



WINNIPEG SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

## Relaxed Concert Experience Guide



I will be attending  
**A Day in Bohemia**  
**Friday, November 1, 2019**

# CONCERT FACTS

# Overview

- The WSO Box Office will open at 9:30 AM.
- The front doors will open at about 9:45 AM.
- At 10:05 AM on the Piano Nobile level there will be a pre-concert chat with RBC Assistant Conductor Naomi Woo. She will talk about the music you are going to hear. I may choose to listen to the chat, or I may find my seat.
- When I enter the auditorium to find my seat, some musicians will already be on stage playing their instruments. This is called a ‘warm-up’, and it helps them be ready to play the concert.
- Before the concert begins, someone will give some important instructions from the speakers in the auditorium.
- Then, someone will walk onto the stage and speak about today’s concert.
- The conductor will then come on to stage and introduce the music.
- Then the concertmaster will stand and the orchestra will tune and then the concert will begin.
- The concert will be approximately 55-minutes in length.
- After the concert ends, the conductor will come back on stage to answer questions. You may leave now if you like, or you may wish to stay and ask questions.
- Two WSO staff will be in the audience with microphones to help you ask questions. Raise your hand if you have a question so they can see you!
- After the Q&A concludes everyone will leave.

# Helpful Information

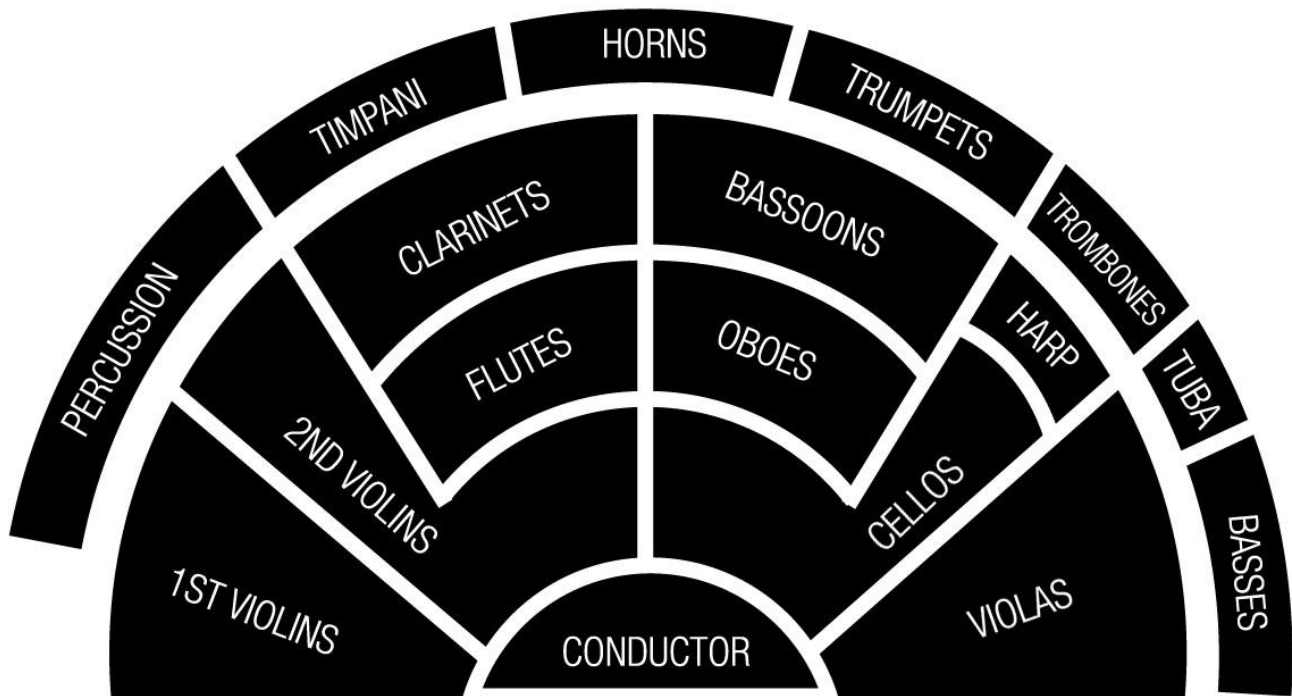
- Lights will be left at reading-level, so that you will be able to see.
- Only the main floor is open for seating at this concert.
- You will be able to move around the auditorium and lobby during the concert. You may move to any open seat if you prefer to be farther back or closer to the front.
- If you need a quieter space, you will still be able to hear the concert on the speakers in the lobby, and also see the stage on the lobby TV monitors.

- A quiet space is also available on the 1<sup>st</sup> Balcony level. Ushers can help you find this space.
- The WSO will perform two pieces of music by the two leading 19<sup>th</sup>-century composers from Bohemia (the rough area we now call the Czech Republic): Bedřich Smetana and Antonin Dvořák.
- Czech music of that time was lively, tune-filled and dance-like. These composers were masters of these musical elements.
- Smetana's Overture from his opera *The Bartered Bride* is seven-minutes in length and introduces the opera's characters.
- Dvořák's Symphony No. 6 is 40-minutes in length, presented in four sections (movements) of contrasting tempos (speed) and character. You will hear clearly when each section ends.
- The musicians are playing live and acoustic (not amplified); however, an orchestra can be loud. We will have a limited supply of sound-dampening headphones and ear-plugs onsite, but we recommend bringing your own if you can.

Thank you to Prelude Music, the CMU Music Therapy Program, all of our volunteers and the WSO Share the Music program for making today's relaxed concert possible!

# Orchestra Layout

This diagram shows the sections of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra as they are arranged on stage at the Centennial Concert Hall:



Here is a photo of the orchestra on stage:



# Repertoire

## 1. Overture to *The Bartered Bride*



Bedřich Smetana

**Composer:** Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)

**Composed:** late in 1863

**Length:** 7-minutes

**Listen for:**

- Fast-moving strings and loud brass chords at the very beginning.
- The theme being passed from one section of the orchestra to another.
- The quick and brilliant character throughout this piece. You will often hear high, loud sections, but also many quiet sections this is called dynamic contrast (how loud or soft the music is).
- Watch the conductor, especially his arms, to see how he conveys the dynamics to the orchestra.
- The ending is quite fast and quite loud, just like the beginning.

### Background Information

- In Smetana's time, Bohemia was ruled by the Austrian and Hungarian empire. Smetana, upset at having to grow up under a foreign power, joined a group who tried to create an independent Bohemian state. His opera *The Bartered Bride* is the first great Bohemian folk opera.
- By 1882 *The Bartered Bride* was so popular, it had been given in Prague for the 100th time.
- The story of *The Bartered Bride* is rooted in the Bohemian countryside. Lovers Hans and Marie are forbidden from marrying by her father, who has found a more lucrative arrangement for her through the local matchmaker Kezal.
- The exuberant opening describes Kezal. Watch the violins here, as they play very fast. Then comes a happy melody from the full orchestra that signifies the signing of the marriage contract. The lyrical theme in the oboes is associated with Hans.



## 2. Symphony No. 6



**Composer:** Antonin Dvořák (1841-1904)

**Composed:** 1880

**Length:** 41-minutes

**Movements (sections):**

There are four different movements (sections), each with a different name in Italian words. The movement titles describe its character (English translation provided in parenthesis).

There will be a brief pause between movements. You may clap if you enjoyed the music, or you may choose to remain quiet until

### 1. **Allegro non tanto** (brisk but not too much) – 13-minutes

Listen For:

- A soft, tentative beginning in the upper woodwinds.
- Then the music builds in intensity, but not too much, and goes back and forth between quicker, somewhat louder sections, and softer, calmer sections.
- At about 11-minutes the build-up to the end of this first movement begins and the music will become louder, bolder and darker sounding until it becomes quieter and calmer again.
- Then there is a surprise loud section at the very end.

### 2. **Adagio** (slow) – 12-minutes

Listen for:

- The three-note theme which is repeated at the beginning by different instruments.
- This movement is generally calm and lyrical, meaning the notes are all very connected and smooth-sounding.
- After about 5-minutes it may sound like the movement is ending, but then the French Horns play and change the character of the music, making it sound darker and slower. The tension builds quite a bit more and then releases into a calmer section.
- There is a short surprise section that is louder just before the end, then the ending of this movement is very calm and quiet.

### 3. **Scherzo** (lively, dance-like) – 8-minutes

Listen for:

- The strong, leaning theme which starts quiet and quickly builds to loud and fast.

### 4. **Finale: Allegro con spirit** (brisk with spirit to close the work) – 10-minutes

Listen for:

- This movement begins quietly and builds to a quick, exuberant section.
- There are lots of short, contrasting sections in this movement.
- After about five and a half minutes there are loud brass chords and then the character changes.
- Near the end of the movement, the brass become brighter and stronger.

## **Background Information**

- Like Smetana, Dvořák was a Bohemian whose childhood was filled with country folk music and merry peasant tunes.
- When he was 16, Dvořák moved to Prague and heard music by Smetana. Dvořák got so excited, he decided to write original Bohemian music too, but on a larger scale.
- A symphony is like a story-book. Its movements are like chapters in the book where the characters in the story (themes) interact. As you listen, you can follow how he does this through changes in how the orchestra plays the themes. Each movement is a new story.
- Dvořák wrote nine symphonies during his lifetime.
- Unlike many composers' music, Dvořák's was extremely popular during his lifetime.
- In 1892 Dvořák was invited to come to America to head a music conservatory. He stayed for three years but was deeply homesick, before returning to his homeland.
- Like Smetana, Dvořák's music is full of melody. His Sixth Symphony is bracing, optimistic and beautiful.

**Thank you for coming! We hope you enjoy the concert!**

**Want to send us feedback? Please e-mail [info@wso.mb.ca](mailto:info@wso.mb.ca) or call us at 204.949.3950**