

Music Notes – PA All State Jazz Ensemble 2024

Dr. Jason Kush, guest director

Dear students,

Congratulations on being selected for this high honor! All State is a big deal, and your hard work to get to this point is admirable. I'm looking forward to combining all of your artistry for a fantastic All State Jazz experience.

The PA All State Jazz has a special place in my heart, as I was a member of the group in 1999 and 2000. It is truly a dream to return to the group as your director. I'm looking forward to working on a fantastic set of music with you – fun music that is important to American culture and history!

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions – I can be reached via email at jasonkush@gmail.com.

PMEA asked that I include some biographical information, so here it is:

Dr. Jason Kush is an acclaimed saxophonist, educator, and scholar. Kush has performed as a leader, soloist, and ensemble member in a wide variety of musical settings in the United States, Europe, and Central and South America. Skilled and accomplished in multiple genres, Kush is both a member of the Pittsburgh Jazz Orchestra and has performed fourteen seasons with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, including a European tour. Prior to relocating to Pittsburgh, Kush performed five seasons with the New World Symphony, including an extended tour of France and Spain. As a freelance artist, Kush has appeared with ensembles including the Woody Herman Orchestra, the Smithsonian Jazz Masterworks Orchestra, the Russian National Orchestra, the Miami Sax Quartet, as well as with the artists Maceo Parker, Arturo Sandoval, Eddie Daniels, Paquito D'Rivera, Benny Golson, Sean Jones, Christian McBride, Jeff "Tain" Watts, Freddie Cole, Tom Scott, Hubert Laws, Common, Patti Austin, Michael Bolton, Andrea Bocelli, and Hugh Jackman, among many others.

Kush's solo discography includes *Finally Friday* (MCG Jazz), *Intersecting Lines* (New Focus Records/Naxos), and *Sonate* (Armazi Productions). Performing his original compositions, the Jason Kush Quartet appears regularly at premier jazz venues. Additionally, Kush's saxophone talents can be heard on albums by the Mike Tomaro Big Band, Alton Merrell, the South Florida Jazz Orchestra, the Nathan Douds Ensemble, and the Stephen Philip Harvey Jazz Orchestra.

Also an author and academic, Kush is a Professor of Music at Slippery Rock University and an Artist Lecturer at Carnegie Mellon University. He is endorsed by the *Conn-Selmer* and *Selmer Paris* companies, and plays the mouthpieces and ligatures of Belgian craftsman François Louis.

Festival Preparation

There are two essential elements for being ready for the festival:

1. Be able to play your part (rhythms, notes, articulation, improvisation).
2. Listen to the music to study the context, spirit, and nuance of each tune.

The following pages contain notes for your consideration. Please read them all! Each has a limited list, but this will give us a great head start.

Your study of the recordings is crucial because the audio shows far more detail about style than what is on the page, and more than we can discuss in rehearsal! Make sure to both actively listen as well as play along with the recordings. Having them in your mix while you are passively listening is also great!

One of the unique things about a jazz or pop music ensemble is the flexibility of the music. The sheet music is a guide to us. We will work to sound like the jazz greats while naturally adding our individuality to the music.

As a result, please be ready to be flexible with the music. We may change things in the music! We may shift some solos around or do whatever is needed to best serve the music.

Study scores:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/457aylo4rjnInmm7n96go/h?rlkey=udkp7i4jh2bs7firewhthtq13&dl=0>

YouTube playlist:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLoWjUKZWXtnL1QPOB3tyVJMLqBScDdxW>

My Lament:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/x7dt3n4fzr1cpbauqg00q/My-Lament-Maria-Schneider.mp3?rlkey=0ucozwuyp725ygrrtbijgap8n&dl=0>

1. Go'n an' Git it Y'all (Frank Foster)

This is a medium-up swing Basie chart and a fantastic, high-energy opener!

Reference recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hAnAIKDYSHA>

- We'll plan to do this closer to the recording tempo of ♩=190, *not* ♩=160 as listed on the sheet.
- The chart will start with two choruses of piano solo (Ab blues). Rhythm section can use the chord changes from Reh. 77.
- As with all music on the program, style identification from tune to tune is important. Make sure to check out the Count Basie Orchestra recording (from the album *Live at El Morocco*). Be aware of the treatment of the articulations: > . ^ _
- Trumpets and Saxophones: check out the bluesy grace notes from above in M. 15 and M. 27
- Reh. 89 very soft, including rhythm section.
- Trumpets, revoice the last note to (this is edited from the original Conductor Notes, and we may end up changing this at the festival):
 - Tpt. 1 – written Bb above staff
 - Tpt. 2 – written F top line of staff
 - Tpt. 3 – written Db natural in staff
 - Tpt. 4 – written Ab in staff
- This chart will have space for additional solos should we decide to add them. Please see the chord sheets included in some of your folders. In addition to fluency on the Ab (concert) blues scales, make sure to work out the changes if you want to get some solo space.

2. Shafi (Mary Lou Williams)

Shafi is a soulful up-tempo/halftime swing chart that includes an interesting quartal melody line mixed with a bluesy line.

Reference recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U9HWXb1ED0A&list=PLoWjUKZWXtnL1QPOB3tyVJMLqBScDdxfW&index=4>

This recording varies from the printed music. We will stay with the arrangement on this one.

- Saxophone make sure to get the line under finger and in time (m. 1 to m. 22)
- Drums – check out the switch of groove between the m. 1 and m. 22
- Rhythm section – m. 46-69 – notice the unusual form of 14 bars then 8 bars. Drums make sure to mark the sections, especially the top of the form.
- Be aware that at m. 95 the recording varies from the chart.
- M. 103-104 – Trumpets 2-3-4 – bring this line out
- M. 128 – Brass and Rhythm count!
- In general this chart is on the aggressive side. Make sure to include soft dynamics wherever possible (and when we meet, follow your lead player for dynamics)

3. My Lament (Maria Schneider)

This is a beautiful ballad that features tenor saxophone. The chart combines lush, warm harmonies with moments of simplicity and musical repose.

Reference recording:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/x7dt3n4fzr1cpbaugg00g/My-Lament-Maria-Schneider.mp3?rlkey=0ucozwuyp725ygrrtbijgap8n&dl=0>

- Intro will be rubato and conducted.
- ♩=92 at m. 17
- Rhythm section – this chart is unusual and allows for creativity beyond a typical jazz chart. Make sure to put this recording on repeat and emulate what is happening between piano, guitar, bass, and drums.
- Trombones – bucket mutes at m. 19
- Tenor – student Rick Margitza’s original recording, even transcribe it (or parts). Notice his lyricism and dedication to tone. Have fun with this!
- Saxophones (A1, A2, T1) – please transpose the flute parts to your saxophone and play in the upper register (not altissimo). Alto 1, if you have good flute, you can play it on flute.
- Horns – though this one looks easy, the challenge is in the seamless blending. Play along with the recording and practice matching the lead in time, tone, and pitch.
- Piano – you are the main comping instrument during the tenor solo. Study the recording!
- Guitar – experiment with simple, yet supportive lines during the tenor solo. This could be even a one note line. We’ll find something that works during our rehearsals but please bring a few options.

4. In A Mellow Tone (Duke Ellington, arr. Frank Foster)

This is a classic chart that combines the influences of the two big bands greats – Duke and Basie!

Reference recording:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7TJMiyD_Hmc

- Feel is crucial on this chart. As you listen, check out the length and placement of notes.
- Rhythm section – you are the driving heartbeat of this. Work with a metronome at various tempos around 120 to solidify your time.
 - A difficult but excellent metronome exercise it to work with various clicks:
 - 2 and 4
 - Beat 1 only
 - Beat 2 only
 - Beat 3 only
 - These make you more responsible for the beats between.
- Trombones plunger mute at m. 17
- Trumpets cup mute at Reh. A
- M. 68, up beats of 2 and 3 should be ^, not > (play them short)
- M. 95 – Saxophone Soli! Lots of notes to get together here. Have fun! This is one of the great solis!
- M. 142 and M. 147 – the articulation at the end of the dotted quarter should be a dip (fall off), *not* going up. Reference the recording here.
- Dynamics are really important for the vibe. M. 77 should be ppp (very soft) but rhythmically intense!
- There will be a Trumpet 3 solo added – see included chord sheet

5. A Night in Tunisia (Dizzy Gillespie, arr. Michael Philip Mossman)

This is a hard-hitting arrangement of Dizzy's classic tune!

Reference recording:

https://youtu.be/AUR9_oVu5t8?si=JlGASjpVnRS56V1V

- Tempo feels like it is in 2, quarter note is about ♩=200-208
- As with many of our charts, any long notes (half notes, dotted half notes, whole note) should be accented, forte-piano, the crescendo back to the written dynamic. M. 1 and m. 5 is a good example of this.
- Articulations in this chart are tight! ^ should be powerful and compact.
- Piano and Guitar (and Bass) – make sure the montuno at m. 9 is solid.
- Saxes – some technique work on this one – see m. 22 (no cresc. – keep it forte) and 23-31.
- Melody is at 13 in the 4th trumpet part. Since 4th is doubled in our band, we'll divide who is going to play it during our rehearsals.
- Solos are in the chart:
 - Trumpet 3 – solo at 55 (part is assigned)
 - Trombone 2 – solo at 95 (part is assigned)
 - Alto 2 – solo at 105
- Saxes – make sure to shed m. 86! Full sound.
- M. 129 – Trumpet 4 and Trombone 2 – this is an independent line. Be ready to play it out.
- M. 173 – Trumpet 1 play down 1 octave
- M. 173 – Trumpet 2 play the B down 1 octave

6. Wong Way (Mike Tomaro)

This is a brand-new chart that gives tribute to the funkiness of guitarist Cory Wong. This chart is filled with challenges and a lot of fun.

Reference recording:

<https://youtu.be/S-BQssSxwZ0?si=TG46ay1vNHXp4D3E>

- As with Cory Wong's music, this groove is busy and *tight*. Mike has been very clear in his notation. Rhythm section – dig deep into this one for specifics on the groove.
- Horns – in general there are a lot of notes on this chart! Plenty of work to dig in to
- Subdivision is really important. Always feel the 16th note subdivision throughout this chart.
- Look out for m. 20 and m. 26 where Mike throws in 7/8 and 3/8 bars.
- Horns - all articulations are exaggerated. Super tight staccatos.
- M. 41 soloist #1 will be guitar (changes in your part)
- M. 101 soloist #2 will be tenor 2 (changes included in folder)
- M. 153 starts the horn soli. There are a lot of notes and intricate rhythms to check out.
- The last measure (m. 186) trades notes of the triplet across the band.
- Supplement your listening by checking out tunes by Cory Wong!