

SCOTTISH  
CHAMBER  
ORCHESTRA

*IMMERSE*

**RESOURCE PACK**

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**A painting is music you can see,  
and music is a painting you can hear.**

– Miles Davis

**I do hear music in lots of colours.  
It's like a painting**

– Lady Gaga





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# Welcome to Immerse!

This resource pack is designed to help you prepare your students before the concert with insights and classroom activities inspired by the repertoire. This year we explore the relationship between music and art and take inspiration from composers and artists who have synaesthesia – a condition where activation of one sense, such as sight or hearing, leads to involuntary experiences in a second sense.

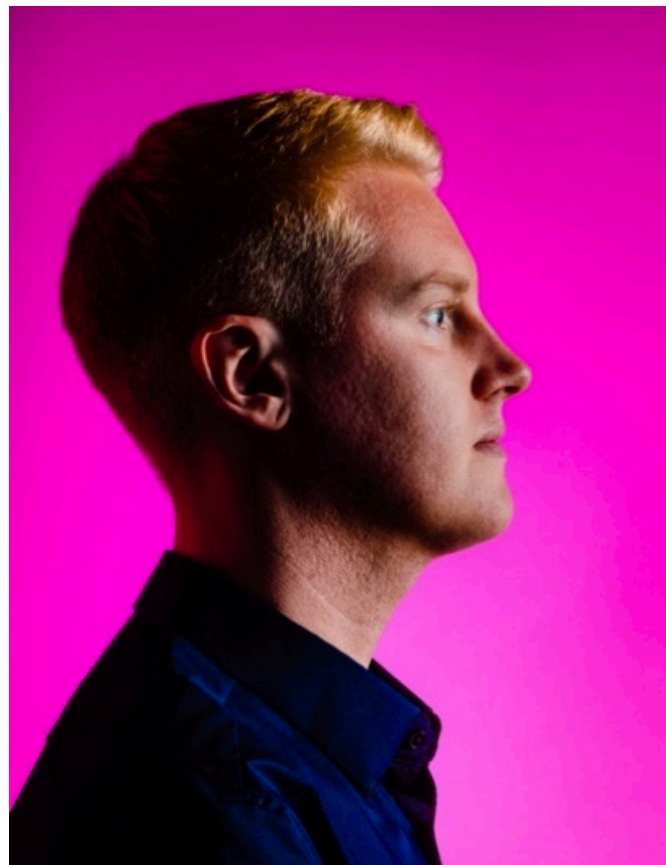
As well as more traditional repertoire from Jean Sibelius and Ludwig van Beethoven, we will present a brand-new work by SCO Associate Composer Jay Capperauld – *The Origin of Colour* – a musical journey inspired by a surrealist tale of the creation of colour on planet Earth. A series of paintings inspired by the theme, created by visual artist and musician Kirsty Matheson, will

be introduced and used as a source of inspiration at the concert and in this resource pack.

The live orchestral concert is performed by the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Teresa Riviero Böhm and presented by Jay Capperauld and Kirsty Matheson. Jay will give insight into his compositional processes while breaking down some musical concepts familiar (and perhaps unfamiliar!) to students studying National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher Music. He will also discuss different sources of creative inspiration with Kirsty, who will share how music acts as a vital part of her work as a visual artist and how she was inspired by Jay's work to create a series of artworks which will be on display as part of the concert.



# Meet the Artists



**Jay Capperault**

*"As the SCO Associate Composer, I am interested in finding connections with audiences through my music by creating welcoming and accessible pieces that tell unusual or interesting stories via the medium of the chamber orchestra. My music often aims to tell a story, even in an abstract way through pure emotion or creative expression, but my ultimate goal as a composer is to allow the audience space and inspiration to make up their own minds as to why the music unfolds in the way that it does, which in turn can lead to surprising, unexpected and powerful answers from our own perspectives as listeners."*



**Kirsty Matheson**

*"I paint music. I see music as an entity in itself, a separate life force. As a musician I hear all the layers, the rhythm, the style of music and as an artist I use paint, form, colour, texture to capture the emotional essence of the music that I hear. I have synaesthesia. When listening to music I can open a door in my mind to find a world of different colours that then interact with structure and form to create an artwork which captures the music itself in all its complexity. I want you to see what I hear."*



# What is Synaesthesia?

We are celebrating the work of composers who have synaesthesia, the links between art and music and what we can learn from this. Synaesthesia is a condition where the activation of one sense leads to involuntary experiences in a second sense. For example, when some people hear music, it triggers seeing colours. The opposite way round can also happen, where seeing colour can trigger hearing sound. It is estimated that 2-4% of the general population have some form of synaesthesia but that this rises to around 20% for arts professionals! All of the composers in this concert programme and the artists we quote have synaesthesia.

**Music is for me like a  
beautiful mosaic which  
God has put together**

– Jean Sibelius



# What to expect at the concert?

The concert contains four pieces:

1. **Sibelius** Pelléas et Mélisande suite, *movement I*
2. **Beethoven** Symphony No 6, *Movement II, Andante molto moto.*
3. **Beethoven** Symphony No 6, *Movement IV, Allegro*
4. **Capperauld** The Origin of Colour

Jean Sibelius had synaesthesia across many senses, he claimed to hear sounds in his mind when he saw colours, objects or via scents. The first piece in the concert is part of a collection, commissioned as incidental music for a play. The play was described as dense, metaphorical and hard to understand. It was said that Sibelius' music helped make sense of the confusing text and conveyed its meaning more clearly.

Beethoven's Symphony No 6 is programmatic – in other words he intended to depict the countryside and nature through music. You will hear the second movement – Szene am Bach (Scene by the brook). Listen out for the bird calls. The fourth movement of the Symphony, Gewitter, Sturm (Thunder, Storm) is a dark, a brooding and dramatic depiction of a storm. It moves towards the listener from afar, then envelops the audience in thunder and lightning. The storm passes over and the movement closes with the flute's ascending major scale, depicting a rainbow.

*The Origin of Colour* takes its inspiration from a short story, *Without Colours* by Italo Calvino which tells a surrealist tale of the creation of colour on Earth. It begins with a depiction of a colourless world which is suddenly and dramatically changed when a meteor rips through the sky. Colour explodes into the world and people must learn to adjust. This dramatic tale is brought to life by Jay's music, which uses the orchestra in innovative ways to paint a vibrant and engaging story with music.



# How do we experience music?

Music is a full sensory experience. It is perceived individually through people's bodies and imagination and collectively through shared experiences. You do not have to have synaesthesia to experience music in an interesting way. Music is special for many reasons, for example it is:

- Social – its important in many life events with friends and families
- Emotional - people tailor their music listening choices to match or change their mood
- Communicative – it's a way of sharing emotions and ideas
- Physical – humans are naturally affected by beat and want to be in time with each other
- All encompassing – it can help you get into mindfulness and flow

We invite you and your students to think about the listener's role as creative as well as analytical. Ask your students to pay attention to how the music makes them feel and what musical features trigger their imagination. This will expand students' understandings of music, making new neural pathways and associations. These connections are important as they can offer another way of thinking about music concepts.

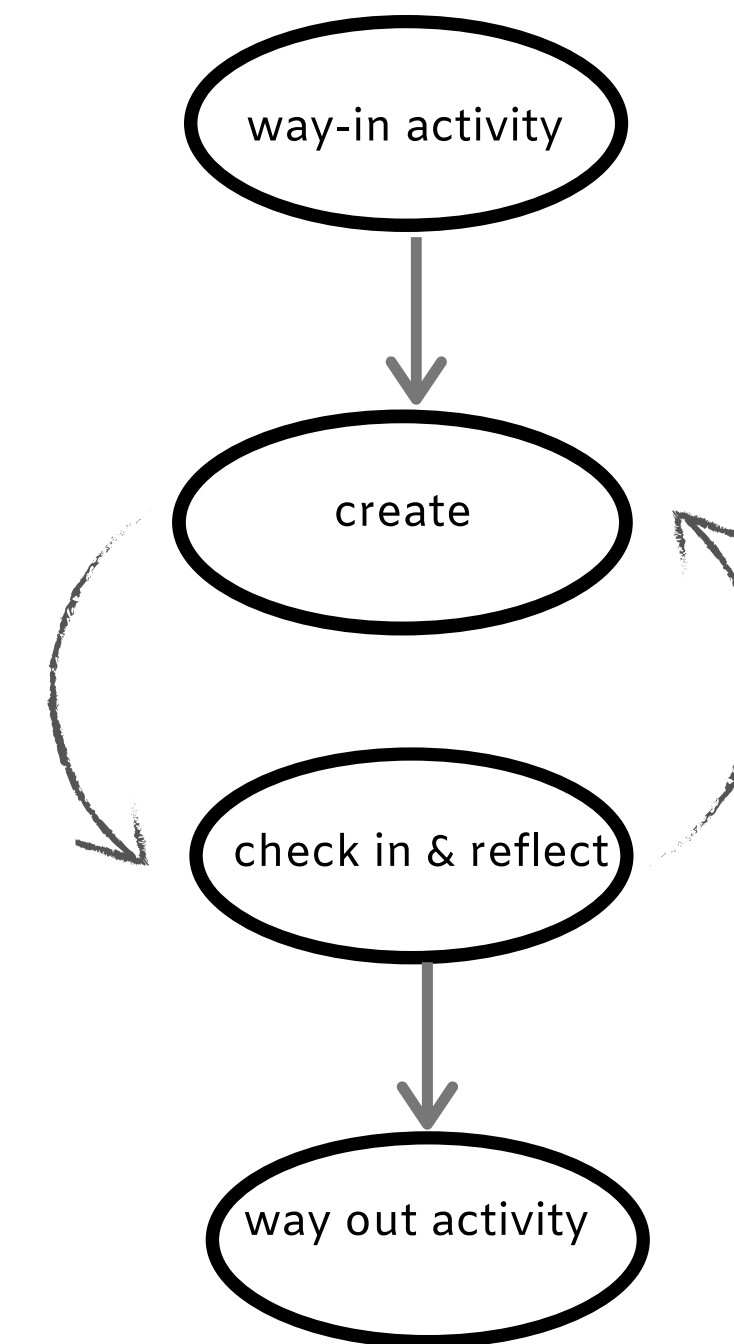
**I believe harmonies are colours**  
– Beyoncé



# Classroom activities - Art as a starting point for composition

In the following activities we outline approaches to composition inspired by art that can be explored over three to four lessons of around 45 minutes each. This approach works best with small groups of around three for the first couple of lessons, then students can move to working individually. Key techniques that Jay used in *The Origin of Colour* will be described and can inform the students' creative process.

The shape of each lesson can be demonstrated in the following model <sup>1</sup>



## SQA concepts used:

- atonality
- counter melody
- drone
- dynamics
- form (A-B-A)
- melody
- timbre
- tonality
- tremolando
- riff



# Activity 1 – Way In (10 minutes)

In the concert we will talk about ways of listening and focusing on sound. The two tasks are designed to bring your class to a focused place of attentiveness. Both take around 5 minutes and you can choose one or other or both.

## Task A – Three listening spaces

This exercise is inspired by warm-ups used by legendary theatre director Konstantin Stanislavski and his ways of preparing for creative tasks.

1. *Ask the class to listen to the sounds in the room they are in for around 30 seconds. (They have to ignore sounds outwith the four walls of the classroom)*
2. *Ask them to describe what they hear*
3. *Listen for sounds outside the classroom but inside the school*
4. *Ask the class to describe these sounds*
5. *Ask the class to listen to the sounds outside the building and talk about what they hear*

You can develop this further by encouraging your class to describe the sounds in musical terms. For example, what dynamic were the sounds (pp, mf, ff)? Were they legato/staccato? Was there any repetition?



### **Task B - Relational Playing: Accompany, Copy, Differents**

The teacher plays (or sings) a short motif and invites young people to either **accompany, copy**, or play **differently** to them.

For this task, it's important to emphasise to the class that there is no right or wrong. Playing or singing perfectly in pitch or tonally is not the goal. Instead, let's focus on other skills.

**Accompany** means students are being creative and responding quickly in a way that complements the motif.

**Copy** means for the students to copy the motif. This may present challenges in matching pitch so mention that this is not expected. Instead the focus is on copying the shape, rhythm or dynamic of the motif as these are more accessible.

**Differently** simply means sounding not the same. This should be the easiest task, and the ways in which the differences are expressed musically is a good point for group discussion.

This task is about loosening up and becoming confident about responding in the moment. It is important that each playing relationship has a different approach and process, which can be applied to their composition projects. If desired, the teacher can then choose different students to create their own motif for the rest of the class to respond to using the three playing relationships.



## Activity 2 - Create (25 minutes)

To begin with, each group chooses a piece of art to work with. The following examples are from Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, artists and pioneers of theory on colour. You may also find examples to inspire from Kirsty Matheson's works.

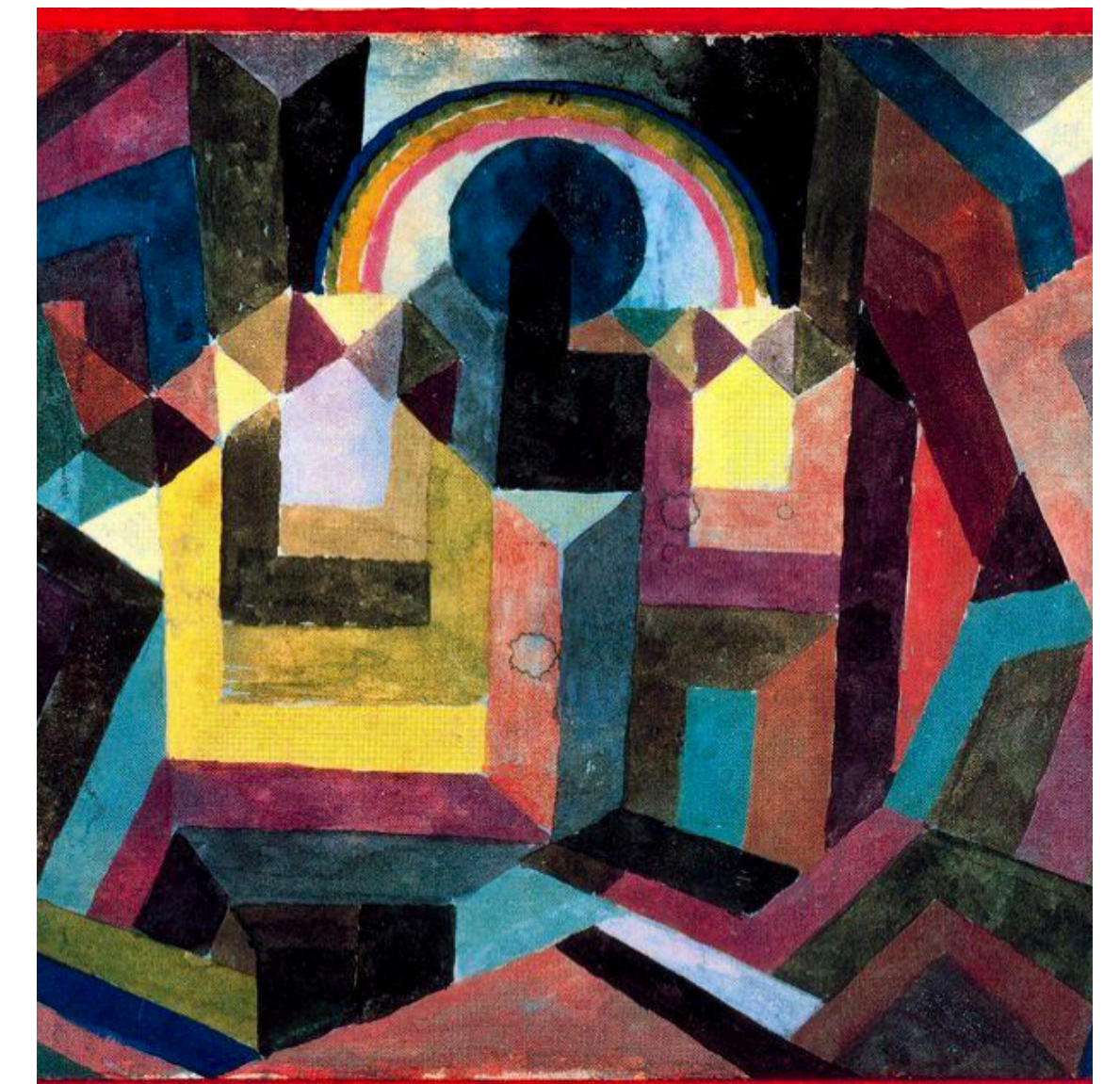
Access specially chosen artworks: <https://www.kirstymatheson.com/immerse> (password: Immerse23/24)

Alternatively, students can create their own art as the starting point.

The next step is to decide different musical parameters informed by the art. Four tasks for developing atonality/tonality, melody and form, riffs and timbre now follow.



*Several Circles by Wassily Kandinsky*

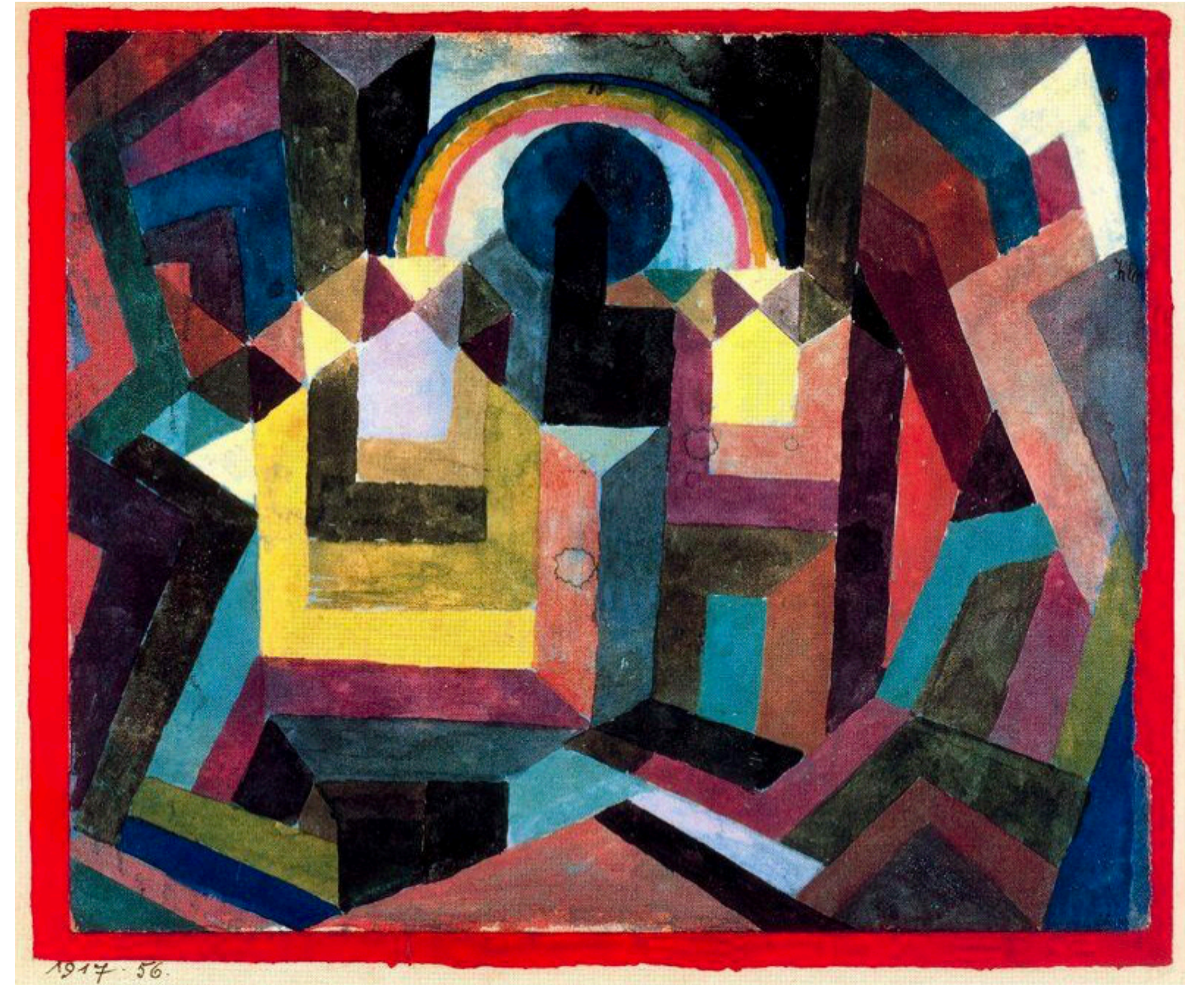


*With the Rainbow by Paul Klee*





*Several Circles by Wassily Kandinsky*



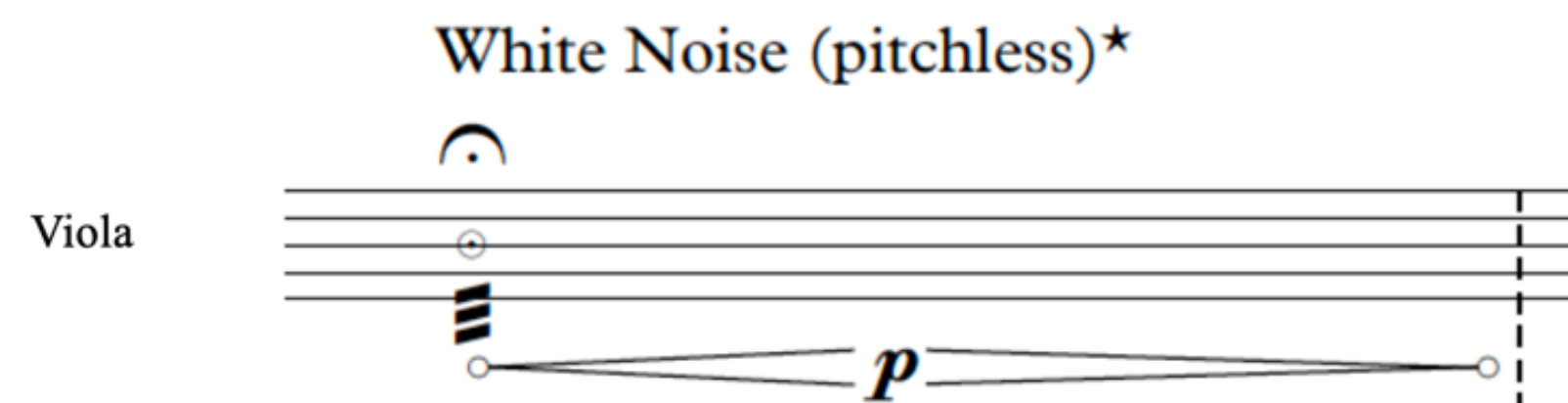
*With the Rainbow by Paul Klee*



## Task A - Colour & Atonality/tonality

The opening of Jay's piece the *Origin of Colour* depicts the absence of colour through layers of unpitched and unusual sounds. These are known as 'extended techniques' and are non-standard ways of playing instruments. For example:

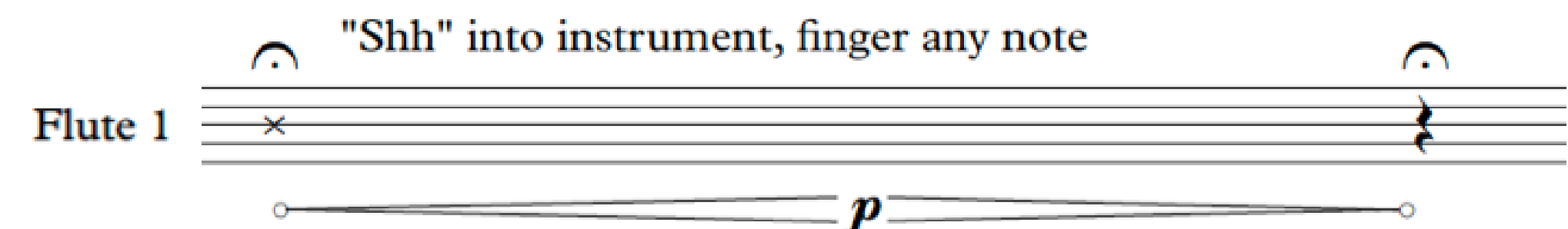
Strings have to make unpitched sounds and use tremolando to create 'white noise'.



Brass players blow air into their instruments and waggle their keys rapidly!



Wind players are instructed to vocalise (make the *shhhh* sound) into their instruments. They have the choice of note.





Stage one of the task is to find unusual ways of playing your instruments that create 'white noise'. Each person in the group can find a different sound and then layer these up. Finding ways of notating this is important so other people can recreate this.

Moving to deciding on tonality - depending on the stage of your class there will be some keys that they will know better than others. National 5 should know chords I, IV and V, Higher should know I, IV and V in major keys and Advanced Higher should know I, IV, V and VI in major and minor keys.

In the Kandinsky there is a dark grey background. We suggest students pick the home key that seems the most 'dark grey' of the keys they know. This can be achieved through improvising. One person in the group provides the keynote as a drone and the others use the notes of the key only to play over the top. The group then decides the best key for the colour through discussion with their group.



*Several Circles by Wassily Kandinsky*



## TASK B - Shape, Melody & Form

Looking at the Kandinsky's artwork, the circles could inspire a melody. For example, a melody could use all or nearly all of the notes in the scale, varying length and expression. For example, here is a melody in key of F, which uses A-B-A form representing a melody coming back around a 'full circle'.



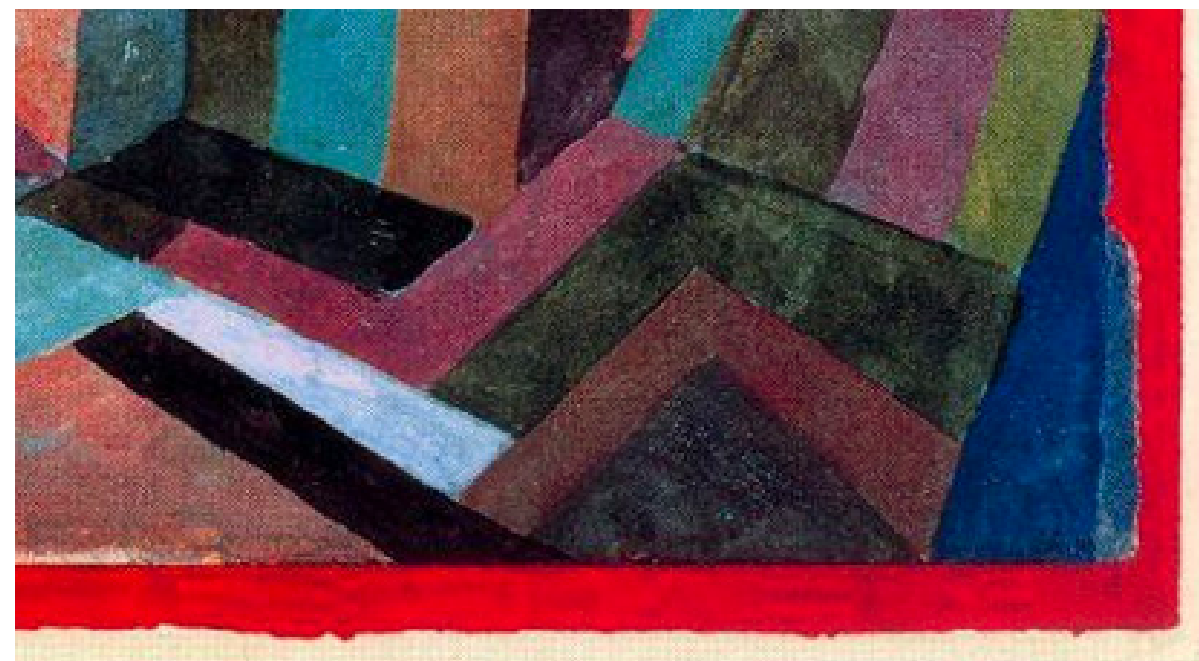
*Several Circles by Wassily Kandinsky*



## TASK C - Shape & Riffs

Repeated shapes have a direct parallel in music. In *the Origin of Colour*, Jay uses repetition and riffs to form an accompanying line bubbling underneath the orchestra, played by the percussion section.

For example:

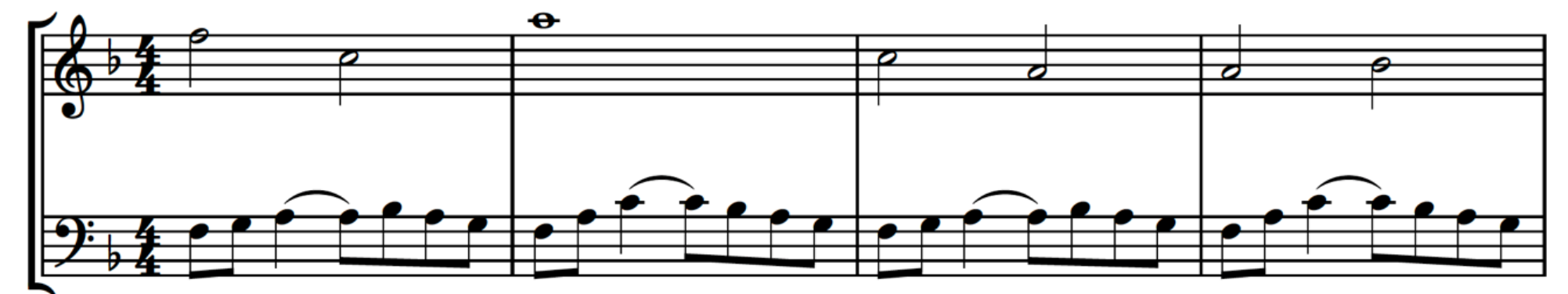


In Klee's artwork, the shapes in the bottom right-hand corner could indicate a series of similar musical elements. Its outline could be played in the left hand/ bass clef as a bassline, forming a rising and falling pattern.

For example:



The relationship with other shapes can be explored musically – for example the lines moving up from the triangular figure could form a more static legato melody.





## Task D - Texture & Timbre

*The Origin of Colour* explores different timbres across the orchestra as a way of creating atmospheres through interesting textures. Here are cellos and basses playing tremolando, going from *p* to *f* or *ff* and back, creating dramatic tension.



In Klee's artwork there are subtle variations in the colours which create an interesting textural quality. This could be transferred into music through quiet countermelodies or melodic fragments which enhance the main melody. Another approach is to think about ways of creating atmospheric accompanying parts using tremolando strings if available. You can also create this effect on other instruments by moving between two notes very quickly. Jay shows a way of notating this in the flute part, with the three bold lines indicating to alternate between notes E and C as fast as possible.



Another technique used in *the Origin of Colour* is matching dynamics very precisely to the emotion/mood. Quick changes (as seen opposite, in the strings tremolando) can be very dramatic, and slow changes can build tension.



## Activity 3 - Check in and reflect (5 minutes)

This section forms a cycle with the creative tasks. Reflection can be effectively modelled by the teacher, and then carried out by students themselves if appropriate. Some suggestions for reflective prompts are:

1. *Did the artistic prompt provide a different way of thinking about music? If so, how?*
2. *Were any of the tasks particularly successful/unsuccessful? If so, how?*

The teacher can use the information from these questions to:

**Clarify:** The tasks and approach may not immediately clear to the students. Clarification can help students to choose the way forward.

**Change:** Sometimes ideas don't come from students easily. Changing the visual stimulus may spark new ideas.

**Consolidate:** small groups can play the ideas a few times, audio/video record and listen back, or share notation of their ideas as the task unfolds. In a creative process, ideas can be lost if not recorded or written down.



## Activity 4 - Way Out (5 minutes)

The last section of the lesson can include the groups playing their ideas or talking about their creative processes with the whole class. This is an opportunity for them to share feedback with each other and think about what they want to do next.

This enables the students to decide on next steps for the following lesson so it can have a focused start.

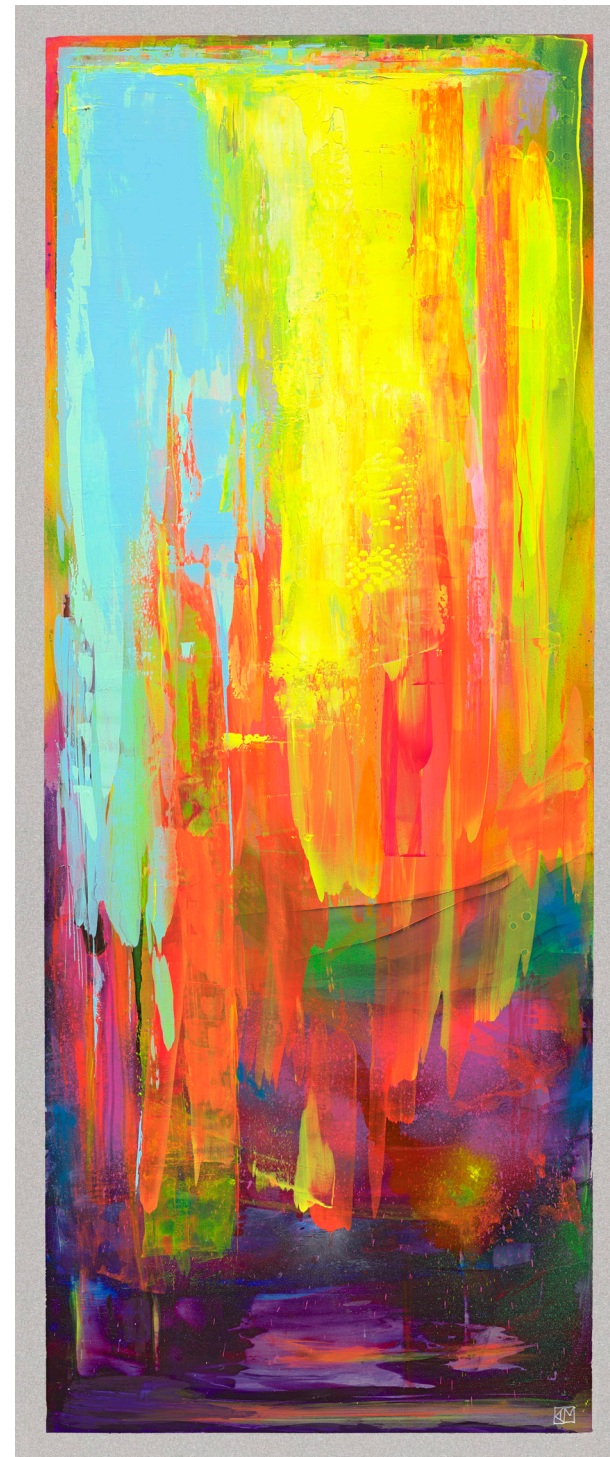
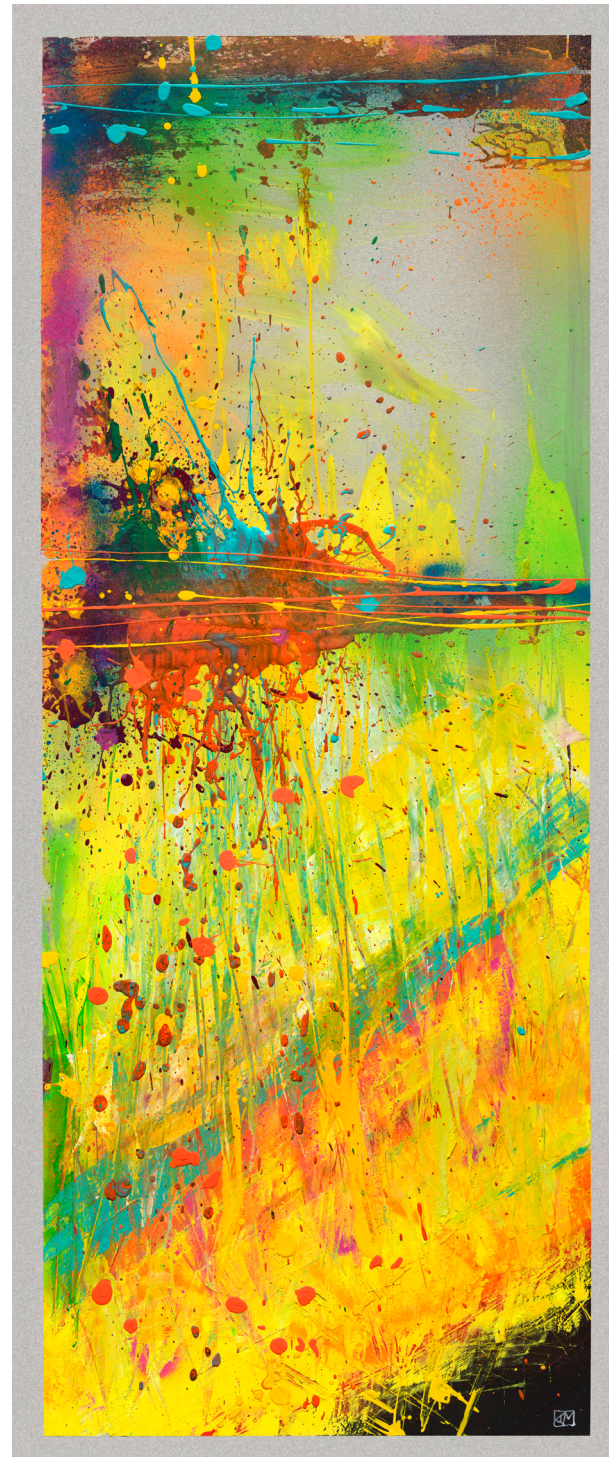
<sup>1</sup> The model and 'way in' activities have been developed from a book chapter: MacGlone, U.M. (2022). *Frames for Improvising*. In Abril, C. R. & Gault, B. M. (Eds.), *General Music: Dimensions of Practice* (pp. 215-234). Oxford University Press.



# FURTHER INFORMATION



# The Origin of Colour by Kirsty Matheson



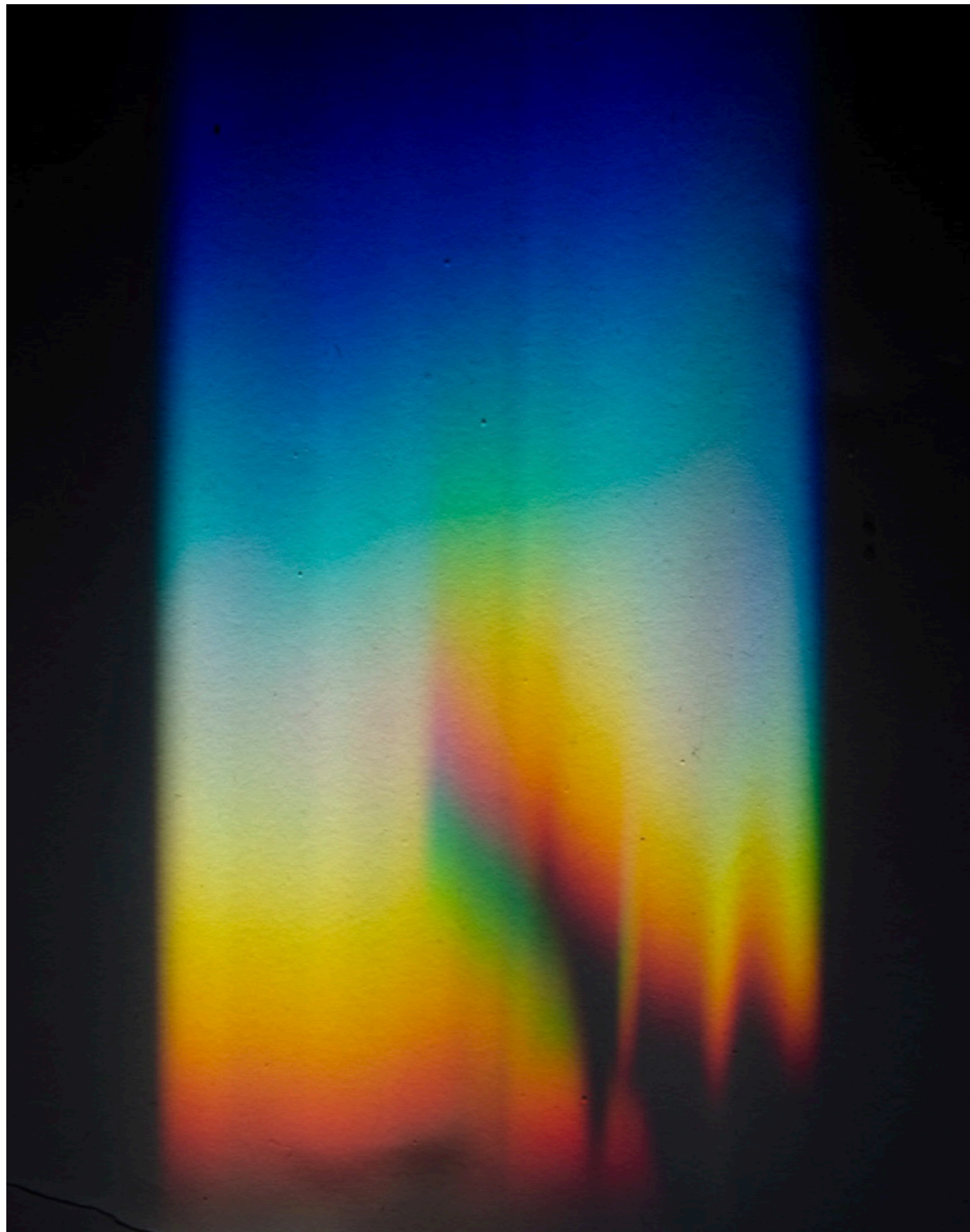
For full size images and access to the artworks visit <https://www.kirstymatheson.com/immerse> (password: Immerse23/24)



**Programme Notes - The Origin of Colour**

*The Origin of Colour* takes its inspiration from a short story in Italo Calvino's Cosmicomics series called *Without Colours*, which tells a surrealist tale of the creation of colour on Earth. In the beginning, the world exists in whites and greys where objects and people are shapeless entities bumping into each other in translucent static hues. Suddenly a meteor rips through the sky illuminating the world for the first time highlighting purple chasms and orange mountains; earthquakes emit blue fluids to form the first oceans; the violet Sun sets for the first time; the first black night reveals the stars; newly formed pink clouds unleash golden lightning; post-storm rainbows appear and now the world is full of blue skies, yellow fish, green trees and red fires. Calvino's story is, above all, a love story between two characters who find and lose each other in the chaos of the Earth's formation of colour. The dazzling quality of these new colours leaves one particular character in fear of this chaotic new world and they decide to hide in a cave where colour did not reach. One final earthquake collapses the entrance to the cave leaving them isolated from their lover and the colourful new world on the other side.

This new showpiece for Chamber Orchestra attempts to capture Calvino's creation story in a musical journey that maps the creation of colour on Earth from the hollow, translucent landscape described by Calvino to a kaleidoscopically vibrant world which is both beautiful and terrifying in equal measure.





## About the Scottish Chamber Orchestra

The internationally celebrated Scottish Chamber Orchestra is one of Scotland's National Performing Companies.

Formed in 1974, the SCO aims to provide as many opportunities as possible for people to hear great music by touring the length and breadth of Scotland, appearing regularly at major national and international festivals and by touring internationally as proud ambassadors for Scottish cultural excellence.

Making a significant contribution to Scottish life beyond the concert platform, the Orchestra works in schools, universities, colleges, hospitals, care homes and community centres through its award-winning Creative Learning programme.

*What really drives us to perform, is seeing the expressions on people's faces and watching them light up when we are playing.* - William Stafford, Sub-Principal Clarinet







### **About the Conductor Teresa Riveiro Böhm**

Austrian-Spanish conductor Teresa Riveiro Böhm is rapidly gaining the attention of orchestras and opera companies internationally. The winner of the Neeme-Järvi-Prize at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival in 2019, Riveiro Böhm spent two years as Leverhulme Conducting Fellow with the BBC Scottish Symphony from 2019 to 2021.

In September 2022 she was announced as the Welsh National Opera Associate Conductor in collaboration with the LSO Donatella Flick Conducting Competition for the 2022/23 season, and as the Associate Conductor of the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra for the 22/23 season.

**[www.teresariveiroboehm.com](http://www.teresariveiroboehm.com)**

# Thank You

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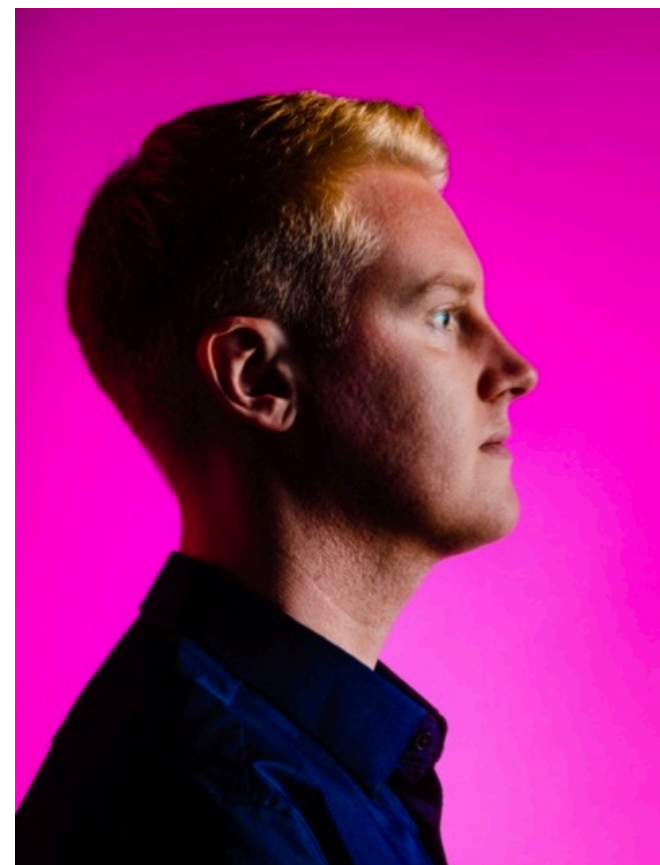
Kindly supported by JTH Charitable Trust and the Sir Iain Stewart Foundation.

Jay Capperauld's *The Origin of Colour* was kindly supported by the Hinrichsen Foundation and the Vaughan Williams Foundation



## Artists' websites

**Jay Capperauld**  
*[www.jaycapperauld.com](http://www.jaycapperauld.com)*



**Kirsty Matheson**  
*[www.kirstymatheson.com](http://www.kirstymatheson.com)*  
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