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Dear Teachers: We have created the following study guide to help make your students' experience with Madera Vox as meaningful as possible. For some, it will be their first time seeing an oboe or bassoon up close for the first time, or listening to how a composer creates new music. We have learned that when teachers discuss the program with their students before and after the performance, the experience is more significant and long-lasting. Our study guide provides pre- and post-performance discussion topics, as well as related activity sheets/ideas. These are just suggestions; please feel free to create your own activities and areas for discussion. We hope you and your class enjoy the performance!

IMAGINE IT! Program & Study Guide

Children's Songs: No. 6, No. 7 (1983)	Chick Corea (b. 1941) arr. by D. Gluck
"My Ship" (1940)	Kurt Weill (1900 – 1950) lyrics: Ira Gershwin arr. C. Carter
"A Mad Rush" from <i>The Penguins</i> - a suite for oboe and bassoon	Vernon Elliott (1912-1996)
Shark Attack	David Gluck (b. 1967)
Jeux d'eau (1901)	Maurice Ravel (1875 – 1937)
Lobster Telephone	David Gluck
"When I'm 10 Years Old"	Beatles/arr. D. Gluck; lyrics: K. Ellenwood
"Mellow Yellow Submarine"	Beatles/Donovan arr. D. Gluck

“My Ship:” Pre-Performance Discussion & Activity

Distribute and/or read the following lyrics to the class and discuss the imagery created by the poetry. Talk about how it makes them feel, what they see in their minds, and if they put the words in a song, what would it sound like.

Recommended Activity: Draw/paint a picture of the ship and the scene in the song, taking inspiration from the poetry of the song. We will look at the artwork created by the students after the song is performed. We will also be viewing other other images inspired by the music in the program; it would be really great to have a few images created by the students themselves that we can discuss during the concert.

MY SHIP

Words by Ira Gershwin
Music by Kurt Weill

*My ship has sails that are made of silk
The decks are trimmed with gold
And of jam and spice
There's a paradise in the hold*

*My ship's aglow with a million pearls
And rubies fill each bin
The sun sits high in a sapphire sky
When my ship comes in*

*I can wait the years till it appears
One fine day one spring
But the pearls and such
They don't mean much
If there's missing just one thing*

*I do not care if that day arrives
That dream need never be
If the ship I sing
Doesn't also bring
My own true love to me.*

Other suggested Pre and/or Post Performance Discussion & Activities:

- Listen to Children's Songs No. 6 & 7 on the demo cd included with the study guide. Compare the piano arrangement (original) versus the Madera Vox arrangement (oboe, bassoon, piano and percussion). This could also be done following the performance.
- Listen to the “Madera Vox Collage.” Discuss the word “collage” and how it relates to the music and how it relates to art. Discuss the name of the group, “Madera Vox” and translate it. Make an actual collage out of the word “madera” and “vox” figuratively and literally, or whatever the class collectively imagines through the music.
- Explore in more depth the double-reed family of instruments (*see enclosed educational sheets provided by Student Arts Information & Lessons, Virginia Arts Festival, 2006; used with permission*).

THE DOUBLE REEDS THE OBOE

Haunting hypnotic hautbois! Early baroque, French musicians Jean Hotteterre and Michel Danican Philidor modified and quieted the shawm into what they called hautbois, French for "high, or loud wood." We call it the oboe. Invented in the 17th century, the oboe is a double-reed wind instrument with a tri-sectioned hardwood body, narrow conical bore and moderate sized bell. The first oboes had seven finger holes and two keys. By the 1800's the instrument had fifteen keys and a twenty-note range. Contemporary oboes feature sixteen to twenty-two side holes that require manipulation of a complex key mechanism.

An oboe player – Toyin Spellman of Imani Winds, perhaps? – gently blows air into the instrument. The blades of the reed vibrate as the air enters the tube. Air escapes the tube through an open key, but continues through the tube when the key is depressed. Using the keys, notes are played by changing the length of the instrument's tube, producing the subtle but poignant music. Due to its stable, penetrating sound and location in the middle of the orchestra, it's the oboe that calls the orchestra to tune before the rehearsal or performance begins. Because of the tiny opening in the reed, the oboe can outblow (hold a note longer) than any other instrument in the orchestra. This is also because the oboe's pitch is less variable than other orchestral instruments.

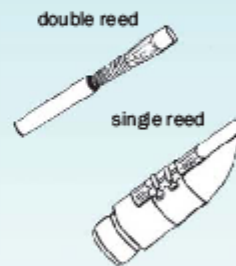
The oboe family includes: the *shinai* – the ancient oboe from the country of India, still played today; the *aulos* – an ancient Greek double reed instrument; the *tibiae* – an ancient Roman double reed instrument; the *oboe d'amour* – the alto oboe; *oboe de caccia* – the older, curved version of the English horn; English horn – the modern tenor oboe that derives from the oboe de caccia; the bass oboe – a rarely used modern instrument, and the most "duddy" sounding of all oboes. The bassoon, contra-bassoon and bagpipes are all double-reed cousins of the oboe. Speaking of the bassoon...



Double Reeds Illuminated

Tricky, tricky, tricky. A double reed is made up of two very thin reeds (or pieces of cane) that unite to form a tubular aperture at one end. Picture two pieces of cane tied onto the end of a small cork tube. The musician trims the reeds by scraping them with a sharp knife until they produce the sound she or he is searching for. This could take awhile, especially if the concert is in Norway, or Ecuador. Temperature and climate affect the reed's performance. Cold temperatures flatten out the pitch. Warm temperatures sharpen pitch.

Draw your lips between your teeth into your mouth. That's what an oboe player has to do to focus air through the reed at high pressure. The reeds vibrate against each other, setting in motion the air that's in the column. The sound travels through the reed to the cone-shaped body or bore of the instrument. The musician changes pitch by opening and closing the keys to allow air to escape.



BASSOON TRIVIA

There are 17 different fingerings for the high F sharp in the bassoon. And there are 11 keys the left thumb has to know how to work. What's more, once you're above middle C, the fingering follows no logical order. Does this have anything to do with its conical bore? The bassoon's range is about 3 ½ octaves (more than a flute, less than a clarinet). Why do you think folks refer to the bassoon as "the clown of the orchestra?"

CONICAL (as in cone shaped) refers to the shape of the bore of an instrument.

Woodwind and brass instruments are categorized as either conical or cylindrical. What's the difference and how does the shape of the bore influence an instrument's naturally-produced overtones, fingerings and timbre? Oh, and by the way, what is the bore of an instrument?

REED TRIVIA

More information that you might think is available about genus *Arundo*, the grass family of which cane is part. Find out what "riparius" means, and where *Arundo* is likely to be found. Which species of *Arundo*'s four is used for the oboe's reeds? (Note: reed cane is NOT of the *Bambusa* genus, as cane is sometimes called "bamboo" by mistake). Some pictures of reed cane growing wild: <http://www.nvcc.edu/home/nvfayx/cane/>

THE DOUBLE REEDS THE BASSOON



When do you think the bassoon was perfected: When it got to be about 8 feet long? When it became too heavy to lift? Surely considerations about the heft of it were disregarded in favor of perfecting the instrument's warm tone and magnificent range.

The basic stats on the bassoon are as follows: It's a wooden conical (see Further Sailing to the left) double reed instrument, which forms the tenor and bass to the woodwind section. It's found in two sizes: the bassoon and double bassoon (or contrabassoon), which sounds one octave lower - these are the lowest instruments of all woodwinds, and the only wind instruments to be considered to improve with age. The bassoon's substantial weight is supported by a neck strap or shoulder harness attached to a ring on the butt. The bassoonist - in the case of Imani Winds, that's Monica - holds it at a slant across her body. When playing the bassoon, hold your left hand uppermost, and your right hand below.

Music for the bassoon is primarily notated in the bass and tenor clefs, with rare forays into treble. Today's modern bassoon has 7 feet 4.5 inches of tubing (the bore doubles back on itself; that design is courtesy of Alfranio Canon of Ferrara, Italy) and is 4 feet 3.5 inches when all four joints are put together. The bassoon can be made of rosewood or ebony, but the most common material is maple, with some bassoons successfully crafted in plastics, notably polypropylene.



The most successful redesign was by Adam Heckel (c. 1820), widely regarded as the foremost maker of the modern bassoon. The German Heckel and the lighter French Buffet bassoons are played throughout the world.

Post-Performance Discussion & Activity

- Continue to discuss the imagery created by the music, and compare what their initial thoughts were and the images presented by group.
- Discuss the kinds of music the group played, and the program; was there a theme?
- Discuss the lyrics to “When I’m 10 Years Old.” What words would they write? What will life be like for them when they are 10 years old (or older)? What will be important?

Activity:

- Present the children with various images, and have them improvise a piece on their instruments (drums, piano, recorder, voice) based on the image.
- Write their own poem/lyric based on what they think life will be like when they are older.

WHEN I’M TEN YEARS OLD

Words by K. Ellenwood, inspired by
Lennon/McCartney, with a little help from
Rhiannon Parsaca

*When I get older, in the fifth grade
Many years from now
Will I still be adding numbers, like 9 and 1
Playing baseball, hit a homerun?
If I stay up till a quarter to 9
Do as I am told?
Will you still read to me, flush me and feed
me
When I’m 10 years old*

*From Junie B. to Harry P. and sometimes
even on TV
If I’ve been real good*

*Disney afternoons...
Plugged into my iPod
When I’m in the mood*

*When I get taller, in the fifth grade
Many years from now
I can reach the top shelf
Get the treats for myself
Go to dances, take the high dive
Maybe mom will let me sky-dive...
Probably not.*

*From Junie B. to Harry P. and sometimes
even on TV
If I’ve been real good*

*X-box, Wii and PS3 and sometimes even on
TV
If I’ve been real good*

*Runescape afternoons...
Plugged into my iPod
When I’m in the mood*

*When I get smarter, in the fifth grade
Many years from now
I will multiply, divide and all of that stuff
Play the oboe, that’s not so tough*

*Can I stay up till a quarter to 12
Do as I am told?*

*Will you still read to me, flush me and feed
me
Will you still love me, hug me and bug me,
Will you still drive me, help me, high-five
me,*

When I’m 10 years old