



The Carnival of the Animals Writing Contest

This fall, on Tuesday, November 17, 2009, we will be performing Saint-Saens' delightful work, The Carnival of the Animals. This piece is written for two solo pianos plus small orchestra and is a light-hearted set of 14 small movements. It has had humorous verse written by Ogden Nash, Peter Schickele and "Weird Al" Yankovic to accompany the music (read aloud in between the movements in concert). More information about Carnival is available at Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Carnival_of_the_Animals. Here are a few more links to performances with narration of the Ogden Nash verses: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fFFt_kFq_eQ (Youtube – Aviary with Roger Moore narration) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IGv933Mnru0&feature=related> – (Pianists with Roger Moore narration) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcAJpsWWuIY&feature=related> – (Fossils with Roger Moore narration)



However, instead of having existing verse written and performed, we will be having local students write their own compositions, whether they be short essays, verses or even jokes to alternate with the music in concert. This project has been made possible by a Community Arts Grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA).

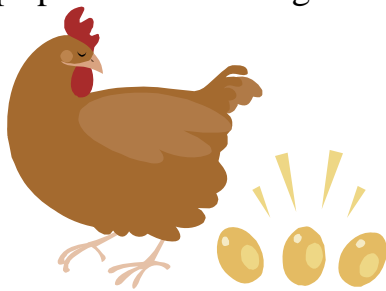
Students in the McGraw School District and in the Cortland Enlarged School District are being invited to write a short piece about an animal that matches a piece of music. (What does that mean? Click on this example to see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QO8v5G0s7BU&feature=related> Picture a student narrating, not Roger Moore!) This will be used to achieve curriculum goals set forth in the Cortland City School District writing and speaking standards for 5th and 6th grade. It

also will give students an opportunity to see their work integrated into a musical setting and performed publicly.

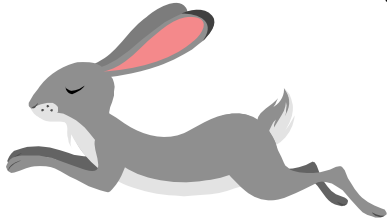
One piece of student writing per movement will be selected by the Music Director to be performed in the concert. The other entries may be printed in a program insert, and will also be posted on a webpage created for the project so that the student writing would be available to the public at large.

Contest rules: Entry length: 1-1 ½ minutes when read/performed. They could be either prose or poetry (haikus, limericks, jokes, etc), and must have correct grammar and spelling, appropriate language, and connection to the music chosen. Humor is also encouraged. The suggested timeline is: introduction in mid-September followed by several weeks for writing and editing. Entries must be submitted to us by Friday **October 16** so that the winning selections can be made. They could be submitted electronically (preferred) or on paper. The winning entries will be performed at the concert on November 17, 2009. Performers will also be selected in consultation with the teachers and the Music Director. A selection of noteworthy entries will be posted on a page on our website so that the public may view them. We propose that each classroom focus on two or three of the movements so that students are not overwhelmed with choices: we will assign one movement per classroom and the others can be at the teacher's discretion.

There will be a monetary prize of \$20 awarded per winning selection to help spur students to a greater level of enthusiasm.



I hope that you are as excited about this contest as I am. I think it will provide a fun opportunity for students to hone their descriptive writing skills and to be involved in an event that combines writing, reading, symphonic music, prizes and publicity.



Please reply and let me know if you are interested and/or if you have further questions. There are more details, but I didn't want to make this too long. Gwen Barbato, speech Pathologist at Parker Elementary School can also be contacted at gbarbato@cortlandschools.org with any questions. My email address is pfisterl@cortland.edu, my phone number is 753-6338. Our Music Director, Ubaldo Valli also can be emailed at udv1@cornell.edu.