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The Instrument Petting Zoo

The Civic Orchestra of Tucson is an all-volunteer symphony orchestra that has been providing Tucson with free concerts since 1975. In 1995 we began offering our Instrument Petting Zoo at special events. Here's how it works: We bring instruments and musicians to give guidance. You play. We have wind, string and percussion instruments to share. It's joyful, noisy fun, and you never know where it will lead. Parents have repeatedly conveyed their surprise and pleasure after seeing their children's obvious interest in this activity, and many have inquired into music lessons. COT musicians have brought this unique activity to schools, children's programs, city-sponsored events, arts festivals, and Bookmans store events.

There are two basic formats to our program:



The Classroom Zoo

We set up in a room. Children are brought to us in groups of up to 12. We give a short presentation about the instruments: wind, string, and percussion. Then we let the children try the instruments. Orchestra members are there to help them make beautiful sounds. We recommend that each group be allowed 15 minutes of play time before the next group is brought in.



The Community Zoo

We set up at a festival or event where other things are going on. Children and adults may wander over and play whatever strikes their interest, with orchestra members there to assist.

A donation to the orchestra of \$100 is suggested for each Petting Zoo. For more information or to schedule an Instrument Petting Zoo at your organization's event call Bob Kovitz, our General Manager, at 520-730-3371 or e-mail him at manager@cotmusic.org.



Civic Orchestra of Tucson Musical Instrument Petting Zoo

The Civic Orchestra of Tucson introduced the Musical Instrument Petting Zoo to Tucson in 1995, after reading of a similar program in the Midwest. This event gives children (and adults) a chance to get an up-close look at orchestra instruments. This program enables children (and adults) to examine and actually play various musical instruments under the supervision of orchestra members. Parents have repeatedly conveyed their surprise and pleasure after seeing their kids' obvious interest in this activity, and many have inquired into music lessons.

Goals:

- To provide children (and adults) the opportunity to explore the families of musical instruments.
- To provide hands-on opportunities to touch, feel, and play strings, winds, brass, and percussion instruments.

Outcomes:

- Participants learn to identify the family to which a given instrument belongs.
- Children learn the proper way to hold and play an orchestral musical instrument.
- Young children delight in having a musical instrument respond to their attempts to play it.
- Adults who have not played an instrument since high school discover that the ability to make a beautiful sound from the instrument is still present.
- Both children and adults often seek further instruction or lessons for their instrument.
- Adults often begin practicing their instrument again and participate in local ensembles.

Vision Statement

Connecting With and Enriching Greater Tucson's Musical Culture

Originating Educational Ideas to Nurture Tomorrow's Symphonic Musicians

Transforming Outstanding Area Musical Talent into a Quality Community-Based Symphonic Ensemble

Mission Statement

The Civic Orchestra of Tucson (COT), an all-volunteer symphony orchestra, is dedicated to enriching the cultural life of the greater Tucson area through its free* concerts at various sites and through using innovative ideas to provide music education opportunities for students. The Civic Orchestra of Tucson sponsors guest artists representing talented elementary, secondary, college-age and other musicians. COT is also committed to providing opportunities for adult avocational symphonic instrumentalists to utilize and improve their skills through performance in a symphonic group.

* Concerts sponsored by other organizations may have an admission charge.