

THE JAZZ STORY

Teacher Handbook 2025-2026

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Know-Before-You-Go 2025-2026

Buses and Parking Book your bus to arrive at The Sheldon 20 minutes before showtime, and to leave The Sheldon 1 hour after show time. We recommend your bus approaches from Spring Avenue. Staff will be waiting to help your bus park in the appropriate place and give further instructions. Please stay on the bus until you have those instructions. Buses park for free on the street in front of The Sheldon and in the lot. Cars park for free in the West Lot, on the right side of The Sheldon if you are facing the steps. Cars park on the perimeter to allow buses space on the interior of the lot.

Tickets & Payment Physical tickets will not be sent, but the seats reflected on your invoice will be reserved together, and you will be seated by ushers in the concert hall when you arrive. Your payment is due 30 days before the show. Payment online with a credit card is the preferred method, but your school can also send a check. Please contact the Director of Education if you have unusual circumstances. A Ticketing and Payment Policies Document is included with your invoice.

Concert Manners Please coach your students in good concert manners before coming to The Sheldon Concert Hall. Good audiences love to listen to music and show their appreciation with applause, usually at the end of an entire piece and occasionally after a good solo by one of the musicians. Food and drink are prohibited in The Sheldon Concert Hall. Any device that makes noise is a distraction for both the performers on stage and your fellow audience members and should be put away. No photos or video are allowed during the performance. Restrooms are on the same level as the concert hall near the Art Galleries. Please encourage students to use restrooms at school or to use Sheldon restrooms before the concert begins. If a student does need to use the restroom during the performance, the best time to get up is between musical numbers.

Art Galleries The Sheldon Galleries will have on view the exhibition *We Each Hold Stories* from November 7, 2025 – May 2, 2026. *We Each Hold Stories* features 16 established and emerging Indigenous American artists co-curated by Tom Jones of the Ho-Chunk Nation and Paula Lincoln, The Sheldon Gallery Director. The work in the exhibition explores themes of personal experience, family, history, and current social issues. The artists reimagine their Native identity through storytelling, addressing land, community, and human behavior with a focus on healing and connection between past and present.

You are invited to contact The Sheldon and add a 30-minute visit to the galleries after the concert when you attend a Sheldon Education Program. Tours are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and we can accommodate 40 students at one time, 3rd grade and older. Groups with 80 students can be divided into two consecutive tours, totaling 60 minutes. Groups of more than 80 students exceed our capacity.

Health + Safety Please visit our website for the most up-to-date information on health and safety measures. To communicate the need for accessible seating, please indicate so on your reservation form. The Sheldon staff can direct you toward elevators. We recommend students that might have sensory or stimulation issues bring their own noise-cancelling headphones, but if you are surprised by a need for them, we have some in the box office.

Show Description and Curricular Connections

About the Show

The Jazz Story was the original Sheldon Education Concert, written and premiered in 1999, and continues to evolve as our longest running show. This performance takes students on a journey from Ragtime to modern time through the lens of jazz. Students learn and experience basic jazz vocabulary, highlighted in a set list of standards performed by local professionals in the field. St. Louis connections (Scott Joplin and Miles Davis) are highlighted.

Recommended Resources

[Smithsonian Education | National Museum of American History \(si.edu\)](#)
(2-5, 6-8) Excellent resource for recordings and lessons on music and musicians

[In The Mood- Glen Miller Orchestra Rhythm Play Along \(Beginner\)](#)
(2-5) Clapping or rhythm sticks play along

[PBS Learning Media: Ken Burns in the Classroom](#) (6-8) (9-12)
Video clips of 5-15 minutes long, addressing social effects of jazz, music technology, and music style

Books (Links to Read aloud/Sing Along Videos)
["Charlie Parker Played Bebop" by Chris Raschka \(K-5\)](#)
<https://youtu.be/GeAHASFqvb4?si=mN0F8atL3sFTuSn4>

["Hip Cat" by Jonathan London \(K-5\)](#)
<https://youtu.be/4KubxhclFr0?si=w3jWYq5kFdRLxnUP>

The Arts as Culture, History, and Connectors
from National Core Arts Standards on Artistic Literacy

Philosophical Foundations

Throughout history the arts have provided essential means for individuals to express their ideas, experiences, feelings, and deepest beliefs. Each discipline shares common goals, but approaches them through distinct media and techniques. Understanding artwork provides insights into individuals' own and others' cultures and societies, while also providing opportunities to access, express, and integrate meaning across a variety of content areas.

Lifelong Goals

Artistically literate citizens know and understand artwork from varied historical periods and cultures, and actively seek and appreciate diverse forms and genres of artwork of enduring quality and significance. They also seek to understand relationships between the arts and cultivate habits of searching for and identifying patterns, relationships between the arts, and other knowledge.

The Sheldon's Goal

We provide access to age-appropriate concert experiences that engage and inspire the student audience to pursue artistic literacy and all the benefits it offers.

Performers



Kim Fuller

Kim Fuller, vocalist, has a rich and diverse musical background. She's shared the stage with renowned artists such as Smoky Robinson, Pieces of a Dream, and Ramsey Lewis. Kim is actively involved in the St. Louis music scene. She serves as a faculty member at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville, where she teaches Private Jazz Voice. Kim's versatility shines through her role as the vocalist for "The Oïkos Ensemble." This group seamlessly blends jazz improvisation with gospel music, allowing her to serve God through her artistry. As a veteran Speech Language Pathologist, Kim finds joy in her dual roles. By day, she helps others with communication, and by night, she graces the stage as a jazz singer.



Kevin Gianino

Kevin Gianino has served as Adjunct Professor of Jazz Percussion at Webster University since 1983, and also serves on the jazz faculty at St. Chales Community College. A native of St. Louis, Professor Gianino attended St. Louis Community College Meramec, the University of Missouri St. Louis, and Webster University. He has served as a faculty member for International Summer Jazz Academy in Poland, Webster Summer Jazz Combo Camp, and the Jim Widner Summer Jazz Camps. He is in demand as a clinician, adjudicator, and performer on a national basis. He is a member of the Webster Faculty Jazz Ensemble, Brilliant Corners, the Dave Dickey Big Band, and the Hard Bop Heritage Quintet. He has performed with Diana Krall, Maynard Ferguson, Louie Bellson, Nancy Wilson, Diane Schuur, Michael Bubl , Bob Newhart, and Don Rickles. He has toured the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.



Randy Holmes

Randall G. (Randy) Holmes has been playing trumpet since the age of ten. Throughout high school, he studied with renowned teacher Edward Brauer. At 19, he received notice in *Down Beat* magazine as jazz soloist with University of MO (Columbia) Studio Band at the Tulsa Jazz Festival. After earning a degree at Webster University, he served for many years on the music faculty (jazz trumpet instructor, big band director). Holmes performed and recorded with St. Louis Brass Ensemble, St. Louis Jazz Repertory Quintet, Legacy Big Band, and Sessions Big Band. Performed/recorded with Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin, Richard Hayman and Doc Severinsen. Performed with jazz luminaries such as Dave Brubeck, Ella Fitzgerald, Ben E. King, Frank Sinatra Jr., Nancy Wilson, The Four Tops, The Spinners, and The Temptations. Randy has fronted various jazz combos under his own name (performing jazz standards as well as original material), notably the group HARD BOP HERITAGE, which recorded and issued the CD "At Home With Holmes" in 2010. Currently performing with Sarah Jane & The Blue Notes, the mariachi groups Nuevo Azteca and St. Louis Mariachi, and last but not least "The Jazz Story" at The Sheldon, where he was a founding cast member.



Blake Mickens

Blake Mickens is a St. Louis-based bass player who has been playing professionally since 2016. Blake began playing music at 7 years old. Starting with drums, he tried a multitude of different instruments until he settled on bass at age 11. He began to play jazz in high school and was a member of the JazzU All-Stars. Since graduating from Webster University in 2022 with a degree in jazz performance, he has played with a number of local musicians including Dawn Weber, Eldraco Price, Nathan Rauscher, and Ian Buschmann. He currently plays bass in many local bands with genres that range from jazz to soul to punk rock, as well as teaches music privately.



Carolbeth True

Pianist Carolbeth True is an active member of the St. Louis musical community as a teacher/coach and performer. She is a long-time member of the Webster University music faculty, and does extensive private teaching; an original member of the cast of "The Jazz Story" at the Sheldon, just finishing its 25th season. She acted as pianist with Variety Children's Theatre, The Munny, and MCDA Jazz Vocal Ensemble (director David Cannon). Her group Two Times True, (Dave True- drums), Larry Johnson- sax, Glen Smith- bass) performs around the St. Louis area, and is heard on multiple recordings: "Two Times True," "Circles," "I'm Just Sayin,'" and "True Christmas." Carolbeth is a member of The Oïkos Ensemble directed by saxophonist/ Reverend Cliff Aerie. Carolbeth has backed many big name jazz artists, and performed a dozen concertos with orchestras. Her awards include Excellence in the Arts Award (Arts and Education Council); Riverfront Times Jazz Musician of the Year; St. Louis Musician of the Year (St. Louis Magazine); Rock Hill Citizen of the Year.

Featured Jazz Musicians



Duke Ellington (1899-1974)

Duke Ellington, the King of Swing, began his piano study at age seven, and was influenced by ragtime piano. He formed a small band and made his professional debut at seventeen. An early recording, "East St. Louis Toodle-oo," included musicians to play drums, bass, saxophone, banjo, trumpet, trombone, clarinet with Duke on the piano.

Ellington played music with his band in the famous Cotton Club in Harlem, New York City, where his creativity and originality made him a leader in jazz. His band grew from 10 musicians to 18 - a Big Band. His band got to be famous in the United States and all over the world because of the recordings they made, and tours the band took to Europe.

He was particularly good at writing arrangements for the orchestra to accompany an improvising soloist, and won many awards and honors, including the Presidential Medal of Honor.

Source: The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz



Miles Davis (1926-1991)

Miles Davis started playing trumpet at age 13 where he grew up in East St. Louis. After only two years he was playing professionally and moved to New York City at age 18 where he started playing in big bands. He was a very creative musician and imagined music in a whole new way.

Miles Davis played bop music with his musical idol, saxophone player Charlie Parker, in New York. He played his trumpet on one of the most important jazz albums- *The Birth of the Cool*- and can take credit for influencing the cool jazz movement. He was a remarkable improviser and had a very unique sound. One of his contributions to jazz is the introduction of the harmon mute.

As soon as he popularized one thing, he would move onto the next! He was also a trailblazer in fusion, with jazz-rock and with the inclusion of instruments that hadn't been included in jazz music before, like the Indian sitar, African or Brazilian percussion, and Chinese cymbals.

Source: The New Grove Dictionary of Jazz

Jazz Story Vocabulary

ragtime- A blend of African-American and European music, known for syncopated rhythm. Ragtime became very popular piano music about 120-years ago and was the music that came right before jazz. Scott Joplin, who lived for a while right here in St. Louis, was known as the “King of Ragtime” and was one of the most popular composers and performers of ragtime.

syncopation- Accents on what would normally be weak beats (beats two and four are weak beats in four/four time). Ragtime and jazz make extensive use of syncopated rhythm.

improvisation- The art of changing and expanding upon a melody or chord progression to express the musical ideas of the soloist. A jazz player “taking a solo” is improvising on the tune.

blue notes- Lowered third, fifth and seventh notes in a scale are the “blue notes” used by blues singers and later by jazz singers and instrumentalists to give a special blues feeling to a song.

swing- A type of rhythm that became popular in the 1930’s and 1940’s. Eighth notes are not played evenly but “swung” in a rhythm closer to a triplet feel. During the “swing era” from 1935 to 1945, swing music was popularized by the big bands and used for dancing.

scat singing- Singing nonsense syllables that imitate instruments instead of words. This technique was made popular by Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald and many other jazz singers.

big bands- The popular bands of the 1930’s and 1940’s (and beyond) that played swing music, featuring sections of trumpets, saxophones, trombones and a rhythm section of piano, bass and drums. Big bands played for dances and often featured a singer or a vocal group.

bebop or bop- A type of jazz not for dancing, usually for a small combo, that took melody and harmony to new levels of complexity and freedom. There are lots and lots of notes on fast solos and great freedom on slower tunes. Partly a reaction to the commercial big bands.

trading fours- An exchange between two jazz musicians in which first one player and then another player improvise for four measures at a time.

riffs- A short musical phrase that is imitated by another player or section in the jazz ensemble. Riffs can become a written-out part of a jazz composition.

cool jazz- A by-product of bop, “cool jazz” was used to describe an unexcited, quiet, behind-the-beat playing that felt like relaxed swing.

fusion- A combination of jazz and rock and roll. Jazz improvisation is added to a rock and roll rhythmic feel of even eighth notes.

Jazz Story Set List

Roots of Jazz

- Maple Leaf Rag..... Scott Joplin
Stars and Stripes Forever..... John Phillip Sousa
Wade in the Water.....traditional spiritual
St. Louis Blues..... W.C. Handy

New Orleans Jazz

- Struttin' with Some Barbecue..... Louis Armstrong

Swing and Big Band

- God Bless the Child/Them There Eyes/Ooh, What a Little Moonlight Can Do..... Billie Holiday
It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing..... Duke Ellington
A-Tisket, A-Tasket Ella Fitzgerald

Bebop

- Night in Tunisia..... Dizzy Gillespie

Cool Jazz

- If I Were a Bell..... Miles Davis
Blue Rondo a la Turk..... Dave Brubeck

Fusion

- Watermelon Man/Chameleon..... Herbie Hancock
Happy..... Pharrell Williams

Classroom Activity: Call and Response

Form

Students will identify call-and-response and scat singing in “Minnie the Moocher,” a big band jazz tune written and performed by Cab Calloway.

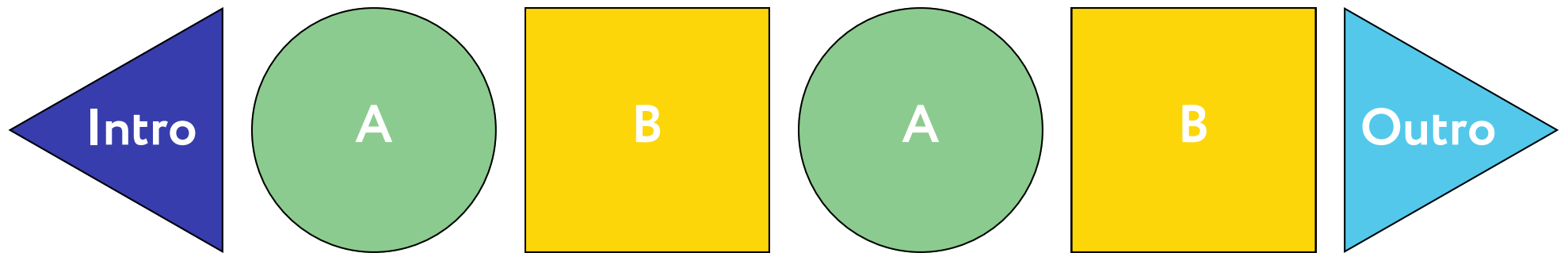


1. Play the video or recording (YouTube link on the photo), asking students to listen for repeated sections. Identify the pattern (A, B, A, B). ABAB can be identified from the story in Part A and the call-and-response scat singing Part B.
2. Project the form diagram on page 9 and play the recording again, pointing to the shape as the song progresses.
3. “Call-and-Response” of Part B demonstrates scat. Play the video again and ask the students to sing along with the responses. Teacher points to video or class so they know when to respond. Ask a student to point on the diagram to the shape as the song progresses.
4. Optional extension: A student leader (caller) uses different, improvised scat syllables, and lead the class (responders) in their own version of the call- and- response scat chorus. (Teacher can accompany on a E minor or E5 chord.)

Fun Facts about Cab Calloway and “Minnie the Moocher”

- He led a big band called The Missourians that made a recording called “Ozark Mountain Blues,” even though they were living and working in Harlem (NYC).
- “Minnie the Moocher” is believed to be the first jazz record to sell a million copies.
- The song is archived at the Library of Congress, and is in the Grammy Hall of Fame.

FORM in Minnie the Moocher



Postcards Without Borders

Allow students to reflect on the performance by writing a postcard to a friend describing what they experienced at The Sheldon. Students can color the front and write a message on the back.
(Please hand deliver- the “stamp” is fake.)

Missouri ELA Standard

Example: 2nd Grade

Writing 2A. Write opinion texts that:

- a. introduce a topic or text being studied, using complete sentences
- b. state an opinion about the topic or text and provide reasons for the opinion
- c. use specific words that are related to the topic and audience
- d. use linking/transition words and phrases to signal event order
- e. provide evidence of a beginning, middle, and concluding statement or section

Writing 2B. Write informative/explanatory texts that:

- a. introduce a topic or text being studied, using complete sentences
- b. use facts and definitions to develop points in generating paragraphs
- c. use specific words that are related to the topic and audience
- d. use linking words and phrases to signal event order
- e. create a concluding statement or paragraph

Please share excellent student work with us!

Email photos to
educationboxoffice@thesheldon.org

Missouri Music Standard

Example: 2nd Grade

Responding.

8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
 - a. Demonstrate knowledge of musical concepts and how the support creators'/performers' expressive intent.
9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
 - A. Apply personal and expressive preferences in the evaluation of music for specific purposes.

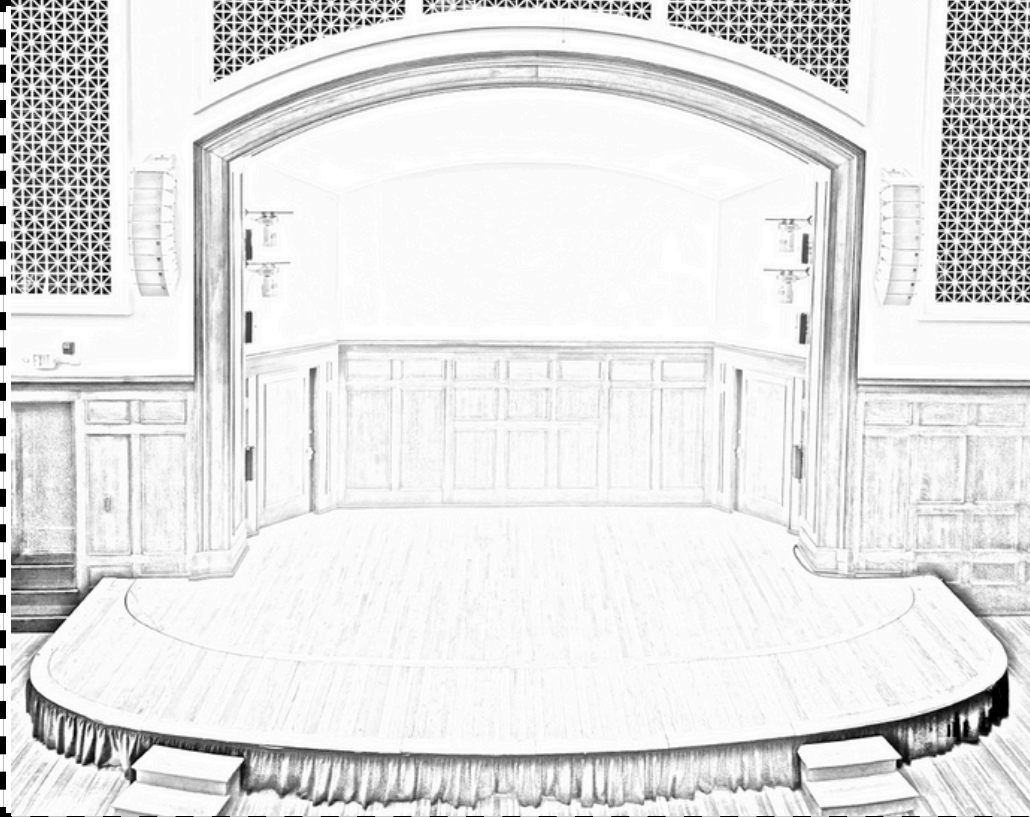
Connecting.

10. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.
 - A. Demonstrate understanding of relationships between music and other arts, other disciplines, varied contexts, and daily life.

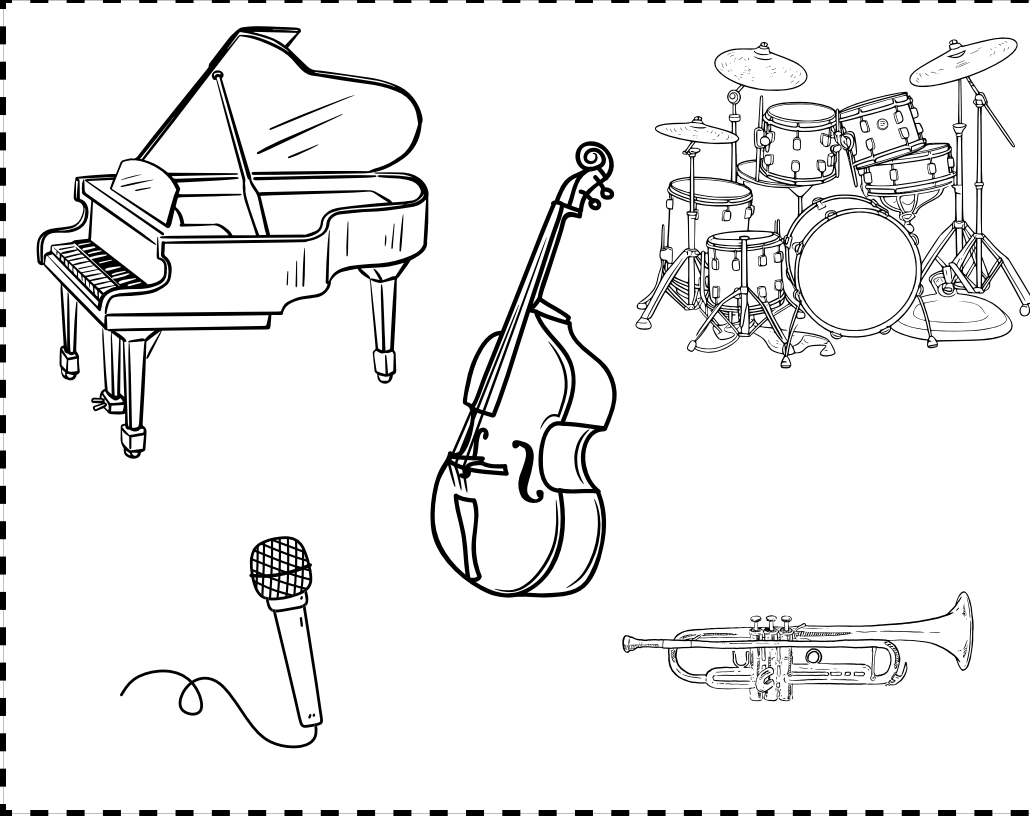


Suggested Jazz Story Prompts

- What are the roots of jazz music in America?
- Which styles of jazz music got your toes tapping?
- What elements of jazz music do you hear in music you listen to today?



MILES DAVIS



It don't mean

a thing

if it ain't

got that

SWING!



About The Sheldon

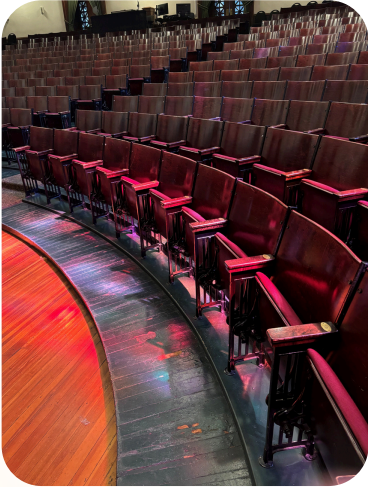


The Sheldon Concert Hall is a historical building that was constructed in 1912 by the famous architect, Louis Spiering. It was originally home to the Ethical Society of St. Louis and is named after Walter Sheldon, founding member of the Ethical Society. It was purchased in 1991, becoming The Sheldon Arts Foundation, with the first season presented in 1994. The education programs began in 1999 and continue to inspire young audiences today.



In 1998 The Sheldon Art Galleries were opened in the building next door to the concert hall, joined by a glass bridge. Interestingly, the building used to be a parking garage before it was renovated for the Sheldon galleries and event spaces.

Concert Hall Eye-Spy



Acoustic Materials

The Sheldon is known for having perfect acoustics, which means that sound travels really well – even without the use of microphones! The architect of The Sheldon carefully considered **shape, size, and materials** used in order to make the perfect concert hall. Hard and smooth surfaces **reflect** sound back to the listener and soft surfaces **absorb** sound.

The wood floor beneath your feet acts like the belly of a REALLY large guitar, vibrating with the sounds from stage. What you *cannot* see is that under the floor is open space and a dirt floor. The open space allows the floor to freely vibrate and the dirt floor absorbs the extra vibrations that pass through.



Reappearing patterns

Louis Spiering, architect of The Sheldon, gave the room his own personal touch through this geometric pattern found on the concert hall doors. This pattern is also found elsewhere in the concert hall. See if you can find the pattern when you visit!



Stage extension

If you look closely you will notice a seam where an extension to the original stage was added. The first row of original seats was removed to make room for this stage.

Stained glass windows

When you walk in the concert hall you won't be able to miss the beautiful stain glass windows creating a kaleidoscope of colors! Notice the contrasting designs. The windows on opposite sides of the stage were created by different artists at different times.

