

# PMEA 2026 All-State Concert Band

*Jeffrey D. Gershman, Conductor*

## Conductor Introduction

Hi All-State Concert Band members! I just wanted to send you a short introduction in preparation for our time together coming up in April. I currently serve as the Director of Bands and the Department of Music Chair at The College of Wooster, which is a small, liberal arts college about an hour outside of Cleveland, OH. This is my 29<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, having also taught at the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, the Capital University Conservatory of Music in Columbus, OH, and the School of Music at Texas A&M University-Commerce (now East Texas A&M University) outside of Dallas. I've been a frequent guest conductor with state and regional honor bands, a band contest adjudicator across the United States, as well as in Australia and Singapore, and a published band arranger of the music of Eric Whitacre, John Corigliano, and Frank Zappa. My most recent professional endeavor is singing Baritone as a member of the Cleveland Orchestra Chorus, who collaborate alongside The Cleveland Orchestra. This past January, I had the opportunity to sing at Carnegie Hall with the orchestra and chorus on a performance of the Verdi Requiem, which was definitely a career highlight. In fact, as soon as our concert is over, I'll drive back to Cleveland so I can perform Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* on Sunday afternoon at Severance Music Center.

A huge congratulations to all of you on the honor of being selected as an All-State Musician and I very much look forward to getting to work with you on what I think will be a very special program. In preparation for that, **please carefully read the Conductor Notes below**, as entering the information in your music on the notes applicable to you will be a big time saver once we're together. Thanks again and I can't wait to meet you in April!

## Conductor Notes

*Olympic Fanfare and Theme* (John Williams; arr. Curnow)

- **Reference Recording:** <https://youtu.be/klfXofVsHaY?si=-w0tzOH3cA2XpwcY>
- **Tempo:** Quarter=90 (throughout)

mm. 1-12     **Cornets/Trumpets/Horns/Euphonium**

- The opening of this piece (and of our concert) is all you. Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on the double tonguing passages.

**Alto Saxes/Horns/Euphoniums**

- In mm. 5-8, please make sure your dotted eighth/sixteenth accuracy is **exact**. If it's not, we'll have alignment issues with the melody.

mm. 13-17     **Piccolo/Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets/Cornets 1 & 2/Trumpets**

- The secret to playing this passage at tempo is to make the second note of any slurred grouping *very* short. This will allow you to set your tongue for the next articulation so you won't drag the tempo.

**Alto Saxes/Tenor Saxes/Cornet 3/Euphoniums**

- Please make sure your dotted eighth/sixteenth accuracy is **exact**. If it's not, we'll have alignment issues with the melody.

mm. 37-51     **Bassoons/Bass Clarinets/Tenor Saxes/Horns/Trombones 1 & 2/Euphoniums  
(and Flutes/Clarinets/Alto Saxes/Cornet 1 starting in m. 41)**

- Spend some time on this melody. Because it's somewhat angular, it has a tendency to drag and/or be heavy and vertical.
- Also, make sure your rhythm is *exact* off of longer notes. There's a tendency to release them late, causing the tempo to drag.

**Contrabassoon/Contrabass Clarinet/Baritone Saxes/Tuba/String  
Bass/Timpani/Snare Drum**

- All notes here should be pointed and short. Note the placement of isolated accents and put greater weight on those.

mm. 51-55     **Horns**

- There is a potential misprint in your part in m. 51. Your final note in that measure should be a written C (concert F).

**Clarinets/Alto Saxes**

- Work these technical runs slowly, if needed, in order to play them cleanly at tempo. Once they are at tempo, practice this section with a metronome, as beats 2 and 3 will tend to rush coming out of the 32<sup>nd</sup> notes.

- mm. 67-75 **Cornets/Trumpets**
- The secret to playing this passage (as when it occurs earlier in the piece) at tempo is to make the second note of any slurred grouping *very* short. This will allow you to set your tongue for the next articulation, so you won't drag the tempo.
- Snare Drum/Field Drum**
- Starting in m. 71, note the accent placement on these ostinato patterns. Putting weight on these accents is crucial for setting the correct style.
- mm. 75-90 **Piccolo/Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets/Snare Drum/Field Drum/Xylophone**
- Practice this section with a metronome, as there will be a tendency to rush into the next group of 32nds after playing the eighth notes.
- Piccolo/ Flutes/ Clarinet 1/Trumpets/Xylophone**
- Starting in m. 77, Piccolo, Flutes, Clarinet 1, and Xylophone, practice coming directly out of your ostinato pattern into this melodic figure. Trumpets, make sure you are subdividing the measures before you enter or else you will have a tendency to drag.
- mm. 90-94 **Piccolo/Flutes/Clarinets/Trumpets/Xylophone and Alto Saxes/Tenor Saxes/Horns**
- Again, the secret to playing these alternating passages at tempo is to make the second note of any slurred grouping *very* short. This will allow you to set your tongue for the next articulation so you won't drag the tempo.
  - Group 2 (Saxes and Horns), make sure to match the style and dynamics when inheriting your figure from the Group 1 (upper Woodwinds and Trumpets).
  - For both groups, make sure you continue to subdivide on the measures you're not playing so you're not late to your next entrance.
- mm. 94-End **Cornets/Trumpets/Horns/Trombones**
- The closing of this piece is all you. Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on the double tonguing passages. Pay particular attention to the rhythmic accuracy coming out of m. 94 (32<sup>nd</sup> notes for Cornets, Trumpets, and Trombones) into m. 95 (eighth note triplets for everyone).

*Cosmopolitan America* (Helen May Butler; arr. Lamb)

- **Reference Recording:** <https://youtu.be/JUBa63PjA2c?si=sNG34IaGVtSXXvp>
- **Tempo:** Dotted Quarter/Quarter=108 (throughout)

**Additional Rehearsal Markings**

Unfortunately, this edition has too few rehearsal markings, which makes finding specific spots very cumbersome (i.e. having to say things like “count 17 mm. after Reh. X”).

To make our process easier, **everyone should add the following markings into your music:**

- 9 mm. after Reh. A=A<sup>1</sup>
- 16 mm. before Reh. B= A<sup>2</sup>
- 10 mm. before Reh. B= A<sup>3</sup>
- 17 mm. after Reh. D= D<sup>1</sup>
- 17 mm. after Reh. E= E<sup>1</sup>

Beg.-Reh. A

**Trumpets/Trombones/Euphoniums**

- Concentrate on maintaining a nice, light, fanfare-like style in this opening. Pay particular attention to the rhythmic accuracy of the siciliano rhythm (dotted eighth-sixteenth-eighth). Trombones & Euphoniums match the exact style the Trumpets have given you in mm. 1-4.

**Snare Drum**

- Make sure your accuracy coming out of your rolls is exact and that you're not rushing into the final two eighth notes.

**Tutti (i.e. Full Ensemble)**

- One mm. before Reh. A, the tempo will **stay exactly the same** as we move from a 6/8 compound feel (i.e. three subdivisions per beat) into a 2/4 simple feel (i.e. two subdivision per beat).

3 mm. before Reh. B **Bassoons/Bass Clarinet/Baritone Saxes/Tubas**

- There is a misprint in your part. Beat 2 should be a concert F, **not** a concert Eb.

Reh. B-Reh. C

**Brass (Tutti)**

- Concentrate on maintaining a nice, light, fanfare-like style in this transitional section. Horns, Trombones, Euphoniums, and Tuba, match the exact style the Trumpets have given you in the first 7 mm. of Reh. B.

Reh. C-Reh. D

**Tutti (i.e. Full Ensemble)**

- At Reh. C (just as in the beginning of the piece), the tempo will **stay exactly the same** as we move from a 6/8 compound feel (i.e. three subdivisions per beat) into a 2/4 simple feel (i.e. two subdivision per beat).

**Oboes/Trumpets**

- Make sure to concentrate on exact rhythmic accuracy coming off your tied notes.

**Piccolo/Flutes/Clarinets**

- All grace notes should be placed as close to the eighth note that follows it as possible.

Reh. D-Reh. E

**Piccolo/Flutes/Clarinets 1 & 2**

- Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on this technical obbligato section. It's imperative that your sixteenth figures are very even and in time. The figure 7 mm. after Reh. D is particularly awkward.

Reh. F-Reh. G

**Flutes/Clarinets 1**

- You carry the melody here, so please make sure to concentrate on note and rhythmic accuracy throughout this section.

**Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets**

- Your trill figures 4 mm. and 8 mm. after Reh. F should be treated as a mordent (i.e. a three note figure of two 32<sup>nd</sup> notes and one 16<sup>th</sup> note. Specifically: 32<sup>nd</sup> No. 1: Play written note/32<sup>nd</sup> No. 2: Move up one whole step/16th note: Return to original written note.

Reh. G-End

**Piccolo/Flutes/Clarinets 1 & 2**

- Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on this technical obbligato section. It's imperative that your sixteenth figures are very even and in time.

## Second Prelude (George Gershwin; arr. Krance)

- **Reference Recording:** <https://youtu.be/p5tXbMUPtjA?si=tRSPeccVpFe-sBY>
- **Tempo:** Quarter=68 (Beg.-m. 30)/Quarter=92 (mm. 31-40)/Quarter=68 (45-End)
  - Note that tempo will be fairly *rubato* throughout the piece.

### General

- The piece is structured in ABA form. The A sections (Beg.-m.30 and m. 44-End) **are not played in a swung style**. Section B (mm. 31-40) **will be swung, while mm. 41-44 will not be swung**.
- There are several featured solos in the Gershwin. Please see below to see who will be assigned these solo passages:
  - Cornet 1 (mm. 4-12): Performed by 1<sup>st</sup> ranked player.
  - Alto Sax (mm. 12-16): Performed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> ranked player.
  - Alto Sax (mm. 46-50): Performed by 1<sup>st</sup> ranked player.
  - Oboe 1 (mm. 51-54): Performed by 1<sup>st</sup> ranked player.

#### mm. 15-16 **Tutti (Full Ensemble)**

- Please add fermatas on beat 4 of both mm. 15 and 16.

#### mm. 17-22 **Bells**

- These octaves should be played with the lower octave being a quick grace note to the upper octave.

#### mm. 23-29 **Piccolo/Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets/Cornets**

- You are the melody throughout this section. Please make sure that the grace note at the beginning of m. 24 is placed very close to the note that follows it.
- In addition, be careful of your accuracy in the sixteenth notes in mm. 24-25, as these will have a tendency to rush at this slower tempo.

#### m. 29 **Tutti (Full Ensemble)**

- Please add a fermata on beat 4

#### m. 30 **Tutti (Full Ensemble)**

- This is an awkward transition into the *Con moto* section. Please write into your part two fermatas—one on beat 4 and another on the and-of-4. For those that play, please pay special attention to your part on these two beats, as there are three independent kinds of parts: 1) Play beat 4 and release on the and-of-4 2) Play both on beat 4 and the and-of-4 or 3) Only enter on the and-of-4.

- mm. 31-40 **Baritone Saxes/Trombones/Euphonium**
- You are the featured melody throughout this entire B section. The Low Brass, in particular, are in an awkwardly low register, so please make sure that note, rhythmic, and stylistic accuracy are excellent. As a reminder, this section will be swung.
- mm. 41-44 **Bassoons/Bass Clarinets/Baritone Saxes/Tuba/String Bass**
- You have the melody on this transition section, which is very exposed. While not difficult, please make sure that your note accuracy is exact.
- mm. 45-54 **Clarinets 3**
- Please play the Alto Clarinet cues until your written pickups to m. 55.
- mm. 57-58 **Tutti (Full Ensemble)**
- Please add fermatas on beat 4 of both mm. 57 and 58.

*American Guernica* (Adolphus Hailstork; ed. Levine)

- **Reference Recording:** <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/lu0xnqvkwh6m9u5clf532/1.-American-Guernica.wav?rlkey=1vzaqbpty4piv91gbkkax5o1b&st=7jfbuf1n&dl=0>
- **Tempos:** Quarter=120 (Beg.-26; mm. 33-45)/Quarter=60 (mm. 46-52)/Quarter=54 (mm. 52-57; mm. 94-End)

*General*

- There one featured solo in the Hailstork. Please see below to see who will be assigned this solo passages:
  - Clarinet 1 (mm. 46-51): Performed by 1<sup>st</sup> ranked player.

mm. 1-7      **Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets/Bass Clarinets/Alto Saxes**

- Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on this technical section.
- Clean releases **with no *decrescendo* into the releases** are imperative here. For m. 3, release on beat 2. For mm. 5, release on beat 4. For m. 6, release on beat 4.

**Horns/Trumpets/Trombones**

- This opening section is sneaky hard. The entrances in mm. 2 & 4 must be accurate and start cleanly at a *pp* dynamic. This will take work, so please practice this opening with a metronome.
- Horns and Trumpets, please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on your triplets in m. 6.

mm. 15-16      **Saxophones**

- You should bend pitch slowly up and down and far as you can, but you **do not** need to flutter tongue here. This is also true of mm. 21-26.

m. 17      **Xylophones/Marimbas**

- Each player should choose and play only one of the lines (for the Xylophone, there are 3 parts; for the Marimba, there are 2). No one should be playing multiple notes at the same time. This is also true in mm. 37-43.

**Clarinets**

- Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on this technical section. All notes should be articulated and played as fast as possible.

m. 18      **Trombones/Tubas**

- Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on this technical section. All notes should be articulated and played as fast as possible.

- mm. 22-26 **Trumpets**
- Your rhythms are highly independent and syncopated here. Please make sure your pitch and rhythmic accuracy are exact.

- mm. 26-32 **Tutti (Full Ensemble)**
- These measures will be uncondacted, as they feature a Piano-only solo.

- mm. 38-44 **Flutes/Oboes/Bassoons/Bass Clarinets/Alto Saxes/Tenor Saxes**
- Please concentrate on note accuracy and building your tempo slowly, if needed, on this technical section.

#### **Horns/Tubas**

- The long, ascending line indicates playing a chromatic scale to your highest possible note. The key here is to **release when printed** (even if it means that you don't quite get to your highest note).

#### **Clarinets**

- In mm. 41-43, the long, ascending line indicates playing a chromatic scale to your highest possible note. The key here is to **release when printed** (even if it means that you don't quite get to your highest note). As a secondary (and actually, preferred, option), if you are able to bend your pitch (a la the opening of *Rhapsody in Blue*), do that instead of playing a chromatic scale.

#### **Horns/Trumpets**

- Rhythmic and pitch accuracy are crucial here.

#### **Timpani**

- Rhythmic accuracy is crucial here. Please be exact in your rhythm and note that the dynamic is *fff*.

- mm. 46-48 **Clarinets/Bass Clarinets/Horns**
- Horns should release on beat 2 in m. 47.
  - Clarinets & Bass Clarinet should release on beat 2 in m. 48.

- mm. 52-57 **Horns/Trombones/Euphoniums**
- Clean releases **with no *decrescendo* into the releases** are imperative here. For m. 53, release on beat 2. For mm. 55, release on beat 3. For m. 57, release on beat 1.

- mm. 57-93 **Tutti (Full Ensemble)**
- These measures will be uncondacted, as they feature a Piano-only solo.

mm. 94-99    **Horns/Trombones**

- Clean releases with no *decrescendo* into the releases are imperative here. For m. 95, release on beat 2. For mm. 96, release on beat 3. For m. 97, release on beat 4 (Trombones only).

mm. 99-100    **Horns**

- Clean releases with no *decrescendo* into the releases are imperative here. For m. 101, release on beat 3. Take a full breath here as, ideally, you won't have the chance to breathe again until your release on beat 4 in m. 107.

mm. 107-End    **Vibes/Chimes**

- The sections from mm. 107-113 and mm. 117-119 are rhythmically tricky—especially given the *very* slow tempo. Rhythmic accuracy is imperative. I would recommend practicing with a metronome (that, if possible, can sound eighth note triplets, a la 12/8) to better guarantee accuracy.

## Let My Love Be Heard (Jake Runestad)

- **Reference Recording:** <https://jakerunestad.com/products/let-my-love-be-heard-winds>
- **Tempo:** Quarter=50 (throughout)
  - Note that tempo will be fairly *rubato* throughout the piece.

### General

- This piece is deceptively difficult because of its very slow tempo and its frequent alternation between simple and compound groupings. Although not “note hard,” **I would strongly recommend everyone play through their part with a metronome on at 50 BPM** so you can understand how to accurately shift between eighths, eighth note triplets, and quarter note triplets.
- There one featured solo in the Runestad. Please see below to see who will be assigned this solo passages:
  - Euphonium (mm. 9-14): Performed by 1<sup>st</sup> ranked player.

### mm. 31-45 Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets/Trumpets

- Having done this piece a number of times, despite how it seemingly easy it looks, this section is treacherous. The overall effect of your parts is a composite eighth note triplet ostinato, but each of you only has one beat of that ostinato. Rhythmic accuracy is imperative. I seriously cannot stress enough the importance of practicing this section with a metronome (that, if possible, can sound eighth note triplets, a la 12/8) to better guarantee accuracy.

### mm. 46-50 Bassoons/Clarinets/Bass Clarinets/Saxophones/Horns/Bass Trombones/Euphoniums

- Again, despite how seemingly easy your music looks, this section is also treacherous. The overall effect of your parts is a composite eighth note triplet ostinato, but each of you only has one beat of that ostinato. Rhythmic accuracy is imperative. I seriously cannot stress enough the importance of practicing this section with a metronome (that, if possible, can sound eighth note triplets, a la 12/8) to better guarantee accuracy.

## Xerxes (John Mackey)

- Reference Recording: <https://www.johnmackey.com/music/xerxes/>
- Tempo: Quarter= 112 (throughout)

### General Notes

- Everyone should be **very intentional** about John's marked articulations throughout the piece. There should be clear audible and stylistic differences between notes that have accents and notes that don't.
- All grace notes should be placed as close to the written note, as possible.

### Beg.-Reh A

#### Snare Drum/Tam-Tam

- You are the rhythmic heartbeat of the entire piece. It's not an overstatement to say that the success of the work is built on a foundation of your ostinato patterns. Please practice all of your music with a metronome and be *very* aware of putting weight on accented notes.

### Reh. A-B

#### Oboes/Trumpets/Horns/Trombones 1 & 2/Euphoniums

- Because this opening melody is so angular, make sure to focus on note accuracy when practicing.

### Reh. C-D

#### Horns/Euphoniums/Trumpets/Trombones

- This second melody is also quite angular, so make sure to focus on note accuracy when practicing.

### Reh. E-F

#### Flute 1/Oboe/Bassoon 1/Bass Clarinet/Clarinet 1/Soprano Sax/Tambourine/Marimba

- Beginning 5 mm. after Reh. E until Reh. F are the most-transparent, chamber-like music of the piece. While none of your parts are difficult, please look at this section because of its transparency.

### Reh. G-H

#### Trombones/Soprano Sax

- Trombones, 2 mm. before Reh. G, this *gliss* should last the entire two measures. Please practice this, as it's a challenge to *gliss* this slowly. This same will be true 2 mm. before Reh. I. Also, feel free to **use a cup mute instead of a practice mute**.
- Beginning at Reh. G, Soprano Sax alone has the melody. Rhythmic and note accuracy within the tempo are crucial throughout.

### Reh. H-I

#### Saxophones

- You are the feature throughout this section. Rhythmic and note accuracy within the tempo are crucial throughout.

Reh. I-J

**Large Tom**

- You alone provide the ostinato figure for the entire band. Please carefully look at this section, paying careful attention to the accent placement, which is crucial to establishing the stylistic groove intended.

**Oboe/Soprano Sax/Alto Saxes/Tenor Sax**

- You are the melody throughout this section. Rhythmic and note accuracy within the tempo are crucial throughout.

Reh. K-L

**Piccolo/Flutes/Oboes/Clarinets/Soprano Sax/Alto Saxes/Tenor Sax**

- You are the melody throughout this section. Rhythmic and note accuracy within the tempo are crucial throughout.

Reh. P-End

**Trumpets/Horns**

- You should dominate the end of the piece. Rhythmic and note accuracy should be exact. I would recommend practicing this section with a metronome at no louder than a *mf* dynamic. Once it's accurate, then increase to the written dynamics with a focus on always maintaining a good characteristic sound.

**Piccolo/Flutes**

- This final section for you is rhythmically tricky, as you double many of the Percussion parts. Work towards exact rhythmic accuracy and keeping everything very dry in style.