

Conductors Moving Mountains

1. Question & Research Task

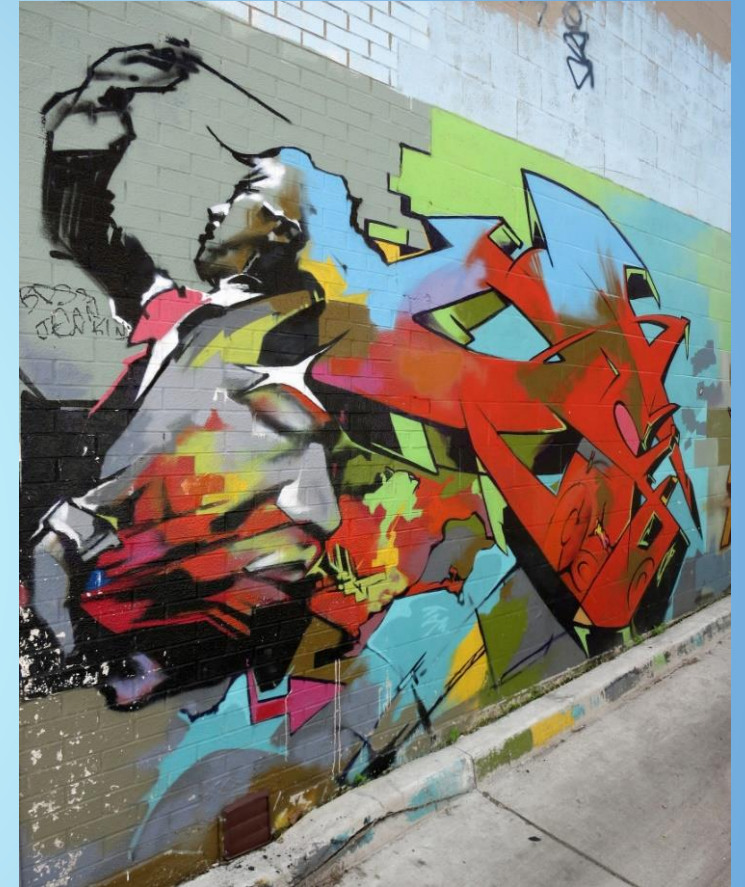
When you search for the greatest conductors of all time, you might see names like [Leonard Bernstein](#), [Sir Thomas Beecham](#), or [Otto Klemperer](#). All are very accomplished conductors; however, they do not really reflect the rich ethnic and cultural diversity around us.

The instrumental music community has recognized for some time that there is a significant lack of diversity among musicians, composers, and conductors. There is hope, however, as a growing number of musicians of different backgrounds, races, and genders have been rising to the forefront as conductors for prominent orchestras across the world.

Who are these pioneers and why are their contributions important?

In this Slam Dunk, you will conduct brief, focused research to respond to the inquiry question:

How does diverse representation of music conductors impact the orchestral experience?



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2. Information Sources

Choose several of the information sources linked here to complete the Student Activity on Slide 3. You can also use databases on BCPS Digital Content page in the [Apps Portal](#).

William Grant Still

- [William Grant Stills- GALE Article](#)
- [Biography- Library of Congress](#)

Henry Lewis

- [Henry Lewis, first Black conductor of a major symphony orchestra](#)
- [Henry Lewis, the Conductor Who Broke Orchestral Racial Barriers, Is Dead at 63](#)

Roderick Cox

- [Roderick Cox Website](#)
- [NBC News- Roderick Cox](#)

Kazem Abdullah

- [Leading the Orchestra, an Outsider Invited In](#)
- [Kazem Abdullah Website](#)

Gustavo Dudamel

- [The Electric Conductor](#)
- [Gustavo Dudamel On The Magic Of Stravinsky's 'Crazy Music](#)
- [About Gustavo](#)

Jacomo Rafael Bairos

- [Jacomo Bairos Biography](#)
- [Jacomo Rafael Bairos : What's it like to be a conductor- PBS VIDEO](#)

Alondra de la Perra

- [Alondra de la Parra: the new leader of the band](#)
- [A Baton for the Youth of the Americas](#)
- [Mexican Conductor Alondra de la Parra Makes History](#)

Jessica Bejarano

- [This Trailblazing Symphony Conductor Is Breaking Barriers- Today Show](#)
- [Tattooed, Mexican-American and female: Classical maestra keeps symphony in tune- PBS News Hour](#)

Sonia Marie de Leon de Vega

- [LATINA OF INFLUENCE - SONIA MARIE DE LEON DE VEGA](#)
- [How Do You Get Latino Kids Into Classical Music? Bring The Parents](#)

Jonathon Heyward

- [BSO Names Jonathon Heyward as Music Director](#)
- [Jonathon Heyward is Named Music Director of Baltimore Symphony Orchestra](#)

JoAnn Falletta

- [JoAnn Falletta](#)
- [Wooing and Wowing//Female conductor breaks new musical ground](#)

Marin Alsop

- [Raising the Baton](#)
- [Baltimore Symphony Orchestra](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Peabody Institute](#)

Xian Zhang

- [A baton charge at the glass ceiling](#)
- [Enter the New Leader, Defining Her Own Sound](#)
- [A Lengthy Journey, Nowhere Near Over](#)
- [PBS Video Interview](#)

3. Student Activity

Use the information sources on Slide 2 to research at least two diverse conductors.

Use this [graphic organizer](#) to record the information you find for each conductor.

As you research pay special attention to...

- ... the conductor's biographical information
- ... significant achievements they have made
- ... important pieces or works they have conducted
- ... noteworthy ensembles they have led

Research Topics	Conductor #1	Conductor #2
Name		
Biographical Information		
Significant Achievements		
Noteworthy Pieces or Works Performed and/or Ensembles Led		
Additional Notes		

4. Assessment Activity

How does diverse representation of music conductors impact the orchestral experience?

The program that is given at a performance often includes information about the conductors in addition to the music to be played.

Create a program for a musical performance that features at least two of the diverse conductors you examined during this research assignment. In your program, include a **brief biography, an explanation of their impact, and why they are worth seeing.** There should also be a page/section for significant pieces or works they have performed. Refer to the [rubric](#) for guidance.

Consider using one of these tools to create your program:

- Paper and Markers
- Google Docs or Slides

Need some examples? Check these out!

- [Maryland Classic Youth Orchestra at Strathmore](#)
- [Baltimore Symphony Orchestra: Overture May/June 2022](#)

American Premiere and CD Release Party
Daniel Kahn & The Painted Bird with Beatboxer Yuri Lane
Thursday, March 26, 9:00pm
Rickshaw Stop Club, 155 Fell St., San Francisco
Presented in association with the Hub of the JCCSF
Co-sponsored with Gaia Fund!

Daniel Kahn & The Painted Bird
repeats Thursday, April 2, 8:00pm
Congregation Beth Am, Arastradero Rd., Los Altos Hills
Presented in association with the Roots Collective, a project of Congregation Beth Am
Both shows are a project of the Bay Area Jewish Community Centers' Jewish Cultural Collaboration. The Jewish Music Festival especially thanks Kimberly Gordon for her help in making this program possible.

Direct from Berlin, Daniel Kahn & The Painted Bird's second CD *Partisans & Parasites* is an explosive mix of klezmer, radical Yiddish song, political cabaret and punk folk. With Yuri Lane, pioneer of the art of Beatbox Theater, known internationally for his one man hip-hop play *From Tel Aviv to Ramallah* and his beatbox harmonica videos on YouTube.

Musicians
Daniel Kahn, vocals, accordion, piano, ukulele, harmonica, shrutit box
Dan Blackberg, trombone
Hampus Melin, drums, percussion, back vocals
Michael Tuttle, bass
Michael Winograd, clarinet

Detroit area native **Daniel Kahn** attended the University of Michigan, where he studied acting, directing, playwriting and poetry. After finishing his studies he lived, played music, recorded, acted, directed plays and composed theatre music in New Orleans, Detroit, New York and Ann Arbor. In summer 2005 Daniel moved to Berlin, and, within a short time, became an integral part of the city's folk and klezmer scene. He soon formed his own band, featuring a rotating roster of some of Berlin and New York's best young Klezmer and Balkan players.

“Kahn writes like the rainy ghost of Woody Guthrie hitched a ride with Tom Waits to New Orleans, spilling accordions, ukuleles, busted pianos, and broken dreams all over the road from Brooklyn to the bayou.” - *Detroit Metro Times*

Daniel Blackberg received his Bachelor of Music in jazz performance from the New England Conservatory. Since then, he has become active in the rapidly growing creative jazz and improvised music scene in Philadelphia and has been deeply involved in klezmer music, playing with many of the field's top artists such as Frank London, Michael Alpert, Alan Bern, Hankus Netsky, Adrienne Cooper, Alicia Svigals, Michael Winograd, Alex Kontorovitch, Daniel Kahn, Aaron Alexander and the Shirim Klezmer Orchestra.

Michael Winograd - clarinet, horn arrangements. In 2005, Michael Winograd graduated with distinction in performance from the New England Conservatory in Boston. Considered a modern master of the Klezmer Clarinet style, he has performed all over the US, Canada and Europe.

Michael Tuttle - contrabass, electric bass, back vocals. Michael Tuttle studied at Berklee College of Music. He has played in a variety of contexts, from Gospel bands in Baptist churches to modern orchestral work, soundtracks and incidental music for theater to jazz quartet, as well as composes.

Raised in the Haight district of San Francisco, **Yuri Lane** learned rhythms by osmosis and quickly learned to incorporate urban rhythms into his daily life. In the 1980s, he started breakdancing and supporting himself by teaching moves at his middle school parties. After studying theater at the Pacific Conservatory for the Performing Arts, Yuri returned to his native San Francisco to pursue mime, improvisation and alternative theatrical forms. Currently Yuri lives in Chicago and tours *From Tel Aviv to Ramallah*, a hip-hop play that tackles the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while emphasizing the humanity, suffering and joy of both Israelis and Palestinians. Since the fall of 2003, the play has toured New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta and Cleveland. He has also recorded a beatbox album.

5. Enrichment Activities

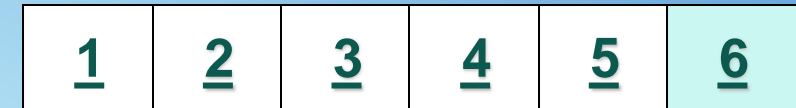
Explore these resources to further your understanding of diversity in conducting.



TedTalk by Steven Banks- [Into the Canon: Equity in Classical Music](#)

- Watch videos of some of the conductors you researched leading their orchestras. Compare their conducting styles and observe how the musicians react to their leadership.
 - [Gustavo Dudamel](#)
 - [Jacomo Bairos](#)
 - [JoAnn Falletta](#)
 - [Alondra de la Perra](#)
 - [Xian Zhang](#)
 - [Kazem Abdullah](#)
- [What Is the Career Path To Becoming a Conductor?](#)
- Baltimore Sun Article: [Diversity Critical To Survival of Classical Music Field](#) (Access this Baltimore Sun article through [Newspapers in Education](#). Your teacher/librarian can give you the info)

6. Teacher Resources



Learning Standards Alignment

Maryland Music State Standards

Anchor Standard 10 Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art

I:6-8:1: Describe how interests, experiences, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and musical intentions when creating, performing, and responding to music

I:9-12:1: Describe how interests, experiences, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and musical intentions when creating, performing, and responding to music.

E:6-8:1: Identify and describe personal and cultural influences as well as creative preferences in creating, performing, and responding to music

E:9-12:1: Identify and justify personal and cultural influences as well as creative preferences in creating, performing, and responding to music

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy

Reading: 1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

Writing: 7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

AASL Standards Framework for Learners - Inquire: Build new knowledge by inquiring, thinking critically, identifying problems, and developing strategies for solving problems.

Think: Learners display curiosity and initiative by:

I.A.2 Recalling prior and background knowledge as context for new meaning.

Create: Learners engage with new knowledge by following a process that includes:

I.B.1 Using evidence to investigate questions. I.B.3 Generating products that illustrate learning.

Share: Learners adapt, communicate, and exchange learning products with others in a cycle that includes:

I.C.1 Interacting with content presented by others.

Grow: Learners participate in an ongoing inquiry-based process by:

I.D.2 Engaging in sustained inquiry.

Middle and High School Instrumental Music

Objective: Students will analyze information from multiple sources in order to determine how diverse conductors impact the orchestral experience.

Time Frame: 2 90 minute class periods

Notes to the teacher:

- Collaborate with your school library media specialist to plan and implement this lesson.
- Have students use learning supports provided in any [BCPS-licensed Digital Content](#) in the Apps Portal included in this lesson. Refer to [Digital Content Snapshots & Support resources](#) for guidance as needed.
- Consider using the [Schoology Assignment Apps feature](#) to assign Microsoft and Google documents and files for students to access, edit, and submit through Schoology.
- You will need to view the videos prior to giving to students, to verify the links fit your unit, are still working, and are appropriate for your specific class or student.
- **Other conductors to explore:** Paula Nava Madrigal, Mirga Grazinyte-Tyla, Andrea Quinn, Susanna Mälkki, Jane Glover, Sian Edwards, Jose Luis Novo