



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE UNITED STATES ARMY BAND "PERSHING'S OWN"
400 McNAIR ROAD
FORT MYER, VIRGINIA 22211-1306

09 NOV 2020

Dear PMEA All-State Concert Band Member,

Congratulations on being selected to perform in the 2021 PMEA Virtual All-State Concert Band. This is truly an honor and is at the same time evidence of your talent, tenacity, and dedication to musical excellence. It is equally an honor for me to serve as your guest conductor.

Just a little bit about me: I currently serve as the Deputy Commander of The United States Army Band, "Pershing's Own," in Washington, D.C. I have served as a conductor in the Army for more than 17 years and have led Army bands around the world. In this particular assignment, I have the opportunity to conduct all of the various ensembles that comprise the Army Band, including the Concert Band, Ceremonial Band, the Army Chorus, and the Army Voices. The Army Band supports the ceremonial and musical needs of our most senior leaders here in Washington. Most recently, I had the great privilege of conducting the Ceremonial Band at the 2021 Presidential Inaugural Wreath Laying at Arlington National Cemetery, which was attended by the new President and Vice President as well as three of the four former presidents.

My work here in the National Capital Region inspired my choice for our piece this year: Three Washington Statues. Written by Philip Sparke in 2015, this three movement work depicts several important monuments in the District of Columbia: The Lincoln Memorial, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and the Duke Ellington statue, entitled "Encore." If you have not been to D.C. in person and seen all three of these statues, I encourage you to google them and familiarize yourself with not their look and their size, but also their location in the city.

I think this piece lends itself well to a virtual ensemble because it has only a few tempo changes. We will follow Mr. Sparke's printed tempo markings. Probably the most challenging tempo change occurs at measure 29, since there is no real mathematical correlation between 88 (opening tempo) and 144 (tempo at m.29). Nonetheless, by following our metronomes, we should be able to navigate this successfully. The tempo change at m.70 should be quite natural given that the half note from the previous two bars equals the quarter note at m.70.

One of our fun challenges will be to authentically recreate the Duke Ellington jazz style in the third movement. Note that the eighth notes are all swung. If you are not familiar with swing style, I encourage you to do some listening to some recordings of Mr. Ellington's music before we gather in April.

Speaking of listening, I encourage you to take some time to listen to the Army Band's recording of this piece. Though our interpretation will invariably differ from this recording, it will nonetheless give you a good overall sonic picture of the work. The three movements can be found on YouTube via these links:

- I. The Lincoln Memorial
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQBHnyR5qwQ>
- II. The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22GVMZn-uXA>
- III. Duke Ellington "Encore"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Ldd5QBPEPg>

I very much look forward to gathering with you next month. I know that each one of you will take your preparation of this music seriously and will come to our event fully prepared to contribute your absolute best musical product. If each of us does this, it will be a thrilling and rewarding event!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Toven", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniel F. Toven, Lt. Colonel
Deputy Commander