

Greetings!

Just wanted to introduce myself as the conductor of the 2025 PMEA All State Jazz Ensemble. My name is Gary Smulyan, a NY based baritone saxophonist and I invite you all to visit my website, garysmulyan.com to learn a bit more about who I am and what I do. I'm very excited about working with you and have some great music planned for our concert. Here is the list..you can find all of the pieces on YouTube, Spotify, Apple music, etc...and have all been recorded...
The tunes are also available on your 2025 Jazz Ensemble Page website through PMEA. (Use the QR code from the folder.)

1 Dolphin Dance by Herbie Hancock arr. by Bob Mintzer. This piece was written for the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra and recorded on a live CD at the Montreux Jazz Festival. It features an alto saxophone and a trombone solo.

2 Tow Away Zone by Thad Jones. A funky blues in G Major originally recorded by the Thad Jones Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. There is a great live video of this on YouTube featuring a tenor saxophone duel with Eddie Daniels and Joe Henderson. We may do it the same way at our concert. However this can feature anyone in the band.

3 Rays Idea by Ray Brown recorded by the Dizzy Gillespie Big Band. It's rhythm changes in Db with a different bridge and can be opened to for different soloists.

4 Just Friends arr by Bill Holman recorded by the Mel Lewis Jazz Orchestra. This will be quite challenging as it starts with 7 choruses of the band in unison playing quite softly volume wise. Practice these parts! Just a heads up..probably the most challenging piece on the program.

5 Thank You by Jerry Dodgion recorded by Thad Jones. A ballad, mostly through composed with a bunch of short exposed solos throughout and a longer improvised baritone saxophone solo originally played by the great Pepper Adams with pretty hard chord changes. Give a listen to this to get acquainted with the road map..

6 Extra Credit by Jim McNeely. This is an exciting and complex composition with a lot of layers and interlaced parts. Lots of interaction between all the sections. Features solos by tenor saxophone, trombone, piano, and trumpet. This was originally recorded on Lickety Split: The Music of Jim McNeely.

Since we are a jazz ensemble I want to make sure that everyone who wants a solo gets one so I urge you all to learn the changes to Rays Idea, Just Friends, and Tow Away Zone. Dolphin Dance, Extra Credit, and Thank You aren't really designed for opening up...

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch. Here's my info.

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email. garysmulyan@gmail.com

Once again, I'm thrilled to be working with you and look forward to a great concert!

All the best,

Gary Smulyan