Stan and Mabel
Participation Pack

by Paul Rissmann
Say ‘G’day’ to Stan and Mabel

*Stan and Mabel* is a fantastic new book by Jason Chapman, published by Templar.

It tells the story of two neglected animals - Stan (a dog) and Mabel (a cat) - who live in a tall tower block in the city. Although though their owners ignore them, Stan and Mabel find great comfort in the music played by the lady who lives downstairs.

But one day the music stops.

When Stan and Mabel go to investigate, they discover that their beloved neighbour has gone to Italy, to a competition to find the greatest orchestra in the world.

In a flash, Mabel decides that they should follow in her footsteps and visit the famous La Scala opera house in Milan. They just need to find some friends to join their animal orchestra first! And so the adventure begins.

A Musical Tail (Tale)

In 2013, I was commissioned by Music in the Round to set this zany story to music for Ensemble 360 and Polly Ives. It is such a fun book and Jason’s pictures are so brilliant, that they were perfect inspiration for my music.

I’ve ended up creating a 25 minute musical adventure for narrator and an ensemble of 11 players. In 2015 I was invited by the Adelaide Symphony, Melbourne Symphony, Tasmanian Symphony and London Philharmonic to create a new version of my music for full orchestra, and this is the music you will hear in concert.
Join Our Band!

*Stan and Mabel* has been designed to be highly interactive for young audiences, so there are lots of opportunities to join-in with the action on stage.

This pack details all of the participatory elements your class will perform during the concert. It would be great if you could teach all of the following songs to the children in preparation for attending our performance.

To make the music even easier to practise in class, I have made a whole host of digital resources to use in school. There are practise audio files for each section and also a PowerPoint of images from the book.

Here is a list of all the different things you will do during the concert:

✦ Sing the short tune for **Stan and Mabel**
✦ Sing **The Greatest Song in the World**
✦ Sing the very funky **I Like the Beat of your Feet**
✦ Sing a song for **La Scala**
✦ On cue make a loud animal noise
✦ Give our musicians a standing ovation!

At first, this may seem quite extensive, but I promise, each of these elements are very short and easy to learn.

If you’d like to watch a short film about the original performances of Stan and Mabel in the UK with Ensemble 360 in please go to YouTube and search for:

‘Presenting Stan and Mabel’

or paste this url into your browser:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IGAecO17ZE
Because Stan and Mabel are the main characters in our story, they both get their very own tune - or theme - in my music.

Mabel of course, is a clever and brave cat, so her music is really quite sophisticated. Stan on the other is hand is not so independent, so his theme is much simpler. When the animals are introduced at the beginning of the story, you’ll hear their two themes very clearly in the orchestra, and then they’ll pop up in various guises throughout the adventure.

But as the excitement builds, a new theme appears for Stan and Mabel. This one is very clear, very easy, and very short and we need you - the audience - to sing it with us.

It goes like this:

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G     F     G     Eb
Stan  and  Mabel
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You’ll have to sing this short theme many times in the concert, but don’t worry - I will tell you exactly when to start.

Try singing this theme using Practice Tracks 1, 2 and 3. Track 1 is normal, Track 2 is a bit scary and in Track 3 Stan and Mabel are on the run!
The Greatest Song in the World!

This is the main song in the piece. We will all sing it four times during the story.

The best way to learn it is simply to listen to Practise Track No.4. The melody and lyrics are very repetitive, and the first three times you sing it, the words remain exactly the same.

We’re going to I-tal-y to au-di-tion in a com-pe-ti-tion.

To be the great-est orches-tra in the world, To be the great-est in the world. To be the great-est orches-tra in the world, To be the great-est in the world.

Every time you sing ‘To be the greatest orchestra in the world’ raise your hands up into the air and then slowly move them apart – as if you are drawing a semicircle. Notice the stars marked in the music – they are a claps. The claps will really help you with the rhythm of the song.

Try singing along with Practise Tracks 4, 5 and 6. Track 4 is quite relaxed, Track 5 is very bouncy and Track 6 is sung when the animals are on the airplane.
When Stan and Mabel discover Roberta and Bobby the drumming rabbits, we all sing “I like the beat of your feet”.

This music is very repetitive (but very funky) - so we’ll sing this next phrase many, many times.

If you like, you could also gently tap the rhythm of this song on your thighs as you sing.

Try singing along with Practice Track 7.
When Stan, Mable and their new friends arrive at the magnificent opera house, we all sing a jolly song.

This music in 3/4 time, which means its rhythm makes you want to swing from side to side or dance a waltz. Feel free to do either!

**Here is the song:**

We sing this short tune, twice in a row. Then we hear a bit more of the story, and then we sing it again.

The challenge with this song is that the orchestra will play around with its timing - quite a lot I expect. Italian songs are lots of fun (though often quite over the top) - so my tip is to watch me very closely so you know exactly what is about to happen.

Try singing along with **Practice Track 8**.
The Final Medley

At the very end of the story, once our friends have been voted the greatest animal orchestra in the world, we sing a medley of three songs we’ve already learned:

- The Greatest Song in the World
- I Like the Beat of Your Feet
- Stan and Mabel’s Theme

However, since we are now at the end of the story, some of the lyrics have to change a little.

**So in the Greatest Song, you now sing:**

We came to Italy to audition, in a competition,
No we’re the greatest animal orchestra,
Now we’re the greatest in the world,

I like the beat of your Feet becomes:

They like the beat of our feet!

You’ll be pleased to know that Stan and Mabel’s Theme remains exactly as before:

I will remind you of all these changes in the concert – so please don’t worry about this new text.

You can practise these changes using two different Tracks:

**Track 9 - The Greatest Song - Finale**
(with the new lyrics)

**Track 10 - Final Medley**
(with all 3 of the songs above)

I hope you have lots of fun.

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