
QUARTETO NUEVO: JAZZ ROAD SUITE



STUDY GUIDE

BIOGRAPHY

Quarteto Nuevo merges Western classical, eastern European folk, Latin, and jazz with an organic feel that packs a wallop! Their diverse programs can be tailored to fit anywhere, from an intimate chamber music venue to a large outdoor festival. The ensemble's razor-sharp precision is enhanced by jazzy interludes, lightly rumbling percussion motifs, and mesmerizing rhythms. They effectively meld the music of ancient worlds and faraway places with a contemporary groove that enchants audiences of all ages!

"Quarteto Nuevo's recent performance at Alberta Bair Theater grabbed the audience from the first note and gained momentum with each piece performed...and then we got to the Jazz Road Suite. Wow. Vivid imagery was painted by each instrument. Our wide-open spaces of Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana could be felt between the notes. The majesty of our mountain ranges and the whispering of our grasslands are heard throughout. Bravo, Quarteto Nuevo, for composing such spot-on individual homages for each state! What a great way to maximize the intent of the South Arts Jazz Road Tours grants!"

-Jody Grant, Programming & Marketing Director
Alberta Bair Theater, Billings, Montana



Jazz Road Suite: Western States

Quarteto Nuevo was recently awarded a Jazz Road Creative Residency grant from South Arts to compose a Jazz Road Suite - exploring the connection of jazz to geographical and cultural locations. The members of Quarteto Nuevo composed new works for each state they visited during the 2023-24 touring season. The result is a nine-movement work entitled, “Jazz Road Suite: Western States”, that includes new compositions for Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Wyoming. Each composer found connections to their chosen states through geography, culture, and personal experience. The complete suite will be recorded live in concert in March 2024 at ASU Kerr Cultural Center in Scottsdale, AZ.



Alaska – Damon Zick:

“Raven’s Dance” honors the common raven, which is a year-round resident across the entire state of Alaska. The raven is among the smartest of all birds, a magnificent acrobatic flyer, and the largest species of songbird. Many Native Alaskan cultures view the raven as the creator of the world and the bringer of daylight, as well as an incurable trickster.

Arizona – Damon Zick:

“Camelback” is a reference to Camelback Mountain. I began visiting Scottsdale in the late 1970s to visit my grandparents and extended family for holidays and celebrations. I distinctly remember landing at the Phoenix airport and driving down a small two-lane road past Camelback Mountain to get to Scottsdale. Being an annual visitor for over 30 years, I witnessed the explosive growth of the area from a small ranch town to the thriving city it is today.

California – Kenton Youngstrom:

“Line Drive” pays homage to the uniquely influential music genre that grew out of the Southern California surf culture of the 1960s. In the piece are recognizable elements of that genre infused with Quarteto Nuevo’s penchant for “odd” meters, in this case, 7/8.

Colorado – Kenton Youngstrom:

I found inspiration in the state flower, the Colorado Blue Columbine, of which **“Aquilegia”** is the Latin name. The flower’s two layers of petals, white and lavender, suggested two “colors” of instrumental sound. In this case, cello and soprano saxophone engage in a musical “canon,” whereby the melodies overlay each other.

Montana – Felipe Fraga:

“Big Sky” was written to explore the connection in geography and culture between the wide-open spaces of Montana and my home state of Paraná in Brazil. The composition uses a Paraguayan style of music called “guarânia” which is often heard in Brazilian country and folk music of that region.



Nevada - Jacob Szekely:

Nevada has figured prominently in many of my most cherished memories, and some of the best days of my life. **"The Road"** refers to the drive on Interstate 15. Driving through the vast expanse of emptiness acted as the perfect canvas for my imagination that I filled with hopes and dreams for the future and, most recently, the inspiration for the piece of music you are about to hear.

Oregon - Felipe Fraga:

"A Jornada" was inspired by my journey from Brazil to the United States. I thought about those who arrived before me crossing from the East Coast to the West Coast via the Oregon Trail, learning new languages, and encountering new cultures along the way. The Chinook Love Song that closes the piece symbolizes the welcoming and connecting of distinct cultures.

Utah - Jacob Szekely:

I visited Arches with Quarteto Nuevo during a tour through Utah several years ago. The scenery of the National Park was an inspiring, almost religious experience. **"Arches"** has four distinct sections played without pause: **"Alaap of the Caves"** is a chant-like section inspired by Indian Classical music with the sounds of echoes bouncing off of cave walls and the rustling of the desert brush; **"Cave Counterpoint"** features several melodies of different lengths slowly phasing against each other like the layers of rock and sediment in the cave walls; **"Arches"** adds electronic looping in the cello and takes on a musically minimalist style reminiscent of composers John Adams and Steve Reich to portray a bird in flight; **"Sunset"** is a chorale to end the day.

Wyoming - Damon Zick:

When I was twenty-one, I bought my first car and made a solo drive from my hometown of Seattle to my final year of college in Rochester, NY. I remember leaving Seattle at 6am with a fully loaded car and tons of excitement for the journey ahead. After almost a thousand miles I finally stopped in Sheridan, WY for the night. When I woke up the next morning the stunning Big Horn Mountains were framed in my hotel room window. **"Cuerno Grande"** conveys the sense of adventure that Wyoming has in my heart.



INSTRUMENTS



Saxophone

The saxophone is from the woodwind family of instruments. It is made of brass and played with a single reed and was invented in 1846 by Adolphe Sax, a Belgian instrument maker.

Guitar

The guitar is a fretted string instrument with six strings. It is played by strumming or plucking the strings with either a guitar pick or the fingers/fingernails of one hand, while simultaneously fretting (pressing the strings against the frets) with the fingers of the other hand.

Cello

The lowest pitched and largest member of the violin family. Cellos have four strings and can be played with a bow or sometimes with fingers by plucking or strumming.

Cajon

An Afro-Peruvian percussion instrument whose name in English means "Big Box." The cajon is played with the hands while the player sits on top of the instrument and is common in Peruvian and Spanish Flamenco music.

Pandiero

A Brazilian percussion instrument from the frame drum family that is distinct from, but similar to, a tambourine. It is a national symbol of Brazilian music.

GENRES

World Music

Traditional folk and indigenous music from around the world.

Chamber Music

A form of classical music that is composed for a small group of instruments that could fit in a palace chamber or a large room.

Classical

Broad term for music rooted in European culture from 1400 to 1900.

Jazz

Music with roots in blues and ragtime that originated in the Black communities of New Orleans in the early 20th century.

Tango

A social dance that originated in the 1880s along the Río de la Plata, the natural border between Argentina and Uruguay.

Rock

Broad term for music that developed from the genres of blues, rhythm and blues and country music in the late 1940s, and evolved into a wide range of different styles in the 1960s and later.



STUDENT ACTIVITIES



ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Spotify Playlist:

Quarteto Nuevo Educational Playlist (search)

- 1) Haitian Lady - Pancho Sanchez - World Music/Latin Jazz
- 2) Symphony No.1 in C Minor, Op.68 - Johannes Brahms - Classical
- 3) String Quartet Op.18, No.3 in D Major - Ludwig van Beethoven - Chamber Music
- 4) Moment's Notice - John Coltrane - Jazz
- 5) Libertango - Astor Piazzolla - Tango
- 6) Billie Jean - Michael Jackson - Pop/Rock

Listening:

Play short excerpts of selections from our Spotify Playlist and ask these questions:

What are the different instruments that you hear?

What are the differences in the rhythms that you hear?

What are other ways each selection is similar or different? (Loud vs. soft, lyrical vs. rhythmic, etc.)

Rhythms Of The World:

Have students count the beats of track 6 from our Spotify Playlist: "1, 2, 3, 4"

Have half the students clap only on beats "2" and "4". This is called the "backbeat".

Which selections from our list have a backbeat? (1, 4, 5, 6)

Which don't? (2, 3)

Improvising:

In Jazz and other styles of world music, it's common to improvise, but what is improvisation?

Discuss the fact that we all improvise every day when we walk, play, and talk with our friends. Ask the students the different ways they improvise.

Improvising isn't just random notes:

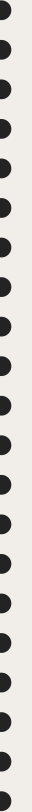
Speak random gibberish to the class, such as: "Pink up yes cat"

Like when we speak, there are certain rules that help give music meaning.

When we talk we use grammar, which are the rules of language.

Musical improvisers use different sets of rules regarding rhythm, notes, etc., to produce different sounds and styles of music.

CONCEPTS AND TERMS



Accompaniment: A musical part that supports a solo instrument, voice, or group.

Arrangement: A version of a piece for specific instruments.

Articulation: The way notes are performed - slurred (connected), staccato (short), legato (long), accented.

Beat: The basic pulse of music.

Backbeat: The strong emphasis on beats 2 and 4 found in popular styles of music.

Comping: The accompaniment that the rhythm section provides to support a lead melody or an improvised solo.

Composition: An original piece of music.

Dynamics: Variations in volume.

Genre: The type or style of musical work (classical, jazz, world, rock).

Harmony: The sound of two or more notes heard simultaneously.

Improvisation: The creative act of spontaneous musical composition.

Interval: The distance in pitch between two tones.

Melody: An organized sequence of single notes.

Meter: The grouping of beats by which a piece of music is measured.

Notation: Special symbols that create a visual representation of music.

Ornaments: Added musical embellishments that serve to decorate a musical line.

Ostinato: A repeating rhythmic and/or melodic figure.

Percussion: Musical instruments that produce sound by striking with the hand or stick.

Phrase: A musical idea comparable to a sentence or a clause in language.

Pitch: "High" and "low" sounds defined by their frequency.

Rhythm: The placement of sounds in time; a combination of long and short sounds and silences.

Scale: A set of musical notes ordered by pitch.

Strings: Musical instruments that produce sound from vibrating strings.

Syncopation: The placement or rhythmic accents on weak beats or weak portions of beats.

Tempo: The speed at which a piece of music is played, measured in beats per minute (BPM).

Timbre: The tone color or quality of sound.

Woodwinds: Musical instruments that produce sound when air is blown into or across a mouthpiece.

**GEOGRAPHY &
SOCIAL SCIENCE**



Geography and Social Sciences:

The Jazz Road Suite explores the characteristics of different locales and is inspired by the various connections between physical locations, cultural features, as well as the relationship and interdependence of human activities, such as the migration of people within and between regions. We look forward to sharing the stories and inspiration behind each composition with you!

TEACHING STANDARDS



Educational outreach performances by Quarteto Nuevo cover the following teaching standards outlined in the Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards for California Public Schools (grades K-12). Programs are customized to appropriate grade levels.

1.0 ARTISTIC PERCEPTION

Processing, Analyzing, and Responding to Sensory Information Through the Language and Skills Unique to Music. Students read, notate, listen to, analyze, and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.

1.2 Identify basic forms (e.g., musical phrases and sentences, larger structures, repetition).

1.3 Identify common instruments visually and aurally in a variety of music.

1.5 Analyze and compare the use of musical elements found in various genres, styles, and cultures, with an emphasis on chords and harmonic progressions.

1.6 Analyze the use of form in a varied repertoire of music representing diverse genres, styles, and cultures.

2.0 CREATIVE EXPRESSION

Creating, Performing, and Participating in Music. Students apply vocal and instrumental musical skills by performing a varied repertoire of music. They compose and arrange music and improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments, using electronic technology when appropriate.

2.3 Compose and improvise simple rhythmic and melodic patterns on classroom instruments.

2.10 Improvise original melodies over pre-established chord progressions.

3.0 HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

Understanding the Historical Contributions and Cultural Dimensions of Music. Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

3.1 Compare and contrast the functions music serves and the place of musicians in society in various cultures.

3.2 Identify uses of music elements in non-traditional art music (e.g., atonal, twelve-tone, serial)

3.3 Explain how music has reflected social functions and changing ideas and values.

3.4 Compare and contrast the distinguishing characteristics of musical genres and styles from a variety of cultures.

3.5 Compare and contrast instruments from a variety of cultures and historical periods.

3.6 Compare and contrast musical styles within various popular genres in North America and South America.

3.7 Analyze the stylistic features of a given musical work that define its aesthetic traditions and its historical or cultural context.

3.8 Compare and contrast musical genres or styles that show the influence of two or more cultural traditions.

4.0 AESTHETIC VALUING

Responding to, Analyzing, and Making Judgements About Works of Music. Students critically assess and derive meaning from works of music and the performance of musicians in a cultural context according to the elements of music, aesthetic qualities, and human responses.

4.1 Compare and contrast how a composer's intentions result in a work of music and how that music is used.

4.3 Compare and contrast the musical means used to create images or evoke feelings and emotions in works of music from various cultures.

BOOKING

Marian Liebowitz Artist Management

619-988-0751

Marian@MarianLiebowitz.com

