imani Winds

**Hopkins Center
for the Arts**
at Dartmouth

About the Show

In *Rhythm and Melody: The Building Blocks of Music*, **quintet** Imani Winds seamlessly navigates between classical, jazz and world music **idioms**. This program explores musical concepts through musical styles from around the world, including African call and response, Afro-Cuban, Klezmer and contemporary classical styles.

The show's program includes pieces from several **composers**:

- "Asheo (*African Call and Response*)" – composed by Valerie Coleman
- "Kites Over Havana" – composed by Paquito D'Rivera
- "Bagatelles" – composed by Gyorgy Ligeti
- Selections from "Scheherazade" – composed by Simon Shaheen, **arranged** by Jeff Scott
- "Klezmer Dances" – composed by Gene Kavadlo

To get a snapshot of the Imani Winds *Rhythm and Melody* program, click on the following links to watch videos of the group's musical performance:

- *Klezmer Dances* by Gene Kavadlo
- *Kites Over Havana* by Paquito D'Rivera



Imani Winds ensemble members Toyin Spellman-Diaz (oboe), Jeff Scott (French horn), Brandon Patrick George (flute), Mark Dover (clarinet) and Monica Ellis (bassoon).

About the Company

“Imani” means “faith” in the African language Swahili. Over the course of their 20+ year career, Grammy-nominated quintet Imani Winds has discovered what audiences value most from their concerts: a sense of connection with the music, the performers, the composers, the artistry and beyond. The wide range of programs offered by Imani Winds demonstrates their mission to expand the wind quintet repertoire. From Igor Stravinsky and Astor Piazzolla to 21st-century greats like Frederic Rzewski and Simon Shaheen, Imani Winds actively seeks to engage new voices in modern classical music. Imani Winds first came to prominence at the 2001 Concert Artists Guild International Competition, where they were selected as the first-ever Educational Residency Ensemble in recognition of not only their musical abilities, but their connection with audiences of all ages. The group participates in residencies throughout the U.S., offering workshops and performances to thousands of students each year.

Imani Winds's Toyin Spellman-Diaz (oboe), Mark Dover (clarinet), Monica Ellis (bassoon), Jeff Scott (French horn) and Brandon Patrick George (flute).



Contextual Background: Musical Styles

African Call and Response

In Call and Response, a “phrase” of music serves as the “call” and is “answered” by a different phrase of music. These phrases can be either vocal, instrumental, or both. Call and Response originated in Sub-Saharan African cultures, which used the musical form to indicate democratic participation in public events such as religious rituals, civic gatherings, funerals and weddings.

African enslaved peoples brought this tradition to the Americas, with songs heard all over plantations in the Deep South. It had a huge impact on the development of African-American music, from soul, gospel, and blues all the way to rhythm and blues, funk, and more contemporary styles like hip hop. Edwin Hawkins Singers’s gospel standard “Oh, Happy Day” (1968) is a great example of call-and-response being used to reach the listeners directly and lift their spirits.

Portion of Edwin Hawkins Singers’
“Oh, Happy Day” (1968).

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OH HAPPY DAY

Words and Music by
EDWIN R. HAWKINS

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Afro-Cuban musician Daymé Arocena.

Afro-Cuban Music

The Spanish brought African enslaved peoples to Cuba until the 1880s; by the 1840s, enslaved people made up half of Cuba's population. Therefore, Cuban music has deep roots in both African and Spanish ritual and rhythm. The term Afro-Cuban refers to the culture and history of Cubans from Sub Saharan African ancestry and the combining of African and other cultural elements found in Cuban society. Afro-Cuban music involves two main categories of music: sacred and secular. Religious music includes the chants, rhythms and instruments used in religious rituals, while profane music focuses largely on rumba, guaguancó and comparsa (carnival music).



Klezmer Music

Klezmer is a musical tradition of the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe and is easily identifiable by its characteristic expressive melodies, which are reminiscent of the human voice. The genre originally consisted largely of dance tunes and instrumental display pieces for weddings and other celebrations, and klezmer musicians were typically men. By the 1930s and '40s, klezmer music moved beyond specifically Jewish work to join mainstream dance bands. However, the Holocaust caused a decline in the practicing and sharing of klezmer. When American musicians rediscovered its roots in the mid-1970s, the music spread across North America, Europe and the Middle East. This new wave also prompted more female klezmer musicians.

Klezmer band The Klezmatics with members Matt Darriau, Frank London, Paul Morrisett, Lorin Sklamberg, Lisa Gutki and Richie Barshay.

Contemporary Classical Music

This style describes music composed in the classical tradition by composers of the second half of the 20th century and current times. After World War II, composers searched outside of the Western canon of music for inspiration and experimented with new musical structures and notation systems. Contemporary classical music incorporates modern technological developments such as recording and electronic instruments while maintaining a composition style rooted in notation.

Contemporary classical composer Philip Glass.



About the Instruments



Flute (soprano range)

- Originally made of wood, the flute is now often made from silver, nickel or gold and is about two feet in length.
- To produce a sound, the player blows air across the small hole in the mouthpiece of the flute to increase the air's vibration.
- Covering and uncovering **tone** holes controls the **pitch**.
- Tone quality and octave placement is controlled by the player's lips and the direction of the air.



Oboe (second soprano range)

- The English word oboe comes from the French word hautbois, (pronounced "oat-bwah") which literally means "high" or "loud" wood.
- A double **reed** instrument.
- Has metal keys that can produce many notes rapidly.
- Does not have a mouthpiece.
- Originally from India and dates back thousands of years.



Clarinet (alto range)

- Most modern clarinet bodies are made of plastic or African blackwood called grenadilla.
- A single reed instrument.
- By pressing metal keys with the fingers of both hands, the player has the ability to play many different notes very quickly.
- Clarinets come in a range of sizes with different pitch ranges.
- An instrument similar to the clarinet—a cylindrical cane tube played with a cane reed—was used in Egypt as early as 3000 B.C.E.



French Horn (tenor range)

- Consists of about 12 feet of narrow tubing wound into a circle.
- A brass instrument, not a woodwind instrument.
- Brass family instruments produce their unique sound by the player pursing their lips while blowing air through a cup or funnel-shaped mouthpiece.
- To produce higher or lower pitches, players adjust the opening between their lips.



Bassoon (bass range)

- A large double reed instrument with a lower sound than the other woodwind instruments.
- Its double reed is attached to a small curved tube called a bocal which fits into the bassoon.
- When the player blows air between the reeds, the vibrating column of air inside the instrument travels over nine feet to the bottom of the instrument then up to the top where the sound comes out.
- The instrument is known for its distinctive warm tone, color, wide range and variety of character.

Pre-performance Discussion Questions

Music:

- What kind of music do you like and why?
- What influences can you find in the music you like to listen to?

Social Studies:

- What do different musical traditions tell us about the cultures they come from?
- Consider important periods of history, such as the Civil Rights Movement. What kinds of songs arose from that movement and why?

English Language Arts:

- Think about a song that is meaningful to you. What **imagery** does that song bring up for you?
- How does music tell a story?

Post-performance Discussion Questions

Music:

- What different styles of music did you hear from Imani Winds?
- How would you compare and contrast these styles, considering elements such as **tempo**, tone and **dynamics**?

Social Studies:

- Imani Winds explored several different cultural traditions with their music. What did you learn about some of these cultural traditions?
- Imani Winds played songs from various time periods. What historical factors or events may have influenced how and why the songs were written?

English Language Arts:

- What descriptive adjectives would you use to describe the songs they played?
- Remind students that music is like a story; it includes a **rising action, climax** and a resolution. Play the song “[Kites Over Havana](#)” by Paquito D’Rivera once, asking students just to listen. Play the song a second time; this time, ask students to identify which parts of the song they think represent the rising action, climax and resolution. You may want to project the clip as it plays so that students can identify the sections of the song (e.g. 0:25-1:05). Afterwards, ask students what they came up with and discuss why they arrived at those conclusions. There isn’t one right answer; this is about students listening deeply and justifying their answers based on their knowledge of a dramatic arc’s elements.

Learning Activities

A Truth About Me (grades 2–5)

This activity asks students to compare and contrast different musical instruments and can be used to assess students' prior knowledge before a unit or assess what students have learned after a unit.

Ask students to stand in a circle with you, the teacher standing in the middle. Give each student a small piece of colorful tape or a post-it to place at their feet to mark their spot. Then, hand each student a card with a picture of a wind instrument on the front and facts about it on the back. Some students may have the same instrument as each other.

Explain that in this activity, folks will be moving around and that the objective of every person is to have a spot in the circle. However, because there is one fewer spot than total participants, one person will always end up in the middle. The person in the middle begins by telling the group what instrument they are and a fact about it. For instance, if they have a flute card, they could say "I am a flute and a truth about me is that I am made of silver, nickel or gold." If that statement is true about anyone else's instrument, those students must move and find a different open spot in the circle.

Begin by stating the kind of instrument you are and a truth about it and try to find a new open spot in the circle. The student that cannot find a spot ends up in the middle and states a new truth about their instrument. The activity continues this way for as many rounds as you'd like.

Fun addition: Ask students to move across the circle as if they are playing their instrument. Encourage them to mime holding the instrument correctly or even sing a tune in the pitch of the instrument, such as bass or soprano.

Afterwards, ask students the following reflection questions:

- What was it like to participate in this activity?
- When did a lot of people move across the circle? When did fewer people move?
- What were some similarities between instruments? What were some differences?

To watch a video of this strategy in action, visit dbp.theatredance.utexas.edu/content/truth-about-me

Note: If you have never done this activity before, it can be helpful to model a simpler version first without any cards. The same structure applies, except the person in the middle says their name and something that is true about them. This is a great way for students to learn new facts about each other and build classroom community!

Call and Response Musical Poetry (grades 4–6)

This activity encourages students to use a framework inspired by call and response to generate poetry. This activity might extend into several lessons or a full unit.

Use [this link](#) to listen to "Klezmer Dances" by Gene Kavadlo, performed by Imani Winds. Play 15-30 seconds or several measures of the song and then pause the audio. This is the "call." Ask students to write down a couple of words and phrases that the section of the song makes them think of. This is the "response." For instance, if they're drawn to its pitches, they might write "high" or "deep." The section of music might also remind them of particular places or images; they might write "a fluttering songbird" or "a thunderous sky." Encourage them to go with their first impulse—no wrong answers! After giving students a moment to write down their words and phrases, play the next section of music. Pause again and give them time to write. Repeat this process several more times or until the end of the song.

Ask students to review the list of words and phrases they generated. Then, ask them to use the corresponding list of words to write a poem (appropriate to grade and experience). Encourage them to use as many of the words as possible,

Call and Response *continued*

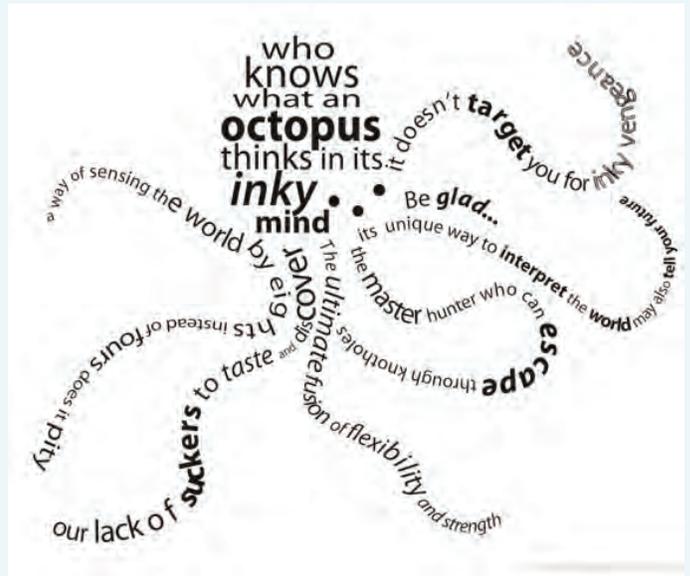
but it's okay if they don't use them all. The words serve as inspiration for their poem's topic and to get them thinking of strong, descriptive language.

Have students share their poems in small groups. After each student finishes reading, ask their group members the following reflection questions:

- What did you notice about this author's poem?
- What literary devices did the author use?
- What might be the message or meaning of this poem?

Optional extension: Invite students to turn their poems into concrete poems, which are written in the shape of the poem's subject.

Visit [Power Poetry](#) for tips on how to craft a concrete poem.



“The Concrete Octopus Mind” by Lori Ono.

Song Study (Grades 4–6)

This activity asks students to do a deep dive into a song written by a composer from the Imani Winds program to learn more about the historical context of the song, its composer and the style of music. This project could extend multiple days into a unit.

Assign students a song written by composers featured in the Imani Winds program. You might have students work individually or in small groups. Use the embedded links to find audio clips of each song:

- “[Bagatelles](#)” – composed by Gyorgy Ligeti
- “[Blue Flame](#)” – composed by Simon Shaheen
- “[Kites Over Havana](#)” – composed by Paquito D’Rivera
- “[Klezmer Dances](#)” – composed by Gene Kavadlo
- “[Red Clay and Mississippi Delta](#)” – composed by Valerie Coleman

Ask students to research the following information and cite their sources:

- When the song was written.
- Important historical events that occurred during that time period.
- Biographical information about the composer.
- The composer’s reasons and inspiration for writing the song. For instance, the composer may have written the song in honor of a particular person or in response to an historical event.
- The style of music in which the song is written and historical influences of that style.

After their research is complete, ask students to report their findings in a creative presentation, which might include performing a recreation or reimagining of the song, doing the presentation in role as the composer they studied or creating a digital presentation.

Vocabulary

Study Guide Vocabulary:

Arranger: A person who adapts or reinterprets a previously written piece of music.

Climax: The point in a story at which the tension or conflict reaches its peak.

Composer: A person who writes music.

Idiom: A style or form of artistic expression that is characteristic of an individual, a period or movement, or a medium or instrument.

Quintet: A group of five musicians who perform a composition written for five parts.

Reed: The piece of cane in wind instruments, which the players blow across to cause vibrations and produce sound.

Resolution: The point of a story in which the conflict or problem is solved; typically at the end of the story.

Rising Action: Events that build suspense and tension in a story.

Imagery: A literary device that draws on the five senses and uses descriptive language to allow the reader to better imagine the world of the piece.

Tempo: The speed of a musical piece.

Tone: The quality or character of the music, including its meaning, feeling, or attitude.

Additional Musical Concepts:

Beat: A unit of musical rhythm.

Chord: Three or four notes played simultaneously in harmony.

Dynamics: The loudness or softness of a musical composition.

Forte: A musical dynamic that indicates musicians should play loudly.

Measure: Sections of music where beats are divided up into two, three, four beats to a section.

Piano (musical dynamic): A musical dynamic that indicates musicians should play softly.

Pitch: The frequency of a note which determines how high or low it sounds.

Reprise: To repeat a previously played section of a composition.

Time Signature: A numeric symbol in sheet music which determines the number of beats to a measure.

Unison: Two or more voices or instruments playing the same note simultaneously.

Resources

Imani Winds Website: www.imaniwinds.com

Music Vision resources for music teachers: www.teachervision.com/subjects/art-music-drama/music

“Social Studies and World History through Music and Dance” resources by PBS Learning Media:
vermont.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/social-studies-and-world-history-through-music-and-dance

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