



Orli Shaham, Artistic Director
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Mission Statement:

The purpose of Baby Got Bach is to spark young children’s interest in creating and listening to music. This is accomplished by introducing them to musical instruments and educating them about musical concepts. Hands-on activities with professional musicians are followed by an interactive concert - with those same musicians - in which the same concepts are reinforced. The events are presented in New York City as well as in other locations around the United States, for families with young children.

Live concerts are supplemented by the distribution of multimedia materials to increase the organization’s outreach. With this production, we aim to expand our reach by offering a slice of our live concert experience via video content: downloadable video, physical DVD, phone “app,” or even broadcast programming. Our focus is always on developing children’s listening skills and empowering them to participate in music-making, both important aspects of a live Baby Got Bach concert.

About the concerts:

Our concerts are the brainchild of internationally renowned concert pianist Orli Shaham, who understood the need to fill the gap in serious musical education for children age 3-6. This is the age when children are beginning to be receptive to learning the language of music, yet most music education programs are geared towards kids younger than three and older than six. The programs feature Ms. Shaham alongside members of professional performing arts ensembles and music school teaching faculty. Baby Got Bach programs contain two main components

- BackStage Up Front: hands on, interactive, one-on-one activities
- Main Stage concert: live interactive concert

BackStage Up Front: Active participation

Each Baby Got Bach program begins with active participation – **BackStage Up Front** -where kids have an opportunity to play with real musical instruments, build their own instruments, conduct sound experiments, and compose music, with each activity guided by the musicians that will later be performing on stage. Participants go to as many as five different stations where they have one-on-one time with professional musicians and engage in many different educational activities. For example, during Baby Got Bach’s “stringed instrument” themed program, children may draw a bow across a cello or violin with the assistance of a professional violinist or cellist. During a “wind instrument” themed show, children may press different keys on a flute while the musician blows into the instrument, thus changing the pitch. They can also participate in sound experiments, using straws and their breath to see what a focused stream of air can create. For percussion themed shows children use a variety of percussion instruments to create their own percussion solo. In some programs, professional composers

(whose music is often performed in the live concert portion), help children compose a short melody which is then performed by one of the musicians at another station.

Participants are guided through BackStage Up Front activities with the help of a “passport,” which is a program and guide to each activity station. After completing a station, children are given a stamp on that particular section of the “passport.” The passport also contains information about related activities that children can perform at home with the help of their caregivers.

MainStage Concert: Reinforcement and interactive listening

After **BackStage Up Front** children and their families participate in a live, interactive concert which reinforces the concepts introduced during the first part of the program. For example, children who used a bow on a violin and then plucked its strings might hear the musicians on stage play violin duos by Bartok that use these same techniques. After blowing into a trumpet mouthpiece during **BackStage Up Front**, children get to see professional musicians creating music by doing the same thing. The same professional musicians who worked one-on-one with the children at individual stations during the first part of the program perform on stage with Ms. Shaham at the piano.

Most of the compositions performed during the **MainStage Concert** are interactive. Ms. Shaham is the host, providing context and continuity; and is both performer and curator of the listening experience. Ms. Shaham has created original stories for children, which, as she reads them aloud, bring to life aspects of the classical music that is performed by the professional musicians on stage.

One example is Beethoven’s “Variations on a theme from Don Giovanni” for wind trio. For this work, Ms. Shaham reads segments of an original story between each variation to match the changes in the music, calling the children’s attention to different instruments or types of music.

Also included in the concerts are compositions specially commissioned by Baby Got Bach from prominent composers. These new, interactive works include *City Sounds*, which tells the story of a day in the life of a ballerina, *Curious Engine* about a train which stops at a fiesta, a carousel, and a parade, and *Sneaky March*, in which children listen for musical cues to perform various movements which are rehearsed before the performance.