

MUSICAL ROOTS

featuring

CONSTANTINOPOLE



Didem Basar, kanun

Kiya Tabassian, setar

Pierre-Yves Martel, viola de gamba

Meet Constantinople

Constantinople features Kiya Tabassian, setar, Pierre-Yves Martel, viola da gamba and Didem Başar, kanun.

Constantinople is a musical ensemble that chose the journey—geographical certainly, but also historical, cultural, and inner—as its cornerstone. It draws inspiration from all sources and aims for distant horizons. Inspired by the ancient city illuminating the East and West, Constantinople was founded in 1998 in Montreal by its artistic director, Kiya Tabassian.

Since its founding, the ensemble promotes the creation of new works incorporating musical elements of diverse musical traditions around the world, drawing from medieval manuscripts to a contemporary aesthetic, passing by Mediterranean Europe to Eastern traditions and New World Baroque. Over the course of the decade, Constantinople has created nearly 40 works and traveled to more than 140 cities in 30 countries.

Visit www.constantinople.ca to read up on all things Constantinople!

Where was Constantinople?



The city of Constantinople no longer exists but is now where modern Istanbul is.

Istanbul is the place where the ancient city of Byzantium was located, and the place where Constantine decided to build a new capital for Rome. He named it after himself, **Constantinople**.

A city that bridged the East and the West.



WRITING



Pick a country in the Eastern Hemisphere. Take your musical passport and write a story about what you've learned!

Story Title: _____

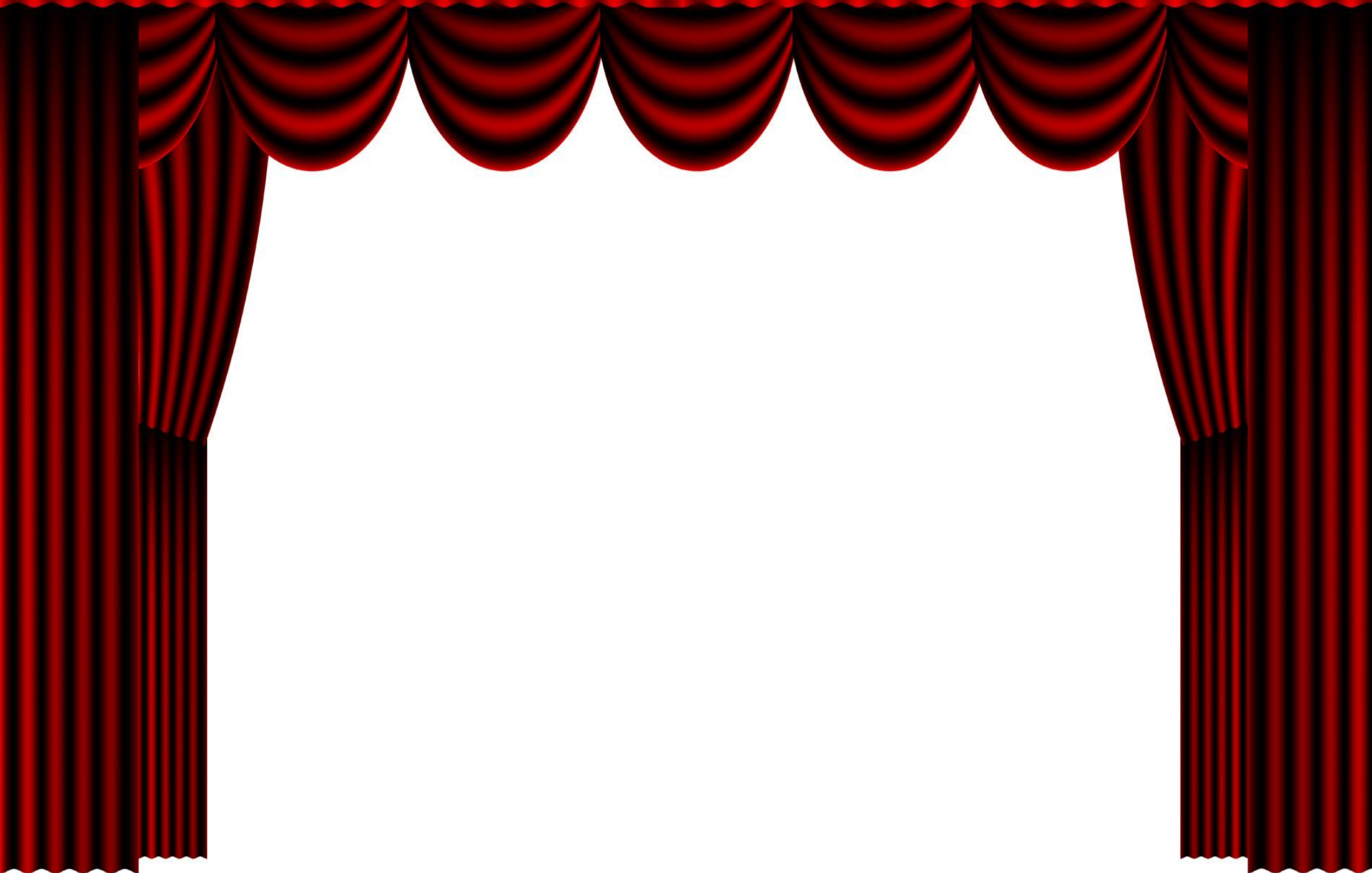
Country visited and their culture/group: _____

The music in this country: _____

Summary of the story (include an instrument from the country you learned about): _____

Draw a picture of your story!

Include a drawing of the instrument you learned about.



Learn about the instruments used by Constantinople!



Kanun

A string instrument played either solo or as part of an ensemble. A Middle Eastern instrument, it has a long history, possibly descended from the ancient Egyptian harp, and is related to the psaltery, dulcimer, and zither. Played by plucking the strings either with the fingers or with flexible plectra attached to finger rings, it rests on the player's lap or on a table.

Setar

The setar is a stringed instrument popular in northern India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The word is derived from the Persian word *sehtar*, or "three-stringed." Descending from long-necked lutes taken to India from Central Asia, it flourished in the 16th - 17th centuries and arrived at its present form in the 18th century. Today it is the dominant instrument in Hindustani music.

Viola de gamba

A bowed, stringed instrument used mainly in chamber music of the 16th - 18th century. The viol shares with the Renaissance lute the tuning of its six strings and gut frets on its neck. Viols first appeared in Spain in the mid to late 15th century - early ancestors include the Arabic rebab and the medieval European vielle. Viol instruments are held between the legs like a modern cello, hence the Italian name *viola da gamba* (it. "viol for the leg").

LISTENING

Look up recordings of Constantinople from YouTube, listen to the media files from the Debut Atlantic website, or retrieve sound files on iTunes.
Close your eyes and listen actively with your imagination.

Describe characteristics of the music (was it loud? soft? fast? slow?).

Describe the mood/character of what you listened to (was it happy? sad? scary? angry?).

How does listening to this music make you feel? Describe the particular sounds that the instruments make.

WRITING

On a separate sheet of paper, name the instruments from the ensemble Constantinople and describe the sound of each. Think imaginatively!

1.



2.



3.

