



# OLIVIA FORMS

## A BAND

Online Sound Explorers: Interactive  
Chamber Concert



Creative projects for the classroom or at home  
Key Stage 1

**LSO Discovery**

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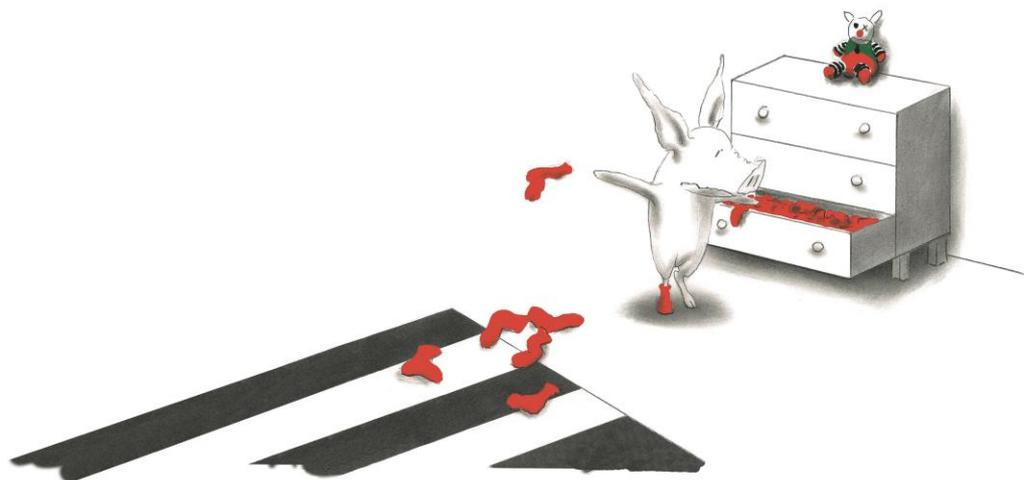
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# About the London Symphony Orchestra and LSO Discovery

The London Symphony Orchestra is widely regarded as one of the world's leading orchestras. It is a resident orchestra at the Barbican Centre in London and regularly tours abroad. Its many activities include LSO Discovery, the energetic and ground breaking education and community programme, LSO Live, a recording company and exciting work in the field of information technology. Over a century after it was formed, the LSO still attracts the best players, many of whom also have flourishing solo and chamber music careers. The LSO also draws on an enviable roster of soloists and conductors, including Music Director Sir Simon Rattle, and François-Xavier Roth and Gianandrea Noseda as Principal Guest Conductors.

LSO St Luke's, the UBS and LSO Music Education Centre on Old Street, continues to expand its artistic programme with top artists from diverse musical backgrounds, and LSO Discovery is facilitating music education using new technology, and building stronger links with the local communities. LSO Live is the best-selling orchestral own-label in the world and is regularly No 1 in the classical downloads charts on iTunes. Continuing the Orchestra's long association with film music, the LSO has recorded soundtracks for Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith and Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire. The Orchestra also features regularly on radio, TV, computer games and in-flight music programmes.

LSO Discovery has, for the past 30 years, been one of the most important ways for the LSO to realise its mission of 'making the finest possible music available to the widest number of people'. Through workshops, projects and masterclasses, LSO Discovery has become a world leader in taking the music and players of the orchestra into the community, and making the LSO relevant to the lives of thousands of people beyond the concert hall.



# Introduction

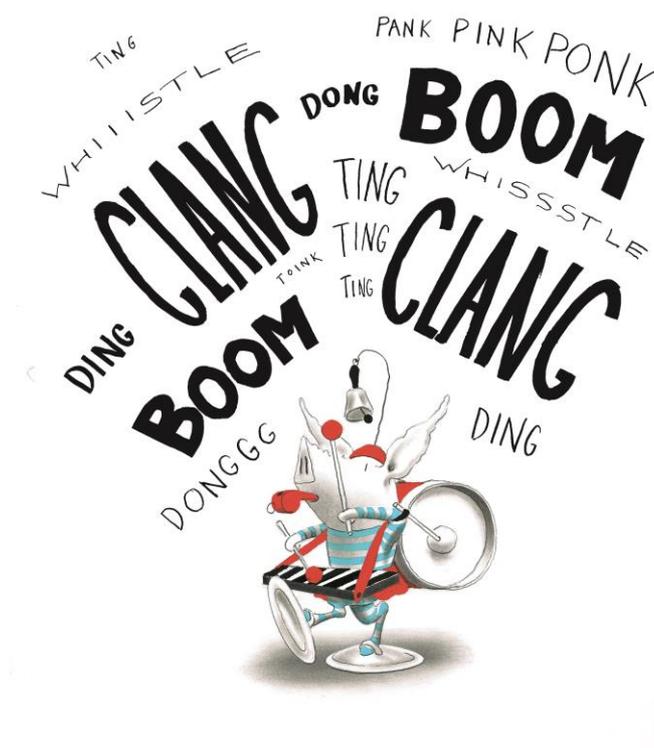
This pack is designed to provide creative extension activities for Key Stage 1 teachers and their class or families at home, supporting our online Sound Explorers concert, Olivia Forms a Band.

Based on the popular children's book *Olivia Forms a Band* by Ian Falconer, we invite you to join Rachel Leach and musicians from the London Symphony Orchestra for a 30 minute concert, telling the story of Olivia and her trip to see the fireworks.

These interactive activities provide fun and creative extensions to the concert.

## A few helpful guidelines before beginning work with instruments in the classroom:

- Take time to demonstrate each instrument. Encourage your children to use its name and hold it in the correct way. Pass it around the class and let children have a go. Your children will then be able to make informed choices when they make their piece. Which instrument sounds like rain? Which instrument can be loud, soft, scary?
- Encourage your class to respect and care for the instruments from the start. This could save your eardrums from a pounding and will preserve the instruments in a good state of repair.
- Children should know to put the instruments gently down on the floor when not playing.
- Put in place a signal for silence. This could be simply putting your hand in the air or clapping a pattern. When children hear or see the signal they stop, put their instrument down and listen. You could even make this into a game.
- Finally, when working creatively with instruments it is important to try out the children's ideas as they suggest them. Nothing is 'right' or 'wrong' with this type of creative work.



# Project 1: Fireworks!

Whilst this project is outlined for classroom percussion, voices and body percussion can also be used. As always, please feel free to adapt our ideas to suit the resources you have available. The tasks can be achieved in the classroom with the whole group working together or by splitting into smaller groups and putting the pieces together at the end. The project can also be done at home with homemade instruments or by using your voice or body percussion.

1. Have a discussion about fireworks. Have you ever seen a firework display? Do you know the names of the different fireworks? Can you make their sounds using your voices?
2. You are going to make some music to describe fireworks. Let's start with a rocket. A rocket makes this sound

**Shooooo!!!! Whiiiiiiiiizzzz! BANG!!**

3. Take a look at your instrument collection. Can anyone spot an instrument that can make a 'Shooooo' sound? How about a 'Whiiiiizzzz' and a 'BANG!?' Select the instruments you need and decide who's playing them. Join these sounds together to make the sound of a rocket. You might like to use simple signals to make sure the sounds come one after the other rather than together.
4. Now think about other types of firework. Begin by deciding on their sounds and trying them out vocally, then switch to instruments. Below are some more suggestions:

**Catherine Wheel**  
**Roman Candle**  
**Banger**

**turning turning turning fizz!**  
**shhhhh! (getting louder and louder)**  
**Shhhhhooooo (gap) BANG**

5. Make up some new fireworks of your own with new sounds. If you run out of ideas, try making a big bang with everyone making one loud sound together at the same time.
6. When everyone has an instrument and a sound, either individually or in groups, explain that you are going to create a giant musical firework display and appoint a conductor. When the conductor points to a person or group they must play their firework sound once. The rest of the time they must be silent. The piece will be most effective if the conductor leaves plenty of gaps (silences) and tries to give everyone a turn.
7. Try out several conductors. You may like to leave your piece like this or try it without a conductor. Can it be achieved, with all the silences and discipline without someone standing at the front and signalling?

### Taking it further

- Try structuring your fireworks sounds so that the piece is the same every time.
- Create a graphic score of the piece (a diagram of events) for everyone to follow.

*This simple project should help your children to begin to make creative decisions, learn about the different musical instruments and their sounds and to try out ideas. Using a conductor encourages children to follow simple visual signals to control their instrument. Try to begin and end your performance with silence and teach the importance of silence as part of the music. Encourage your children to listen to each other's contributions and not to play all the time.*

## Project 2: Let's Make a Band!

1. Explain to your class that you are going to form a band and create an exciting march to describe a lively firework display. Begin with a **plodding pulse**....

Marching music usually has a pulse like this

*unpitched instruments....*



*pitched instruments....*



You can practise changing the pulse to other notes. Decide how many of each you are going to do, but always begin and end on the same pitch (C).

You can also create a pulse by marching on the spot or tapping alternate knees.

2. Now you need some rhythms - this is where your children's knowledge of fireworks will come in handy! Start by choosing (or inventing) the names of some fireworks (eg. Chinese Fountain, Roman Candle, Zip-Bang-Whiz), or simply use your fireworks ideas from Project 1.
3. Choose one person to provide the pulse and encourage everyone to join in saying their firework names over the top. The aim is to make a pattern with the words, and repeat it over and over again to create an **ostinato**. An ostinato is simply a repeated rhythmic pattern.
4. When this is achieved, choose your favourite two or three fireworks and practise clapping the words rather than saying them - one clap for each syllable. For example:

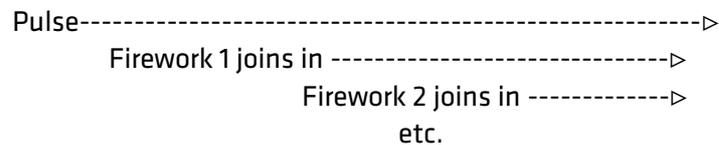


*Cath'rine wheel Siz zle Siz zle Bang!*

5. Split the class into smaller groups – one group for each firework pattern. Ask each group to choose an instrument (it would be great if each group uses only one type of instrument so you end up with a group of maracas, a group of woodblocks, a group of guiros etc). Make sure that each group has one child playing the pulse throughout or appoint one child to keep the pulse for the entire class.

Encourage the groups to practise playing their firework pattern round and round to the pulse.

6. Bringing the groups all back together, have a go at putting all your elements together into one piece. The following shape would work really well to begin with:



7. Decide on a structure that is achievable and practise your piece until it is the same every time. Think carefully about the ending, should you drop out one by one or end with a loud flurry of explosions or one big bang?

### **Taking it further**

- Add some unexpected loud explosions such as cymbal crashes or loud drum hits. Use these sparingly!
- If your piece sounds too crowded, ask each group to add a gap between the repeats of their pattern. To do this, ask them to choose a number between 1 and 8. After they have played their pattern, they count this number of pulse beats in their head before playing again. This simple trick will make your music sound a lot more interesting as the patterns will become unpredictable

*This project should help your children to learn about rhythm and is the first step towards playing together as an ensemble.*

### **Working from home?**

Both of these tasks can be done at home. Raid the kitchen cupboards for ‘instruments’ or use just body percussion (clapping, stamping, tapping the knees etc) or voice.