



# **BLACK VIOLIN**

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*Applause Series Curriculum Guide*  
May 13, 2014



CIVIC CENTER • STONER THEATER • TEMPLE THEATER • COWLES COMMONS

# BLACK VIOLIN

## Dear Teachers,

Thank you for joining us for the Applause Series presentation of Black Violin, a classically trained viola and violin duo with a revelatory knack for melding highbrow and pop culture as they fuse classical music with hip-hop, jazz, and other musical styles. Quickly gaining wide attention and acclaim from everyone from Alicia Keys to 50 Cent, Black Violin remains particularly committed to turning young fans on to their own potential through their rigorous schedule of performing for students. “We’re living proof that people can overcome their obstacles and triumph,” shares member Wil B. It is that message they hope to instill in students while simultaneously getting them fired up about classical music.



We thank you for sharing this very special experience with your students and hope that this study guide helps you connect the performance to your in-classroom curriculum in ways that you find valuable. In the following pages, you will find contextual information about the performance and related subjects, as well as a variety of discussion questions and assessment activities. Some pages are appropriate to reproduce for your students; others are designed more specifically with you, their teacher, in mind. As such, we hope that you are able to “pick and choose” material and ideas from the study guide to meet your class’s unique needs.

See you at the theater,

Des Moines Performing Arts Education Team

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This study guide was compiled and written by Karoline Myers.  
Adapted in part from Black Violin Teacher Study Guide by Alaska Junior Theater.

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# ABOUT DES MOINES PERFORMING ARTS



Des Moines Performing Arts is a private, nonprofit organization and is an important part of central Iowa's cultural community. It is recognized nationally for excellence as a performing arts center and is committed to engaging the Midwest in world-class entertainment, education, and cultural activities.

Des Moines Performing Arts presents professional touring productions, including theater direct from Broadway, world-renowned dance companies, family programming, comedy, and concerts.

Education and Community Engagement programs are core to Des Moines Performing Arts' mission as a nonprofit performing arts center.

**Public education programs** allow audience members and local artists to make meaningful and personal connections to the art they experience on Des Moines Performing Arts' stages. Guest lectures and Q&As with company members allow audiences to explore the inner workings of the performance. In addition, master classes, workshops, and summer camps taught by visiting performers give local actors, dancers, and musicians the chance to increase their skills by working directly with those who know what it takes to succeed on the professional stage.

Through its **K-12 School Programs**, Des Moines Performing Arts strives to ensure that central Iowa students have affordable access to high quality arts experiences as part of their education. More than 50,000 students and educators attend curriculum-connected school matinee performances through the Applause Series annually. In addition, Des Moines Performing Arts sends teaching artists into the schools to provide hands-on workshops and residencies in special opportunities that engage students directly in the creative process. Through its partnership with the John F. Kennedy Center, Des Moines Performing Arts provides teachers with in-depth professional development training on how to use the arts in their classrooms to better impact student learning. The Iowa High School Musical Theater Awards is Des Moines Performing Arts' newest initiative to support the arts in Iowa schools, providing important learning tools and public recognition to celebrate the achievements of students involved in their high school theater programs.

## DID YOU KNOW?

More than 350,000 people visit Des Moines Performing Arts venues each year.

Des Moines Performing Arts opened in 1979.

Des Moines Performing Arts has three theater spaces:

- *Civic Center, 2744 seats*
- *Stoner Theater, 200 seats*
- *Temple Theater, 299 seats (located in the Temple for the Performing Arts)*

No seat is more than 155 feet from center stage in the Civic Center.

Cowles Commons, situated just west of the Civic Center, is a community gathering space that is also part of Des Moines Performing Arts. The space features the Crusoe Umbrella sculpture by artist Claes Oldenburg.

As a nonprofit organization, Des Moines Performing Arts depends on donor funding to support facilities, programming, and education programs.

The Applause Series started in 1996. You are joining us for our 18th season of school performances.

# GOING TO THE THEATER . . .



## YOUR ROLE AS AN AUDIENCE MEMBER

Attending a live performance is a unique and exciting opportunity. Unlike the passive experience of watching a movie, audience members play an important role in every live performance. As they act, sing, dance, or play instruments, the performers on stage are very aware of the audience's mood and level of engagement. Each performance calls for a different response from audience members. Lively bands, musicians, and dancers may desire the audience to focus silently on the stage and applaud only during natural breaks in the performance. Audience members can often take cues from performers on how to respond to the performance appropriately. For example, performers will often pause or bow for applause at a specific time.

As you experience the performance, consider the following questions:

- \* What kind of live performance is this (a play, a dance, a concert, etc.)?
- \* What is the mood of the performance? Is the subject matter serious or lighthearted?
- \* What is the mood of the performers? Are they happy and smiling or somber and reserved?
- \* Are the performers encouraging the audience to clap to the music or move to the beat?
- \* Are there natural breaks in the performance where applause seems appropriate?

### A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE

Seeing a live performance is a very special experience. Although it is not required, many people enjoy dressing up when they attend the theater.

## THEATER ETIQUETTE

Here is a checklist of general guidelines to follow when you visit the Civic Center:

- \* Leave all food, drinks, and chewing gum at school or on the bus.
- \* Cameras, recording devices, and personal listening devices are not permitted in the theater.
- \* Turn off and put away all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices before the performance begins.
- \* Do not text during the performance.
- \* Respect the theater. Remember to keep your feet off of the seats and avoid bouncing up and down.
- \* When the house lights dim, the performance is about to begin. Please stop talking at this time.
- \* **Talk before and after the performance only.** Remember, the theater is designed to amplify sound. Other audience members and the performers on stage can hear your voice!
- \* Use the restroom before the performance or wait until the end. If you must leave the theater during the show, make sure the first set of doors closes before you open the second — this will keep unwanted light from spilling into the theater.
- \* Appropriate responses such as laughing and applauding are appreciated. Pay attention to the artists on stage — they will let you know what is appropriate.
- \* Open your eyes, ears, mind, and heart to the entire experience. Enjoy yourself!

GOING TO THE THEATER information is adapted from the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts study guide materials.

# CIVIC CENTER FIELD TRIP INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS



**Thank you for choosing the Applause Series with Des Moines Performing Arts. Below are tips for organizing a safe and successful field trip to the Civic Center.**

## ORGANIZING YOUR FIELD TRIP

- \* Please include all students, teachers, and chaperones in your ticket request.
- \* After you submit your ticket request, you will receive a confirmation e-mail within five business days. Your **invoice will be attached to the confirmation e-mail.**
- \* Payment policies and options are located at the top of the invoice. **Payment (or a purchase order) for your reservation is due four weeks** prior to the date of the performance.
- \* Des Moines Performing Arts reserves the right to cancel unpaid reservations after the payment due date.
- \* Tickets are not printed for Applause Series shows. Your invoice will serve as the reservation confirmation for your group order.
- \* Schedule buses to arrive in downtown Des Moines at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the performance. This will allow time to park, walk to the Civic Center, and be seated in the theater.
- \* Performances are approximately 60 minutes unless otherwise noted on the website and printed materials.
- \* All school groups with reservations to the show will receive an e-mail notification when the study guide is posted. Please note that study guides are only printed and mailed upon request.

## DIRECTIONS AND PARKING

- \* Directions: From I-235, take Exit 8A (Downtown Exits) and the ramp toward 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Turn onto 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and head south.
- \* Police officers are stationed at the corner of 3<sup>rd</sup> and Locust Streets and will direct buses to parking areas with hooded meters near the Civic Center. Groups traveling in personal vehicles are responsible for locating their own parking in ramps or metered (non-hooded) spots downtown.
- \* Buses will remain parked for the duration of the show. At the conclusion, bus drivers must be available to move their bus if necessary, even if their students are staying at the Civic Center to eat lunch or take a tour.
- \* Buses are not generally permitted to drop off or pick up students near the Civic Center. If a bus must return to school during the performance, prior arrangements must be made with Des Moines Performing Arts Education staff.

## ARRIVAL TO THE CIVIC CENTER

- \* When arriving at the Civic Center, please have an **adult lead your group** for identification and check-in purposes. You may enter the building through the East or West lobbies; a Des Moines Performing Arts staff member may be stationed outside the building to direct you.
- \* Des Moines Performing Arts staff will usher groups into the building as quickly as possible. Once inside, you will be directed to the check-in area.
- \* Applause seating is not ticketed. Ushers will escort groups to their seats; various seating factors including group size, grade levels, arrival time, and special needs seating requests may be used to assign a group's specific location in the hall.
- \* We request that an **adult lead the group into the theater and other adults position themselves throughout the group**; we request this arrangement for supervision purposes, especially in the event that a group must be seated in multiple rows.
- \* Please allow ushers to seat your entire group before rearranging seat locations and taking groups to the restroom.
- \* As a reminder, children under the age of three are not permitted in the theater for Applause performances.

## IN THE THEATER

- \* In case of a medical emergency, please notify the nearest usher. A medical assistant is on duty for all Main Hall performances.
- \* We ask that adults handle any disruptive behavior in their groups. If the behavior persists, an usher may request your group to exit the theater.
- \* Following the performance groups may exit the theater and proceed to their bus(es).
- \* If an item is lost at the Civic Center, please see an usher or contact us after the performance at 515.246.2355.

### QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Education department at [education@desmoinesperformingarts.org](mailto:education@desmoinesperformingarts.org) or 515.246.2355

Thank you!

# VOCABULARY



**counterpoint:** two corresponding melodies are played at the same time

**DJ:** in hip-hop, a person who cuts and loops



beats to recreate music. They also pause, scratch, backspin, speed up or slow down, and or/delay the music. In its simplest form, cutting involves cutting a few bars of the beat and looping it to create a continuous sound.

**duet:** a piece of music written for two performers

**dynamics:** the loudness or softness of sound.

piano	<i>p</i>	soft
pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	very soft
mezzo piano	<i>mp</i>	slightly soft
forte	<i>f</i>	loud
fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	very loud
mezzo forte	<i>mf</i>	slightly loud

**fugue:** a composition tool in which one instrument plays a short melody, then another instrument echoes the pieces, then another echoes, with all parts interweaving into each other.

**improvise:** to compose or perform without previous preparation, to create in the spur of the moment

**influence:** the power to change or affect someone. Many musicians and styles influenced Black Violin's style.



Image: brianvellmure.com

**pitch:** the relative highness or lowness of a sound



**solo:** a piece of music written for a single voice of instrument

**tempo:** the speed or rate at which a piece of music is played

**violin:** a bowed instrument with four strings that is used to provide the soprano and alto parts in the string section of the modern orchestra and the string quartet. It is a highly valued instrument because of its remarkable acoustical properties and its versatility.

**viola:** the tenor of the modern violin family, with a range that extends a fifth below that of the violin and starts an octave above that of the cello. Experiments were made, starting in the later 19th century, to produce an instrument of sufficient size to provide the desired resonance while remaining small enough to be manageable.



A violin (top) and viola (below). How does the size of the instruments affect their pitch? Image: whstatic.com

# ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE



Virtuoso violinists Kev and Wil B raise the roof sky-high with their funky fusion of classical, jazz, hip-hop, blues and R&B. Joined by a DJ at the turntable, BLACK VIOLIN compose a concert just for you with booming new beats, classic faves and cool pop covers.

**Run Time:** Approx. 60 minutes

## STYLE

To most people, jazz, hip-hop, funk, and classical are musical genres. But to revolutionary music group Black Violin, they're nothing but ingredients.

Combining an array of musical styles and influences to produce a signature sound that is not quite maestro, not quite emcee, with influences ranging from Shostakovich and Bach to Nas and Jay-Z, Black Violin breaks rules, blending the classical with the mod-

ern to create something rare — a sound that most people have never heard, but that people want to feel.

At an age when music is coming to be more defined by genres and labels, Black Violin shows that music does not exist within a box, but rather exists in another space — one as open and unrestrained as the minds that produce it.

## WHAT YOU WILL EXPERIENCE

During the performance, you'll experience Black Violin funk up compositions by classical composers. You might recognize current popular songs mixed up in a new way, and at times, the group will freestyle, or improvise, creating something wholly original.

With a party-like atmosphere, you may even find yourself up and dancing.

## MISSION

When the members of Black Violin first learned to play their signature instruments — Wil B, 14, at the viola and Kev Marcus the violin at 9 — neither could have foreseen that playing music would become their livelihood, though it was becoming their passion.

Graduates of Dillard Performing Arts High School, both used their musical talents to earn full scholarships to college. Now their mission is to make sure that America's young people get the same exposure to the arts, and therefore the same opportunity that they did.

"We encourage kids to think creatively, to take what they love doing and try to come up with something no one has ever done before. And that doesn't just apply to playing violin or even music, but whatever it is you decide to do. Expand your mind. Once we get their attention with the music, that's the message we want to deliver." -Wil B

## ABOUT THE ARTISTS



Learn more about the artists in  
Black Violin.

### WIL B

Wil B 'Simply Sick' (at left, above) attended Dillard High School of Performing Arts, and attempted to join the school band in an effort to play the saxophone. At age 13, he was mistakenly put into the string program instead of the band; as luck would have it, he mastered the viola and grew to love it.

He attended Florida State University. Not only is this young man talented on the violin but he also can sing, play the piano, drums, trumpet and the bass guitar. His influences include well known musical artists such as Stevie Wonder, George Benson, Curtis Mayfield, Chaka Khan, Victor Wooten, Common, AZ, Jill Scott, and Talib Kweli.

### KEV MARCUS

The second master of this unique duo, Kev Marcus (at right, above) also attended Dillard High School of Performing Arts. He was encouraged by his mother and teachers at the age of nine to begin playing the violin. From there he grew so intrigued by it that he couldn't let it go.

He went to college at Florida International University, where he met their manager Sam G. His musical artist influences are past great pioneers of the music world such as Herbie Hancock, Stuff Smith, Mozart, Bach, Brahms, and Nat King Cole. Kev Marcus also has been influenced by some of today's artists such as Mos Def, Notorious BIG, Dr. Dre, The Roots, Nas, and Jay-Z.

### ABOUT THE NAME

The name 'Black Violin' is derived from the influence of a famous Jazz violinist, Stuff Smith, who changed Wil B and Kev Marcus' perspectives on what the violin is really capable of. Six months before Smith's death, he recorded his most soulful solo album entitled *Black Violin*. His life's work was so moving that the duo decided to name their group after the most inspiring violinist they had ever heard.

### Did you know?

Black Violin has been given an Award by the Brooklyn Center for Performing Arts for their Outstanding Contributions to Middle & High School Performing Arts Students.



# MUSICAL INFLUENCES



Music is a powerful social force in our world. It has the ability to provoke emotion, share opinions and viewpoints, and offer an outlet for self-expression. During the performance, pay attention to your feelings and thoughts—are you inspired? Is this genre of music something that you have heard before? Try to sit back, keep an open mind, and really focus on the performance. If you are speechless, don't worry – music sometimes expresses ideas better than words do.

You do not need to know everything about a piece of music in order to enjoy it, however you may find you enjoy it even more if you know a bit about why it was composed and how it achieves its effect. Once you know what to listen for, you may even begin to enjoy types of music that previously did not interest you.

Explore some of the different musical styles that Black Violin draws on in their performances.

## HIP HOP

Since hip-hop emerged from the South Bronx in the 1970s, it has become an international, multi-billion-dollar phenomenon. It has grown to encompass more than just rap music—hip-hop has created a culture that incorporates ethnicity, art, politics, fashion, technology and urban life.

## JAZZ

Jazz emerged in the early 1900s when African American musicians combined European traditions with blues, ragtime, marching band music and other elements. During the 1920s many young Americans were disheartened by the destruction of World War I and began to challenge the old-fashioned attitudes of their parents. At the same time African Americans were migrating to northern cities like Chicago and New York and brought jazz and blues music with them. Jazz was one of the first styles of music to be played internationally over the radio directly into people's homes.

## CLASSICAL

The classical period was from around 1750 to 1830. Mozart and Haydn were famous composers from the Classical period. Today, one of the ways Merriam-Webster defines classical is “of, relating to, or being music in the educated European tradition that includes such forms as art song, chamber music, opera, and symphony.” There are six periods of classical music with stylistic differences.

- ◇ Before 1400 – Medieval  
*Characterized by Gregorian chant, mostly religious*
- ◇ 1400-1600 – Renaissance  
*Increase of secular music, madrigals, and art song*
- ◇ 1600-1750 – Baroque  
*Known for intricate ornamentation*
- ◇ 1750-1820 – Classical  
*Balance and structure*
- ◇ 1820-1900 – Romantic  
*Emotional, large, programmatic*
- ◇ Beyond 1900 – 20th Century  
*Limitless*

# PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, pg. 2

## 1) INFLUENCES

**Goal:** To reflect on influences in our life

**Explanation:** Wil B and Kev chose to name their group after Stuff Smith, a jazz violinist from the swing era. Smith's final and most soulful album was titled "Black Violin." His work inspired Wil B and Kev so much that they decided to name their group in honor of him. In this activity, students will think about someone who influences or inspires.

### Materials:

- ◇ Paper
- ◇ Writing utensil

### Activity:

1. Give each student a piece of paper.
2. Ask them to fold it in half and then in half again, so that it is divided into fourths.
3. Next, ask students to think about someone who influences or inspires them. Have them write this person's name at the top of the paper.
4. Let students know that you will be asking them a series of questions about this person. They will record their thoughts to each question in the separate quadrants on their paper.

Quadrant 1: What do you admire about this person?

Quadrant 2: In what ways does this person influence or inspire you? Be specific.

Quadrant 3: Do you feel that you and this person have similar goals? If so, what are they?

Quadrant 4: What are some things you could do to achieve these goals?

### Follow-up Questions:

1. What qualities make someone admirable?
2. What can we learn from those who inspire us?
3. Why is it good to have someone that you look up to that inspires you?
4. Are our influences always positive? What can you do to make sure that you choose people to admire that have a positive impact on your life?

## 2) EXPLORE THE VIOLIN

**Goal:** To research various aspects of the violin instrument and synthesize findings in order to present

**Explanation:** The members of Black Violin fell in love with the violin instrument as young performers. In this activity, students will work in groups to learn more about this classic yet highly versatile instrument. They will then choose a creative medium to present their findings to the class.

### Materials:

- ◇ Library or other research materials
- ◇ Paper, markers, or other art supplies

### Activity:

1. Divide students into small groups.
2. Assign each group a topic to research:
  - ◇ The history of the violin
  - ◇ An explanation of how violins are made
  - ◇ An explanation of how violins produce sounds
  - ◇ An explanation of how the violin is played
  - ◇ Why antique violins are desirable and/or why Stradivarius instruments are highly valued
  - ◇ The importance of varnish on acoustic violins
  - ◇ Acoustic violins versus electric violins
3. Invite students to present their findings to the class. Challenge them to present their findings in a creative way, such as creating a poster, a wrap, video, or other artistic expression.

### Follow-up Questions:

1. What did you know about the violin prior to your research?
2. What is the most interesting thing you learned researching your topic?
3. What is the most interesting thing you learned from another group's presentation?
4. Which presentation stood out to you the most? Why?



### JUST FOR FUN

Share these amazing photos of the inside of musical instruments, including a violin and cello, taken by a photographer for an ad campaign for the Berlin Philharmonic.



[CLICK TO ACCESS](#)

# PRE-SHOW EXPLORATION ACTIVITIES, pg. 1

## 3) “TRIUMPH”

**Goal:** To preview a Black Violin performance; to explore the theme of choice and music’s positive influence in young people’s lives

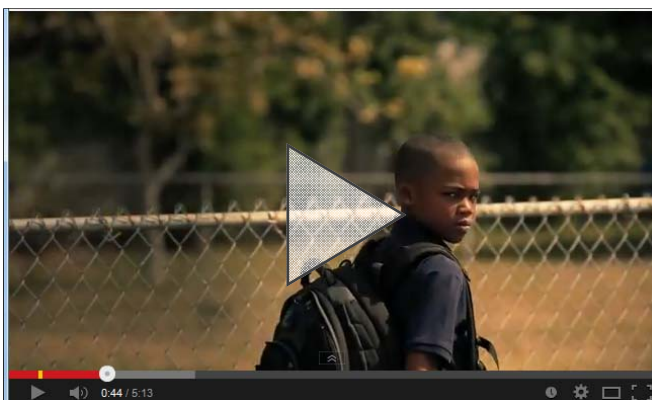
**Explanation:** In this activity, students will watch the Black Violin music video “Triumph” which depicts a young boy facing the choice between the temptations of the street and picking up a musical instrument at school. They will then write a journal entry from the perspective of one of the characters in the video.

### Materials:

- ◇ Computer with internet access
- ◇ Critical Response Worksheet, pg. 12
- ◇ Paper
- ◇ Pencils

### Activity Part 1—View the Video

1. As a class, watch Black Violin’s music video “Triumph” (access by clicking on the image below).
2. As they watch, ask students to fill in the “Critical Response Worksheet”\* on page 12. The worksheet asks them to record what they notice in the video, what it reminds them of, what questions they have as they watch, what emotions they feel or see, and what they think the meaning of the piece is.
3. After the video ends, give students additional time to continue to fill in their Critical Response Worksheet.
4. Next, invite students to share one of their top observations, questions, memories, feelings or speculations.



### Activity Part 2—Journal Writing

1. Next, ask students to think about the different people or characters they saw in the music video (the boy, his mother, the musicians, etc.)
2. Ask them to write a journal entry from the perspective of one of these characters. In the journal entry, they must include the following:
  - ◇ A problem that the person sees or is facing
  - ◇ At least one question
  - ◇ At least one word or phrase from their Critical Response Worksheet
3. Provide them with time to free write.
4. Pair students up and ask them to share their journal entries with one another.

### Follow-up Questions:

1. Whose perspective did you choose to write your journal entry from? Why?
2. Did you and your partner choose to write from the same person’s perspective? If not, what drew your partner to write about who they chose?
3. What do you think is the relationship between the boy and the musicians?
4. Why do you think this video is called “Triumph”?
5. Why do you think Black Violin chose to tell this particular story in their music video?

**Critical Response Worksheet:**  
**TRIUMPH MUSIC VIDEO** (Activity on page xx)

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**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Record your thoughts as you watch the music video "Triumph" by Black Violin.

1. I notice...  
*(Describe what you see and hear.)*
  
  
2. This reminds me of...  
*(This can be something you have done, seen or watched before.)*
  
  
3. This makes me feel... OR I see these feelings expressed...
  
  
4. I wonder....  
*(What questions do you have as you watch this?)*
  
  
5. I think that...  
*(What do you think this piece of art means? Why did the artist make it?)*

Critical Response is a reflective practices protocol developed by the Perpich Center for Arts Education.

# POST-SHOW DISCUSSION AND ASSESSMENT

## DISCUSSION

1. Which songs did you recognize during the performance (both pop/hip-hop and classical)?
2. What did you think of the music? Did the different styles mesh effectively and sound harmonious, or was it more jarring and discordant?
3. If you have been to a traditional classical music concert and/or hip-hop concert, how did this compare? What were the differences? What were the similarities?
4. What do you think Black Violin's mission is with their performances, or, what do they want you to think about after seeing them perform?
5. Black Violin named their group after an album by Stuff Smitt, a jazz violinist from the swing era. If you had to give the group a different name, what would it be and why?
6. What did you notice about the different instruments that were played? Were any of them new to you? Or, were they played in a way that you had never experienced before?
7. Black Violin was inspired by many distinctly different musicians from different time periods and styles. What types of people influence or inspire you? Have you ever been inspired by someone who is no longer living? If so, who?

## POST-SHOW ASSESSMENTS

### 1) WRITE A REVIEW

Ask students to imagine that they are a critic for the school newspaper. They are going to write a review of *Black Violin* to inform others about what they experienced. They should describe with detail: what they saw; what they heard; how the performance made them feel; what the performance reminded them of; and what their favorite part was and why. Remind students that they must paint a picture of the experience with their words so that others who did not see the performance can imagine it.

### 2) YOUR ARTISTIC IMPRESSION

Create your own artistic impression of the performance. Using shapes, lines, colors, patterns and other artistic elements from your imagination, draw or paint a picture that expresses how the music made you feel. Use art to interpret your impression of the performance and qualities of the music.

### 3) WRITE TO THE MUSICIANS

Once you have seen the performance and you and your students have had a chance to discuss what you saw and heard, write to the Black Violin musicians.

Letters may be sent to:

Education Department  
Des Moines Performing Arts  
221 Walnut Street  
Des Moines, IA 50309

### 4) DESIGN A CD COVER

Ask students to imagine that Black Violin has asked them to design a CD cover for their next album. They want the CD design to celebrate how they fuse different musical styles together. Have students think about important ideas and images that come to mind when they think about the concert and use those ideas to guide their design. Students should also create a title for the album. After students have create their cover using art materials, have them imagine that they are going to present their design to members of Black Violin (played by the teacher). Ask students about the elements they included in their design, why they made those design decisions, the title they gave the album, and what the design communicates about Black Violin's music and message.

# RESOURCES AND SOURCES



## BOOKS

### Picture Books:

- ◇ *This Jazz Man* by Karen Erhardt
- ◇ *Lift Every Voice and Sing* by James Weldon Johnson
- ◇ *Across the Alley* by Richard Michelson
- ◇ *Charlie Parker Played Be Bop* by Christopher Raschka
- ◇ *Sweet Music in Harlem* by Debbie A. Taylor

### Chapter Books:

- ◇ *Yolanda's Genius* by Carol Fenner
- ◇ *Second Fiddle or, How to Tell a Blackbird from a Sausage* by Siobhan Parkinson
- ◇ *The Minstrel's Melody* by Eleanora E. Tate

### Teen Fiction:

- ◇ *Harlem Hustle* by Janet McDonald
- ◇ *The Mozart Season* by Virginia Euwer Wolff
- ◇ *Sky: A Novel in 3 Sets and an Encore* by Roderick Townley
- ◇ *Good Enough* by Paula Yoo

**Also, check your local library for nonfiction books on violins and African Americans in Music.**

## CLASSROOM RESOURCES:

Black Violin Documentary. <http://vimeo.com/45099378>

*View this 10-minute documentary on the group, how they got started with music as young people and their journey. Note: mild adult language at 1:29.*

"Classical Music."

<http://classicalmusic.about.com/od/classicalmusic101/a/intro072104.htm>

*Provides an overview of different classical music periods, composers, and characteristics.*

"Examining Hip Hop Culture." PBS

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/tavissmile/features/examining-hip-hop-culture/>

*Features interviews with several hip-hop artists discussing hip-hop culture, its controversies, and its purest form as an agent of social change.*

Jazz, by Chuck Vanderchuck Jazz.

*Student-friendly animations, games and other content about jazz music and its history.*

[http://pbskids.org/chuck/video\\_jazz.html](http://pbskids.org/chuck/video_jazz.html)

## STUDY GUIDE SOURCES:

"Glossary." Naxos: the World's Leading Classical Music Group.

<http://www.naxos.com/>

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