



# **"TRIUMPHAL MARCH"**

*(from Aida)*

**Giuseppe Verdi (1871)**



## TRIUMPHAL MARCH

from *Aida*

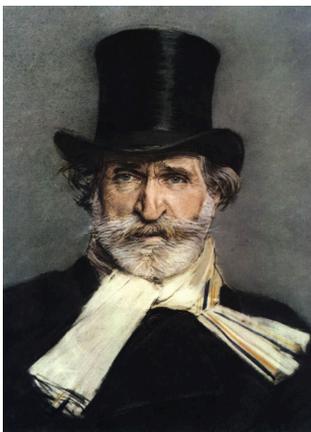
By Giuseppe Verdi (Italy)  
Romantic (1871)

### LESSON INTRODUCTION

#### Important Terms and Concepts

- **Fanfare:** a musical work, or section of a musical work, that signals an “announcement” and is often played by brass instruments or solo trumpet
- **Opera:** a play that uses music and singing instead of speaking

### BEHIND THE MUSIC



Giuseppe Verdi (1813 – 1901) showed interest in music at an early age and although his father was a poor grocer, he made sure that his son received music lessons. Verdi grew to be one of the world’s greatest opera composers, and his works are known for their dramatic power. Verdi lived in Italy during the rise of Italian Nationalism, and sometimes wove politics and desires for independence into his works. Unlike many composers, Verdi was an old man when he died at 87, and was rich and famous during his lifetime. He wrote a total of 28 operas and *Aida* was one of his last, premiering in 1871.

The Discovery concerts on January 26 - 27, 2017, will feature the Triumphal March!  
[Register your class for this free concert today!!](#)

*Aida* was an opera created in order to celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal and the Cairo Grand Opera House. In the Second Act of the opera, Egypt’s victory is celebrated by a grand parade in which the “Triumphal

March" is performed. Recent archaeology had uncovered simple, valveless horns, which prompted Verdi to create special trumpets in an attempt to recreate what ancient Egyptians might have heard when celebrating a victory. The march opens with a trumpet fanfare, which leads into a hymn of praise and then the main theme of the march, played by a small chorus of trumpets.

## ACTIVE LISTENING

1. Play the Youtube recording for students  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DY3YANFxpOM> (The video's total time is 10:35, but if time is an issue, watch from 0:52 – 6:00).

2. Ask students:

1. **What did you notice about this music?**
2. **What did you HEAR? What did you SEE?**

**"This song is called "Triumphal March," and it is part of a larger work of music called *Aida*, by the composer Giuseppe Verdi, which is an opera. An opera is a play that uses music and singing instead of talking."**

**"Based on what you HEARD and SAW, what might you guess about the opera *Aida*?"**

*You may want to prompt them to guess the setting of the opera (Egypt), or the language that performers were singing (Italian).*

3. Ask:

1. **How would you describe the mood of this piece?**
2. **Why do you think this song was composed? What do you think might have been happening in the story when this song occurs?**

4. Explain, **"This piece is called the 'Triumphal March,' and it celebrates the military victory of the Egyptian troops after a battle against the Egyptians. The troops are parading into town while people dance, play music, and sing a hymn of praise to their gods.**

5. **"Let's listen again and see if we can figure out how Giuseppe Verdi created such a joyous, triumphant mood in this song."**

6. Listen again from 0:54 – 2:00. Ask students to identify the elements of music that contribute to the mood, including dynamics, tempo, and instrumentation.

7. "The Triumphal March opens with a **fanfare**, a section of music that signals an announcement and is played by a trumpet. In this piece, the fanfare is played on only ONE pitch, but is interrupted by the rest of the orchestra periodically."
8. Lead students in clapping the rhythm of the opening fanfare (or if possible, performing the rhythm on whatever instruments are available), first alone, and then along with the recording.
9. Close by listening to the main theme of the March (4:25 – 6:00). If you wish, have students march around the classroom to the beat as they listen to this melody. As a typical march, the theme is written in 4/4 meter. Note that the theme continues the triumphal mood, with the brass leading the melody.

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## GO DEEPER

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### OPTION 1. READER'S THEATRE: AIDA

*During this activity, students will act out the story of Aida in order to better understand how the Triumphal March fits into the rest of the opera. Use the script on pages 33-38 of the "Play Me a Story" Teacher Guide:*

<http://www.dsokids.com/media/10709/2006-Play-Me-a-Story-Teacher-Guide.pdf>.

### OPTION 2. COMPOSE A FANFARE

*First, have students listen to other musical examples that contain fanfares. Some possibilities include:*

1. Fanfare for the Common Man, by Aaron Copland:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLMVB0B1\\_Ts](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLMVB0B1_Ts)
2. La Peri by Dukas: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vmh3A7ohFnc>
3. 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox Theme:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7GE\\_HMZxa0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S7GE_HMZxa0)

*Ask students to notice what similarities and differences they notice among the various fanfares. What instruments are used? How would they describe the rhythms used? The melodies? The mood?*

*Divide students up into groups. Invite them to compose their own fanfare, using just one pitch, as with the opening of the Triumphal March.*

### OPTION 3. PERFORM

*Using recorders, violins, or other instruments, have students learn the melody of the main theme of the Triumphal March (see resources, page 5).*

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## RESOURCES

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### YOUTUBE RECORDING:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DY3YANFxpOM>

**SHEET MUSIC:** [http://hz.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/3/3d/IMSLP42194-PMLP17351-Verdi - Aida - Act II\\_full\\_score\\_.pdf](http://hz.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/3/3d/IMSLP42194-PMLP17351-Verdi_-_Aida_-_Act_II_full_score_.pdf)

(The "Triumphal March" begins on page 48 of the file, or 144 of the score)

### "TRIUMPHAL MARCH" SHEET MUSIC:

Please note that this melody is notated in C, but is played in Ab and B in the actual score. You may also want to look up free sheet music resources online (e.g.

[http://makingmusicfun.net/htm/f\\_printit\\_free\\_printable\\_sheet\\_music/triumphal-march-trumpet-solo.htm](http://makingmusicfun.net/htm/f_printit_free_printable_sheet_music/triumphal-march-trumpet-solo.htm)):

### FOR ADDITIONAL IDEAS:

"Aida Guide" from the Metropolitan Opera:

<https://www.metopera.org/metoperafiles/education/Educator%20Guides/Ed%20Guide%20pdfs/Aida.12-13.guide.pdf>

### LESSON ACTIVITIES WERE ADAPTED FROM:

"Make Your Own Fanfare:" <https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/tudor-fanfare-music-lesson>