



Dear PMEA All-State Concert Band,

Congratulations on earning a position in the 2023 PMEA Pennsylvania All-State Concert Band. You are enjoying this recognition as a result of your diligence, attention to detail, and love for making music. This achievement follows you for the rest of your life as situations will arise when you find yourself proudly stating, “Yes, I was a member of the Pennsylvania All-State Band”. You are part of an elite group of band students who are in a position to enjoy some of music’s most rewarding experiences. Your family, instructors, and friends are all proud of you and I join them in offering best wishes for an amazing All-State experience.

I have been asked to share thoughts related to conductor expectations. I wish to state my thoughts instead in terms of expectations between ensemble members. Advanced instrumental ensembles should think in terms of developing and maintaining a collaborative musical experience that is the responsibility of the individual group members. In order for band members to be capable of real musical collaboration several things must happen.

- Attention is given to the production of a characteristic tone. Only after the ensemble is capable of playing with a resonant and characteristic tone can issues related to balance and resonance be addressed. Attention to these areas continues regardless of the achievement level of the ensemble. Remember, tone comes first!
- All notes and rhythms are to be mastered before entering the first rehearsal. **Practice** is where notes and rhythms are learned and this can be accomplished individually. **Rehearsal** is the place where musicians learn everyone else’s part! I will prepare for our rehearsals by assuming every band member can play notes and rhythms in tempo.
- Learning the role that every section and soloist has in the overall musical landscape opens real possibilities for music collaboration.
  - Who has the melodic responsibility.
  - What is the appropriate volume.
  - Something in the music is always changing, what is it?
  - What can I be doing to support the overall musical objectives?
  - In the best ensembles, individuals are aware of what others are doing and are actively listening to what is happening and making continual adjustments. I would expect this to happen in an All-State group.
- To foster favorable musical outcomes, a professional rehearsal atmosphere is to be maintained. This does not simply mean a rehearsal void of distractions, but refers to an environment where active critical listening occurs and musical decisions are the result of preparation and careful listening.

All of this to say – I wish to direct all possible musical responsibilities away from me and on to the band. This opens up avenues that can lead to powerful performances. The All-State Concert Band is very large and runs the risk of becoming cumbersome. However, as I interact with the group, it should feel as if I am working with a chamber ensemble and I will expect this type of general environment. There will of course be lighter moments in our rehearsals. Good bands can move out of lighter moments and immediately into periods of intense music making.

**California by David Maslanka**  
[Reference Recording](#)

This piece initially establishes for the listener a calm sonic dreamscape that in time becomes laced with recurring expressive points. The initial aesthetic gradually transforms and gives way to more aggressive postures that are punctuated with crisp rhythmic interjections by winds and especially percussion. The work continues to move between dream-like episodes and technical fireworks before finally settling into a long final section with ever decreasing instrumental forces featuring an extended oboe solo with piano and vibraphone providing a delicate ending accompaniment.

*Music is wonderful. It lets us tell ourselves things we can't speak out in words. It opens the dream space and lets us dream together. It lets us imagine the world as it really is, a place of vitality, power, and possibility. - David Maslanka*

Considering specifics of performance:

Measure 1. (extended fermata)

- Tune the sustained sonic pedal in low reeds and low brass with piano
- Percussion swells throughout the first measure must be timed to overlap. We will coordinate the percussion swells in rehearsal.
- There is no need to hurry measure 1

Measure 2-18

- Winds must be flexible as there will be significant levels of rubato at this slow tempo. There are traded melodic moments between winds and trombone/tenor saxophones that must be balanced.
- I would remind all performers to read the composer's directions carefully and listen many times to the reference recordings until there is a clear picture of what is likely to happen.

Measure 17-18

- Percussion parts 1-5 must be prepped for a unison attack with piano followed by a bold crescendo from timpani and tam-tam. Often in performance this is not together.

Measure 19-34

- A noticeably faster tempo here with balanced contributions from winds alternating with percussion
- Dramatic moments of tension and release – Just notice Maslanka's directions on the page

Measure 28-33

- Increased rhythmic agitation created through syncopation. This must be clear to the listener
- Please know that throughout this piece, there will usually be a lift after any dotted quarter note.

Measure 34-40 (much tempo fluctuation)

- I will be checking sections on all 16<sup>th</sup> note technique in places like measure 34 and 35 – so make sure you follow through on preparations
- Measure 35 has intricate dovetailing between winds, high brass, and piano. As you prepare these measures, focus on precise rhythmic execution

Measure 41-56 (much faster tempo)

- As a general rule, isolated notes will be played short.
- Starting in measure 49 a broad melodic figure is presented along with the crisp articulations from before. It will be important that the energy level remains high while clearly hearing the melody presented in long note values.

Measure 57-64

- Very free section rhythmically with long thoughtful fermatas
- Bass drum – very soft mallets in this section
- Clarinets listen to piano for pitch in measure 64

Measure 65-77

- Piano very soft on the a-minor repeated eighth notes, but extremely precise
- Clarinet must find expressive postures in the melody – we will explore them
- Timpani in measure 68 and other places, play the grace notes open

Measure 78-91

- Continues as before, but grows dramatically
- Measure 89 in "6" with subdivided beats 5 and 6 and a most dramatic crescendo

Measure 91-98 (a bit faster)

- Much louder here with alternating ideas between winds and percussion
- Please adhere to Maslanka's instructions regarding the sudden crescendos

Measure 99-109

- The technique must be mastered here. I will be listening to it in small groups and individually
- Measure 101 – bold anvil strike. The anvil should be suspended if possible and struck with a metal hammer
- Be committed to the *ffpp* moments in the low reeds and low brass
- The two 16<sup>th</sup> notes in measure 109 will be dictated

#### Measure 110-117

- Percussion and piano need to think of being equal in impact and musical contribution to the winds. This is true in many places throughout the piece.
- 32<sup>nd</sup> note technique starting in measure 115 will be checked in rehearsal (Clarinets/Bassoon/Saxophones)

#### Measure 118 – 127

- There will be subtle shadings in the clarinet tremolo parts. The tremolo speed needs to be very fast.
- Measure 121 will have a fermata hold on beat 2 and beat 4
- Measure 122 will release fermata on beat 1 and continuing descending line in clarinet I and bass clarinet (the bass clarinet with the best tone will play this solo)
- Measure 124 with double bass and piano will be slow and very soft.
- Measure 125 – piano part will be *a piacere*

#### Measure 128-139

- Opening material returns and is more dreamlike and reflective
- Bass clarinet and string bass must play the A-natural pedal tone in tune
- 1<sup>st</sup> clarinets must play as one
- Bass drum – puffy beater with resonant instrument

#### Measure 139 to 154

*The 1st ranked Oboe I will play the solo based on their seating placement*

- The oboe solo in this section must be approached with beautiful tone and vibrato and is one of the pivotal moments in the concert. I will allow and encourage degrees of flexibility and will be having discussions with the soloist regarding the most effective use of vibrato.
- This section is a wonderful dialogue between the oboe soloist interjecting new materials and the clarinets reinforcing elements from previous sections. It is all very slow and reflective.
- Measure 152-154 Coordination between piano and must be exact and feel free to the listener

#### Measure 155-END

- The coordination between piano and vibraphone must be exact and fluid sounding with consideration to the sustained melodic line in the oboe.
- Measure 159-162 no need to get in a hurry with piano and vibraphone. It will be long and drawn out and take advantage of the natural decay.

### **Washington Greys March by Claudio Grafulla Arr. by Loras J. Schissel**

#### **[Reference Recording](#)**

This 1861 march gets right down to business by jumping immediately into the first strain and without the standard introduction. It also forgoes the standard key change found in march trios by staying in 5 flats throughout. The march (originally for brass only) written for the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment of New York (located in the Bronx) and features a seemingly endless seamless flow of contrasting aggressive and flowing melodies in the most compact of forms. This popular march even omits a “stinger” at the end of the piece. *-David Romines*

Considering specifics of performance:

This march is styled in a very traditional manner with Italian and German influences impacting the various melodies. General considerations must be given to the spacing between notes and styles of accents.

- All ruffs in the snare drum and field drum should be open style
- Snare rolls should be open style for a regimental sound. If the level of technique allows, I will ask for a slight crescendo through each roll so we could hear the “grit” of the rhythm.
- I am considering having on two per part from the pickup to measure 30 until two measures before 46. Please be prepared for this contingency.
- A comfortable marching tempo will be maintained (116-120)
- Keep notes well-spaced (short) without over articulating – no hammer tongue. The energy should come from the airstream
- All notes (except those with tenuto markings) should be played at less than written value, indications of staccato (dots) should be considered an indication for more clarity (played clearly and cleanly)
- Marcato accents at 46 should be heavy “breath” accents, not hard tongue accents. Low brass should think short and heavy here.
- Measure 75 – I am considering moving to one on a part during this section with everyone carefully entering back in at 90

- Measure 108 – take care that the melody is not played with heavy articulation; a light, crisp, articulation is called for here
- Tubas should always play dry and short and horns play clear and crisp. What has sometimes been considered to be the “boring parts” are really the whole harmonic structure or “iron-work” of march compositions.
- We will maintain one tempo throughout with **no** rallentando leading into the final strain.

*Loras J. Schissel/David Romines*

### **Eine Kleine Yiddische Ragmusik by Adam Gorb**

#### [Reference Recording](#)

This music exemplifies the “jaunty” club style found in 1930s Germany similar in fashion to Kurt Weill’s music from *The Three Penny Opera*. The general effect is that of clever and poignant melodies combined with the rhythmic style of Scott Joplin ragtime. -*David Romines*

Considering specifics of performance:

Clarity of line and emphasis on syncopation is important throughout the work. There are many solos that are passed around. Soloists must project to the audience and accompanying lines must be responsive to balance issues. There is only one tempo throughout with quarter = 92 is indicated in the score.

*The 1st chair ranked in that section/part will automatically be assigned the solo.*

- Measure 1 woodwinds matching style
- Measure 9 alto saxophone solo with wider than normal vibrato please
- Measure 15 and 34 dovetailing in bassoons through flutes must match exactly every time it occurs
- Measure 24-27 cornet and horn play forceful and match style
- Measure 28 oboe solo with crisp style – it is more important to maintain style than play with a piano volume
- Measure 39-40 horns and trombones should gliss across the barline
- Measure 48 address technique in 16<sup>th</sup> notes and be sure to follow articulations in an exact manner
- Measure 61 and 172 – Cornet solo should be a bit pressed – don’t concern yourself too much about the piano dynamic
- Measure 62 – we need a woodblock that resonates or maybe a nice temple block
- Measure 79 - 91 and 181 - 192 repetitive rhythm that starts in the timpani must be clearly heard as it moves through the band
- Measure 94 and 102 – old school saxophone solo vibrato style from the 1930s – think Rudy Wiedoeft
- Measure 98 – one clarinet on a part
- Measure 99 and 107 flute solo triplets are not short or long and please don’t rush
- Measure 115-118 Alto saxophone and Tenor saxophone dovetail
- Measure 119-125 connect flute, oboe, alto saxophone
- Measure 139 the bassoon solo should be more forward and match the style of the earlier saxophone solos with a wider than normal vibrato
- Measure 151 trombones gliss into this measure
- Measure 160 – 164 deep and obnoxious embouchure scoops in the clarinet parts – don’t be shy
- Last note long and resonant

### **Horkstow Grange from Lincolnshire Posy by Percy Aldridge Grainger**

#### [Reference Recording](#)

This brief folksong setting of a melody collected from Lincolnshire, England is actually much, much more. It, along with the five other movements found in Grainger’s 1937 band masterwork, *Lincolnshire Posy* represent a milestone in band literature and in many ways established new standards for wind writing. *Horkstow Grange*’s verses tell the story of brutal violence that erupts at an 18<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse when a servant in built up frustration kills his overseer with a club. Although only 37 measures in duration, the emotionally packed aesthetic balances the feelings of pathos, underlying sadness, and pent-up anger that eventually results in the vicious attack. It is rare in instrumental literature to find music that so adroitly and simultaneously projects contrasting emotions. We will dive headfirst into the aesthetic points that make this music so worthy of our attention. -*David Romines*

## Considering specifics of performance:

- There will be a considerable amount of rubato (slowing down or speeding up the tempo in subtle ways to enhance emotional and or expressive potential) employed throughout the piece. The extent to which this technique will be determined by several factors including:
  - The maturity level of the individual performers
  - The acoustics of the rehearsal and performance venue
  - Clues from the harmony, rhythm, or melody
- You can count on no two versions being exactly the same. This of course means performers must be “beyond the notes” and working within the ensemble and also with the conductor for the best outcome.
- Measure 1 (pick up note) – this measure has only one beat. This pickup note or *anacrusis* will be held a bit longer than the initial tempo established in measure 2. Instruments with the pickup note and the initial melody (soprano sax, alto sax, horns, and Bb baritone) must establish total balance with any deference given to the horn/baritone quality.
- Regarding soprano sax and english horn in the opening measures. These instruments will only be used if the result is a balanced and musical presentation.
- Measure 3 – conducted 3+hold and no breath at the end of the measure
- Measure 5 – conducted 2+3
- Measure 8 – the 3/2 time will be conducted in a subdivided 3 pattern
- Measure 9 – no pulses given here, just the indication for a decrescendo
- Measure 10 – All grace notes will be placed **on the beat**
- Measure 11 – conducted 3+2
- Measure 13 – conducted 2+hold
- Measure 16 – the last 16<sup>th</sup> note will be placed on the downbeat of measure 17
- Measure 17 – snare drum begins sonic pedal at an inaudible volume
- Measure 19 – instructions for trumpet solo
  - Begin rehearsals with a volume that results in the best possible tone quality. Adjustments will be made if necessary
  - The solo should be played with a freedom of rhythm that allows for individual tones to be emphasized at will.
  - The conductor will provide as little input as possible
  - Take a breath at the end of measure 21
  - A second breath can happen after the dotted eighth note in measure 23
  - Very dramatic crescendo in measure 25 – if necessary soloist can style a breath at the end of measure 24
  - Other possible breaths
    - Measure 23 after beat three
    - After the 5<sup>th</sup> pulse in measure 27
- Measure 21 – conducted 3+2
- Measure 23 – snare drum begins to be heard
- Measure 24 – bold, but balanced crescendo
- Measure 24 – linger on the down beat. The chord in the horns is important and all three notes should be evident
- Measure 26 – 4 pulses in trumpet solo but 6 equal pulses in woodwinds (conducted in 4)
- Measure 27 – snare drum grows in volume and add suspended cymbal in consort . 3 beats subdivided
- Measure 29 – dramatic crescendo – the 16<sup>th</sup> note at the end of the measure is placed on the down beat of measure 30
- Measure 31 – conducted 3+2 and ends with a heavy 8<sup>th</sup> note on the last half of beat 5
- Measure 32 – heavy passing tone in low reeds and low brass on the “and” of beat 3
- Measure 33 – conducted 2+4. Strong suspended cymbal crescendo. Grace note placed directly on beat 3. Strong eighth note at the end of the measure
- Measure 34 – slowing down the end. Heroic horn and alto sax part
- Measure 36 – conducted in subdivided 3 with a long hold on the last quarter note
- Measure 37 – grace note on the beat and morendo to the end

## Symphony #3 *Slavyanskaya* by Boris Kozhevnikov Ed. by John R. Bourgeois

### [Reference Recording](#)

This Russian symphony for winds features a first movement that rushes out of the gate with bombastic military signatures alternating with moments of decidedly romantic postures. Although the work was written in 1950, it was unknown in the

United States until the circumstances outlined in the paragraph below unfolded. Shortly after the first U.S. performances in the late 1990s, Slavjanskaya has become a favorite for university, military, and professional bands. - *David Romines*

I first came to know of the symphony through my Norwegian friend and band buff, Jan Ericksen, of Norwegian Radio, Oslo. At that time, our knowledge of wind music in the USSR was very scant and obtaining information of performance materials was practically nil. However, Jan was and continues to be the master of musical protocol and he circuitously obtained a score and set of parts for me. Later, Jan was the person who was singularly responsible for achieving a state of 'musical détente' between the U.S. and the USSR through his Norwegian Radio broadcasts of the Marine Band. - *John R. Bourgeois*

Considering specifics of performance:

Euphonium Section: I would consider the euphonium part to be the most difficult part assignment. Please prepare your parts thoroughly.

One of the first things we will work on is establishing a good tempo for this particular ensemble movement. Please practice and work up to a tempo of quarter note = @180. We might go a few clicks faster or slower. The more lyrical sections as found at rehearsal number 5 may have a more relaxed tempo.

- Rehearsal **1** through two measures before rehearsal number **5** – it is all very bold and marital in style with spacing between dotted eighth and 16<sup>th</sup> notes. The 16<sup>th</sup> notes in this rhythm should be played as if they belonged to the next beat.
- Two measures before rehearsal number **5** – this two-measure transition may see a bit of easement in the tempo.
- Rehearsal number **5** – the euphonium with help from tenor saxophone and horn must be prepared to carry the melodic responsibility and range (high Ab).
- Rehearsal **6** – the ensemble must balance to the solo oboe line
- Two measures before rehearsal number **9** the solo clarinet must cleanly advance through the arpeggio with no break between the high Bb slurred to the high D. The high D quarter note should be long. The three quarter notes in the measure before rehearsal number 9 will start very soft and be dictated by the conductor.
- Rehearsal **9** – a strong down beat followed by piano. Trombones and euphoniums, don't allow this section to catch you off guard.
- Rehearsal **9** plus seven – HORNS, make sure you can play this in the right style and in tempo, you have the responsibility
- Nine measures before rehearsal number **11** – HORNS be ready to be bold here, you carry the primary melodic responsibility
- Rehearsal **11** – bassoons, I will hear you on this in rehearsal to determine how we will proceed. It is an important part.
- Two measures before rehearsal number **12** - bass clarinet, bassoon, trombone III and tuba need to more this line with volume and style
- Rehearsal **12** – bass clarinet, bassoon, euphonium make sure you can play this in the correct separated style (not muddy)
- Rehearsal 12 plus 4 measures – HORNS again, this line must project
- The balance of the movement is essentially a recapitulation of previous events.

I cannot wait to get started. It is going to be a blast. If you have a question, you can always email me. I want to get to know you all as soon as possible.

My kindest regards,



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