

Dear PMEA Wind Ensemble member,

Congratulations on being selected to perform in the 2019 PMEA All-State Wind Ensemble. This is a significant honor, but carries with it significant responsibilities and opportunities.

I am your guest conductor. I serve as a conductor in several different institutions including as the Senior Director of Instrumental Music and Conducting Studies at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA. At F&M I conduct the Symphonic Wind Ensemble, Orchestra, Philharmonia Chamber Orchestra, and teach conducting. I am also the Artistic Director and Conductor of Allegro Orchestra Lancaster, which is a professional orchestra. I am also the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Allegretto Youth Orchestra and Director of Music at First United Methodist Church in Lancaster. I am fortunate to have served as guest conductor for festivals and ensembles in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Maryland.

For your ensemble to reach its full potential there are several things that I need you to do. Perhaps most important, please prepare your music with the same enthusiasm, dedication, and energy that you prepared your solo for your District audition.

Rehearsing and practicing are two very different kinds of experiences. We will be rehearsing, not practicing. For me, rehearsing or re-hearing is a concept. As we re-hear your individual parts, you will be reacting and responding to each other. It is not practice, which is what you do individually to develop technical skills to perform. This means that you must be so familiar with your own part, that you can focus on responding and reacting to everyone else's part.

Below I have included YouTube links for our repertoire. Please review these recordings with your music in hand. There is no acceptable excuse to be surprised at our first rehearsal.

Make sure you have a pencil with you in rehearsal. The only comments that I will make in rehearsal are to make changes in how you are presenting your musical line. Be prepared to mark all of these changes.

Cell phones are a wonderful and truly amazing tool. Some of you use cell phone as tuners, in which case having the phone on hand in rehearsal is appropriate. But any other use of a cell phone in rehearsal is completely unacceptable. I recommend that you leave your phone in your case.

We have three significant works for our repertoire:

- Robert W. Smith, "12 Seconds to the Moon": 2019 marks the 50th anniversary of humans walking on the moon with the landing of Apollo 11. This work depicts the advent of human flight, starting with the Wright brothers first motor propelled plane, flying 12 seconds, to our arrival on the moon. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-UUkwOPsNE>

- Andreas Makris, "Aegean Festival Overture," is an exciting work with extraordinary rhythmic complexity. It inspired by Greek dances and festivals. This work will take some time to resolve given the speed of your technical challenges as well as rhythmic intrigue. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9IgDOxIdml>

- Otto Schwarz, "Mont-Blanc": The following is an excellent description provided by the publisher of this programmatic work based upon the concept of climbing Mont-Blanc, one of the peaks of the Alps: "Otto M. Schwarz composed this work inspired by 'the roof of Europe' with its luminous and huge glaciers. Early in the morning, mountain-climbers set off to the peak; they witness the sunrise, and experience the hazards that the journey up to the summit

brings along. A snowstorm and falling rocks at Arête des Bosses aggravate their journey. A sudden change of weather, however, enables them to reach the top after a strenuous ascent. This piece invites you to an imaginary journey from Saint-Gervais-les-Bains via the “voie royale” to the top of Mont-Blanc.” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bai_BVLjyKo

If you have any questions regarding your repertoire or this festival, please feel free to email me at brian.norcross@fandm.edu.

I am looking forward to both working with you and getting to know you.

Happy practicing,

Brian Norcross