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BEGINNING BAND BOPS: EXAMINING THE COMPOSITIONAL PROCESS OF MUSIC
WRITTEN FOR BEGINNING BAND

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ABSTRACT

Much research in the field of instrumental music education focuses on teaching strategies or repertoire selection and composition for experienced groups. However, it is important to learn more about these same aspects for teaching beginning band students as well. The purpose of this study was to create a more comprehensive approach to composing for a beginning band ensemble so more educators of beginning band students better understand what is necessary to make a great composition to aid in selecting repertoire, or even to compose for the beginning band level themselves. Five composers, Scott Watson, Jodie Blackshaw, Jennifer Jolley, Robert Sheldon, and Frank Ticheli were interviewed in Fall 2021 regarding their perspectives and process for writing for beginning band. Using the information gained from a review of literature and interviews with these prominent composers, I composed a new piece for beginning band and analyzed my experience.

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Chapter 1 :Introduction

It seems when asked to reflect on their beginning band experiences, many students often say things like, “I don’t even remember it” or “It was so boring” or “We just played music out of our method books.” So much of our band world can appear centered around high school and beyond. Repertoire lists, professional development sessions, supplemental materials, and more are often directed toward high school students, and our beginning students can seem to be an afterthought. Why are beginning instrumentalists so often left out when everyone starts as a beginner? Where are the in-depth comprehensive resources for educators of beginning band students?

Purpose and Need for Study

At the foundation of every school band program is their beginning or elementary band. Even though every student goes through the beginning phases of playing their instrument, there is surprisingly limited repertoire and research compared to other levels of music-making. There is also surprisingly little research and information on composing for beginning band. The purpose of this study was to apply elements of beginning band pedagogy in combination with composer interviews to create a new piece for beginning band to create more of a comprehensive resource for beginning band educators. This thesis may aid band directors in selection of quality repertoire by providing insight into the methodology composers use when creating music for this

ensemble level. A secondary purpose also was to serve as a guide for educators seeking to create and compose original content for their students.

Questions

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

What are the important aspects of beginning band pedagogy, and how do composers reflect them in the works for that ensemble?

What are the creative processes of composers for beginning band?

What are the most common characteristics of a piece for beginning band?

What makes a piece for beginning band “good” or “interesting”?

Procedures

After preliminary research was done about beginning band pedagogy and basics of composition, inclusion criteria were created for composer selection. Composers were contacted by email and asked to participate in an interview. Five composers responded and participated in a 30–60-minute interview over Zoom™. Upon analysis of collected data and review of literature, I created an original composition for beginning band level students.

What is a Beginning Band?

In Pennsylvania, most students are first offered school band instruction starting in grade 4, but this can vary from beginning in 3rd grade in some places all the way to starting in 7th grade. Research compiled by Delzell and Doerkson (1998) stated that while typical starting grade levels can range from grade 3-7, there are many factors that affect a school district's choice for when to start. These can range from building grade-level configurations, retention rates, academic scheduling and instructional time alignment, budget and staffing constraints, and physical and mental maturity of students. For the purposes of this study, beginning band will be considered the first two years of band instruction. Elpus (2017) estimated that 43% of elementary schools nationwide offered band and 91% of middle schools offered band.

Music written for band is typically assigned a grade level that gives information about the difficulty of the piece. The American Band College has a grading system most recently revised in 2000 where music is rated from Grade 1-5 including categories such as instrument range, key and time signatures, tempi, complexity of rhythms, articulations, scoring, and length of piece. While this can be regarded as a standard outline of the grade levels, individual publishers of music all have their own individual grading rubric for composers to abide by. This study will focus on music from Grade ½ to Grade 2.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Understanding the process of writing a piece for beginning band requires a concrete understanding of beginning band pedagogy. Beginning band composers must also have an understanding of the foundations of composition. This literature review seeks to compile resources to give a comprehensive look into these topics to both inform this study and educators looking for more information on these topics.

Techniques for student-driven creation in the beginning band classroom

Clauchs, M. (2018). Beginning Band without a Stand Fostering Creative Musicianship in Early Instrumental Programs. *Music Educators Journal*, 104(4), 39-47.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/00274321187683>

This journal article shared strategies for developing musicianship and creative skills in the classroom even for beginning band students. The author did research in audiation, composition, and learning sequences to develop a curriculum where students who could not read notation could still create music. Their first project was using their instruments to create sound effects for movies, which happened in the first few weeks of instruction. They also did “mad libs” where they played an emotion or story in the text. Next, he did exercises to build their fluency in solfege and sharpened their ears, and eventually, it led to students playing something on their instruments and the students playing it back by ear. They composed patterns and ideas based on the Native American Tribes that they learned about in their 4th-grade classes, and the teacher

layered them together to create a larger composition. Finally, they used online file-sharing services to collaborate with other people.

West, C. (2015). Developing Internal Musicianship in Beginning Band by Teaching the “Big 5”. *Music Educators Journal*, 101(3), 101-106. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432114565392>

West (2015) conceptualized teaching music specifically to beginners through the development of musicianship through five lenses known as the Big Five. The Big Five were Rhythmic, Tonal, Executive, Notation, and Creativity. For rhythmic, he emphasized the importance of using movement as a teaching tool. He also suggested modeling tunes students knew and having them tap the macro or micro beat. For Tonal, he stated that students should be able to play the correct notes because they hear that they are correct, not just because they know the fingering for the notation symbol. Activities such as stopping at a random point in a song and having them sing the next pitch or having them play a known tune in the parallel minor were suggested. For creativity, the importance of improvisation in the beginning band classroom was discussed and having students create their own music even if they can't notate it. These five concepts in conjunction were thought to be the collection of skills to provide well rounded musicianship to beginning band students

Beginning Band Pedagogy

Worthy, D., Thompson, B.L. (2009). Observation and Analysis of Expert Teaching in Beginning Band. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 180, 29-41.

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/40319318>

The main point of this study was to find common characteristics that were shared between expert teachers in the beginning band setting. There were three teachers that were observed across three class periods, and they were selected based on recommendations of university faculty. They were all recorded at the same point in the school year and the students all had the same level of experience. Then, the researchers took observation notes based on what they saw and heard in predetermined areas. The results indicated they all used proactive approaches to classroom management, they were engaged in an instructional activity the whole lesson and were never left idle, the teachers were mobile during instruction, they included recuperative periods of instruction, they managed transitions proactively, advocated for a variety of articulation syllables, and then a table was included of the percentage of time that various topics were discussed during the rehearsal.

West, C. (2016). Sound Foundations: Organic Approaches to Learning Notation in Beginning Band. *Music Educators Journal*, 102(4), 56-61. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432116636941>

This journal article advocated for the importance of the foundation of sound before sight and gave ideas for how to approach notation. The author noted that a teacher would not expect a

student learning a foreign language to read before they think it or speak it, but we expect that often in music. It described the internal and external instrument, and that it is important to develop the internal instrument, so students can recognize incorrect notes, bad tempo, or poor intonation instead of just putting down keys and fingers. They cited Kodaly explaining notation is “looking at a music score and being able to think sound”. People should think of notation more as a framework for contextual meaning before we perform it, not just reading the notation and telling which button to press. It also addressed iconic notation and strategies for turning iconic notation into symbolic notation for students.

Dvorak, T., Blocher, L., Emmons, S., Pearson, B., Ramsey, D. S., Wilder, M. (2001). Beginning with the End in Mind. *Teaching Music Through Performance in Beginning Band Grade 1* (pp. 1-12). GIA Publications.

This chapter focused on what “hooked” students on music or what inspired them to join ensembles in the beginning. The author shared his experience, then he shared a research study, and additionally shared reasons that his students gave for joining the band and then later why band was important to them. Finally, he rounded out the chapter by providing the sentiment that when we are teaching, we should, “Begin with the end in mind” and we should give students opportunities to create and be “real” musicians from the beginning of their experience, not just teaching them basics and have them wait around to do “real” music until they're older. He referred to this as the “good stuff”, and this is the stuff that will be most memorable and beneficial for students and will be the reasons they get “hooked”, as he mentioned in the beginning.

Dvorak, T., Blocher, L., Emmons, S., Pearson, B., Ramsey, D. S., Wilder, M. (2001). Beginning Band-Goals and Objectives. *Teaching Music Through Performance in Beginning Band Grade 1* (pp. 13-26). GIA Publications.

This chapter explained priorities that beginning band teachers should have when making goals and objectives in their curriculum. Something important that was stated was that even though the list seems long, teachers should aim to include all aspects in order to create well-rounded lifelong musicians, even if it means they cannot go as far in depth as they like due to time constraints. In addition to fundamentals of each student's instrument, the importance of learning skills to participate in music making activities were discussed, such as scales, phrasing, tuning, interpretation, and sight-reading. Another important idea was the development of skills to make individual musical choices. Improvisation and composition are skills that should be developed and involved from the start. Lastly, the chapter mentioned the importance of providing cultural and interdisciplinary context to music in order to give the students skills to use music throughout the rest of their lives.

Millican, J. S. (2012). Part I: Foundations. *Starting Out Right: Beginning Band Pedagogy* (pp. 1-48). Scarecrow Press.

The first part of this book was dedicated to the foundations that a student should have before even discussing making sounds on individual instruments. The first chapter was dedicated to knowing your learner and was titled "Who are we Teaching?" The chapter covered topics such

as child development and how it applies to music teaching, modifying instruction for students with disabilities, field experience connections, and even touches upon adult beginners on instruments. The second chapter was dedicated to learning the language of music. It compared music to how we learn to read text and how we learn to speak. It gave an overview of music reading philosophies such as sound before sight, singing, imitating, and sequencing. It also went over rote teaching of tunes and then how to move beyond rote teaching to written music and music theory. Finally, it described various developmental differences and how they may interfere with a student's ability to learn the language of music.

Millican, J. S. (2012). Part II: Developing Fundamental Sounds. *Starting Out Right: Beginning Band Pedagogy* (pp. 51-82). Scarecrow Press.

This author explained how the first sounds should be created on wind instruments. He explained that posture and efficient breathing are two of the most important concepts for the students to understand in relation to creating sound. He also explained the block note concept which is a useful tool for understanding constant airstream. He then gave tips for the assembly and first sounds for each individual instrument, and then revisited the concept of block notes. He also gave instrument-specific tips for hand position, which can be a big problem for teachers, especially if they do not play an instrument that is similar. This chapter was useful because it approaches it from a teacher's perspective of how to help the student, and not as if you are the performer on the instrument, which I have found to be very common in many of the things I have read about teaching the first sounds on an instrument.

Composition Pedagogy and Repertoire Selection

Dvorak, T. L. Floyd, F. L.(2000). *Best Music For Beginning Band: A Selective Repertoire Guide to Music and Methods for Beginning Band* (pp. 1-36). Manhattan Beach Music.

The first section of this book described the rationale for selecting a composition for beginning players. Dvorak believed that the compositions must offer an immediate level of attractiveness to the young student musician, a balance of security and challenge, limited to technical in musical expectations that are commensurate with the performance skills generally developed during the first year of instrumental instruction, and the compositions must introduce elements of musicianship style and form. He also explained the criteria for the grading of pieces, which is beneficial for an educator deciding if a piece is a good fit for their ensemble or not. The rest of the first part gave examples of introductory grade 1 pieces for band. Each piece had the length, range for clarinets, trumpets, horns, trombones, and euphoniums, and the publisher, along with a brief description that states why the work is effective and unique. The pieces in the section were appropriate for the very beginning players to get experience playing literature that is still within their technical capability.

Erickson, F. (1983). *Arranging for the Concert Band*. Alfred Music.

Three chapters of this book were devoted to understanding how to notate and arrange for the percussion section of the band. The first part explained pitched percussion instruments.

Something interesting I learned was many percussion parts, even if they are pitched, do not include a key signature and only have accidentals. He explained characteristically what each instrument will add to a piece in terms of texture and rhythm as well as transpositions and how each instrument sounds. Next, he addressed unpitched percussion and explained that it is important that the snare and bass drum should not always play together or continuously. This is an interesting principle that perhaps I can apply to my beginning band composition. Then he explained many of the auxiliary instruments, many of which are just used for effects and not to melodically or rhythmically drive the piece, and how they should be used within a piece. Finally the notation of percussion is covered, which can be extremely confusing for a non-percussionist to approach, because there are many options for what instruments can be combined on a single line and how they should be notated. There should not ever be more than two parts going on at once per line, even if overall there are more instruments than that on the total part.

Two chapters share information about arranging and notating brass instruments. First the author explained every instrument, its range, transposition, and most comfortable range to play in. Something helpful that he explained was the ideal number of players on each instrument and the ideal number of parts to have for each instrument for the best blend. He then explained how to voice and write for the brass section as a whole. He explained that the horn is generally the weakest, and it is a good idea to make sure their part is covered somewhere else. He provided

many written examples of correct voicing across many registers and examples of strategies that can make stronger part-writing. Something else that was useful was explaining situations where closed position and open position chords should be used and in which voices. Finally, it was explained how to effectively combine the woodwinds and brass and which instrument voices should combine to double one another

In two chapters, the author gave a breakdown of every woodwind instrument including things like full range, transposition, articulations that might be difficult in certain registers, and the octaves and ranges that will come across the best in certain contexts and for various comfort levels of players. He also explained how to write for the woodwind section as a whole and voicings for instrument families, especially the clarinets. He explained which voices should double one another and common mistakes in voicing that can create muddy sounds or flawed harmonies. There are many voice leading principles that apply both within a section and within the woodwind section as a whole. He gave many written examples of both good and bad voicing and gave ways to fix it.

The author specifically outlined common problems in scoring for the beginning band and strategies that can be used. The first problem that he explained was that there is a common lack of variety in instrumentation, especially lower instruments. He explained that another problem is the break for the clarinets. Another common problem was over-writing the percussion parts both to be too complicated and to use too many instruments. He explained common doublings both for rhythm and pitch. It is probably best to keep the parts within one octave, especially for beginners. He also encouraged the use of unison in addition to harmonies as a part of a piece. If

a certain instrument is in a range or area of their instrument that is not comfortable for them, he states it would be a good idea to double it with an instrument where they are more comfortable. Written examples that show a variety of options for scoring were included.

Chapter 3 The Interviews

Procedure

After researching and compiling a review of literature, the next step was to listen to music written for beginning band and choose composers' music that was intriguing to me. Those composers were then considered to be interviewed to gain insight into their creative process. I wanted to make sure that the composers represented a wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and career paths. The official inclusion criteria for composers that were used was:

1. Underrepresented composers (women, POC, LGBTQ)
2. Experience teaching in public schools
3. Experience writing for other instrumental ensembles and levels
4. Experience writing arrangements for FLEX Band (Flexible scoring)

After approval from the Institutional Review Board, composers were contacted through email to ask for their participation. Of the 6 composers contacted, 5 responded and agreed to participate. The participating composers were Scott Watson, Jodie Blackshaw, Jennifer Jolley, Robert Sheldon, and Frank Ticheli. The composers were provided with the list of guiding questions for the interview, which is available in Appendix A.

Data were collected through their responses to the guiding questions that were applicable to their personal experience as composers. The interviews took place in the fall of 2021 over ZoomTM and were recorded for later analysis and data collection.

Results

Scott Watson

Background

Dr. Scott Watson is a composer and educator based in Allentown, PA. He has taught music for 35 years in the Parkland School District along with being an adjunct professor at Cairn University, University of the Arts, and Moravian University. He has over 100 published pieces of music for band, orchestra, chamber ensembles, and flex ensembles. He is also a celebrated scholar in the field of music education, often presenting workshops and clinics, along with video content on his popular YouTube channel. He specializes in music technology, and his book *Using Technology to Unlock Musical Creativity* is widely regarded in the music education community.

Pieces of Interest

The first piece of Dr. Watson's that caught my interest was a piece I actually performed when I was at a festival in elementary school titled *Slam Jam!* It remained a part of my memory due to the novelty of the basketball part included in the performance. Basketballs are rhythmically bounced and notated in the score, as seen in Figure 3-1.

4

FL/Ob. 5 6 7 8 9

Cl. 1 2

A. Cl.

B. Cl.

A. Sax. 1 2

T. Sax.

Bar. Sax.

B. Ball (High Bounce) (High Bounce)

Tpts. 1 2

Hr.

Trbs./Bar./Bsn.

Tuba

Bells

Perc. 1 Snare Drum w/brushes

Perc. 2 Bass Drum (Small) Cabasa/Shaker

Perc. 3 Bongos/Congas Vibraslap Whipl

Woodblock

22261

Figure 3-1- *Slam Jam!* Published Score

The second piece that caught my interest was *Escape From Thunder Mountain*. The powerful tutti writing, variety of articulations, and exciting pacing all within the limited note range and rhythmic variety of a beginning band piece was very exciting. These can be seen in the excerpt from the score in Figure 3-2.

Figure 3-2: *Escape from Thunder Mountain* Published Score

Interview

Dr. Watson's interview began with him sharing how he started composing. He originally aimed to be a professional trumpet player but chose to get his music education degree to have increased job stability. When he started teaching to help pay bills, he found his passion for students and decided this was his desired career path. He began writing music for his students and sparked a love of composition he decided to pursue for a masters and doctorate. His higher degrees in composition focused primarily on the creation of concert art music, not writing for

band. It was not until later in life, when speaking with a friend who happened to be the editor at Alfred Publishing, that his original interest in writing music gained a special lens of writing educational music. He was writing music for his students anyway, so he might as well combine his knowledge of the aesthetics of good music with his knowledge of band pedagogy.

His creative process begins with sketches on paper, including ideas such as melodies, rhythms, chord progression, and form. He calls this stage the “pre-composition” stage, where he decides big ideas for where the piece is going before beginning to formally notate. He spends most of his time in this stage, so when it is time to formally notate, the process happens a lot faster than if there was less planning that went into it. When the pre-composition stage may take up to a few months, it might only take a week to formally write the piece due to all the preparation and thought that went into it beforehand. He finds musical inspiration in creating programmatic pieces that share an idea or story, no matter if it is written for young students or professional musicians. Specifically for younger students, he often creates pieces for his own students so they can have fun making music.

Dr. Watson finds that writing for younger students can be more challenging at times than for older students because he wants his music to keep the same ideas and aesthetical weight, while still fitting in the restraints appropriate to that grade level. He finds a lot of his musical ideas to be flexible in grade level, so often to fit what is needed, he can take a musical idea he has and make it more or less complex to fit the grade requirement of the piece he needs.

For pedagogical aspects of teaching, he thinks is it the most important thing to talk the least amount possible and play more, along with teaching routines to your students. You can teach many concepts simply through playing them in the context of a piece instead of having to explain it in a complicated and wordy way. He does often find himself including concepts that

students need extra teaching or reinforcement on in his pieces when opportunity allows, and his years of teaching experience have shown him the concepts that kids most frequently need this for, such as the dotted quarter eighth rhythm.

When asked about writing flex music, he shared some of the most common difficulties that he has faced. It may be easier to put all the instruments in the same key on the same part, but then range alignment issues come up and students might not always be playing in a range comfortable for them while their peers in another section may be fine. It can even be difficult to determine how many part groups are needed. However, he has found that it has been very beneficial, especially during the pandemic, to solve strange instrumentation challenges that a specific ensemble may face.

He shared that teaching his own music and hearing live musicians play his own works has helped him to refine his compositional process. It has often helped him to see issues of standardization things like rhythm. He thinks it is more beneficial to include the same rhythm multiple times across parts, rather than varying it each time, and it does not affect that character of the piece. It also helps to see when things in certain registers of the instruments or instrument combinations may work on paper, but do not come out well enough when played live.

Composers for young students that he admires include Brian Balmages, Mike Sweeney, Mike Story, William Owens, Randall Standridge, and Robert Sheldon. He noted that all of these composers not only write well for young musicians but create excellent music for all levels.

When asked to give advice to beginning composer band directors, his advice is to write as much as possible, back up your writing with pedagogy, and surround yourself with experienced composers or even publishers. Don't include things that are not pedagogically sound for the sake of art. Things like 32 measure drum solos in a grade 1 piece are not beneficial to anyone and

will automatically disqualify your score from being considered by any director or publisher.

Draw from other composers and past experience to find what will make students and directors lean into the story of your music.

Jodie Blackshaw

Background

Jodie Blackshaw is an Australian-born composer who began her educational journey with an undergraduate degree in composition. After spending time working with students, she decided to obtain her teaching certification and move into classroom music teaching. This greatly inspired and informed her as a composer. She began creating music that is highly customizable due to unique instrumentations constraints that her educational environment created. Her compositions center around student opportunities for creativity in order to create student-ownership over what they are learning. She also aims to “foster self-esteem and love of self through music”. She has been widely celebrated as a composer and educator, notably winning the Frank Ticheli Composition Contest. She has also created an educational curriculum titled *Teaching Performance Through Composition*.

Pieces of Interest

Dr. Blackshaw has one of the most unique compositional styles I have seen at any grade level, so it was so exciting to find that several of her works are written for beginning musicians. The two pieces that I found the most interest in were *Earthshine* and *Whirlwind*. As seen in

Figures 3-3 and 3-4, her scores feature extremely detailed program notes and information about teaching the pieces, which are extremely beneficial for educators who may be unsure of taking on the challenge of teaching a piece of such unique nature.

❁ PROGRAM NOTES ❁

Night time on the moon is quite different to that on Earth. When the Sun sets on the Moon it doesn't become completely dark. Why? Because the Earth is providing a light fifty times brighter than a full moon. This 'glowing' Earth is created by light from the Sun, reflecting off the Earth's surface. This is what we call "Earthshine". It is during the moon cycles known as waxing and waning crescents that we can see this glow on the moon's surface. You may have seen it yourself – a bright crescent moon in the arms of the full Moon's shadow.

In this piece, the concept of reflection is explored in several ways, drawing parallels between reflected light and echoed melodic material. The first half of the piece also sounds a little unsure of itself. This tentative writing invites the audience and players alike to consider what people must of thought about *Earthshine* before Leonardo Da Vinci explained the phenomena around 1510. A Timpani solo in the middle of the work allows both performer and audience to imagine the desolate landscape of the moon at midnight, bathed in the Earth's radiant glow. The final section of the piece hastens in tempo and develops a fullness of sound; drawing from the confidence we now have with regard to space travel and NASA's planned return to the moon by 2018. It is anticipated that Astronauts will live at the South Pole of the Moon for some weeks. They will experience 'night' on the moon and be the first human beings to experience Earthshine from the Moon.

❁ REHEARSAL NOTES ❁

GONG (AUXILIARY PERCUSSION 2), MEASURE 1-2 & 146-end

To understand what is intended here, watch this clip:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bO2Hx-tu67U>

Where can I purchase Mike Balter ERSR Super Rubber Mallets?

<http://www.amazon.com/Mike-Balter-MBERSR-ERSR-Mallets/dp/B002BJT090>

<http://www.steveweissmusic.com/category/mike-balter-emil-richards>

http://www.balter.com/emil_richards_sound_of_the_studio_series.htm#

OFFSTAGE/AUDIENCE SOLOISTS, MEASURE 2

Invite Soloists to play around with tempo and dynamics and challenge the "echo" to match how they play their particular phrase. Quasi-improvisation with these expressive techniques is strongly encouraged. Once you reach measure 3, invite 'echo' performers to re-join the band as quietly as possible. Make sure you rehearse this before your first performance!

COLOUR WHEEL SCORES

Colour wheel scores enable you to divide your band into teams. I encourage you to host 1-2 rehearsals where the students get to sit with their team in a small circle. Dot the circles around each other. THEN have students decide if they are playing WITH their team or someone else. This is a great exercise in listening and helps them hear *outside* of their section thus developing ensemble blend and intonation.

Figure 3-3 Program Notes for *Earthshine* in Published Score

PROGRAM NOTES

A number of unusual musical devices are used in *Whirlwind*, which distinguish it from other young band repertoire. The use of soundscape sections at the beginning and end of the piece introduce students to cueing from a conductor, free time, and an increased aural awareness of other players' contributions to the work.

Through its simple structural concepts such as using only four notes and a repeated melody in unison or loosely canonically, the work encourages the young player to focus not on pitch and harmony, but rather, on sound, tone color, form and expression.

The theatrical nature created by the soundscapes and the unusual percussion -- handmade waterglass and rattle instruments, whirling tubes -- allows each student to listen, watch and contribute in order to understand what's happening. As a result, each student gains a sense of empowerment through belonging, the reason for playing in band.

Whirlwind is the First Prize Winner of The Frank Tichelli Composition Contest (Category 1—Beginning Band).

ABOUT THE SPECIAL INSTRUMENTS

And now, the star of our piece, the whirlies

Do you already own a whirly? What is it? It is simply a length of corrugated (ribbed) irrigation hose (if you are offered a choice between the dotted and undotted variety, you want the undotted kind). This hose is similar to (but not quite the same as) the hose used in many above-ground swimming pools (the pool kind of hose is often a light blue color in the USA). However, the swimming pool kind of hose is made of a softer sort of plastic, and does not have as good a sound as hose made of a harder plastic. (The harder and better sounding hose is often a darker color, but not necessarily.) So, you are looking for a plastic irrigation hose that is made of a fairly hard plastic. By the way, at a pool supply, the "pressure hose" (also called "return hose") will probably sound better, as it is a stronger plastic. Plumbing supply shops should also carry the right kind of hose. But the diameter is of some importance (see later).

When we say that the hose is corrugated, we mean that it is ribbed around its diameter. You can easily see the ribbing, which looks like a series of adjacent rings around the hose.

How to tell whether the hose will sound good? If you think the hose with your knuckle, it will resound with a "conk!" sound (at a specific pitch, its fundamental). If (and here, you will need room, both above head and all around you) you spin the hose overhead, it will begin to sing.

Why does it sing? This is a chance for you to integrate science into the music class. The singing (caused, as with all wind instruments, by vibrating air) has to do with the *Bernoulli Principle*. Suffice it to say that when you spin the hose, the end near you moves slowly, the far end moves more quickly, there is a difference in air pressure, and air is pulled through the hose by the difference in air pressure between the ends. (It's the same principle by which lift occurs in airplane wings: faster air vs. slower air.) Air flowing over ribbing equals vibrations, and sound.

The faster you spin the hose, the higher the pitch: you'll probably be able to hear the overtone series ascend as you increase the speed.

The sound is quite unearthly. It's a bit like a bass flute (although it also has vocal quality to it), and four whirlies together might be the sound of a flying saucer (as the pitches interact, the effect is eerie and beautiful).

The best-sounding hose is usually not the 1 1/2 inch variety, but the wider diameter hose (2 inches to 2 1/2 inches in diameter). The wider hose often "speaks" more easily. You should cut the hose into varying lengths (for different fundamental pitches), from about five feet to about seven feet.

We plan to upload a video of the composer playing a whirly on the Manhattan Beach Music website (www.ManhattanBeachMusic.com), so you can see and hear for yourself.

The waterglass chimes

How to create: Fill various sized glass jars and/or tumblers with water. Create different sounds by varying the amount of water in each glass and size of container. Experiment with different types of glass containers, wine glasses work well, as do glass bowls.

To play: Gently hit glass with a teaspoon, or drop a large, smooth pebble into the water.

The rattles

Some ideas:

1. Thread 5 old cassette tapes together with strong string.
2. Try a set of old (or new) keys on a large round key ring.
3. Use aluminum foil trays with a handful of rice or split peas or lentils.

To play: (1) & (2) hold by string/keying and rattle high above your head; (3) Hold tray by the corner and gently swirl around the rice/split peas/lentils...

That concludes the home-made instruments. We need next to discuss the "drone," the purpose of which is to provide your young musicians with an anchor point. This will provide each player with the opportunity to listen to the long notes at the end of each phrase of the melody and attempt to match their intonation. The drone part can be played either by an electronic keyboard, bass string instrument with a bow (such as a Cello or Double Bass), or alternatively, you could use a didgeridoo pitched in A.

This drone part will not only provide a strong reinforcement of the tonic, but will surely also add a very interesting color and hence new dimension to your piece. If interested in using a didgeridoo pitched in A, they are available from Alex Murchison in Australia. See his website for purchases and playing tutorials: www.echotree.com.au; there are also shops in the USA that specialize in unusual instruments and sell didgeridoos, such as Lark in The Morning (www.larkinthemorning.com).

TEACHING THE MUSIC

Goal: To encourage all students to listen, not only to themselves, but to each other.

Focus on:

1. 3/4 time signature
2. Free time
3. Interpreting and understanding a conductor's cue.
4. Tone color: through percussion highlights and home made instruments.
5. Tonal centre: students are to match pitch with tonic drone at end of each phrase.
6. Texture: through round, solos, and soundscapes.
7. Minor key.
8. *mf* and *mp* and inviting students to create a difference between them.

Sections A, & I: Soundscape (Free time. Play on cue.)

The score represents an idea of how this section may sound. The notation of waterglass chimes and rattles is only meant as a guide. Although each entrance is notated by a single note, a single sound is not necessarily intended. A large section (e.g., clarinets) may have many players, each with a waterglass. The conductor should cue each section, and the players should stagger their entrances to produce the most interesting soundscape. This holds true equally for the rattles.

It is best if every band member has a home-made instrument (see discussion later on) and that each individual is cued to play at the conductor's discretion.

Section B: Solo with whirlies

Every instrument has the solo written in their part. (On the score, cue size notation is used in all parts.) This gives you the flexibility to select your own soloist, and if you prefer, you may choose more than one for different occasions. Here's how to go about it:

1. The conductor announces that students can try out for the solo.
2. Those keen to try out perform the melody for their peers in rehearsal. Not only is this a chance for the conductor to hear various players on their own, it is also an excellent performance opportunity for students in a relaxed, supportive environment. The students in the band hear the soloists and are welcome to become involved in the selection process (if the conductor wishes).
3. The conductor makes the final decision and chooses up to three soloists for the part and alternates between them for various performances. Not only will this change the color of Section B, it also provides a back-up if your all too important soloist is sick on the day of an important performance.

Section C: Soundscape

Once again the score is only meant as a guide. To achieve what is printed with ease simply:

1. encourage all students to learn the last phrase of the melody off by heart;
2. as with the home-made instruments, cue each individual to play the last phrase only;
3. each will hold the last note (breathing as they need to) until everyone has played; and

Figure 3-4 Program Notes for *Whirlwind* in Published Score

The piece *Earthshine* has a special scoring type called color wheel scoring that Dr. Blackshaw describes as “Instrumentation is divided into teams. The make-up of each team in *Earthshine* is more focused on sections, inviting instrumentalists to listen within their own section and echo or respond to each other.” (Blackshaw, 2018.) It is also extremely interesting because it gives students the opportunity for creation of a soundscape, which can be seen in Figure 3-5. It also creates an opportunity for interdisciplinary education with science. Dr. Blackshaw also includes supplemental exercises that take students through each topic that is applicable to the piece. In addition to the detailed program notes, this creates an incredible tool for teachers who may be hesitant to teach a piece with so many new concepts, since it is already planned for them. One of these exercises can be seen in Figure 3-6.

SCORE: Earthshine

[F] Solo & soundscape: commence slowly (approx. $\text{♩}=72$)

rit. rit. A tempo accel.

6 53

TEAM YELLOW
FL A
FL B
Ob.

TEAM RED
CL A
CL B
Ten. Sax.

TEAM ORANGE
A. Sax. A
A. Sax. B

TEAM PURPLE
Tpt. A
Tpt. B
Hn.

TEAM BLUE
Bsn.
Tbn./Euph.
B. Cl.
B.C. Bb.

[F] Solo & soundscape: commence slowly (approx. $\text{♩}=72$)

rit. let ring rit. A tempo accel.

Temp.
Mk. Perc. 1 Vib.
Mk. Perc. 2 Xyl.
Aux. Perc. 1 Fl. Tom
B. D.
Aux. Perc. 3 R. Cym.

Pre-rec Sound Waves

fade in gradually - do not hit full volume until measure 60 (conductor will cue)

Work with your conductor to create a space-inspired soundscape using vocal sounds and body percussion

let ring
mf
f
p
Always let ring
f
sub p

lv.
lv.
lv.
To cymbal
Claves

**Do not conduct the soloist - only the soundscape for entry and exit - allow the soloist the freedom to be expressive!*

Figure 3-5 Soundscape in *Earthshine* Published Score

KNOW YOUR STUFF FOR 'EARTHSHINE'

3. WHEN 3 MEANS ONE (WHA??? AGAIN?)

Get a pencil. Watch your conductor as you play this. Where is the "downbeat"? When you know, circle the note(s).

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Figure 3-6 *Earthshine* Supplemental Materials Published Score

For the piece *Whirlwind*, beginning students have the opportunity to venture into aleatory music in a structured way. As seen in Figure 3-7 and 3-8, students have the opportunity to create a soundscape but on cue to make the freedom more structured and comfortable for beginning leveled students, both with auxiliary percussion music to fit the whirlwind theme and melodically with their instruments. This piece also includes two rounds, a 2-part and a 4-part. Dr. Blackshaw also created supplemental materials to take students through a sequence to teach the content of the piece.

WHIRLWIND

FOR CONCERT BAND

JODIE BLACKSHAW

A Soundscape
Free time. Play on cue.

The musical score is arranged in systems. The first system includes Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, B♭ Clarinet, and B♭ Bass Clarinet. The second system includes E♭ Alto Saxophone, ♭ Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, B♭ Trumpet, F Horn, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Double Bass, Keyboard (optional), and Drone. The third system includes Glockenspiel, Snare Drum (snare off), Medium Tom, Bass Drum, Suspended Cymbal, and Timpani. The score features various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *mf*, *f*, and *p*. There are also performance instructions and a note about the drone part.

NOTE: Rattles and waterglass chimes should blend and not compete with the sound of the whirries. See preface of score for construction tips and performance technique. Although each entrance is notated by a single note, a single sound is not necessarily intended. A large section (e.g., clarinets) may have many players, each with a waterglass. The conductor should cue each section, and the players should stagger their entrances to produce the most interesting soundscape. This holds true equally for the rattles. Therefore, this page is not to be interpreted literally, but should be seen as a graphic representation of a sparse soundscape created at your discretion.

DRONE: The drone part (always playing concert A) may be played by an electronic keyboard, bass stringed instrument, brass bass instruments, or (for an indigenous Australian sound) a didgeridoo in A.

PERFORMANCE NOTE TO CONDUCTOR AND PERFORMER: Make sure you allocate sufficient space between each Whirly player and the rest of the band so that Whirlies can be spun without contacting objects or persons. Spin Whirly vertically, beside you, (like a lasso) or horizontally above you (like a helicopter rotor). Band members construct their Whirlies from 2-inch to 2½-inch diameter plastic corrugated hose (see preface).

Purchase music, download free MP3's, view scores and more at www.ManhattanBeachMusic.com

Figure 3-7 Whirlwind Published Score

C Soundscape NOTE TO CONDUCTOR: Cue players approximately as shown (see preface).

Play melody on cue and hold last note

Fl. *mf* clingingly

Ob. *mf* clingingly

Bsn. *mf* clingingly

B♭ Cl. *mf* clingingly

B♭ Bass Cl. *mf* clingingly

E♭ Alto Sax. *mf* clingingly

B♭ Ten. Sax. *mf* clingingly

E♭ Bar. Sax. *mf* clingingly

B♭ Tpt. *mf* clingingly

F Hn. *mf* clingingly

Tbn. *mf* clingingly

Euph. *mf* clingingly

Tuba *mf* clingingly

D.B. *mf* clingingly

Kbnd. *mf* clingingly

Drone

on cue

Drone should be played by more than one player. If using bass brass instruments, always use at least two to maintain the drone as a continuous sound. The drone will provide the band with a stable pitch for intonation. (Electronic keyboard, bass stringed instrument, or didgeridoo in A may be used if available.)

let ring

to Snare Drum

to Medium Tom

to Bass Drum

to Suspended Cymbal

Glock.

Sn. Dr.

Med. Tom

Bass Dr.

Sus. Cym.

Timp.

3

Figure 3-8 *Whirlwind* Published Score

Interview

Jodie Blackshaw shared she has been fascinated with discovering people's "firsts" whether musical or otherwise. There is research that shows by the time we are 7, we already have formed detailed perceptions of who we are as people, so we are incredibly impacted by early experiences. For her, music was the leading influence for her from a young age, and it has stayed the same ever since. Her view of musical colors was rooted in listening to *Peter and the Wolf* growing up, and still to this day she finds herself searching for colors that give her the same feeling.

When asked if music should be written for pedagogy or for artistic merit, she shared her split view. She says many of her colleagues believe that all music is educational, so artistic merit should be the only factor on the creation of the composition, but she believes that a piece is its best when it both is musically meaningful and serves a pedagogical purpose. When she started teaching out of her undergraduate composition degree, she couldn't afford to buy music for her students, so she needed to write music out of necessity. This is where she developed her love for writing for younger musicians and working with students.

She shared the amazing story of her Ticheli Competition winning piece, *Whirlwind*. She started working at a new position in a school where the music program was not taken care of. She had an odd instrumentation, and many of the students could barely read music. She turned to her background in Orff Schulwerk and taught students through solfege and homemade marimbas, then have them transfer this over to their instruments. They worked together for months to build the piece from a folk melody with only 4 notes, filling it with soundscapes, echoes, rounds, and more. Eventually, she wrote her own four note melody, and a result of this

projects, students who were poor note readers were able to grow their reading skills, students who were strong note readers were able to facilitate creation and be leaders, and students who struggled with ensemble skills and being along on an instrument were able to gain strength from the ensemble unity.

In terms of music and beginning band pedagogy, Dr. Blackshaw has found that in order for the most possible students to accept and take on a musical concept, it needs to be embedded within a piece, not just a separate educational exercise. This is where she came up with the idea for color wheel scoring. She wanted to encourage students to work on listening to each other more and focus on the blend of sound and timbral color. If students are only surrounded by like instruments, they will not get a chance to listen to explore instrument timbre combinations. Students are able to benefit with being combined with instruments they would not usually hear on their “team”, despite the extra scaffolding steps that were needed to be taken for students to be able to participate in the activity.

Before instrumental specific pedagogy can be applied, a student needs to reach a state of “relaxed alertness” to reach the optimal emotional climate in the classroom most conducive to learning and creativity. When looking through the lens of the 12 Brain Learning Principles developed by Renate and Geoffrey Caine, students need both immersion, and active processing through context in order to develop skill. Often, band directors only focus on developing skill while neglecting the other two elements, which would naturally lead to the development of skill. Students need to feel safe and validated in the learning environment, as well as feeling that the content is relevant to them as learners before any specific pedagogy can take place. Rhythmic content can be taught without pitch in order to make strong rhythmic readers before adding elements of pitch. Students can also take exercises or short songs and melodies and make

compositional choices about concepts such as form or dynamics so students can step into creating without being responsible for generating notes. It gives them ideas about how music can be used in the big picture and inspire creation for the entire music making careers. Students having an active part in the creation process protects them from falling into what researchers called “repetition suppression” when they fall into an unengaged automaticity when participating in band.

Two composers who she admires are Michael Colgrass and Hubert Hoche. She appreciates the creativity they bring to their writing and how they aren’t afraid to break out of the confines of what we are told that the “limits” and “expectations” for beginning musicians are. The most important advice she has for beginning teachers is to take care of yourself and make sure that not only your students are safe, but you are safe as well.

Jennifer Jolley

Background

Jennifer Jolley’s compositional voice is often focused on being proactive politically. She has written music about topics of such as the destruction of the environment, the #MeToo movement, the current political climate, and more. She also frequently composes electronic music, which is unique from other composers in this project. She produces her own opera company, NANOWorks Opera, along with frequently serving as a composer in residence and collaborating with communities worldwide. She also has an impressive online presence through her blog, where she shares letters of rejection from various festivals and competitions because

she “enjoys removing the taboo around “failure” for her students.” (Jolley, 2021) She is currently a professor at Texas Tech’s School of Music in addition to composing full time.

Pieces of Interest

Most of Dr. Jolley’s works are about mature topics, so therefore created for more mature ensembles, she has two pieces for beginning ensembles that are incredibly unique. *Last Stage to Red Rock* and *Son of a Gun* were both written as a soundtrack to Quentin Tarantino’s film *The Hateful Eight*. As seen in figures 3-9 and 3-10, the scoring uses a very limited range of notes and simple rhythms, but still effectively scores the scenes from the film using this limited toolbox. This is a unique opportunity for young musicians to venture into a complex topic of playing music for a film score.

Figure 3-9 *Last Stage to Red Rock* Published Score

Commissioned by Samuel Fritz, Center Grove Middle School Central Bands
& Ashley Carney, Zionsville Middle School Orchestra

Son of a Gun

Jennifer Jolley

Transposed Score

Instrumentation

1 Full Score	4 F Horn
10 Flute/Oboe	6 Trombone
12 Bb Clarinet	3 Euphonium B.C.
2 Bb Bass Clarinet	3 Euphonium T.C.
1 Bassoon	4 Tuba
6 Eb Alto Saxophone	1 Timpani
2 Bb Tenor Saxophone	1 Triangle
2 Eb Baritone Saxophone	1 Snare Drum
8 Bb Trumpet	1 Tam-tam
	1 Chimes

Program Note

Son of a Gun is taken from the second chapter of Quentin Tarantino's film *The Hateful Eight*. In this scene, Major Marquis Warren, John Ruth, Daisy Domergue, and Chris Mannix (the new sheriff of Red Rock) are on their way to town. Major Marquis Warren does not like or trust Sheriff Mannix.

Commissioned by Samuel Fritz, Center Grove Middle School Central Bands
& Ashley Carney, Zionsville Middle School Orchestra

Duration: 2 minutes

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Figure 3-10 *Son of a Gun* Published Score

Interview

Jennifer Jolley always found interest in composition through her years of studying piano, but she thought that all the music there was had already been written. It was not until her high school years taking an orchestration class when she discovered that composition is a lively field and decided that this was the career path, she wanted to take to tell her own story. She finds that being a composer and a musician are very much intertwined and balance one another.

When deciding to write for younger musicians, it was a part of a project to try to include more creative pieces in the repertoire of young musicians, not simply pieces that are primary based in pedagogy and used for teaching. She found while it is sometimes difficult to be conscious of things like keeping clarinets under the break or using the limited toolkit of rhythms

and notes, her compositional ideas can often translate well to Grade 1 music. She has the opportunity to share a single “chapter” or idea without having to complicate it with the additional length requirements of higher grades.

Her musical inspirations are based on things that happen around her and surround her. She finds that during the day, she doesn’t always have a lot of time to write, so musical ideas that come up in her brain are ones that are based around the life she experiences during the day or problems that she sees in the world.

When asked about the intersection of composition and pedagogy, she compared it to English class. When you’re learning about haikus, the best thing you can do to fully understand how they work is to write one yourself, so shouldn’t that be happening with young musicians as well? She wants young students to be able to make their own creative ownership, whether it be through improvisation or students voicing creative desires in the creation of someone else’s music.

Dr. Jolley found that some pieces naturally translate over to flexible scoring very well, but for some it is seemingly impossible. It is often difficult to choose what instruments in what keys should be on what parts. She found a solution may be to not always have everyone on the same part play for the whole duration of the piece and giving directors their own creative liberty to make choices like that when putting together a flexible scoring piece. She finds the most important thing is relinquishing control but still keeping the same heart of the piece.

Beginning to work as a conductor and teacher has given her great insight into aspects of her music that she maybe would change or in the future maybe avoid for pedagogical reasoning. She found pieces that are at too slow of a tempo might sound great on paper, but in real time are difficult to conduct or make flow. Frequent meter changes might make sense in your head but

overly complicate things for students and conductors. The benefit has been that you are able to have more of an insight on the intent and heart of the piece, since you are the one that wrote it, so it is easier to address stylistic components and artistic choices. She finds there is no right way to do things, and there are often multiple strategies for achieving the same results and that is ok.

Composers that inspire her are Frank Ticheli, Alex Shapiro, and Jennifer Hidgon. She finds that many composers of younger band do not take the artistic implications of what they do seriously, and these composers that she admires both fit within the restrictions for young musicians but also create art.

Advice that she had for young composers and educators is to increase communication between teachers and composers whenever possible. If music is truly for all, then the process of what a composer does should be informed by the practice of educators and conductors and vice versa. If the line of communication between the two increases, then it will be mutually beneficial for the art form.

Robert Sheldon

Background

Robert Sheldon is one of the most widely performed band composers in the world. He has sold over three million copies of his published works; he has received countless prestigious awards for his work in composition and music education. In addition to experience both teaching in public schools and college, he also served as the Director of Concert Band Publications for Alfred Music for 17 years. Currently, in addition to composing full time, he

often serves as a guest conductor and music education clinician. He is also a co-author of *Sound Innovations* and *Measures of Success*, two popular and widely used beginning band method books in schools today.

Pieces of Interest

With countless compositions and such sizeable impact on the field of band, it is difficult to pick only a few pieces of interest. A series of pieces that particularly caught my interest were his series of pieces based around modes. The pieces include Lydian Lullaby, March Mixolydian, Dorian Dreamscape, and Phrygian Phantasy. It gives students an opportunity to be introduced to the tonality of various modes and a variety of musical styles, all while still within a limited range and rhythmic complexity, as illustrated in Figures 3-11 and 3-12. These are tonalities that students typically would not be introduced to until later in their musical experience but can help to form more well-rounded musicians.

Figure 3-11 *Dorian Dreamscape* Published Score

2

Dorian Dreamscape

CONDUCTOR SCORE
Duration - 2:45Robert Sheldon
Op. 100

Moderato $\text{♩} = 84$

Flute/Oboe

B♭ Clarinets

E♭ Alto Clarinet

B♭ Bass Clarinet

E♭ Alto Saxophones

B♭ Tenor Saxophone

E♭ Baritone Saxophone

Moderato $\text{♩} = 84$

B♭ Trumpets

F Horn

Trombone/Baritone/Bassoon

Tuba

Bells

Percussion 1
(Triangle, Suspended Cymbal, Wind Chimes)

Percussion 2
(Snare Drum, Bass Drum)

Timpani

C, G

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22265

20708

FL./Ob. 17 18 19 20 21

Cls. 1 2 *mf*

A. Cl. *mf*

B. Cl. *mf*

A. Saxes 1 2 *mf*

T. Sax. *mf*

Bar. Sax. *mf*

Tpts. 1 2 17

Hn. *mf*

Trbs./Bar./Bsn. *mf*

Tuba *mf*

Bells

Perc. *mf*

Timp. *mf*

Detailed description: This is a page from a published musical score for 'Phrygian Phantasy'. It contains measures 17 through 21. The instruments listed on the left are Flute/Oboe, Clarinets (1 and 2), Alto Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Alto Saxophones (1 and 2), Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, Trumpets (1 and 2), Horn, Trombones/Baritone/Bassoon, Tuba, Bells, Percussion, and Timpani. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 2/2. The Flute/Oboe part features a melodic line with slurs and ties across measures 17-21. The woodwinds and reeds provide harmonic support with various rhythmic patterns. The percussion section includes a steady eighth-note pattern on the snare drum and a more complex pattern on the timpani. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is indicated for many parts.

Figure 3-12 *Phrygian Phantasy* Published Score

Interview

Robert Sheldon started composing as a young musician because he was bored after school. He liked to make things up and started to write ideas down so he wouldn't forget them, and eventually it turned into him creating music to play with friends, which then turned into the music he now writes. He did not start writing for younger musicians until his compositional voice was more refined to include more things playable for those students. Most of his writing for younger students was a result of need after creating his method books, as publishers needed more music for students to perform when they reached certain benchmarks in their method book series.

In the creative process, he found that while it might take a lot less time to write a beginning level piece, there can still be some things that are creatively complicated when writing a piece for beginning musicians. He found that some inspirations and ideas that he found difficult translated into the restrictions for young musicians, but often the same ideas and inspirations can apply in similar ways. Often as a young composer, he found inspiration from other music, but most currently, he finds most of his inspiration from his travel and within.

The most important pedagogical aspect of teaching a beginner for Mr. Sheldon is getting students to produce the best possible tone quality and sound while also expressing themselves, which often intersects with his mission and ideas as a composer. He wants students to know from the very beginning that they have ownership over what they create, and it can affect people and their emotions.

As a composer, he finds that if music is well crafted and creative, teachers will be able to find unlimited teaching opportunities in it regardless of pedagogical demands. He does not

create music for a specific pedagogical purpose except for composing for his method books. He said as a music teacher he found himself searching for specific music to teach things like staccato, but that does not mean that as a composer that alone will help to create quality music. He thinks it is very important for all students in band to get a comprehensive musical experience right from the beginning, which includes writing and improvisation. A teacher might only get to have a student for a year, so they deserve to have an experience that will help to set them up to become lifelong music appreciators. They should play pieces in a variety of styles, improvise, and create music, and consume music that is performed by musicians at a high level.

Composers that he admires include John O’Riley, Lary Clark, Brian Balmages, and many more. He loves to listen to romantic era composers like Strauss, A Capella music, wind chamber music, jazz ensembles, musical theatre, and so much more. He likes to find inspiration from all of these sources as a writer. He sends a charge to all music educators to appreciate the joy of teaching music and embrace the exciting life of music making ahead, both for the teacher and their students.

Frank Ticheli

Background

Frank Ticheli is one of the most prolific band composers living today. Many of his works are standards for not only band, but also orchestra and choir. He has received countless prestigious awards and honors. Dr. Ticheli studied with other legends of composition including Leslie Bassett, William Bolcom, William Albright, George B. Wilson, Donald Erb. He currently

serves as a professor at University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music. From 1991 to 1998, he was the Composer in Residence of the Pacific Symphony.

Pieces of Interest

Due to his profile, Frank Ticheli's beginning instrumental works are not what he is most famous for. What made him a composer of interest for this project was the method book project he co-created with Gregory Rudgers titled *Making Music Matter*. This method book has several points of interest, one of which being it features 14 original instrumental solos and 24 original full-band compositions all composed by Frank Ticheli, which can be seen in Figure 3-13. The goal is to get students to play quality solo and ensemble literature from the beginning of their instrumental journey, along with beginning on pitches that are the most comfortable for their instrument's range. It also features multiple Creative Corners created by Dr. Ticheli that encourage students to think freely and creatively through music, as illustrated in Figure 3-14.

Figure 3-13 *Waltzing in the Rain* published in *Making Music Matter Book One*

WALTZING IN THE RAIN

COMPOSITION NO. 5 FRANK TICHELI

Flute
Oboe
Bells

B♭ Clarinet
B♭ Trumpet

E♭ Alto Saxophone
B♭ Tenor Saxophone

F Horn

Low Woodwinds
Low Brass

Triangle

Snare Drum
Bass Drum

Piano Reduction
(for rehearsal only)

Starting in Lesson 5, for compositions, the Bass Clarinet & Baritone Saxophone parts are no longer assigned to the upper staves, and are instead grouped with the Low Woodwinds and Low Brass.

CREATIVE CORNER

No. 1 - Question & Answer

As a way of teaching creativity to one of his students, Mozart said jokingly to her:
"Look here, I've started this melody and can not finish it! Would you please finish it for me?"

Let's pretend you are Mozart's student! You are given two fragments of a melody (the "Questions"). Provide the missing parts (the "Answers").

Here's how:

1. Perform the example below on your instrument. For the empty bars, count aloud the rhythms that are provided above the staff.
2. When ready, try improvising your own answers using the rhythms provided above the staff and only using notes in concert B \flat Major.
3. Finally, write down your own notes (perhaps one of your improvisations?) to fill in the blank bars. Then play through your finished melody!

Hints:

1. End on concert B \flat if you want your melody to sound complete. End on another note if you want it to sound as though it should go on.
2. Using mostly stepwise motion (e.g. F up to G, or D down to C, etc.) will help keep the melody smooth and flowing; an occasional leap (e.g., D up to G, or F down to D, etc.) is okay too!

Question: **Answer:** 



Percussion: improvise (make up) an answer using your own choice of rhythms, but staying within the style and mood of the first two bars.

Question: **Answer:** 



Figure 3-14 *Creative Corner* published in *Making Music Matter Book One*

Interview

Frank Ticheli started writing music as a high school student. He wanted to notate music that he heard on his records, but then decided that it might sound cool if he changed some things to make it his own. He laughs now and says that the ideas were so terrible, but every composer must start out with just putting ideas out there, even if they aren't good, which they probably will not be for a while.

After his dissertation and graduate school experience, he wanted to do the opposite of creating complicated music. At the time, he had an opportunity through his new publisher to write music for school aged students, so he gave it a try and greatly enjoyed it. He began to enjoy it more and more when he was presented with opportunities to guest conduct and engage with young musicians. He finds that the pieces he writes for young musicians inspire and inform what he creates for professional musicians and vice versa. He likes the contrast of the energies between composing alone and conducting and collaborating with others.

For his compositional process, he actually finds displeasure and frustration in the beginning of the process. He begins to sketch and describes it as a Catch-22, because you cannot start writing the piece until you have the ideas, but you cannot get the ideas until you start writing the piece. When he finds a spark of something that he can hold onto and finally gets the ball rolling, this is when the joy can begin. He finds the content dictates the form, and he describes it as "getting the car without the map" as he writes through trial and discovery as opposed to pre planning and entirely sketching out pieces before beginning to write. He has found over the years, there are significantly less surprises when

When comparing the experience writing for and pedagogy for younger musicians from the angle of a composer, he shares that there is a lot more crossover than some may think. The time spent at the desk writing a grade 1 piece is just as intense as the time writing a grade 5 piece, it just may be less of it. He believes that even from a young age, students need to show and be the music just as much as older and more experienced musicians. We have a responsibility as music educators to express the joy of music in our faces and bodies so that students can do the same and get the most out of music. This is just as important as teaching notes and rhythms for him, and as students get older and more experienced, it will only mean that they have more tools to be expressive, especially if it is a learned and intentional skill from the beginning. Composers that he admires include Hindemith, David Maslanka, John Mackey, Omar Thomas, and Michael Daugherty.

Dr. Ticheli shares that he is happy that he has had the opportunity to convert some of his pieces into flex scoring. Not only has the pandemic created a situation of music in our schools where it may be necessary for more schools, but he now has made his music more accessible to school music programs who may have not been able to access it even before the pandemic due to instrumental limitations, so it has been a very positive experience for him. While he finds that a lot of his music can be easily translated into flexible arrangements, he did not like being in less control of the timbres and colors of the music at every grade level.

Advice he has for teachers is to continue to bring the joy into music for your students, along with bringing your true self to your teaching. No one can do what you do in the way that you do it, so embrace that and contribute that to the world of music. He also charges to program repertoire that can take you to a place “that only music occupies” at every grade level and that says something meaningful to the player and the audience. It should “work well within the

universe it establishes” which applies to any grade level or context that a musician can encounter. He also sees some great learning value for both teachers and their students to compose and create music for them. It will help a teacher to not only learn as a composer, but also to learn more about their players and give an opportunity to tweak the piece again and again to fit them and make it better, and for students, not only will it excite them, but also give them a chance to learn from something they have more of a direct connection to.

Conclusions

While each interview was incredibly unique and the individual composers each had so much to offer, there were some reoccurring ideas I found as a result of these interviews to be important for students.

The biggest takeaway I had was that music should be a joyful and creative experience for students at every level, and that includes our beginners. For students to gain an investment and take ownership over their musicianship, they should have an opportunity to express themselves through music at the very beginning. The composers shared a variety of ways this core idea can manifest, such as learning to play with an expressive and quality tone, mirroring the joy and expression that their music teacher shows in the classroom and in rehearsals, playing music that has the chance to express and tell a story, or even getting the chance to make their own creative choices in music making such as composing or arranging.

While every composer said that it is important to find pedagogical moments in music, and every piece has teachable moments, it is more important to create a piece from quality

musical ideas and colors rather than creating a piece in order to teach a specific pedagogical skill.

The limited palate of notes and rhythms to work with is not a negative limiting factor for artistic creation. Every composer shared that their process for writing for younger students is more similar than different than it is for writing more mature pieces. They still create timbral colors, express musical stories and ideas, and create a meaningful musical experience, just using fewer notes and less complicated rhythms. Multiple composers shared that they believe almost all of their musical ideas could be written into pieces for any grade level, they are just “watered down” or “fleshed out” to make the piece fit their desired grade level. When asked to share the composers that they most admired, they all shared composers who write good music across multiple difficulty levels and sometimes even across genres, which is also true for these composers themselves.

Chapter 4 The Piece

Methodology

In order to compose an original piece for beginning band, I wanted to combine all the knowledge amassed through research and the composer interviews to create original content for beginning band students. There are several ideas that I felt were the most important to adhere to in summation of the research experience:

Use a limited range within an octave, and do not have clarinets go over the break unless a divisi to a lower note is included for students who are not able to go over the break yet. This restriction creates a limited color palate to work with, but this is not a limiting factor.

Start first with a creative idea for a piece, then form it to fit pedagogical ideas and needs of the performing ensemble. Music is a form of art and expression, and there are teaching moments that can be created out of almost any opportunity.

Keep parts together. Rhythmic unison is powerful, as you can still have stability while exploring different types of harmony. Make sure every part in full ensemble playing is doubled somewhere else. The low brass and woodwinds should all stick together and can even live on one staff and part to make things simplified.

Limit the length and avoid extended measures of rest for any section. Beginners have both endurance and focus issues.

Repeat materials when you can. The piece can still be effective while giving students something familiar to keep coming back to.

Whenever possible, create opportunities for student creation and improvisation in music.

Students should be able to take more creative ownership over what they perform and will encourage students from the beginning to create.

Writing Process

I chose to pick the theme of safari because I was inspired by my students' excitement in general music class to participate in activities with the music from *Carnival of the Animals*. I chose the playful title of *Symphonic Safari*. Inspiration struck one day for the opportunity for student creativity. I greatly credit the inspiration to Dr. Blackshaw, who so beautifully scaffolds opportunities for student creation in a way that is developmentally appropriate yet still exciting. As seen in Figure 4-1, in *Symphonic Safari*, students are given a pattern of notes and are invited to work collaboratively with their section and band director to add dynamics and articulations to illustrate an animal of their choice. This gives students an opportunity to create something without having to take the leap of generating their own notes. It gives them ownership over what they are playing, and each performance of the piece will be unique. Interdisciplinary content can also be included, such as studying the animals they are portraying in life science class or the safari environment in earth science. Students could create animal masks in Art Class to wear to further help to portray the animal of their choice. I aimed to include a few different articulation types in the fully notated sections to give students a few ideas for what they could include in their own passage. In the program notes, I gave ideas for what each section could be in case the students or director are in need of an idea as a jumping off point.

Symphonic Safari

5

19

Fl, Ob

B♭ Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

The image shows a musical score for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". The score is written for four instruments: Flute/Oboe (Fl, Ob), B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), and Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.). The score is divided into five measures. The first measure is marked with a rehearsal mark "19". The second measure contains a text box that reads "Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice". The third and fourth measures are empty. The fifth measure is marked with a page number "5". The score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B♭).

Figure 4-1 Directions in *Symphonic Safari*

For instrumentation, I chose a hybrid of traditional instrumentation and flex instrumentation. As seen in the scoring in Figure 4-2, instruments such as low reeds/low woodwinds and flute are oboe are combined in the scoring, and the horn part is always doubled. In this scenario, every necessary part is very likely to be covered in a variety of ensemble situations. Rhythmic unison between the melody lines and the bass line parts was used to build ensemble wide stability. Each part is contained within a limited range and does not use complex rhythms. The piece is only about two minutes in length and does not feature extended rests for any sections. The rondo form gives the students a repeating melody to come back to as the piece plays out.

The image displays a page from a musical score for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". The page is numbered 49 in the top right corner. The score is arranged in a vertical column of staves. At the top right, the word "June" is written. The staves are labeled on the left as follows: "Flute, Oboe", "Clarinet in Bb", "Alto Sax", "Tenor Sax", "Horn in F", "Trumpet in Bb", "Trombone Baritone Bassoon" (with "Baritone" and "Bassoon" on separate lines), and "Percussion". Each staff begins with a treble clef (except for the Trombone Baritone Bassoon staff, which has a bass clef) and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The time signature is 4/4. The notation on the staves is sparse, showing only the beginning of the piece with a few notes and rests.

Figure 4-2 *Symphonic Safari* Scoring

The full score for *Symphonic Safari* is available in Appendix B.

Appendix A - Guiding Questions for Composer Interviews

Interview Questions

About their background as musicians and composers- basically, how did you get here

When did you first start composing or arranging and why? Where does it fit in with your overall musicianship?

What made you decide to write a piece for beginning instrumentalists?

How long does it take you to write a piece for beginning band students? What is the process like?

What are your musical inspirations for beginning band?

What is different or similar about writing for this group as opposed to (other group that they have written for)

What do you consider to be the most important pedagogical aspects of teaching a beginning instrumentalist? Do you try to reflect that in your music?

What is it like writing Flexible Instrumentation pieces for beginning musicians?

For practicing educators, do you write pieces to fit the needs or strengths of your current students?

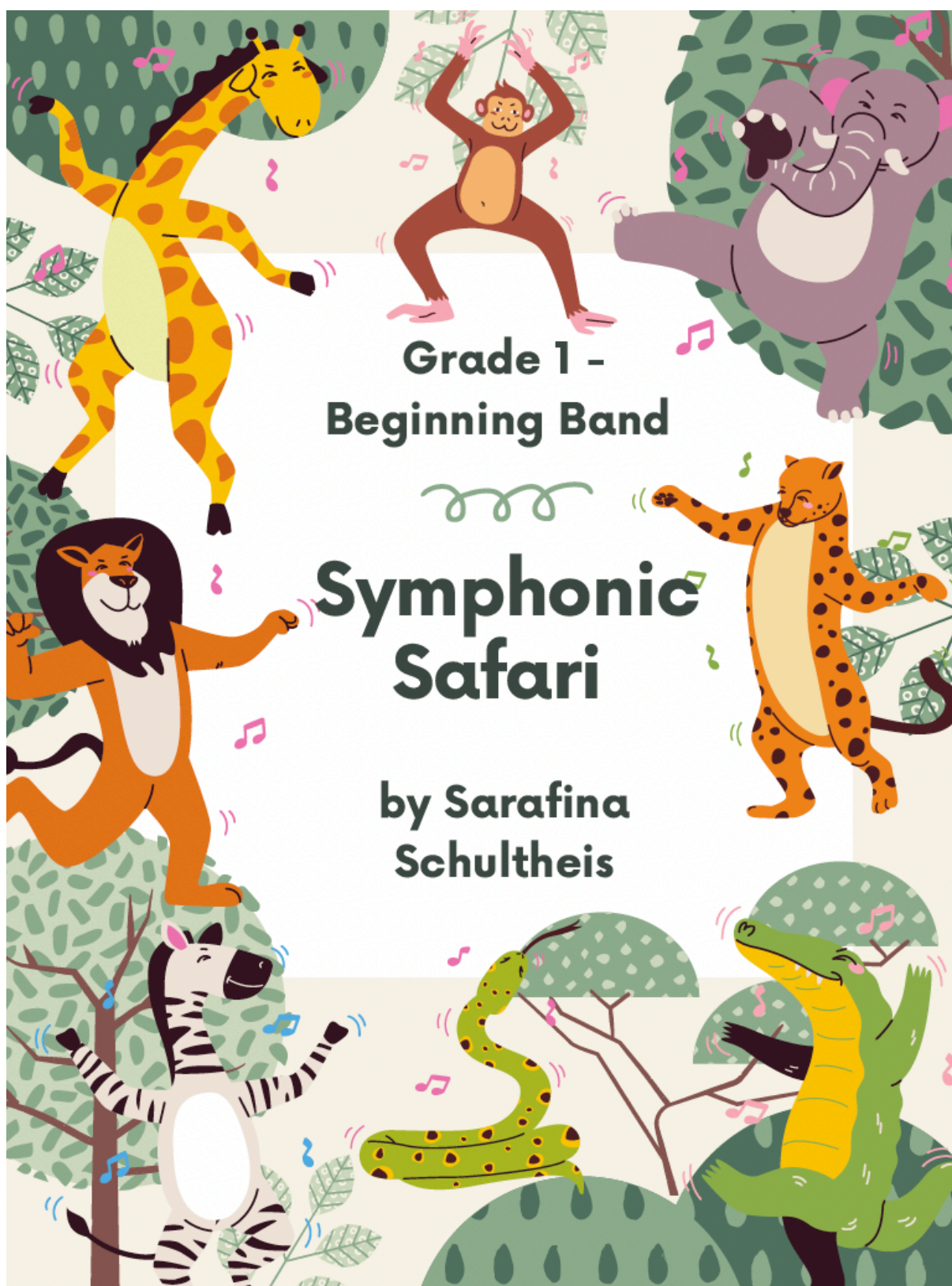
For practicing educators, how do you approach teaching this piece to an ensemble?

Are you ever surprised about how your music is performed or certain spots that the students have trouble with?

Who is another composer of beginning band music that you admire?

What advice do you have for future band teachers? Future composers? People who do both?

Appendix B – Symphonic Safari for Beginning Band



Symphonic Safari

for Grade 1 Beginning Band

by Sarafina Schultheis

Duration: ~ 2 Minutes

2022

Program Notes

Journey on a symphonic safari through the musical jungle! The reoccurring tutti theme is accompanied by drums with the snares off to transport you to the green trees of the jungle chattering with animals. In this piece for beginning musicians, students have the opportunity to use personal creativity to paint a picture of an animal of the students' choice. Each section has a 3 measure solo where they are given the notes but work with their section mates and director to add in dynamics and articulations to illustrate an animal of their choice. There is an exciting opportunity to showcase student artwork, perhaps animal masks to aid in the depiction of the different animals.

Ideas for Animals

There is no right answer, but these are some example ideas to get the ball rolling if you or your students are feeling stumped.

Low Brass and Woodwinds: add accents and loud dynamics for an elephant stomping by. For added difficulty, start softer, peak in the middle, and decrescendo to imitate the sound of stomping by.

Clarinet: Add staccatos and a crescendo in combination with the rising pattern to simulate a monkey climbing up a tree.

Saxophone: Add a loud staccato on the quarter notes, followed by quiet legato 8th notes and the loud staccato quarter note to mimic a crocodile/alligator chomping down.

Trumpet and Horn: Add accents and separation at a loud dynamic to create a fanfare fit for a lion.

Percussion: Add accents to mimic the stampede of a running zebra

Flute and Oboe: Add a slur at a quiet dynamic to mimic a sneaking snake hissing along

Score

Symphonic Safari

Sarafina Schultheis

Jungle Beat ♩ = 90

Flute, Oboe

Clarinet in B \flat

Alto Sax

Tenor Sax

Horn in F

Trumpet in B \flat

Trombone
Baritone
Bassoon

Percussion

snare off

mf

mf

f

div.

div.

Symphonic Safari

The musical score is for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". It is written for a symphonic band or orchestra. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute (Fl.) and Oboe (Ob.), Bassoon (Bb Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.), Horn (Hn.), Baritone Trombone (Bb Tpt.), Tuba/Euphonium (Tbn Bar Bsn), and Percussion (Perc.). The second system includes parts for Horn (Hn.), Baritone Trombone (Bb Tpt.), Tuba/Euphonium (Tbn Bar Bsn), and Percussion (Perc.). The key signature is one flat (Bb). The time signature is 2/5. The score is marked with a *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamic. The percussion part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes. The woodwinds and brass parts have various melodic lines, including some with slurs and ties. The percussion part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes.

Fl. Ob. *mf*

Bb Cl. *mf*

A. Sx. *mf*

T. Sx.

Hn. *mf*

Bb Tpt. *mf* div.

Tbn Bar Bsn *mf* div.

Perc. *mf*

Symphonic Safari

3

[illegible]

Symphonic Safari

4
13

Fl, Ob *mf*

B \flat Cl. *mf*

A. Sx. *mf*

T. Sx. *mf*

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

Hn. *mf*

B \flat Tpt. *mf* div.

Tbn Bar Bsn *mf* div.

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

Perc. *mf*

Symphonic Safari

5

19

Fl, Ob

B \flat Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

19

Hn.

B \flat Tpt.

Tbn

Bar

Bsn

19

Perc.

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

mf

div.

div.

div.

div.

Symphonic Safari

6
24

Fl, Ob

B \flat Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

Hn.

B \flat Tpt.

Tbn
Bar
Bsn

Perc.

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

mf

div.

div.

div.

div.

Snare cross sticks

Snares off

The musical score is for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". It is written in 6/8 time and consists of 24 measures. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute/Oboe (Fl, Ob), B-flat Clarinet (B \flat Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.), Horn (Hn.), B-flat Trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), Trombone/Euphonium/Baritone (Tbn Bar Bsn), and Percussion (Perc.). The second system includes parts for Horn (Hn.), B-flat Trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), Trombone/Euphonium/Baritone (Tbn Bar Bsn), and Percussion (Perc.). The score includes a rehearsal mark at measure 24. The percussion part includes snare cross sticks and snares. The score includes a dynamic marking of *mf* and a text box instructing students to work with their teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of their choice.

Symphonic Safari

7

30

Fl. Ob.

B \flat Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

30

Hn.

B \flat Tpt.

Tbn
Bar
Bsn

Perc.

div.

div.

div.

div.

mf

mf

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

Symphonic Safari

The musical score is for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". It is arranged for a woodwind and brass ensemble with percussion. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute (Fl.) and Oboe (Ob.), B♭ Clarinet (Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), and Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.). The second system includes parts for Horn (Hn.), B♭ Trumpet (Tpt.), Trombone (Tbn), Baritone (Bar), and Basson (Bsn). The percussion part (Perc.) is shown at the bottom. The key signature has one flat (B♭), and the time signature is 3/6. The score is marked with a rehearsal mark 8 and a measure number 36. The woodwinds and brass parts have melodic lines with slurs and ties. The percussion part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

8 36

Fl. Ob.

B♭ Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

Hn.

B♭ Tpt.

Tbn
Bar
Bsn

Perc.

36

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

Symphonic Safari

40

Fl. Ob.

B \flat Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

40

Hn.

B \flat Tpt.

div.

div.

Tbn

Bar

Bsn

40

Perc.

mf

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a piece titled 'Symphonic Safari'. The page is numbered 61 at the top right and 9 at the bottom right. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes staves for Flute/Oboe (Fl. Ob.), B-flat Clarinet (B \flat Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), and Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.). The second system includes staves for Horn (Hn.), B-flat Trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), Trombone/Euphonium/Baritone/Saxophone (Tbn Bar Bsn), and Percussion (Perc.). The percussion part is marked with a '40' and a 'mf' dynamic. The woodwinds and brass parts feature various melodic lines, some with slurs and accents. The percussion part has a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature (C).

Symphonic Safari

10
44

Fl, Ob

Work with your teacher and section to add articulations and dynamics to become the animal of your choice

mf

f

B \flat Cl.

f

A. Sx.

f

T. Sx.

f

Hn.

f

B \flat Tpt.

div.

f

Tbn
Bar
Bsn

div.

f

Perc.

44

f

Symphonic Safari

50

Fl, Ob

B \flat Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

50

Hn.

B \flat Tpt.

div.

div.

div.

div.

Tbn
Bar
Bsn

50

Perc.

The musical score is for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". It consists of eight staves, each representing a different instrument or section. The staves are: Flute/Oboe (Fl, Ob), B-flat Clarinet (B \flat Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.), Horn (Hn.), B-flat Trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), Trombone/Euphonium/Baritone/Saxophone (Tbn Bar Bsn), and Percussion (Perc.). The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 50, 51, 52, 53, and 54 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "div." (divisi). The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The percussion part features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Symphonic Safari

12
55

Fl, Ob

B \flat Cl.

A. Sx.

T. Sx.

Hn.

B \flat Tpt. div.

Tbn
Bar
Bsn. div.

Perc. 55

This musical score is for a piece titled "Symphonic Safari". It is arranged for a symphony orchestra with woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute/Oboe (Fl, Ob), B-flat Clarinet (B \flat Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sx.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sx.), Horn (Hn.), B-flat Trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), Trombone/Euphonium/Baritone/Saxophone (Tbn Bar Bsn.), and Percussion (Perc.). The second system includes parts for Horn (Hn.), B-flat Trumpet (B \flat Tpt.), Trombone/Euphonium/Baritone/Saxophone (Tbn Bar Bsn.), and Percussion (Perc.). The score is written in 4/4 time and features a variety of musical notations, including eighth notes, quarter notes, half notes, and full notes, as well as rests and dynamic markings. The percussion part is marked with a "55" and a "Perc." label. The woodwind and brass parts are marked with "div." (divisi) and "55".

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Concert Choir | Penn State School of Music
Outer Dimensions | Penn State School of Music
Clarinet Choir | Penn State School of Music

Professional Development and Leadership

Pennsylvania Music Educators Association Conference Research Exhibition | 2022
Encore: School of Music Benefitting THON | Treasurer | 2019-2021
National Association for Music Education | Treasurer of Penn State Chapter | 2018-2021
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