

# DISCOVERY CONCERTS

## *Reach for the Stars: Courage Through Music*

January 31 and February 1, 2019  
First Baptist Church Sanctuary  
Shreveport, Louisiana



MICHAEL BUTTERMAN, MUSIC DIRECTOR

Dear Teachers:

This packet contains lesson plans with composer biographies and piece descriptions that are designed to help you prepare your students for the Shreveport Symphony Discovery Concert. Included are lessons and activities for your students. Every effort has been made to ensure that these listings are accurate and appropriate for children. We hope that these materials will be useful to both music and classroom teachers alike. Feel free to adapt or change the activities to suit the needs and abilities of your students!

Please review the concert etiquette on page 7. This will help your students enjoy the concert more on their special day.

The musicians of the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra are looking forward to playing for you and your students. They know this can be a life changing experience!



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# Meet Michael Buttermann

Michael Buttermann is making his mark as a model for today's conductors and is recognized for his commitment to creative artistry, innovative programming, and to audience and community engagement. He is in his tenth season as music director for both the Shreveport Symphony Orchestra and the Boulder Philharmonic Orchestra, and is the new music director of the Pennsylvania

Philharmonic, which celebrated its inaugural season in

2014-2015. He is also the resident conductor of the Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra, and is in his 16th season as Principal Conductor for Education and Community Engagement for the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, the first position of its kind in the U.S. Mr. Buttermann began studying music at the age of seven. He enjoyed music so much that he became a violinist in the Northern Virginia Youth Symphony. He eventually entered and won several piano competitions when he was in high school. Although he loved music, he decided to concentrate on studies in chemistry when he was in college. He remained involved in music by playing piano for his school's choruses. One year, he was asked to conduct the choruses, and discovered how much he enjoyed working with other musicians to prepare concert programs. Mr. Buttermann then decided to get some specialized training in conducting, and enrolled at Indiana University. The rest, as they say, is history!

## Famous Conductors:

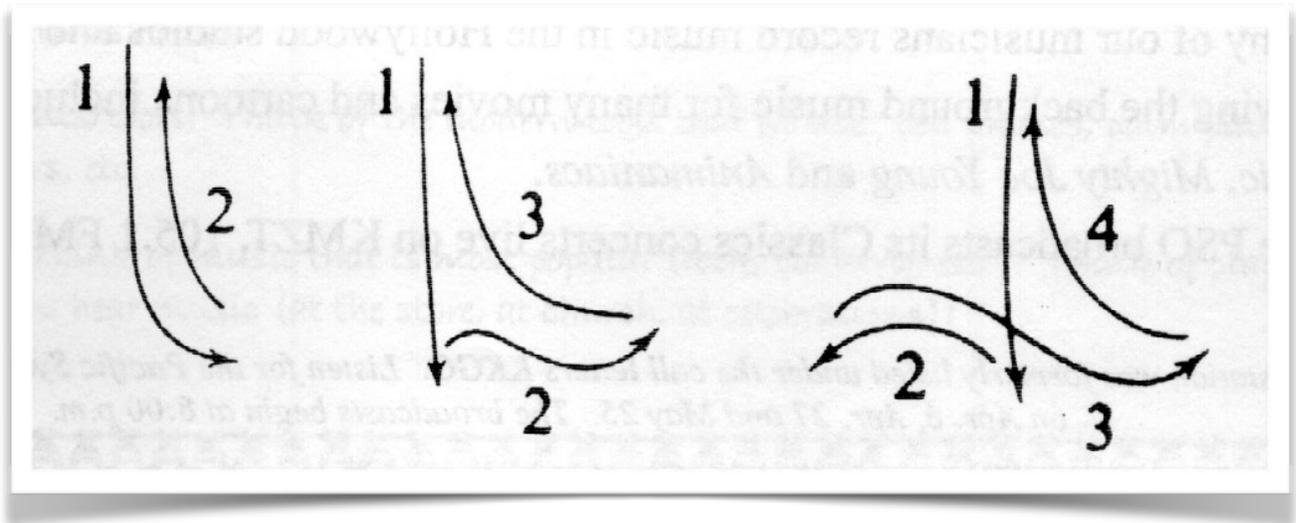
Leonard Bernstein - Wilhelm Furtwängler - Nikolaus Harnoncourt - Herbert von Karajan - Otto Klemperer - Seiji Ozawa - Simon Rattle - Georg Solti - Arturo Toscanini

## Learn to conduct!

A conductor has many different responsibilities. The conductor plans the music that the audience will hear, learns the different parts that each musician plays and decides how to interpret what the composer has written. The conductor uses each of their hands differently. With the right hand the conductor keeps the beat with a specific pattern (see page 5), with the left hand, communicates the expressive qualities of the music.

# Try this!

Practice these conducting patterns with music:



## What is an orchestra?

“Orchestral music is one of the glories of the world.”

—Georg Solti (1912-1997)

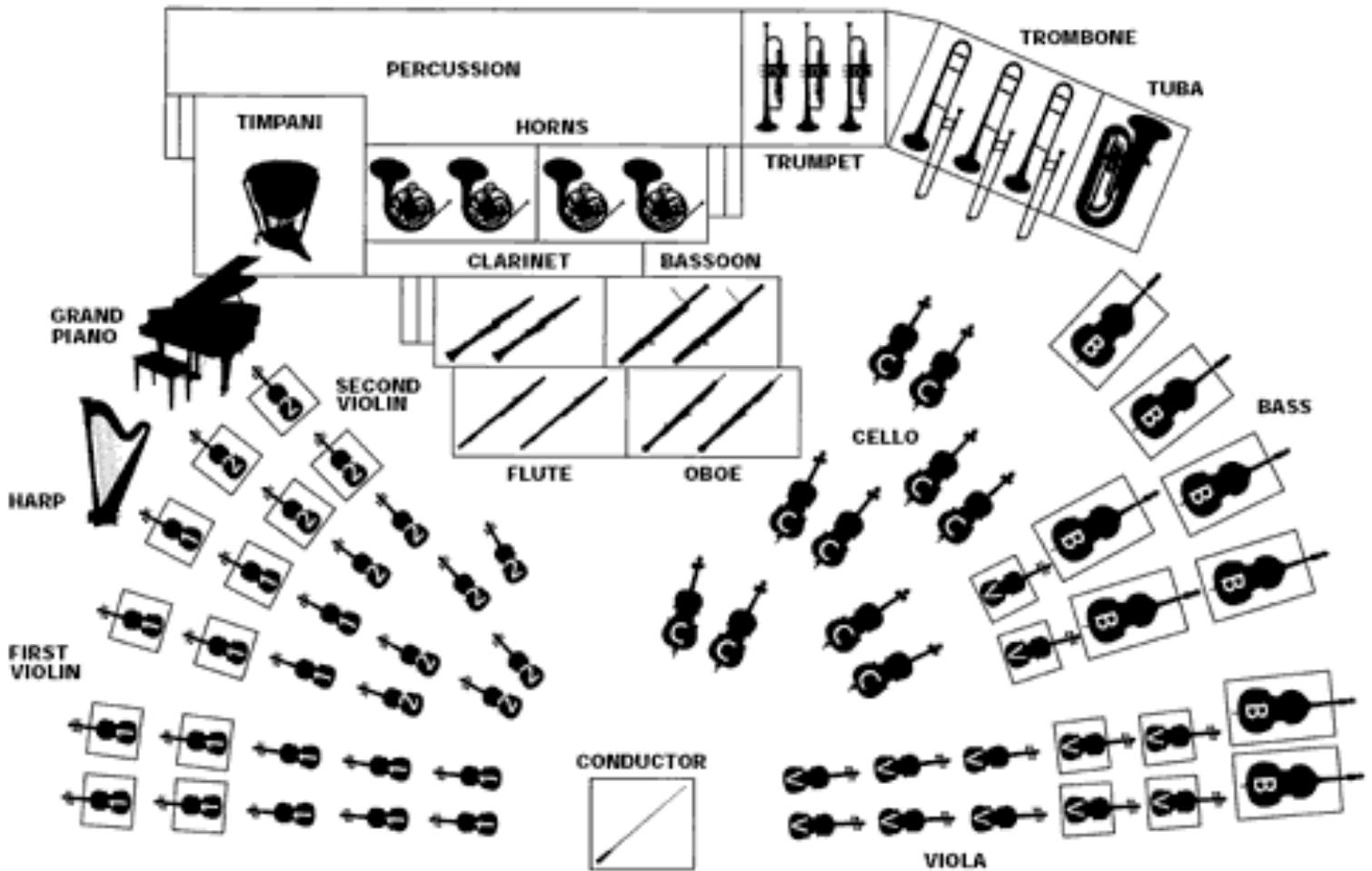
In ancient Greece the **orchestra** was the space between the auditorium and the proscenium (or stage), in which the chorus and the instrumentalists were seated. This is how the modern orchestra got its name.

In some theaters, like RiverView Theater, the **orchestra** is the area of seats directly in front of the stage (called "primaflila" or "platea"); the term more properly applies to the place in a theatre, or concert hall set apart for the musicians.

The modern symphony orchestra consists of around 20 different musical instruments. There are four main groups: **Strings** (violin, viola, cello, bass, and harp), **Woodwinds** (flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon) **Brass** (trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba), and **Percussion** (including the piano). Can you find all of them at the theater?

# Meet the orchestra!

A “symphony” is a type of musical composition. Your orchestra is called the **Shreveport Symphony Orchestra** because it is located in the city of Shreveport, Louisiana and the people who started it in 1948 loved music and recognized the value of having an orchestra in the community.





# Concert Preparation and Etiquette:

## Before you depart:

- Remind students that no eating or drinking is permitted in the Concert Hall.
- Suggest students bring a light sweater or jacket in case the hall is cold.

## When students arrive:

- Encourage students to visit the restrooms in the lobby before the concert begins.
- Remind students to sit still in their seats and not to reach between rows, kick the seat in front of them, or otherwise distract from anyone else's concert experience.
- The Concert Hall acoustics provide an opportunity to remind students to remain quiet during the performance and to demonstrate how extreme sounds travel from musicians to audience.

## During the performance:

- Students will know to applaud the musicians when the conductor lowers his arms at the end of the piece and turns to acknowledge the audience.



# Gustav Theodore Holst

1874 – 1934

English  
Post Romantic

**“Music, being identical with heaven, isn't a thing of momentary thrills, or even hourly ones. It's a condition of eternity.”**

## —Gustav Holst

**Life and Works:** Gustav Theodore Holst (born Gustavus Theodor von Holst, 21 September 1874 – 25 May 1934) was an English composer. He is most famous for his orchestral suite “The Planets.”

Having studied at the Royal College of Music in London, his early work was influenced by Edvard Grieg, Richard Wagner, Richard Strauss and fellow music student Ralph Vaughan Williams. Later, through Vaughan Williams, Holst became highly influenced by the music of French composer Maurice Ravel. Holst was also influenced by Hindi writings and English folk music. The combined influence of Ravel, Hindu spiritualism and English folk tunes enabled Holst to free himself of the conventions of Wagner and Strauss and to forge his own style. Holst's music is well known for unconventional use of time signatures and haunting melodies.

Holst composed almost 200 works, including operas, ballets, choral hymns and songs.

**“The Planets”:** Holst wrote his most famous work, “The Planets” during a period of great self-discovery. In 1913, after the poor reception of his piece “The Cloud Messenger,” Holst felt creatively lost. Soon after he traveled to Spain with brothers Clifford and Arnold Bax, close friends of Holst and frequent musical collaborators. In Spain, Holst developed a passion for astrology. Astrology is the study of planets to divine information about human emotions and lives. You have probably seen the work of astrologers in the “horoscopes” section of newspapers and magazines. Holst composed “The Planets” based on his experiences with astrology; each movement is meant to evoke the qualities of different astrological signs.



# Class Listening Discussion: Holst

1. Gustav Holst purposely wrote “The Planets: Mars” in an unusual rhythmic meter, containing five beats per measure. Commonly, music will follow an even number of beats, making it easy to count. This unusual meter means that the piece can sound irregular or can be difficult to count. Did the piece seem irregular or unpredictable? Why do you think Holst decided to create this sound?
2. What aspects of the piece made it sound like a “Bringer of War”?
3. What emotions do you hear in the piece? How do you think Holst felt when he was composing the piece?
4. Throughout the piece, a repeated rhythm is heard in the timpani and pizzicato strings. This is called an *ostinato*, an Italian musical term referring to a continuously-repeated theme in a piece. In this case, the timpani and strings *ostinato* is one of the most recognizable elements of “The Planets.” Why do you think this *ostinato* is so instantly recognizable?



# Mason Bates

b. 23 January 1977  
American  
Contemporary

**“An orchestra is like the world’s  
greatest synthesizer.”  
—Mason Bates**

**Life and Works:** **Mason W. Bates** (born January 23, 1977) is a Grammy-nominated American composer of symphonic music and DJ of electronic dance music. Distinguished by his innovations in orchestration and large-scale form, Bates is best known for his expansion of the orchestra to include electronics. The second-most performed living composer in the United States, he has worked closely with the San Francisco Symphony, as well as the Chicago Symphony Orchestra where he worked as composer-in-residence. In 2015 he was named composer-in-residence of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts (their first ever composer-in-residence appointment), and recently had his contract renewed for another two years though 2019–20.

**“Gemini in the Solar Wind”:** Back in the 1960s, NASA created **Project Gemini** to train astronauts for space travel including how to work with equipment in zero-gravity and how to leave the spacecraft and float in space. In **“Gemini in the Solar Wind,”** Mason Bates uses samples of NASA recordings and re-imagines astronaut Ed White’s famous Gemini IV spacewalk in 1965. From the composer: “‘Gemini in the Solar Wind’ is a re-imagination of the first American spacewalk, using actual communication samples from the 1965 Gemini IV voyage provided by NASA. In this re-telling, clips of words, phrases, and static from the original are rearranged to show Ed White, fascinated by the vastness and mystery of space, leaving the spacecraft to drift away blissfully.”

**Mercury Soul:** Along with fellow musician and educator Benjamin Schwartz, Bates founded **Mercury Soul**, an ensemble and nonprofit dedicated to bridging the gap between classical and electronica music. As well as performing across the country, Mercury Soul runs education programs, putting on free electronic/classical music shows for high school students in San Francisco. Said Bates of his fusion of classical and electronica, **“I found that integrating the two in a substantive way has been a great way to expand the symphonic palette.”**



# Maurice Ravel

1875 – 1937

French  
Impressionist

Maurice Ravel originally wrote Mother Goose Suite as a piano duet for the Godebski children, Mimi and Jean (ages 6 & 7). A few years later he orchestrated the five-piece suite for full symphony.

During the concert, students will hear a performance of the 5th movement from Ravel's Mother Goose Suite. Projected above

the orchestra will be your students' own examples of courage (in response to the Bates and Ravel pieces)

## Classroom Discussion/Writing Activity

Read the story of Sleeping Beauty then play music from Mother Goose Suite. Were there any elements of courage in the music? Does this expand your idea of courage at all?

How would you write your profile in courage? Can you describe, in a few sentences, a time when you were brave? When you had the courage to stand up for something you believed in?

**Please send us your students' examples of courage. This might be in the form of a poem, haiku, or short prose. They may be projected above the orchestra during the concert.**

**Please send examples no later than January 14, 2019 to George Hancock:**

**Fax: 318-222-7490 or Email: [ghancock@shreveportsymphony.com](mailto:ghancock@shreveportsymphony.com)**



# Ludwig Van Beethoven

1770 – 1827  
German  
Classical

**“To play without passion is inexcusable.”  
—Ludwig van Beethoven**

**Overview:** Ludwig van Beethoven (baptized 17 December 1770 – 26 March 1827) was a German composer and pianist. A crucial figure in the transition between the Classical and Romantic eras in Western art music, he remains one of the most famous and influential of all composers. His best-known compositions include 9 symphonies, 5 piano concertos, 1 violin concerto, 32 piano sonatas, 16 string quartets, his great Mass the “Missa solemnis”, and one opera, “Fidelio.”

**Early Life:** Born in Bonn, then the capital of the Electorate of Cologne and part of the Holy Roman Empire, Beethoven displayed his musical talents at an early age and was taught by his father Johann van Beethoven and by composer and conductor Christian Gottlob Neefe. At the age of 21 he moved to Vienna, where he began studying composition with Joseph Haydn and gained a reputation as a virtuoso pianist. He lived in Vienna until his death. By his late 20s his hearing began to worsen, and by the last decade of his life he was almost completely deaf. In 1811 he gave up conducting and performing in public but continued to compose; many of his most admired works come from these last 15 years of his life.

**Symphony No. 5:** Beethoven composed his **Symphony No. 5 in C Minor** between 1804 and 1808. The piece is considered one of the most important pieces of Western art music ever made. The first movement is entitled “Allegro con brio”, which is an Italian expression meaning a fast-paced performance with drive and energy. This expression marking gave Symphony No. 5 a driven, determined sound. It made the piece extremely memorable,—especially its first few notes. These notes form the motive of Movement I. In music, when a small phrase forms the basis of future musical content, it is called a **motive**. Beethoven’s use here of a smaller chunk in a larger musical picture reflects his composition process. When writing Symphony No. 5, Beethoven was afflicted with hearing loss and wrote in small fragments, which he would throw out later out of frustration. These short passages translated well to motives.

# Classroom Activity: Beethoven

Play the opening of Symphony No. 5 for the students. Then, ask them to write on the board the answer to the following question:

**“If you were to hear this passage for the very first time, without any description of what you were about to hear, what would be your first reaction? If you heard it for the first time, what was your first reaction? Please answer with one word.”**

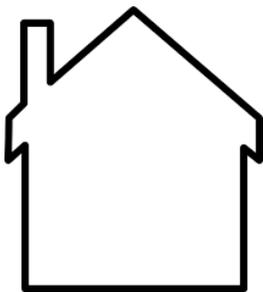
Then prompt the class to discuss the following question:

- 1. Do you think your reaction to the music was how Beethoven felt when he was writing the piece?**

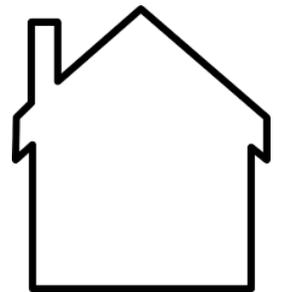
Finally, ask the students to complete the handout below after reading the script below:

“Earlier, you learned about motives, which can act like building blocks of musical composition. A famous motive occurs in Movement I of Beethoven’s famous Fifth Symphony. Now, imagine this Movement like a house. Like the piece, the house is built from the same material, but it changes in the way it is presented. Imagine as these changes as decoration. The use of different instruments, moods, and harmonies is like the use of paint, signs, and plants in decorating the outside of a home.”

At the end of the activity, once students have been given enough time to complete their drawings, ask students to share how they chose to decorate their houses, relating their decorations to what they heard in the piece. You may record these responses and share them at the concert. Another option is to draw two pictures of the same home on the board and use the students’ responses to recreate the homes on the board. The outlines of the homes are below.



**Beginning of Mvmt. I**



**End of Mvmt. I**



# John Ireland

1879 – 1962

English

20th Century

**Life and Work:** John Nicholson Ireland (13 August 1879 – 12 June 1962) was an English composer and teacher of music. Born in Bowdon, Cheshire, England, Ireland studied piano, organ, and composition at the Royal College of Music. Ireland, heavily influenced by Impressionist composers such as Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, preferred to work in smaller forms rather than large scale works. As such the majority of his output consists of piano miniatures and of shorter songs with piano. His best-known works include the short instrumental or orchestral

work "The Holy Boy", a setting of the poem "Sea Fever" by John Masefield, a formerly much-played Piano Concerto, the hymn tune Love Unknown and the choral motet "Greater Love Hath No Man". Ireland taught at the Royal College of Music for 1923 to 1939, advising such influential composers as Ernest John Moeran and Benjamin Britten.

**“Epic March:”** Ireland’s orchestral piece **“Epic March”** was commissioned by the British Broadcasting Corporation and was premiered in 1942. The BBC commission was part of a deliberate effort to encourage the composition of patriotic music in a time of political instability. Ireland’s piece heavily reflected the ideals of patriotism. Both Ireland and the BBC wanted to inspire courage and determination in the face of political unrest, and bridge the gap between the arts and a country’s values. One reviewer described the piece both as having “...orchestral colors laid on thick and heavy,” and becoming a “march pure and simple.” This combination of a rich orchestral sound and a traditional march defined the as having both musical and historical significance. Ireland aligned his artistry with the values of his country’s government, helping to create the political atmosphere that shaped history. His use of orchestral colors was of musical merit as well, evoking through musical color a sense of bravery and patriotism. Through “Epic March”, John Ireland proved to the world the ability of music to advocate courage and in turn influence historical attitudes of patriotism.



# John Williams

b. 1932  
American  
Contemporary



**“Writing a tune is like sculpting.”  
—John Williams**

cinematic history, including *Jaws*, the *Star Wars* series, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, *Superman: The Movie*, *E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial*, the *Indiana Jones* series, the first two *Home Alone* films, the first two *Jurassic Park* films, and the first three *Harry Potter* films. Williams has also composed many classical concertos and other works for orchestral ensembles and solo instruments. From 1980 to 1993, he served as the Boston Pops's principal conductor, and is currently the orchestra's laureate conductor. Williams has won 23 Grammy Awards, seven British Academy Film Awards, five Academy Awards, and four Golden Globe Awards. With 50 Academy Award nominations, Williams is the second most-nominated individual, after Walt Disney.

**Life and Work:** John Towner Williams (born February 8, 1932) is an American composer, conductor, and pianist. With a career spanning over six decades, he has composed some of the most popular and recognizable film scores in

**“Theme from ‘Star Wars’”:** The main theme from the *Star Wars* Suite is easily one of the most recognizable film compositions ever written. In 2005, the American Film Institute even selected Williams's *Star Wars* score greatest American film score of all time! It is adored by both fans and critics. Listen for the triumphant horns, the pulsating percussion, and the emphatic crash cymbal hits. Do they sound inspirational, courageous, or exciting? If so, you hear what fans of the *Star Wars* franchise have heard since the very first installment of the series. The popularity of *Star Wars* and its dazzling opening theme are no coincidence. As with many film scores, the music heard in the opening of the film sets a mood for its storyline and tone. In this piece illustrates the *Star Wars* series' themes of courage and bravery. In the films, the characters embark on a courageous mission to free the people of an oppressive empire. When any film composer is successful in writing a score, the music supports and reflects the plot, themes, and tone of the film. John Williams did so in his score to “*Star Wars*”, and it is clearly communicated from the first few notes of the music.



**John Williams accepting his 23rd Grammy at age 86 (Getty Images)**

# ***Art Activity: “Star Wars’ Theme”***

**Please review and read aloud the script below:**

“Please make a drawing relating to the piece you just heard, John Williams’ ‘Star Wars Main Theme’. When making your artwork, consider what the world might look like by the time you grow up. Just like ‘Star Wars’ envisioned a future society, imagine how the world might evolve and change over the next few decades. Here are some things to consider in your response:”

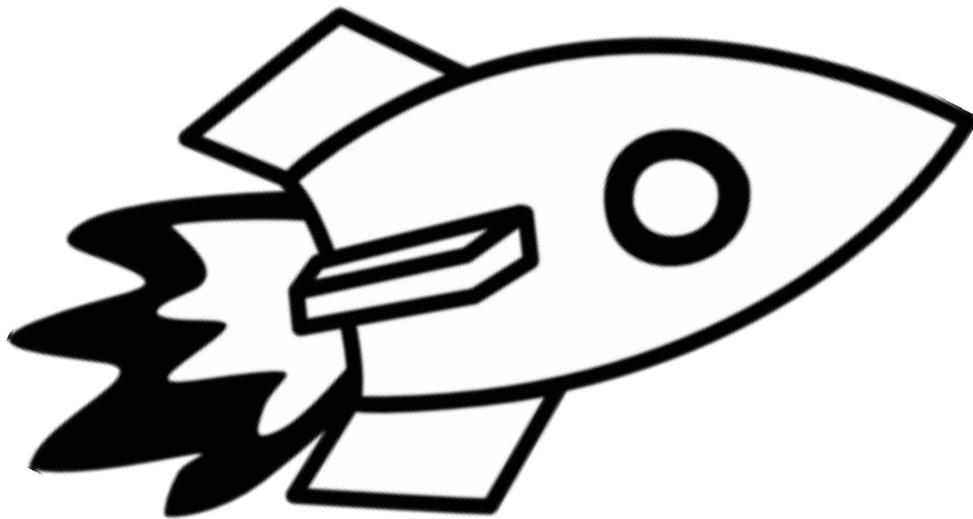
- \* Transportation & how we’ll get around
- \* Communication – between people and countries
- \* Buildings
- \* Play & hobbies as children and adults
- \* Sports – both how we play and view sports
- \* Entertainment
- \* Food/Farming – what we eat & how we get/prepare it & eat it
- \* Homes – heating, lighting, comfort, materials used
- \* Schools and learning – how? where? who? to what age?
- \* Peace between and among people/nations



**DEADLINE** – All scanned drawings must be emailed to [ghancock@shreveportsymphony.com](mailto:ghancock@shreveportsymphony.com) by January 14th

Thank you for your  
participation.

See you at the concert!



MICHAEL BUTTERMAN, MUSIC DIRECTOR