

JOHN ZERETZKE

A World of Music

Art Form: Music

Style: Traditional and World

Culture: World Cultures

MEET THE ARTIST:

John Zeretzke is an award-winning composer, artist/educator and renowned World Music soloist on a variety of exotic folk instruments. He has written numerous ballet scores for such companies as The Joffrey Ballet, The Royal Danish Ballet and The Ohio Ballet, to name a few. His scores have been performed at the Aspen Music Festival, Madison Square Garden, Rockefeller Center and with the United States Marine Band Percussion Ensemble in Washington D.C. He has also composed music for film and television including Paramount Pictures, Disney and Kushner-Locke. Recently, his music was in the soundtrack for Robert Altman's "The Company". Zeretzke was Music Director, educational specialist and soloist with the prestigious Aman Folk Ensemble in Los Angeles for over thirteen years. In 2000 "Mr. Z" - as he is sometimes known - was an honored recipient of the P.A.S.A. Award, (Professional Artist in the Schools), a Lifetime Achievement Award for his work in California schools, and he continues to be a leading Artist/Educator and presenter in Southern California schools as well as nationally.

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE:

The performance starts with the simple concept that humans have used sound in a variety of unique ways since early history. People create and discover new and different musical sounds every day. A simple string can become a bow. Attached to a drum, that bow becomes a one string guitar. Pull another bow across the first string and it becomes a simple violin. In this manner, over thousands of years a variety of bowed, stringed instruments have been created. It is even the basis for the modern *Stro-Viol* and the electric *Steinberger* 5-string violin of the 21st century, two instruments that will also be demonstrated during the program. Wind instruments introduced to the audience include the single and double reed *mizmar* or *zuna* from Egypt, the *sipsi* from Turkey, the *duduk* from Armenia and a very unusual *bagpipe* from the mountains of Bulgaria. A variety of percussion instruments from around the world will be played including bones, rocks, spoons and exotic frame drums from three different countries.



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PREPARING FOR THE EXPERIENCE:

The unusual and unique instruments used in this performance represent various instrument families that are found throughout the world. The three families that categorize most instruments are winds, strings and percussion. In the last few hundred years, mechanical instruments have been introduced (e.g. hurdy-gurdy), and more recently electronic instruments such as the electric keyboard and guitar.

In order for a human to hear a sound, something needs to vibrate. Every sound has a unique "signature" or way that it vibrates to create its own special characteristics. Music is made up of thousands of bits of special sounds, all put together in some wonderful design or pattern. Songwriters, composers, singers, instrumentalists and people in all walks of life create and organize those sounds into music. Every culture and country in the world uses its own traditional sounds and even new sounds in creating music.

As cultures and people throughout the world share ideas, trade and travel, musical ideas are also shared and traded. Musicians sometimes take ideas from other cultures and reshape or redesign them. The simple idea of a one note bamboo flute from West Africa became the many note pan flute or pan pipe in Romania and South America. This demonstrates a variation or innovation in musical instrument design. Another example is bones, which are played in many countries. However, sometimes instead of making them out of cow bones, a player will carve them out of wood. Spoons are a variant of the bones, also related to the castanets of Spain, and are played in the Appalachian mountain region of the United States.

"Music = Sound organized in time by human intent."

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What three instruments played in the performance were your favorites and why?
- Can you explain how each of those three instruments "made" their sounds? (bowed, blown, plucked, scraped, computers, etc.)
- Can you name and locate the countries where these instruments come from?
- What instruments from this show could you try to make and how?
- What is one of the most important ideas you learned during this program?
- Music is considered by many to be a "universal language." Discuss what you think this means.

FRAMEWORK FOCUS - SS/HISTORY/LANG ARTS:

Sit for a moment with your eyes closed and think about the future. Where are you? What year is it? What people are around you? What kind of new technology is all around you? How is this world different from today?

Now put yourself at a specific event, maybe a holiday celebration, a wedding, birthday, or a funeral. Think about what music might be played at this event. What sounds and instruments are being used? What kind of music is being featured? Who is playing this music? Do the instruments fit into categories of wind, strings, percussion, mechanical or electronic?

Draw one or more of these new instruments from the future. How are they played? Describe how they make their own unique sounds. Describe or draw the scene of the event: What are the surroundings, are the musicians playing inside or outside? What kind of people are listening to the music? Teenagers? Adults? Families? How do the people move or respond to this new music? Are they sitting? Singing? Dancing?

Write a story based upon your ideas and share it with the class.

- Legend:
- Artistic perception
 - ❖ Creative expression
 - ▶ Historical & cultural context
 - ⇒ Aesthetic valuing
 - * Connections, Relations, Applications

ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE EXPERIENCE:

- Instruments can be put into sound categories just as librarians place books in categories on shelves. In 1914, famous musicologists Erick von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs came up with a system to organize instruments in a logical order: Aerophones (winds); Chordophones (strings); Membranophones and Idiophones (percussion). A newer category is Mechanical and Electrical. Make a list of the instruments you remember from the performance and group them in these categories.
- ❖ Make or recreate a simple instrument of your own (shakers, drums, whistles, etc.). Try to use ideas from the performance. Practice playing your instrument. Take a small tape recorder and record the sounds of your instrument, then listen to your recording. Does the music that you created surprise you? How? Play your instrument for a family member or friend.
- ⇒ ▶ When we listen to something different, strange or new to us, we sometimes react by laughing or making fun of this "new and different" influence. Listen to a variety of different musical selections from different countries in the world today. What can you learn by just listening to a selection of music? What instruments do you hear? What kind of story does the music tell? How does music tell a story without words?



- * Select specific environments in the world (desert, mountains, islands, etc.) and list materials that people living in the regions might use to make their instruments. What instruments could you create from these materials?

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JOHN ZERETZKE : A WORLD OF MUSIC INSTRUMENTS

WINDS – brass, bagpipes, whistles, end-blown flutes, side-blown flutes

Pigmy Flutes (West Africa) -- An ensemble of end-blown flutes, each with one pitch.

Fipple Flutes (Europe/the world) -- Hollow tubes, with a blow hole at one end and small 'fipple' holes along the length, with a blocked end.

Street Flute or Mizwid (Egypt) -- a reed flute.

Sipsi, Reed Flute (Turkey) -- a reed flute often played with accordion and drum.

Zurna, Reed Horn (Turkey) -- the loudest of all wind instruments and ancestor to the modern day oboe.

Duda, Bagpipe (Hungary) -- an ancient instrument older than the Scottish bagpipes.

PERCUSSION -- instruments that are shaken, scraped, beaten, or struck

Rainstick (Central America) -- a dried bamboo or cactus tube filled with pebbles, seeds or small objects that make a sound like rain when the stick is tilted.

Native American Frame Drum (North America) -- a drum made of animal skin and pulled over a frame, used by Native Americans.

Bodhran, Frame Drum (Ireland) -- a drum made of animal skin that is stretched over a thin frame and played with a stick with a round knob on each end.

Bendir, Frame Drum (North Africa) -- a drum made of animal skin, stretched over a thin frame and often spun around in mid-air as it is played.

Bones and Spoons (United States) -- usually made from two ribs of a cow that are struck rhythmically together. Spoons are a variant of the bones and both are related to the castanets of Spain.

STRINGS

Violin or Fiddle (Europe/the world) -- violins emerged around 1550 from the medieval fiddle known as a rebec.

Saz, Long-Necked Lute (Turkey) -- an ancient, plucked-stringed instrument.

Kemence, Spiked Folk Fiddle (Iran) -- fiddles usually made from gourds or wooden bowls with animal skin stretched over an opening in the gourd and played with a horsehair bow while resting on the knee.

Karadeniz Kemence, Black Sea Fiddle (Turkey) -- a fiddle that is held above the head when playing for dancers; it is also played when ballads and tales are played and sung.

Electric Violin (United States) -- electric violins were created in the early 1950s and can now also 'talk' to computers.