



Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Paul Stanhope

The Magic Island

Teacher Resource Booklet

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BACKGROUND

The Magic Island, by Australian composer Paul Stanhope, is the title track from Vol. 13 of the Hush Music Foundation CD collection.

HUSH MUSIC FOUNDATION

The Foundation (www.hush.org.au) exists to create calming music that reduces stress and anxiety in children, parents and staff in operating theatres, waiting areas, treatment rooms and beyond. It is the brainchild of its executive producer, Dr Catherine Crock, a physician at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, and the mother of five. The Hush music collection transforms the environment through the use of carefully curated music from some of Australia's foremost musicians and talents, and is now played in hospitals, homes and shared spaces across the globe.

The Magic Island CD was recorded by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra in September 2012 and August 2013. Some time prior to that, the composers (all Australian) visited The Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, to meet some of the young cancer patients undergoing treatment in the care of Dr Crock and her team.

Composer Paul Stanhope writes:

When I visited Cath and her team and saw their work, I could see exactly the reason she saw music as being such an important part of health care. The sterile environment, bright lights and funny clothing of an operating theatre can be an anxiety-ridden experience. Music written for a therapeutic reason can be helpful for parents and children and provide much broader benefits for society.

THE MAGIC ISLAND

Paul Stanhope has this to say of his work:

***The Magic Island** imagines a place beyond the walls of a hospital ward – an Island of hope, playfulness and optimism. In many ways, the piece is also a love song to Tasmania itself which I really do think is a magic island! When composing the piece, I drew some inspiration from the scores of various children's movies. At the time of composing, my son was three years old; he had also had an extended hospital stay, and I watched a lot of these films with him. Evan and I especially enjoyed 'Robots' with a fabulous score by John Powell.*

I drew on some of the colouristic and gentle harmonic devices found in this score, such as the extensive use of metal percussion and harp to create a glittering surface. It is written mainly in a gentle, lilting 6/8 beginning with the pastoral sounds of the cor anglais, gradually moving to more expansive, upwardly surging energised sections for the full orchestra before returning to the more ethereal sounds of string harmonics and harp.

I am delighted that this piece is the title track for Hush Volume 13, which includes works by so many terrific Australian composers, performed and recorded so beautifully by the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra.

TEACHING IDEAS

The following activities look at the piece of music *The Magic Island*, composed by Paul Stanhope, in the way that students might study a persuasive text. Composers intentionally select and manipulate sounds to suit their purposes, just as writers select and order words to convey their ideas to their readers. This piece is intended to bring comfort and calm to children undergoing stressful medical procedures. The music can be used to persuade listeners to think of a magical, hopeful, optimistic place.

The HUSH recording of the TSO playing *The Magic Island* can be accessed via the TSO's TUNE IN webpage <https://www.tso.com.au/tune-in-stanhope-the-magic-island/>. Please click the red box titled LISTEN TO THE MAGIC ISLAND. The YouTube recording may be useful for preparing blended learning activities, especially if students are required to learn remotely. Please note that a direct link to the recording is not available for sharing.

It is not necessary to do all the activities below in the order written. It is suggested to start with Activity One and then choose other activities to suit your students and context.

The activities support student development in English, Media and Music areas of the Australian National Curriculum.

I COMING UNDER A SPELL

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through work in this activity, students will:

- describe which musical elements and compositional devices are being used to portray a particular mood or effect. (ACAMUR 083/087/091/097/098 ACAMUM 080/084/088)
- create a story or scene to go with the music (English: ACELT1601/1791/1607/1794/1612/1798)

** = Assessment Opportunity

LISTEN AND ANALYSE

1. ** Without revealing the title, ask students to listen to the piece, sitting or lying silently. It is just over four minutes long. Ask students to use their imagination to think what the music could be about. What images do they see in their minds? Provide a pencil and paper for students to record words and images that come to their minds while listening to the music. Students may need to listen more than once to record their thoughts in words or images.

2. Discuss and share some of their ideas. Prompt students to think about the emotions in the music – “what kind of feelings did it evoke?” (Turn and talk, think-pair-share). Note where there are any similarities between students' ideas, and where there is diversity.

3. ** Listen again. What is in the music that inspires those ideas? Discuss how the music sounds and how it changes during the piece using musical language.

4. After a little discussion, reveal the name of the piece.

** How do you think the composer has gone about conveying the idea or feeling of a place that is magical? Use listening glyphs or charts to guide discussion of musical elements such as high/low, soft/loud, rough/smooth, fast/slow, instrumental colour and variation.

5. How is 'twinkle' or 'sparkle' added to the piece? Focus on the use of the harp, the crotales, glockenspiels and vibes (vibraphone).

See and hear examples of the harp, glockenspiel and vibraphone in TSO website resources as follows:

Harp (in the video titled **Harp**) <https://www.tso.com.au/what-is-a-symphony-orchestra/>

Harp (in the video titled **Learn about Harp Strings**) <https://www.tso.com.au/tune-in-adam-apparition-et-scene-de-myrrha>

Harp (in the video titled **Learn about Harp Pedals**) <https://www.tso.com.au/tune-in-gounod-ballet-music-no-5/>

Glockenspiel (in the video titled **Percussion**) <https://www.tso.com.au/what-is-a-symphony-orchestra/>

Vibraphone (in the video titled **Learn about Tuned Percussion**) <https://www.tso.com.au/tune-in-beethoven-4-allegro-ma-non-troppo/>

The vibraphone and glockenspiel are found in the percussion section. A demonstration of the way crotales are played and their sound can be found on various YouTube videos. Crotales are also known as 'antique cymbals'.

** When are these instruments used or featured in the piece? All the time, or in times of quiet and space? Listen again just for these instruments. Students could perform an action when they hear these particular instruments. Crotales are only used in the quiet spaces of the piece. Harp is throughout, but has times when it is the feature, typically quiet times!

If you need students to work through some guided listening at a workstation or at home, you might consider using a free online program such as Playposit. You can designate moments to pause the music, to direct student listening or ask questions about what is happening in the music.

6. ** What are the metallic instruments in our own classroom? Make a list. It might include: metallophones, glockenspiels, triangles, wind-chimes, finger cymbals, chime-bars, bells, cowbells, agogo bells, sleigh bells, cymbals. Which ones create a 'sparkle' or 'magical' sound? Which ones do not? Explore and experiment with the sounds that these instruments make and how to get the 'best' magical effect.

2 ENTERING A MAGICAL WORLD

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- learn to sing a short song in tune (ACAMUM 080/084/088)
- explore ways to change a short musical phrase to create different effects (eg scared, calm, anxious, joyous) (ACAMUM 080/081/084/085/088/089/092/093)
- explore pulse and accompaniment in 6/8 time (ACAMUM 080/084/088/092/093/095)

** = Assessment Opportunity

PLAY / DANCE / SING

The Magic Island has an easily recognisable theme or motif that appears frequently throughout the piece either as a whole or in smaller fragments, tying the whole piece together. It changes key from C major, to D major, to A major, F major and back again to C major. It is essentially in mixolydian mode.

The most 'complete' example of the motif occurs at around 1min33sec in the TSO recording.

I. ** To familiarise younger students with the theme, teach them to sing these words to the tune.

Magic Island. Sailing away, sailing away to the Magic Island.

How do we get there? Do we sail east to the Magic Island?*

Ma - gic Is - land Sail - ing a - way,

4

sail - ing a - way to the Ma - gic Is - land.

7

How do we get there? Do we sail East to the Ma - gic Is-land?

Each time you sing the tune, you could change the compass point. There is the opportunity to have a mini geography lesson about navigation and the different islands near Australia.

2. When students are familiar with the song and can keep a consistent pulse in 6/8 time, add the open fifths in the accompaniment.

Bring students' attention to the sense of gentle swaying or rocking as the accompaniment shifts down a step and then back again. The motif itself has an even rise and fall with no sudden jumps or shocks.

** Trace the rise and fall of the motif and the swaying of the accompaniment with movement.

** Discuss which instruments would suit the mood of the song best. Students could use the list of appropriately 'twinkly' instruments found on page 3, activity 1 (point 5) to select accompanying instruments.

3. The above simple arrangement is written in C mixolydian for ease of singing as well as making it accessible for common classroom instruments such as xylophones, metallophones and glockenspiels.

C mixolydian mode is like a C major scale but with a flattened seventh note.

2

C D E F G A Bb C

3 MAGICAL ZONES WITHIN AND WITHOUT

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- make connections between the music and the effect on their own emotional state and physical response (ACAMUR 083/087/091/098)
- discuss the purpose of music written for the HUSH foundation and how the composer has communicated this purpose (ACAMUR 083/087/091/098)
- make connections between similar pieces of music they have heard (ACAMUM 080/084/088/092, ACAMUR097)
- explore how soundtracks support scenes in films (Media curriculum: ACAMAM 061/065/071)

** = Assessment Opportunity

MAKE CONNECTIONS

I TEXT TO SELF CONNECTIONS

Explore how this music makes students feel.

Educators are now recognising the importance of emotional awareness and mindfulness in learning. An awareness of strategies for self-regulation is part of the curriculum in many schools. In her work *The Zones of Regulation*, Leah Kuypers (2011) explores strategies for self-regulation and divides emotional experiences into four 'zones' – blue, green, yellow and red. Students learn to identify if they are feeling:

Blue - 'low' (eg. sluggish, tired, sick, depressed),

Green - 'optimal' (eg. relaxed, calm, content, focused),

Yellow - 'heightened' (eg. excited, silly, frustrated, nervous, confused) or

Red - 'extremely heightened' (explosive, angry, terrified, elated)

- a. Have a discussion with students about which emotions fit into each zone. It may be helpful to write a list or draw facial expressions that belong in each zone.
- b. ** Refer to the discussion in Activity I about "what was in the music that made you feel that way?" Which musical elements were used/emphasised? (e.g. slow tempo, smooth phrases, rising and falling phrases). Which 'zone' does this music fit into?
- c. ** Play other contrasting pieces which would fit into the blue, yellow or red zones. For younger students, 'angry' music is easily identifiable. You can make a list of how the music is played and use it for contrast (e.g. fast tempo, really loud, jagged or rough, choppy sounds).
- d. ** Mark out four, coloured 'emotional zones' in your room. As you play each piece, students move to the coloured zone they feel is represented in the music. Discuss how the music is being played in each piece and keep a record of students' analyses. Later, these thoughts or lists may be used as checklists for creating their own calming, magical piece of music.

2 TEXT TO WORLD CONNECTIONS

What is the purpose of this text?

- a. Discuss the purpose of this piece of music. It was written expressly for the HUSH Foundation with the intention of producing a feeling of calm and hopefulness (see Background, page 1). It is meant to bring its listeners from a state of distress to a state of calm, to help with emotional regulation.
- b. Explore the world of the HUSH Foundation. Visit the website and listen to the interviews available there.
- c. ** Choose another piece of HUSH music, and compare to *The Magic Island*. You may wish to choose from the same album as *The Magic Island* or explore other albums and artists. You can access these through Spotify or YouTube.

How are the pieces of music similar? How do they differ?

3 TEXT TO TEXT CONNECTIONS

Explore students' prior experience with similar music.

Does this piece of music remind them of other music they have heard?

Think of the movies you have seen. Would this music fit any of the scenes in those movies?

** Compile a class list of movies or scenes in movies that this music could accompany. **

- What is happening in those scenes?
- What is the lighting like?
- What kind of characters or animals are in those scenes?
- What kinds of things are they doing?
- What kind of movement?
- Select a couple of scenes from your list. Mute the original soundtrack and instead play the scene with the music *The Magic Island*. How well does it work?

If children are struggling to come up with suitable suggestions, try scenes from *The Secret Garden*, the magical rides in *The Water Horse*, or some of the initial scenes in *Paddington Bear*. Documentaries on reef life or polar regions, such as *Our Planet*, have lots of suitable footage.

4 WEAVE YOUR OWN MAGICAL SPELL

In this activity, you will guide students through a process to answer the question:

How do we create an artwork that gives our audience a sense of magic, calm, wonder and hope?

Students may simply focus on creating and recording a piece of music to help calm and soothe, or they may like to use music and video recordings to create a persuasive advertisement.

A COMPOSE A PIECE OF MUSIC FOR THE HUSH FOUNDATION

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- explore and manipulate sounds to convey a sense of calm, joy or happiness (ACAMUM 080/081/084/085/088/089/092/093/095)
- work in small groups to create soundtracks which give a sense of calm or magical wonder (ACAMUM 082/086/090/093)
- go through a process of creating, rehearsing, refining and performing their work. (ACAMUM 082/086/090/094/096)
- Reflect thoughtfully on their own and others' work, considering the purpose and target audience (ACAMUR 083/087/091/097/098)

** = Assessment Opportunity

Create a recording which can then be used by students to help calm and self-regulate. Older students might like to aim their work at a younger audience, such as a lullaby for infants or even for younger students in the school.

1. Revisit the discussion from Activity One (pages 2 & 3) – how did the composer, Paul Stanhope, make *The Magic Island* sound magical and calm? Develop a checklist or rubric that students can use while creating their own piece.

The checklist might include:

- soft
- slow
- smooth
- long notes
- gentle metallic sounds that ring
- regular rising and falling feeling

2. ** Develop a short motif or theme that has mostly stepwise movement, in smooth upwards and downwards motion. For younger students it may be helpful to use a pentatonic scale and designate a home note to ground the composition in.

3. ** Once a short theme is developed, try repeating it with different instruments.

'Song Maker' within Chrome Music Lab allows students to create, test and edit short tunes easily. It a free, web-based program which works across various devices. There is also scope for creating and recording in the application GarageBand, then looping the tune using different sounds.

4. ** Decide on accompaniment. If the theme is in a pentatonic scale, younger students can explore simple borduns or open fifths on barred percussion. Explore which chords will suit the tune, and whether long or short sounds are best.

Explore:

- chordal accompaniment
- type of bordun
- non-tuned percussion – which instruments will give a calming or magical effect? How often and when should they be played?

5. ** Allow students time to review their peers' work and give feedback.

It is important that students have the opportunity to refine their work with this guidance. Give clear guidance about how to respectfully critique the work of others.

B CREATE AN ADVERTISEMENT

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- understand how images and sounds are manipulated to create a persuasive advertisement (Media curriculum ACAMAM 059/063, English Curriculum ACELA 1483/1496 ACELY1708)
- Plan, create and refine a sequence of photos or a short film to advertise a product (Media curriculum ACAMAM060/064/068, English curriculum ACELY1682/1694/1704/1714/1725/1736)
- consider how to use persuasive language in their advertisements (English curriculum ACELA 1478/1490/1543/1531/1518 ACELT 1600/1800/1805/1768)
- identify their intended audience, and shape and refine their work accordingly (Music curriculum ACAMUM 082/086/090, Media curriculum ACAMAM060/064/068/069/070, English curriculum ACELY 1678/1690/1701/1711/1721/1732)

** = Assessment Opportunity

Filmed advertisements use music and sounds to increase the appeal of their product and persuade their audience to buy. Melodies and jingles that are easy to remember or become 'earworms' are especially powerful in promoting a product.

Using students' own magical compositions as soundtracks, students could:

- create a short tourism ad for a particular island, inspired by the title "The Magic Island";
- create an advertisement for a particular town or place. Make it seem like a magical place;
- make a short film or slideshow about the wonderful things in their school;
- make a short ad about a particular product that will change your life in a wonderful way.

All of these suggested projects can be done using slideshows in programs like Powerpoint, Google slides, or using commonly available programs like iMovie and Movie Maker. Students can use their own photos or short videos. Flipgrid may be a useful platform for submitting and sharing student work for this project.

1. ** Before students make their own advertisements, have a look at how other advertisements are put together to influence the feelings of the/their audience.

- what kind of screen shots are used? (close-ups, medium shots, long shots, high shots, low shots)
- how is colour used?
- how is sound used? If there is any music, what is it like?
- how does the camera move? (still shots, panning, cutting between scenes)
- how does the viewer know what the product is, who produces it and how to get it?

An interesting example is a film clip that has been paired with another piece of music written for the HUSH Foundation. The Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra published *The Dance of the Paper Umbrellas* by Elena Kats-Chernin to YouTube on 6 May 2020, as part of their “TSO Daily Dose” series, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3JWFPM6CFg&feature=youtu.be> (starting at 1:39). The first half of the video shows a series of cake shots. They are close up and detailed, showing cake decoration happening in slow motion. While this is not an actual advertisement, it does produce a powerful longing for the cakes which are shown.

2. ** Have students plan the film sequence for their advertisement using a storyboard. This will help them to organise their ideas and consider the composition of their shots.

3. ** As well as planning the visual aspect of their work, consider the language aspects. Persuasive advertisements often have:

- slogans
- rhetorical questions
- language devices such as imperative verbs, superlatives and appealing adjectives.

Students need to consider how they are going to name their product. How will the viewer know what it is, who it is made by and/or where to get this experience?

4. ** Organise a shared viewing of student works. Discuss the techniques used in each piece of work and give feedback on the effectiveness of the advertisements. If students feel that their work could be improved, allow them the opportunity to explain what they would change and why.

NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR MUSIC ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES

Successful completion of the music activities in this pack will offer evidence against one or more of these outcomes, at the appropriate level for your students:

AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL CURRICULUM FOR MUSIC, Version 8.1 (sourced 25/01/2017)		
F-2	3-4	5-6
<p>ACAMUM080</p> <p>Develop aural skills by exploring and imitating sounds, pitch and rhythm patterns using voice, movement and body percussion</p>	<p>ACAMUM084</p> <p>Develop aural skills by exploring, imitating and recognising elements of music including dynamics, pitch and rhythm patterns</p>	<p>ACAMUM088</p> <p>Explore dynamics and expression, using aural skills to identify and perform rhythm and pitch patterns</p>
<p>ACAMUM081</p> <p>Sing and play instruments to improvise and practise a repertoire of chants, songs and rhymes, including songs used by cultural groups in the community</p>	<p>ACAMUM085</p> <p>Practise singing, playing instruments and improvising music, using elements of music, including rhythm, pitch, dynamics and form in a range of pieces, including music from the local community</p>	<p>ACAMUM089</p> <p>Develop technical and expressive skills in singing, playing instruments with understanding of rhythms, pitch and form in a range of pieces, including music from the local community</p>
<p>ACAMUM082</p> <p>Create compositions and perform music to communicate ideas to an audience</p>	<p>ACAMUM086</p> <p>Create, perform and record compositions by selecting and organising sounds, silences, tempo and volume</p>	<p>ACAMUM090</p> <p>Rehearse and perform music including music they have composed by improvising, sourcing and arranging ideas and making decisions to engage an audience</p>
<p>ACAMUR083</p> <p>Respond to music and consider where and why people make music, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	<p>ACAMUR087</p> <p>Identify intended purposes and meanings as they listen to music, using the elements of music to make comparisons, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>	<p>ACAMUR091</p> <p>Explain how elements of music communicate meaning by comparing music from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p>

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RESOURCES

The Magic Island from the album *The Magic Island*
Hush Collection Volume 13 *music for complete calm*
Paul Stanhope *composer*
Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra
Benjamin Northey *conductor*
©2013 Hush Music Foundation

The Magic Island: for Orchestra by Paul Stanhope
Self-published by the composer, 2012

Leah M Kuypers (2011), *The Zones of Regulation; a Curriculum Designed to Foster Self-Regulation and Emotional Control*, Think Social Publishing Inc. Santa Clara, United States of America.