



**ERIE** *est. 1913*  
**PHILHARMONIC**

# **OUR AMAZING EARTH**

**Concept by Music Director Daniel Meyer**

**Curriculum Designed by Steven Weiser and the  
Erie Philharmonic Education Committee**





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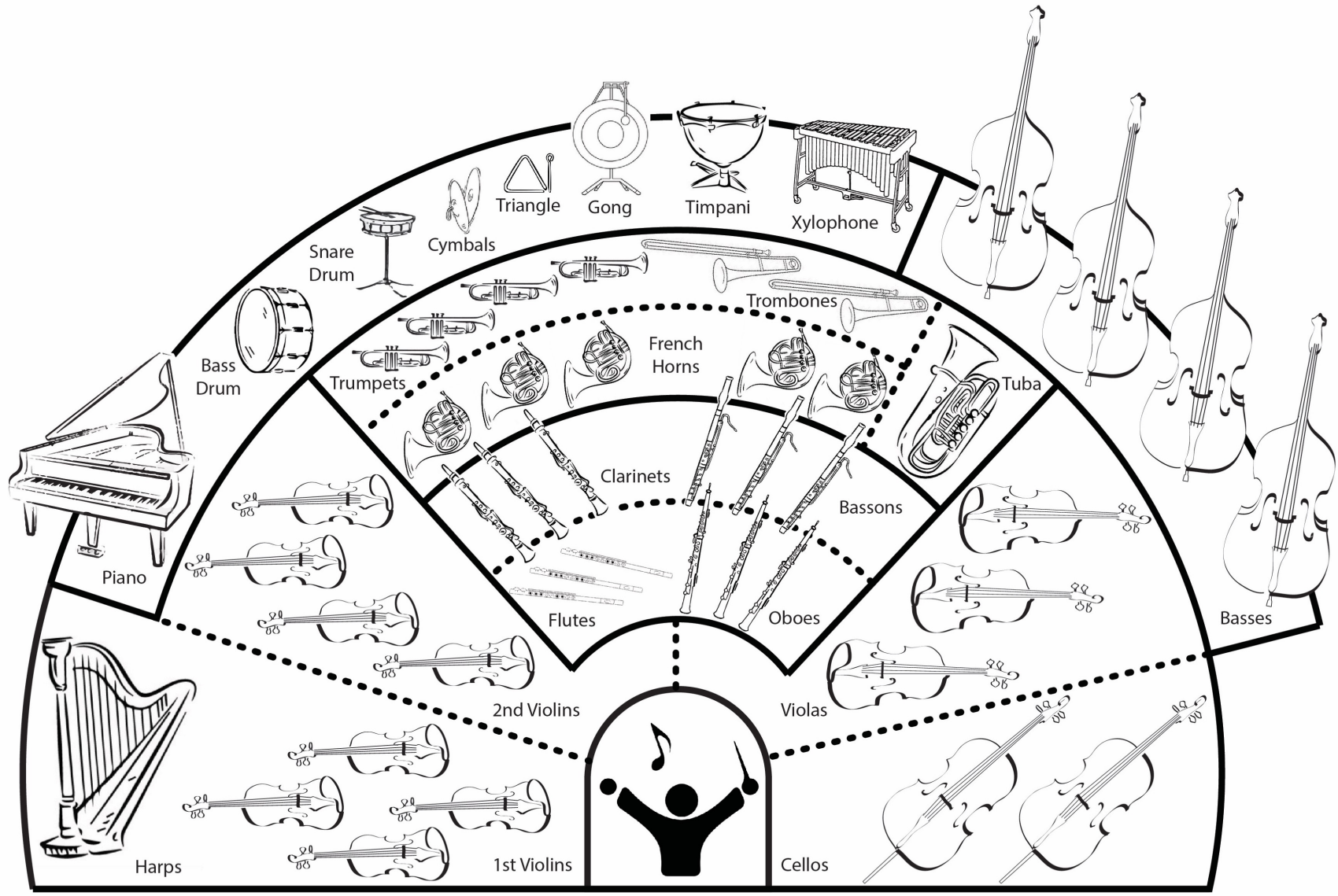
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# Map of the Orchestra



Conductor



# History of the Erie Philharmonic

The history of the Erie Philharmonic began 106 years ago on November 30, 1913, when the Erie Symphonic Orchestra presented a concert of "Sacred Music." It was then a 50 piece ensemble under the direction of Franz Kohler. The concert was entirely symphonic and enthusiastically received by the Erie audience. Kohler, who had been Concertmaster and first violinist of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra from 1897-1911, conducted the orchestra until 1916 when his health failed.

In 1920, following a lapse of four years and the end of World War I, the Orchestra was reorganized under the direction of Henry Vincent. As Music Director for one season, Vincent revised the orchestra under the sanction of the American Federation of Musicians so that professional and amateur musicians played together.

Under the baton of John R. Metcalf, from 1931-1947, the Orchestra reached a new level of support from the community. The Erie Philharmonic Society was created to sponsor the orchestra, and in 1947, members were paid union scale wages. In 1942, the Orchestra became one of the charter members of the American Symphony Orchestra League (now known as the League of American Orchestras).

Fritz Mahler (a nephew of the composer Gustav Mahler) was appointed Music Director in 1947 and conducted the Orchestra's first pops concert in 1950. Under the leadership of Mahler, two long-standing traditions began. In 1948 the Women's Auxiliary was formed (known later as the Friends of the Philharmonic) and the first Viennese Ball was held. In 1950 the Erie Philharmonic sponsored its first important commission for a new musical work by Erie native Peter Mennin. He composed "Concerto for Orchestra," which has established itself in the broader orchestral repertoire.

In 1953, Music Director James Sample and Orchestra President William Schuster established the Erie Junior Philharmonic, which today still serves as an important part of the Orchestra's educational activities. After Sample, the Orchestra continued under the artistic direction of John Gosling (1967-74), Harold Bauer (1974-76), Walter Hendl (1976-1990), Eiji Oue (1990-96), Peter Bay (1996-99), and Hugh Keelan (1999-2005). Daniel Meyer, the Philharmonic's 12<sup>th</sup> Music Director, was appointed in July 2007.

A milestone was reached in 1975 when the Orchestra moved to its present home, the historic Warner Theatre in the heart of downtown Erie. In November of 2013, the Orchestra celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!



# History of the Warner Theatre



Since its grand opening, the Warner Theatre has established itself as a major cultural center for the region. Millions have passed by the free-standing ticket booth of solid bronze, walked through the main doors and stepped into the luxuriously gilded Grand Lobby.

There they behold untold beauty of rich tapestry and French gold backed mirrors. A regal staircase with exquisite bronze banisters leads them through an archway of marble, gold gilding, and draped tapestry to the mezzanine. Czechoslovakian glass and crystal chandeliers create the soft lighting that enhances the

grandeur of an edifice unmatched in stature, opulence and beauty. The beauty of this theatre is absolutely breathtaking.

The Warner Brothers commissioned the building of the Warner Theatre in 1929, appointing the world renowned Rambusch Studios in New York City to decorate the interior. Rambusch created a lavish Art Deco interior that would invite generations of theater-goers to a palace of magnificence and fantasy. Considering the quality of the design and cost of the building materials used, the theater would be virtually impossible to replace today.

The Warner Theatre opened its doors on April 10, 1931. 8,000 colored lights illuminated the ten-ton marquee that announced the feature film of the opening evening, "The Millionaire" starring George Arliss and James Cagney. In its early history, the theater hosted various traveling shows, became an important link in the vaudeville circuits of the 1930s, and presented the "pick" of the major film releases. Bob Hope made his appearance at the theater in November 1930 telling stories while sitting on a barrel at the front of the stage.

The "Mighty Wurlitzer" organ that once rose out of the floor into the corner of the orchestra pit provided music for Vaudeville shows and accompanied the early talking motion pictures. The organ was donated to the Western Reserve Chapter of American Theatre Organ Enthusiasts in 1969 by Warner Brothers.

In 1971, Cinemette Corporation of America bought the Warner Theatre and operated it until 1976, when then Mayor Louis Tullio heard that the chain might want to sell the Warner. The mayor saw the importance of saving the Warner from planned demolition. With assistance of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, he took it upon himself to negotiate a successful purchase of the building.

In 1977, the Erie Civic Center Authority was formed and given the physical and fiscal management of the Warner Theatre. With this change-over, the policy of the theatre changed as well to one that included the production of mostly live performances. In 1974, the Erie Philharmonic had its first concert at the theater and its home was secured.

In January 2022, the Warner Theatre reopened after a back-stage renovations over 20 years in the making.





# What to Expect at the Concert

## **See an orchestra**

What is an orchestra? An ensemble of people who play string instruments such as violins, violas, cellos, and basses. Also expect to see flutes, oboes, clarinets, bassoons, horns, trumpets, trombones, a tuba, timpani, drums and other percussion, and maybe even a harp. The conductor is the leader of this group of players. He or she will communicate to the players the meaning of the music score, having musicians play louder or softer, faster or slower, smooth or choppy.

## **Be in a large room with lots of other people**

Talk quietly with your neighbor until the concertmaster comes on to tune the orchestra. Then settle back in your seat and prepare to listen!

## **Sit quietly and listen to the music**

Listening to an orchestra is different from listening to other types of music. It is fine to tap your toes or move your fingers in time with the music. Remember though that others are watching and listening with you and you shouldn't do anything that would disturb their chance to watch and listen too!

## **Applaud at the end of the piece**

How do you know when that is? Sometimes you will have a printed program that tells you and sometimes the conductor will tell you if the piece has more than one part (or movement). Usually you don't applaud between the movements (that would be like thinking that the story is over after one chapter of the book!). The best way to know when a piece is over is to watch the conductor and when he or she puts their arms down and turns around, that's the time to applaud. Many times the music itself will tell you when it is time, too!

## **Listen for different things**

The person who wrote the music is making an individual statement. His or her piece won't be like any other. Try to figure out what makes the particular piece special. Is it because it is loud or soft? Is it because of the fast or slow notes? Does it make you feel happy, sad, angry, or excited? What message do you think the music is sending? Think about it, but please don't discuss it with your friends until after the concert. Also, listen to the sounds of the instruments. Sometimes certain instruments have the melody and others just accompany them. Try to find out who has the melody at every moment of the piece. Notice how different the oboe sounds when it plays with the violin. Listen for how each instrument sounds solo and in combination with others.

## **Have a good time!**

Music is fun all by itself. Let it make you think of things. Let it make you feel emotions. Make up a scene or story in your mind as you listen and see how it changes with the music. Don't just sit there – think about it and you will enjoy the concert even more!