

# Bandmasters Review



*An Educational Publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association*

December 2017 • Volume 19, Issue 2



**Happy New Year**





# Bandmasters Review

An Educational Publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association

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*Mark Your 2018 Calendar:*

- January 13 • Professional Development Clinic**
- February 12 • TBA convention registration opens online**
- February 19 • Professional Development Clinic**
- April 7 • Professional Development Clinic**
- July 26-28 • TBA Convention/Clinic**

*Details on the clinics can be found on the back cover.*

*TBA publishes these educational articles for your use in the classroom and rehearsal hall and to share with your students as you wish. The opinions and teaching methods are those of the authors and not necessarily shared by all members of the TBA staff and Board of Directors.*

*BANDMASTERS REVIEW is an educational publication of the Texas Bandmasters Association. The magazine's purpose is to assist TBA members in achieving the highest standards of instrumental music education. BANDMASTERS REVIEW is a quarterly publication and is mailed to current Active/Retired and Business Members of TBA. If your address has changed, please contact the Texas Bandmasters Association office: 1002 Central Parkway South, San Antonio, TX 78232 Phone: (210) 492-8878 Fax: (210) 492-8996 www.texasbandmasters.org*

## Mission Statement

The purpose of the Texas Bandmasters Association, Inc. is to:

Continually assist its membership in achieving the highest standards of instrumental music education.



Promote the place and value of music education in our society and the important role instrumental music plays in our cultural, intellectual, and social lives.



Foster goodwill, fellowship and a collegial, fraternal spirit among its members.



Provide its membership with an annual Convention/Clinic which introduces new music, tried and proven teaching methods and materials as well as instruments and equipment.



Provide educational publications of instructional methods and materials for TBA members and aid them with their personal development and leadership.



Provide information for the university music student preparing to become a band director.

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# “If You Build It, They Will Come”

**Roland Sandoval, 2017-18 TBA Treasurer**

---

“If You Build It, They Will Come” ...a great adapted line from the movie *A Field of Dreams*. In that movie we learn the more time, attention, effort, and thought you apply to an idea the more likely it is that something can and will come of it. Now there are certainly no guarantees but at least planting the seed and tending to it increases the odds that it'll grow something. So, BUILD away! PLANT away!

We have so many challenges with the academic demands on our band students. We must be great “farmers” and create unique musical crops that our students simply can't resist. The more comprehensive program you build (and plant a variety of musical opportunities) then you increase the odds of them coming and STAYING. We've all been to those farmer's markets where we think “I want to try that... and that...and that!”

The inverse, however, has more certainty. If you pay no attention to an idea and make no effort to manifest it, you decrease the odds of it materializing. It does mean extra effort and time if you are by yourself or a fantastic team effort from the entire band staff if you work on a team.

So, what does that look like? Offer as many musical experiences that you can for the individual student musician and your ensembles. From the beginner to the senior you want them to have wonderful musical moments that make them feel proud, successful, accomplished, appreciated and a part of the community they represent.

Have a plan with short-term and long-term goals. Build something unique to just your program...traditions that beginners have, 8th graders do, Seniors serving in a Big Brother/Big Sister program etc. Have a focal point for each grade level. Develop leadership opportunities at all grade levels. Create variety in your daily routines...if your students are challenged and thinking in their fundamentals it takes the monotony out of routine. Bring in guests/mentors if you can...even more variety for students and staff.

Give them opportunities to perform in a variety of individual and ensemble experiences in class and concerts. Beginners to seniors should be exposed to Solo and Ensemble, District, Region, All-State auditions, Youth/Community Wind Bands and Orchestras. If you can, feature small sections or families (WW, Brass, Perc) at concerts between songs or bands. Have a private lesson program

or spend a few minutes with each student even if once a week or once a month. Use technology...a lot...this generation lives it! Play music and recordings of world class musicians, bands, orchestras and jazz ensembles. Show them EVERY summer band camp flyer that is mailed to you. Take them to concerts...MS to HS... HS to local university or community band. I like the idea of being like a great college or university program: They offer a great concert band program, marching band program, jazz program that even includes combos, percussion ensembles, winter guard, woodwind & brass choirs, mariachi program, steel drum band, chamber ensembles, full orchestra (if you do have a string program), musical pit and they perform, perform, perform.

Students and parents also appreciate a fair, logical, achievable assessment tool that is clear and allows for personal growth and development.

On top of striving for a comprehensive program you then must detail what you can and do offer. For instance, a passion for me is to offer a great jazz education for my students. So, within that genre we teach jazz vocabulary, theory, ear training, rhythmic dictation, improvisation, jazz language & symbols, articulations and ensemble skills pertaining to just jazz. We listen to jazz, show YouTube recordings of great jazz performances and have guest artists and attend jazz festivals...whew...variety!

Where do you get these seeds to plant and build a great comprehensive band program? That's where the Texas Bandmasters Association can and should have an important role in your career and impact the musical lives of your students. The excellence of Texas Bands comes from directors sharing their knowledge either at our annual clinic/convention or at our outreach programs throughout the state and school year. Every July the musical farmer in you should want to get in your car or a plane and make your way to San Antonio, Texas to pick up your new packet of seeds for the new school year. “If You Build It, They Will Come.” It is such an honor for me and my family, Jackie and Nathan Sandoval, to serve TBA and your band family. See you in July!



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# ...oh Harvey!

## John Morrison, 2017-18 TBA President Elect



As the 2017 school year was beginning for the greater Northwest Houston area, the teachers were ready, the classrooms were ready for the students and the high school bands had completed their August camps and were eagerly anticipating their first football game performances, and then.... Uncle Harvey paid a visit.

Once the water receded from this epic storm, neighbors were busy bailing each other out, literally. Many others that weren't as affected by water were taking care of bigger picture items like the infrastructure of the roads, merchants and schools. It quickly became very clear that our communities were going to feel the impact of this epic storm, in no similar way. Some school campuses were completely destroyed, some sustained minor issues that were resolved within days. Many more communities were reeling as to how the storm affected the individuals and their ability to function in their programs. Were the homes and cars of the teachers compromised? What about the instruments that the students have at home? So many unanswered questions.

I check my email to see that my neighbors Monte Mast, Klein ISD and JD Janda from Tomball ISD, had emailed our Houston Area Music Administrators group and suggested a gathering of those that could, to do some game planning and share ideas for recovery. Within about two days we met at the Tomball ISD administration building, those of us that literally could get there, only to discover that the group of attendees was to include TMEA, TCDA, TODA, TBA, the Houston Symphony, Houston Arts Partners, Conn-Selmer Instruments, Music for All/BOA, Stanbury Uniforms, Fishburn Violins, Lisle Violins, Brook Mays and H&H Music, Music and Arts, and the list continued on. The collective group of industry professionals coupled with our local

district administrators was simply overwhelming. Three hours later TMEA, thanks to Robert Floyd and Frank Coachman, was deemed the

most appropriate venue for a collaboration that would include the affected areas and the industry professional network to help us rebuild. **Help.GoArts.org** was born and a concentrated effort for rebuilding our music programs began.

Fast forward to now and our new normal. One thing is for sure, the power of good is great. So many directors lending helping hands not only in the classroom with encouragement, instrument and supply donations, but in other ways outside of the school, as well. So many colleagues coming to each other's rescue, even today.

The constant that was clear through this epic challenge was, **good teaching is still good teaching**. I wouldn't try and classify the programs in the area, relative to the damage that was sustained, but I did notice something recently. The very best teachers, impacted in some way by the storm, somehow managed to achieve favorable results in marching band and individual all region events. I wondered as the year got underway how many directors would use the challenge that they were presented, as an opportunity to push their teaching skills. Most would agree that the programs and teachers that always manage to grind out and pace others, showed no change in the performance results of their programs and students.

As the region continues to heal, one constant remains, the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors is alive and well. My wish is for you all is to enjoy your time with your family and friends this Holiday Season.

# TBA News

## Michael Brashear, TBA Executive Director

Congratulations to everyone involved in the competitive marching band arena this fall semester! (See pages 26-27.) I am amazed at the quality of work on display each year at the UIL State Marching Championship. From Class 1A to Class 5A, all the groups were strong musically and very creative visually! All the hard work by outstanding directors and students, and support by band parents and communities paid off and helped contribute to a very successful marching season.

This year was exceptionally challenging to the many groups in South Texas that were impacted by Hurricane Harvey. I hope you enjoy the heartfelt and insightful article "Reflections..." by Joni Perez (pages 13-16). I invite you to contemplate the impact band directors and band has on students' lives. Keep up your great work, Texas Band Directors!!

TBA is excited to continue the Jupiter Composition Contest this year. Please help spread the word and encourage your students to participate. This is a great opportunity to challenge your students. Who knows? You may have the next Frank Ticheli, Brian Balmages, or John Mackey sitting in your band class. (Contest details on page 6.)

Please submit your clinic/clinician ideas on our website link or contact one of our board members. We are in the process of finalizing clinics for next summer and we want to hear from YOU. Enjoy your time off and have a very Happy Holiday Season!



The Conn-Selmer Division of Education, led by Vice President of Education, **Tim Lautzenheiser**, seeks to provide **resources** and **support** to music educators worldwide.



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For more information visit ***AcademicAlliance.com/Melody-Competition***



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# The Trilogy of Successful Educators

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser

---

Having spent multiple decades traveling (throughout our nation and around the globe) working with outstanding music programs and first class music educators, it is ever-apparent there are countless pathways to success. For certain there is no ONE WAY to create and grow an ongoing culture of artistic excellence; instead we can point to many different examples of high level achievement being generated with a myriad of blueprints.

There are some similarities evident in the way one puts together his/her own “magical potion” that brings about a buffet of musical opportunities to and for students, parents, administrators, and all. Of course the exemplary teacher/band director is, first and foremost, a lifetime learning-growing musician. The focus on musical-quality is the **absolute foundation** and everything else is built on that bedrock of reality. From there on, it is a matter of availing everyone to the infinite benefits of music-learning and music-making. Some of the great teachers reveal very charismatic personalities, some are quiet leaders who are almost invisible at times, some are master politicians who can bring about consensus with anyone/everyone,

some are effective delegators offering ownership to various members of the culture, and some are combinations of all the aforementioned character attributes. With that said, here’s what I have discovered are the three commonalities of those who continue to meet the highest of professional standards. They have:

## **1. THE ABILITY TO ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS.**

We open our minds and our hearts (especially) to those WE TRUST. We tend to be skeptical and protective when it comes to those we don’t trust. While the curriculum is (for the most part) the same in many ways, the WAY we teach WHAT we teach often overrides WHAT we teach. Everyone has many examples of the fledgling band program that cannot seem to gain any shred of positive momentum, then along comes a new enthusiastic band director and MAGIC seems to happen immediately. Enrollment increases, quality in every aspect of the band elevates, and the band takes on a new personality with students eager to commit their time effort and energies to the organization with the understanding TRUSTING the leader will help them reach their

**Let us all pledge ourselves to artistic excellence by continuing to develop trusting relationships while laser-focusing our I/me energies as we continue to bring “what isn’t” to our professional landscapes.**

collective goals. Conversely, we also are aware of the awarding winning band program boasting a tradition of superior achievements, and when the former director is replaced with a different individual, things begin to unravel all too quickly. What’s the difference? It is the LEVEL OF TRUST established by each director. In this case, director #1 has garnered the TRUST of those involved with the program and therefore it has focused their dedicated efforts in a synergistic outcome. Director #2 has NOT been able to connect with all areas of personnel (students, parents, administrators, etc.,) and thus the energy subsides and forward progress is halted as things begin to unravel.

## **2. THE WHEREWITHAL TO “FOCUS THE EGO.”**

The EGO drives us and the EGO can inadvertently sabotage us. When we understand the endless possibilities of any/all situations, it is important to “step up to the plate,” wrap our arms around the challenges and **lead the band** to new heights. However, if the REASON(s) to reach the goals is based on the director’s self-promotion, then there is an inauthenticity certain to bring one to an ill-fated destination. On the other hand, if the invested I/me EGO-energy is the given fuel to advance the program to offer a new awareness of musical benefits to/for the students (and the entire community), then EVERYONE is the winner.

The EGO can be our most valued partner, or it can become a “foolish

## The Trilogy of Successful Educators

misguided friend” in support of a selfish agenda. The constant monitoring of WHY we are making this or that decision/choice is the key. The WE/US choices must take precedence of the I/ME decisions.

### 3. THE TALENTS AND SKILLS TO CREATE “WHAT ISN’T.”

It’s an unusual statement, isn’t it? How does one go about creating WHAT ISN’T? First, one must **determine** “what really isn’t.” Perhaps “what isn’t” is an organized office, or a clean band hall, or a greater commitment to home practice, or a wonderful relationship with the administration, or a thriving booster group, or superb intonation, or a robust recruitment template, or appropriate rehearsal disciplines,

or several thriving chamber ensembles, or a favorable relationship with fellow directors, or more responsible student leaders, or, or, or, or. When we embrace the idea of CONSTANT IMPROVEMENT (Japanese: KAIZEN), we will see “what isn’t” is infinite. We can never get to the end of the WHAT ISN’T list; it is constantly growing, shifting, changing, advancing. For those who are eager to become outstanding band directors/teachers/educators, be it known, maintenance is not growth; GROWTH IS GROWTH, and growth requires the ongoing creation of “what isn’t.”

The insightful bit of wisdom: “**Argue for your limitations and you get to own them,**” comes into play when seeking “what isn’t.” If we refuse to consider adding some aspect of “what isn’t” to the planning board because of any perceived limitations, then it is a pointless exercise in the first place. “What isn’t” is merely “what is” waiting to happen.

A music educator/band director may be in the best posture of any teacher in the school to MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT on everyone (not just students, but EVERYONE) who has any connection with THE BAND. Let us all pledge ourselves to artistic excellence by continuing to develop trusting relationships while laser-focusing our I/me energies as we continue to bring “what isn’t” to our professional landscapes.

### “Strike up the Band!”

*Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser is a trusted friend to anyone interested in working with young people in developing a desire for excellence and a passion for high level achievement. His career involves ten years of successful college band directing and three years with McCormick’s Enterprises working as Executive Director of Bands of America. In 1981, he created Attitude Concepts for Today, Inc., an organization designed to manage the requests for presentations. Dr. Tim presently serves as Vice President of Education for Conn-Selmer, Inc., Senior Educational Advisor for Music for All and NAMM (The International Music Products Association) and is an adjunct faculty member at Ball State University (Earl Dunn Distinguished Lecturer), Indiana-Purdue/ Ft. Wayne University, and Butler University. In addition, he serves on The Midwest Clinic Board of Directors and the Western International Band Clinic/American Band College Board of Directors.*

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# The Pocket Guide to Teaching Trombone

Dr. Deb Scott

You feel comfortable teaching beginning trombone, but what do you tell your more advanced trombone players? Help encourage the musical growth of your section from the podium and for the individual player. Improve intonation, tone, technique, and learn what to tell students about the “F” attachment as well as the “D” attachment for the bass trombone. The following information outlines the “nuts and bolts” of how to teach trombone.

## TUNING

### I. Tuning Notes in First Position

Best tuning note. Regular trombone 1st position	Beginning trombonist 1st position	Trombone with F-attach 1st position	Bass Trombone with D-attach 1st position
---	---	---	--

- Tune the main tuning slide on all trombones to top of the staff “B-flat”. Beginners may tune to 4th line F
- Tune the tenor trombone F-attachment tuning slide to the bottom of the staff low “F” in first position (all the way in).
- Bass trombonists should tune their main tuning slide and F-attachment as above, then the D-attachment should be tuned to the below the staff “D” in first position.

### II. Tuning and Tone

Many factors affect tone quality. One of the least talked about is the relationship of the slide to the note produced. In other words, there is a “sweet spot” for each note that improves tone quality (and of course, pitch). Learning to “blow straight” and adjust with the slide creates a slightly better tone. It is possible for a trombonist to play in-tune without micro slide adjustments by “lipping” which may produce an “okay” tone. However, to produce the best sound possible, the slide should be placed in exact positions. Check outer positions with a tuner often.

### III. Tuning Adjustments (The trombone actually has 41+ positions, not 7.)

First position notes (or partials) on the open trombone are written below. Solid notes indicate that an adjustment should be made to get the note in tune. The arrows indicate which way the adjustment should be made. A downward arrow means move the slide outward. An upward arrow means move the slide inward. Note that only the partials that are octaves of the fundamental “B-flat” are in tune. The first position “A-flat” on the seventh partial should not be played because it is too flat.

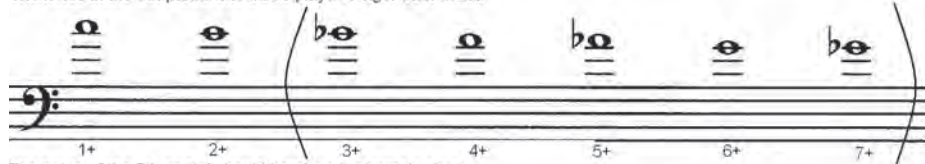
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Adjustments:			↓	↑ (↓)	↓	↑		↓

# The Pocket Guide to Teaching Trombone

## IV. Chart of Positions Requiring Adjustments

Each slide position on the trombone lowers its pitch by a half-step. Therefore, each half step down from the out-of-tune partial generally follows the same adjustments. The following chart indicates what adjustments are needed for each out of tune partial:

The notes in the 9th partial should be played longer than usual.



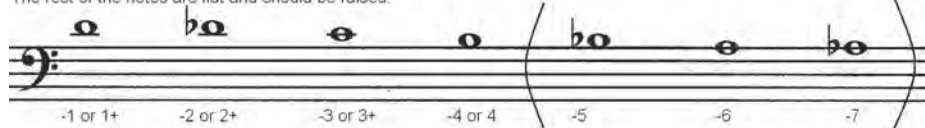
The notes of the 7th partial should be played extremely short.



The 6th partial is noticeably sharp. All of these notes should definitely be played in a longer position.



The "D", "D-flat", and "C" of the 5th partial may be sharp. The rest of the notes are flat and should be raised.



The adjustment on the 3rd partial is so small that it is unnecessary.



## V. What is Most Likely Out of Tune in Your Trombone Section

### Memorize this:

Intonation Tendencies (not found on most fingering charts)

7th Partial Notes: G and Gb/F# (2nd and 1st) ABOVE MIDDLE "C" should be shorter positions.

6th Partial Notes: F, E, Eb, alternate D, (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th respectively) ABOVE MIDDLE "C" on the ledger lines above the bass clef. 6th partial notes should be played in slightly longer positions (roughly .5 inches longer).

5th Partial Notes: D, C#, C, B nat., alternate Bb, (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th respectively) ABOVE MIDDLE C on the ledger lines above the bass clef, 5th partial, should be played in a slightly shorter position (roughly .25 inches shorter). However, some models of trombone need to play these notes in slightly longer positions.

All positions should be checked with a tuner frequently, especially middle of the staff f#/gb in 5th, low c in 6th, and low b in 7th. Remember that young students will be growing (and so will their arms.)

There is no substitute for a good ear. Hearing intonation problems can be taught.

The fourth position is regularly sharp because most beginners are taught to use the top of their slide equal with the bell. It is actually below the bell.

# The Pocket Guide to Teaching Trombone

## THE F-ATTACHMENT (or trigger)

- The F-attachment adds extra tubing to the tenor trombone, allowing it to play lower.
- Pressing the trigger puts the harmonic series of the trombone into F, (rather than Bb.)
- Its primary function is for the convenience of having alternate positions in the low register.
- It adds 4 notes to the low register to help bridge a gap between low E and pedal Bb. (The low B is attainable if practiced by “lipping” down.)
- It is a convenience but is not necessary. Many principal trombonists play “open” horns in symphonies.
- Open wrap is preferable

V1+      V2++      V-4      V5      V6      V7

+ indicates the position should be slightly farther OUT      - indicates the position should be slightly farther IN

V1      V2-      V3++      V-5      V6      V7+

**Memorize this:**

- Tune to LOW F
- C should be slightly out in 1st. (Do not play higher than this note on the trigger.)
- B in long 2nd with the trigger
- Bb in short fourth is available; use it!

## TUNING THE D-ATTACHMENT (2nd Trigger—Bass Trombone only)

The D-attachment is operated by the middle finger of the left hand while the F-attachment is simultaneously pressed by the thumb of the left hand.

"D" stands for both triggers engaged.  
The number relates to the regular slide position of the open horn.

D1=      D-3      D4=      D-6      D7+

+ indicates the position should be slightly farther OUT      - indicates the position should be slightly farther IN.

D1      D2++      D4      D5++      D7

(Pedal B-flat)

**Memorize this:**

- The second trigger is in “D”.
- Tune to LOW D, below the staff
- Learn Low Db (D2++)
- Learn Low C (D4)

# The Pocket Guide to Teaching Trombone

## SLURRING

The trombone is the only wind instrument without a true slur.

• A light tongue must be used to dent the airflow when the slide moves. If the tongue is too hard, slurring will not occur. If the tongue is too soft, glissandos may occur.

SYLLABLES FOR SLURRING range between one rolled “r” and “du”,

- The slide action must be extremely fast between slide positions since there is less time between tones.
- Breath support!

*In general, do not use a natural slur. A light tongue is smoother, avoids the pop, and is more consistent. It is also easier to teach.*

## ALTERNATE POSITIONS

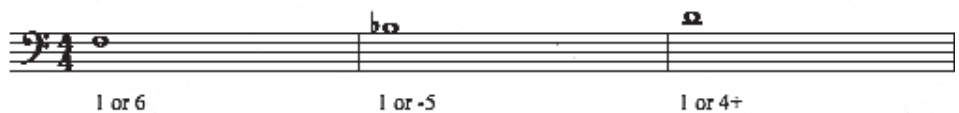
- Alternate positions should be taught early so that players don’t cling to familiar positions.
- The more notes played with the slide going in one direction, the better.
- Half steps should be played with adjacent positions whenever possible.
- Alternate positions have a slightly inferior quality of sound and should not be used for “prominent” notes.

Memorize this:

4th line “F” also in 6th

Top of the staff “Bb”, also in short 5th

1st ledger line “D”, also in long 4th



## VIBRATO

• Jaw Vibrato is the best vibrato to use for classical solo purposes. (Practice chewing gum.) Use only on long notes; start slow to fast. Do not use too much. Listen to professionals.

- Slide Vibrato is used in the jazz idiom. In a jazz band soli trombone section, only the lead player should use it.
- A gut or air vibrato should never be used! (Do not “mess” with a brass player’s air support.)

## MULTIPLE TONGUING

• Multiple tonguing should be taught early. It takes a while to develop this tongue twister. Students who start early have more success.

- Double Tonguing

TU KU for regular double tonguing.

DU GU for legato double tonguing.

- Triple Tonguing

TU TU KU for regular triple tonguing. (Not TU KU TU)

DU DU GU for legato double tonguing. (Not DU GU DU)

- Learn slowly and gradually increase speed.
- Walk around practicing saying the syllables.

*Dr. Deb Scott is the professor of trombone and bass trombone at Stephen F. Austin State University. She is also the director of SFA's first jazz band, The Swingin' Axes. She is active as a performer and clinician in both classical and jazz styles. She graduated with top honors from Texas Tech University and received the top award for her master's degree at the University of Northern Colorado. She went on to be the first woman to complete the doctorate in trombone performance from the University of North Texas. Scott's solo CD, *Playing Favorites*, was released in 2017 by Navona Records. She has been a featured soloist in many recitals and concerts with bands and orchestras in Texas and has been described as "one of the premiere soloists for her instrument" (Cinemusical 2017). In 2016, she was a featured soloist and faculty member in Santa Fe, Argentina at Trombonanza. She has been featured in radio broadcasts throughout North America. At the International Trombone Festival, she and the SFA trombone choir were described as playing a "fantastic performance...of some of the most challenging works in the trombone choir repertoire" (ITA Journal 2010). Scott has reviewed solos for the PML list for trombone and bass trombone and is active as a clinician and performer for All-Region jazz ensembles and festivals. Over fifteen jazz etudes composed by Dr. Scott have been accepted as audition material for the state jazz auditions; she has also selected all-state band audition material for trombone.*

# Reflections . . .

Joni Perez

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Well, we are 2 1/2 days out of getting back from BOA Grand Nats and I'm just starting to come out of the fog. It always takes a "minute" before I am able to truly absorb the experience, both from a seasonal standpoint and a final performance standpoint. I would be lying if I said this season has been one of the most enjoyable...but I will say this...it has been one of the most, if not THE most, rewarding I've ever experienced.

I won't go into the details of all of the hardships that our kids and staff experienced throughout this season because no one wants to hear our sob stories. We are all fighting our own battles. And that is something that I've tried to keep my students aware of these past couple of months but this was definitely one of the most challenging fall seasons I've ever been a part of.

However, we fought the good fight until the very last minute and had the very fortunate pleasure of watching our kids perform one last time in the big show. Going into Indy, we weren't sure how many performances we would ultimately get to have but we worked our butts off to try and earn three of them. The sheer joy of seeing our kids react when being announced as a Grand Nationals Finalist was special. And I am thrilled to be able to say that I've never had so much fun watching a group of students perform than I did last Saturday night in Finals. We still had a lot of issues and could have used the over two weeks of field time we lost over the course

of the season, but man—did they perform. And man, were we proud.

Our shows are never clearly spelled out, and sometimes that can cause some interesting conversation and speculation and this year was really no different. BUT THE MUSIC. Our kids and staff absolutely fell in love with this show because of the MUSIC.

Not only were "Adoration" from Scythian Suite, "All This Shall Be Yours" and "Temen Oblak" fantastic pieces of literature on the field that easily offered our kids the opportunity to pour themselves into them, but our ballad...I will never forget when we listened to the inspiration for *How Great Thou Art* during our first design meeting back in January...It was a no brainer. Not even one hesitation to do it.

I remember discussing the various levels of familiarity with the song that everyone on the staff and design team had at the time, which ultimately foreshadowed how our students and audiences would receive the music over the season. For those who knew the song, they had a special connection with it, mostly through their connection with church and God. For those who did not know the song, their response to it was one of adoration and love. Because whether you knew it or not, it was simply

beautiful and needed to be shared on a big stage.

My connection to the song came from growing up as a child in Albany, TX and singing *How Great Thou Art* often in church at First Baptist. My grandfather was the music director, and my grandmother, parents, aunts

and uncles all sang in the church choir while I sat with my other grandmother, siblings and cousins and sang along while reading out of the hymnal. I remember following along the music staff with my finger and singing the words loudly (while simultaneously

sucking on a piece of hard cinnamon candy from my Nanny.) I remember hearing all of the older ladies in the back pews howling along as the church organ and piano (that now sits in my home) provided the accompaniment for our small town church family to sing along to. I'm sure many of you have your own special connection with *How Great Thou Art*.

As we began learning the music with the kids last spring you could tell that they bought in right away. Whether they knew the music or not, there was something about it that rang true to them. And I don't think I'll ever forget the first time we performed it at a football game and the crowd leapt to their feet afterwards, cheering

**Marching Band is a funny thing. All band directors know this. Some of the best seasons competitively are not as deeply profound while some of the most difficult and challenging seasons can present some of the most beautiful and rewarding outcomes.**

## Reflections . . .

and waving their arms. I had stranger after stranger coming up to me at that game saying they were so happy we were playing that song and that they just loved singing along. At a football game!

We had a standing ovation at Lufkin when we performed for their home crowd and I received emails from their football fans that next week about how much they loved our show and music. Over the next few weeks I also received emails from stadium golf cart drivers and other strangers from across our state that saw our kids, either at a game or contest, who just wanted to share how much they had been touched by the performance. PEOPLE CONNECTED and they wanted to share how much it meant to them.

Clearly there are many meanings that can come out of a show called “In the Garden of Cosmic Speculation,” but this interpretation was one that I found really unique and special. A few weeks ago we had a student share what his interpretation of the show was and he explained that our show was about Houston and the hurricane. We had six large prong-like props in our show that represented the six major hurricanes that had hit various parts of the world up until that point. We had a large circular spiral tarp that represented Hurricane Harvey. Our opener, “Adoration” from Scythian Suite, represented the impending chaos and ultimate destruction of the storm. The 2nd production, “All This Shall Be Yours,” was the struggle between the dark times and the eventual rise of the community to become heroes in the face of darkness. The euphonium soloist in *How Great Thou Art* was the voice of God telling everyone that we would be ok and that he would protect us, and that our closer, “Temen Oblak” (which literally means Dark Clouds) represented the dark clouds lifting and the triumph and survival of our city. WHOA.

A memory that will last a lifetime -- Watching the kids in sheer elation for over an hour after our Finals performance on Saturday night. We always have many tears and see lots of hugs after the last contest performance of the season, but this year was different. On a completely different level. Not just the seniors. Not just the girls. Have you ever seen about 300 kids loving on each other for almost an hour straight after a performance? If you have, then you're as lucky as we are. If you haven't... it's something to behold. I've never seen so much connection and appreciation for one another as I saw that night....UNTIL THIS MORNING IN CLASS.



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## Reflections . . .

We decided to let the kids focus on homework, Region Orchestra prep, etc. yesterday during classes and reserved today for reflection. I didn't want to try and tell the kids how to feel about their season or what they should be thinking. I wanted to give them the opportunity to share their thoughts and personal reflections on their experience, whether it was over the weekend or something in the season that was meaningful to them.

Holy cow...I had NO IDEA what was in store...What I witnessed this morning was one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen. These kids...these beautiful kids, one after another, shared their hearts and bared their souls to each other for the better part of each class. I listened to kid after kid raise their hand to express how thankful they were for a friend, how proud of themselves they were for fighting for something bigger than themselves, how much it meant to have their parents standing in front of them in the rehearsal hall during our final run through, how much they developed a love for one another over the course of time while working together each day. They talked about how much they grew as a family. That they'd never felt as close as a group as this year. I heard kids talk about losing family members and other loved ones during marching season and specifically point out others in the room and thank them for carrying them through their personal battles. I witnessed young girls who I've counseled this fall share how much being in the band means to them and that it's what gets them through their darkest days. I heard move-in students shed tears and share about how they came from a small school or band program and how much they missed their friends from their old school but how proud they were to be in our band; they were

**What I witnessed this morning was one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen. These kids... these beautiful kids, one after another, shared their hearts and bared their souls to each other for the better part of each class. It was like they were finally free of their burdens and hardships and had the freedom to just be and express their love and care for one another.**

thankful to have found a family here. I heard kids who all they wanted to do was quit until a certain person or group of people decided to take them under their wing and help them realize that they have a place in our band family. I listened to kids who struggle socially express that they feel welcome and important. Teenage boys sharing

how much they've loved performing together and growing together as friends and musicians. Grown boys embracing the fact that their buddies brought them to tears after finishing our last performance. Kids talking about meeting other band members and band parents who told them their performance made them cry. I heard kid after kid share their personal experience of their Finals performance and the sheer joy and elation that followed with their peers outside of the tunnel. Kids were crying and hugging each other like it's all they had in the world that night. And then they did this again in class this morning...two days later and in our smelly, broken-down band hall. And I cried and cried and cried while listening to these young

men and women share their hearts with one another with complete and total abandon. Most of my make-up was on my jacket sleeve by 10 a.m.

I couldn't believe my eyes and ears. A group of teenagers, many who are overly protective of sharing too much for fear of being criticized and many who are so hard on themselves and are afraid of failure or of being mocked that they don't let people see them too intimately, were literally baring their souls to each other. It was like they were finally free of their burdens and hardships and had the freedom to just be and express their love and care for one another. It was literally the most precious thing I think I've ever been able to witness.

## Reflections . . .

After the classes ended, Kyle and I took a few breaths to try and compose ourselves. We were not prepared for that. It's been a tough few months (and more to come in the spring) for him and me...I asked him, "Did we just miss all of that? Or was it hidden underneath everything?" He said probably a little of both. Kyle and I were so consumed this fall just trying to climb AND move every mountain that all of this was happening underneath our noses and we didn't even know it. It was in that moment that we were both able to release all of the burdens of the last 3 1/2 months because it was clear right then and there that every single moment was worth it. What those kids shared with us and each other was magic. Priceless. I'm still in awe of it. And it will never leave me.

So, what do I take away from this? I don't know that I can put it all into words. But after what has been some of the hardest months of my life and career, I can honestly say

that I have a certain peace that passes understanding as we put closure on this season. I know that God was with us the entire time, even if the enemy tried to stand in the way. GOD IS GREATER.

Marching Band is a funny thing. All band directors know this. Some of the best seasons competitively are not as deeply profound while some of the most difficult and challenging seasons can present some of the most beautiful and rewarding outcomes. I've been saying to the kids that being in marching band is sometimes like going to battle together. You suit up with your armor and you go out and learn what you're made of. That we're "in the trenches" together, and that we fight the good fight not just as a team, but as a family. I think my kids really got that this year. More than ever before. I am so very proud of them.

And yes -- I know it's "just band." But is it? Of course, not. And we all know this, too. **How Great Thou Art.**



*Joni Perez is in her eighth year as Director of Bands and fifteenth year overall at The Woodlands High School. Her responsibilities include conducting the Wind Ensemble & Concert Band and directing The Woodlands Marching Band. Mrs. Perez earned her Bachelor's degree in Music Education from the University of Houston in 2005 and is in her nineteenth year of teaching in Texas. Mrs. Perez's concert and marching ensembles have received exclusively superior ratings from the University Interscholastic League during her time as Director. TWHS Wind Ensemble has been recognized as a National Wind Band Honors Mark of Excellence Winner and was a featured ensemble at the 2012 Midwest International Band & Orchestra Clinic in Chicago. Under her direction, the marching ensembles have earned four consecutive trips to the 5A/6A Texas state UIL Marching Contest, advancing to Finals in 2010, 2012, 2014 & 2016. The Woodlands High School Marching Band also competes regularly at the regional and national level in the Bands of America marching competitions. In 2013, TWHS Band won the Bands of America Grand National Championship in Indianapolis and most recently finished as a Finalist in the 2017 BOA Grand Nationals competition. The band has been recognized as a finalist all four times they have participated under Mrs. Perez's direction between 2011 & 2017. Joni Perez is a member of the Texas Music Educators Association and the Texas Bandmasters Association. She resides with her husband, Brian Perez, of eleven years in The Woodlands, Texas.*

# Bringing the Music to Life

Don Haynes, Jr.

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Here in the great state of Texas, we music educators enjoy great support of parents, community, administrators, and of course, the best students on campus. We do a marvelous job of teaching young musicians to make music. Yes! They do some pretty amazing things with their musical talents. Many of our middle school and high school groups perform the finest wind literature written. Through music, we invite our students to embrace high standards, practicing and mastering excellence. In essence, we teach them to love music—a passion that we too embrace—not only as a profession, but as a major love of our lives. That part of our job we do very well, but what about the music? Are we doing justice to the composer's work? What is your approach to the art of conducting your fine musicians? ... and the music itself?

Like many of you reading this article, I was fortunate to have an excellent conducting professor. During my undergraduate studies at The University of Texas, Austin in the 1970s, then conducting professor Dr. Bill Moody would state his beliefs and desires for his young aspiring music students. One of my favorites was, "The conductor's number one responsibility is to get the tempo right". This conductor agrees whole heartedly. And now, I am adding my personal favorite belief: As a conductor, I believe it's our job to "bring the music to life."

As I travel across the country to conduct and clinic bands, I am quite fortunate to work with many energetic

and enthusiastic young people. I am often moved by these fabulous youngsters who hunger for the opportunity to make exciting music on the concert stage. They seem to enjoy being in the ensemble, making a musical contribution when it's time for them to play. They embrace the music making experience and cherish this rewarding activity. Performing in a group becomes the most wonderful bonding session musicians get to experience. Therefore, it becomes my job to inspire, motivate, and encourage them to bring the printed music "to life." It is my personal challenge that I accept the moment I step on the podium.

I know that effective score study, special insights, and appropriate conducting on my part will help them bring the music to life. By the way, young musicians just love it when you give them a story behind the work. I encourage you to share with the ensemble the composer's intent and any historical significance represented by the composition. I contend that just as a movie director works his craft at every level, offering creative ideas, and motivating the actors to produce "their magic," so must a music conductor work his craft to bring the music to life. The biggest differences, of course, are our art form is done live and our passion is all in the music. Unlike the movie makers, we get one chance to successfully pull off a selected work.

During that musical performance, what is the job of the conductor?

Think on that for a moment. Allow me to emphasize some key elements that I believe truly help bring the music to life. My fellow conductors, you cannot shortcut the number one element. It is a must!!! **You must know the score extremely well.** Study it, and learn it so that you may use your gestures to show the ensemble and the audience what the music is doing.

- Learn the gestures that show phrasing, style, lyrical lines, crescendos, accents, etc.

- Learn the gestures that "help" your ensemble breath and enter together every time. (Don't make them guess... that can't be fun for them)

- Practice a variety of gestures in front of a mirror. (Video tape yourself in rehearsals)

- Learn to use facial gestures that show the musicians intensity, joy, love, sadness, etc. (the great conductors don't have a problem doing this, why should we?)

- Practice chorales with your band, using a variety of gestures, changing things each time you play the chorale. (Look for ways to be creative) Make yourself "get out of the score", Look up, and make eye contact more often. I like to smile at soloist's right after they've presented a nice solo. The rest of the group sees that and they feed on that, believe me.

- Plan ahead, plan how you will cue major entrances and practice them at home first.

- Know when to get out of the way of the players (esp. a long solo)

- Learn how to use dynamic

## Bringing the Music to Life

gestures effectively (so that even in the sight-reading room, your musicians will respond accordingly)

- Decide what emotion, and what sectional colors the composer's music calls for and try to show that in your conducting.

- Watch and learn from excellent orchestral and wind symphony conductors.

- Rent orchestral videos that show the greats: Sir Georg Solti, Seiji Ozawa, Frederick Fennel, and Robert Reynolds.

- Study the moves of our contemporary greats at TMEA concerts, college wind conductors, and many colleagues in the state. Discover what works for them

- Above all, GET THE TEMPO RIGHT! (Every time)

- Practice difficult time meters and meter changes so that YOU are not in the way of the music making process. (If you're not clear and confident, don't expect the kids to be)

### **My Five Pleases**

**Please** don't start a selection with your eyes down in the score.

**Please** don't conduct the same size beat for all dynamics.

**Please** don't mirror too much (left hand doing same pattern as the right hand).

**Please** don't rock or bounce at the knees as you conduct; this is so distracting.

**Please** don't bury your head in the score; this isn't conducting.

Through your conducting, you should guide the audience's ear and attention to the main line, key entrances, and impressive technical sections as they enter show the audience where to listen. Remember, the notes on the printed page are mere ink dots and markings; it is the written script waiting for the director-conductor and his musicians to bring the music to life.

As we embark upon the "concert season", I invite you to do some self-analysis with regards to your conducting. If your conducting skills tend to lack in any major area, work on those areas. Add some variety to your conducting skills no matter how seasoned you are. Sir Georg Solti wrote, "I am still striving to improve my conducting at the age of 70." Perhaps you may not think your conducting of the music is critical. Perhaps there IS something keeping you from embracing growth, and accepting effective conducting as "your job." Maybe someday you will "climb out of the box" and discover the wonderful adventures that await you as an exciting, insightful conductor. For your student's sake and for the music's sake, I hope you will.

My colleagues, I beseech you, please offer encouragement and praise to those band conductors who do try to bring the music to life. The art of conducting takes years to master. Although it comes easier for some than others, it takes a major commitment to successfully become a good conductor. Keep this in mind when you judge the contests and festivals. Extend to them your praise and encouragement. In my opinion, when they conduct the music and help their students bring the music to life, they're simply doing their job.

Let me close with a few insightful words of the great orchestral conductor Sir Georg Solti from his book, *Memoirs* (1997). "The inexplicable miracle of conducting is that the body, eyes, and soul of a conductor transfer something intangible and unique to an orchestra. Aside from wielding the baton, a basic necessity for a conductor is to know exactly how a certain passage should sound. If your imagination is clear, then you will communicate with the orchestra even if your beat and technique are not first-rate. If a conductor believes in what he is doing, if he is convincing and does not vacillate, the musicians will always follow him."

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*Don Haynes, Jr. served as the Director of Bands at LBJ High School in Austin, Texas for 40 years. During his tenure, the LBJ Band earned many sweepstakes honors, and proudly performed across the globe including ambassador trips to Beijing, China, London, England, Paris, France, and Rome, Italy. Mr. Haynes was awarded the prestigious Texas UIL "Denius Award" in 1994, which is presented to Texas' top UIL sponsors. At LBJ High School, his colleagues selected him "Teacher of the Year" four times. He was recognized as the Outstanding Community Leader (Austin) in 2015. He is frequently invited to serve as an adjudicator for competitions, and now serves in the role of music consultant for schools across Texas. Mr. Haynes has become a motivational speaker for young leaders in the band and music industry. He is a practicing Life Coach with a focus on music educators. [DonHaynes2@aol.com](mailto:DonHaynes2@aol.com)*

# Teachers, Are You Helping or Hurting?

Marina McLerran

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When working with students, it is easy for teachers to feel accomplished because they reached the end of their lesson plan for the day. This achievement by itself, however, means nothing unless the students remember the lesson. In order to commit a new concept to memory, children must make a conscious effort to improve and be provided with opportunities to fail.

## How Lasting Memories Are Made

In a recent study by the Baycrest Rotman Research Institute in Toronto, researchers determined that subjects of all ages were better able to retain information “by making near-miss mistakes” (Griffiths). It is necessary for the brain to first be challenged in order to create new connections and lasting memories. To encourage this type of learning, educators might allow more time for students to find the proper fingering for a note or give multiple chances to answer questions; teach them how to find the solution. Simply giving students the answers is an inefficient method of educating that results in apathetic students with poor critical thinking abilities.

Dr. Robert Duke of the University of Texas, in his recent publication in the *Music Educators Journal*, observes that directors “at times provide *more* assistance than is actually required and, in so doing, inadvertently limit learners’ development over the long term.” Educators who focus too intently on using their time efficiently, Professor Duke warns, may be too

quick to provide answers to students. Although the lecture might be progressing at a fast pace, it is the responsibility of the director to ensure that students are mentally engaged and are therefore able to commit the material to memory; learning cannot be a passive activity. Dr. Duke states that “energy is required [to learn] because memory consolidation involves changes to the physical structure of the brain.”

## Making a Conscious Effort to Improve

Kayt Sukel from The DANA Foundation states that students “must be conscious of [their] mistakes to reap the benefits of improved performance.” She references a study done by Hans Schroder of Michigan State University in 2012 that explored the amount of brain activity required for the completion of a simple task initially and then again when the instructions were reversed. The results showed that individuals under too much stress could not successfully complete the task; there must be a balance between the amount of energy that is used to identify the mistake and the energy required to continue towards the goal of the activity. In the classroom, therefore, educators should strive to create an environment where errors are an acceptable part of the learning process and not a cause for panic. Directors can facilitate this attitude by acknowledging their own mistakes and by responding to struggling students with the creed “we can mess up but we cannot quit.”

About focusing on error-identification in the classroom, Professor Duke believes that it is imperative to the learning process “even though doing so requires more time;” it is the responsibility of the educator to be patient and encouraging, not to give the answers. More helpful to students, is the ability to name their own deficiency and develop a plan of action to remedy the issue. For example, are music students aware of their intonation? When a mistake is realized, do the students immediately ask for help or attempt a solution (or a few) on their own first? The ability (and courage) to analyze a situation and develop a plan of action is not only a desirable trait in students, but also in (future) employees.

## Building Confidence

Sarah Neish from *Psychologies*, asserts that parents and educators most often “stop children from making mistakes to save them feeling distressed,” but that this act denies them the opportunity to grow emotionally. Neish suggests that the “natural consequences” of said mistakes will leave enough of an impact without the need for additional explanation. An educator who employs this philosophy might allow a student to perform poorly at a solo contest in order to make the point that practice is necessary for success. Neish also advises that children who are made to feel ashamed of errors will eventually cease all efforts to improve; educators must find the

## Teachers, Are You Helping or Hurting?

balance between positive and negative feedback. Dr. Evelyn Crone, professor of neurocognitive developmental psychology at Leiden University, encourages parents and teachers to be aware of the developmental characteristics of the age group in question; children younger than twelve will be impervious to negative feedback, while children over twelve will tend to dwell on it. Educators should reassure students that mistakes will be made, especially in live musical performances; it's just part of being a person.

Students who have been allowed to passively enter the classroom will push back, at times with anger, when directors refuse to provide answers immediately. Recently, I taught a middle school woodwind sectional over a particularly challenging pop tune and refused to count the rhythms for the students. This of course, frustrated several of the musicians, and I'm sure, made me a less popular band director. At the end of the rehearsal, though, I was approached by one of the flute players who thanked me for making them figure out their own music. She said that she hates it when teachers give them the answers right away because "it's like spoiling the end of a movie." Students might not enjoy the puzzle-solving process while they're in it, but they will appreciate the ability to decipher their own music in the long run. This confidence in their own abilities will also likely spill over into other aspects of the child's life; their approach to difficult homework, large presentations, and challenging social situations.

*Marina McLerran, originally from Austin, TX, is a graduate of the Stephen F. Austin State University School of Music. She is currently an Assistant Band Director for Center ISD, clarinetist for the East Texas Chamber Winds, and recently launched her own online publication, the "McLerran Journal."*

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# What's the Score?

Gloria Ramirez, Alex Denton, Marshall Thomas

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Do you pick music because it's a piece you've always wanted to perform? Do you choose hard music because you want to make your band stronger? Do you pick music because it's the new thing on the UIL List? After 37 years of teaching, here is a process that helps me when deciding music for my ensemble.

When selecting a piece for your ensemble the MOST important thing is to choose music that fits your group in terms of scoring, instrumentation, and skill-level. Why play a Sousa march if your flutes and clarinets can't match outside of their middle register? Why try to play *Hounds of Spring* with your eight alto saxophones trying to cover the French horn part? Why play *Nimrod* with your third band because it's a "grade three" on the UIL PML list? I've seen these mistakes happen, and have had to judge some of them before. The great thing about music today, is that there is so much great music that can be used for your group. Now, you can have multiple versions of arrangements and find the best one to fit your group. Here's what to consider when selecting music

## First - The Band

During a break (Summer, Thanksgiving, or Winter), on a scale of 1-10 honestly rate:

- 1) Each section of your band. (This will help you see your stronger/weaker sections.)
- 2) Each student within each section. (This will help you see the depth of each section.)

3) Students you would consider soloists. (This will help eliminate some choices for you as well.)

It is important to be honest with your ratings and to do it when you are in a neutral mood. We've all had those rehearsals where a section surprises you one way or another, and you disproportionately think they are bad or good. Following these three steps will give you a clear idea of the kind of piece you are looking for. Are your color instruments (flute, oboe, bassoon, horn, and euphonium) strong? Then consider an orchestral transcription to feature them. Is your flute section weak? Then you know *Enigma Variations* wouldn't be a good fit. Do you have a good trumpet soloist, but you lack depth? Maybe *American Elegy* would be a good fit. These are all a great way to find out the type of piece you are looking for.

## Second - How To Find Music

If you are not familiar with the UIL PML list, listen to recordings. Many online music retailers have the Texas UIL Contest list recordings and some with scores to follow along. If you can't find a recording there, look on YouTube, iTunes, or ask directors who have already performed it for a recording. Check with the recording engineers that typically record UIL performances in your area or throughout the state. You can also look up recordings at Mark Custom Records. Unless it is a VERY new piece, you should be able to find it. There are so many resources, you just

need to be diligent about trying to find them. All of us have heard the saying, "You pick your rating when you pick your music."

Also, be on the lookout for district In-services that are hosting an event where they perform "new" music on the UIL list. Attend those sessions, whether to perform or to listen. Some of these will occur at Summer Band Camps at different colleges and at the TBA Convention/Clinic. Host an event yourself by using your own ensemble if possible. It would take some planning, but I bet it would be a great service to directors both in and out of your district. You would probably want to try talking with music companies who would be willing to loan you music. Who knows, someone in attendance may want to purchase a piece during that session.

Another thing you might consider is looking on [uilforms.com/results](http://uilforms.com/results) to see what selections have been successful for ensembles similar to yours. That doesn't mean it would necessarily fit your group, but looking at the directors or ensembles with consistent and successful track records is a great place to start. It is also a good idea to bounce ideas off of other directors and/or mentors. Remember, you are trying to pick a complete program not just your "big" piece. Once you think you have decided on a program, listen to recordings of them back-to-back to see if they complement each other. Is there enough contrast? Will it keep everyone involved? Will my percussion section benefit from this piece? With

## What's the Score?

percussion, remember to ask yourself, “would I ask my wind players to do this?” You don't want them to have very little involvement. At the same time, you don't want to overstress a smaller section trying to cover multiple parts.

YOU are the person who can pick the best program for your group because no one else knows your kids as well as you do. However, if you know you want to feature a section or a soloist, ask friends or mentors for their input. What is more important to you—building a reputation for playing “legitimate” literature or giving your kids a quality education through a quality performance? Remember, these suggestions are for concert music; stand tunes at football games are a completely different subject.

### Third - The Piece

When first looking at a score, it is important to know what you are **looking at** as well as what you are **looking for**. Here are some things to consider:

**Key/Time Signatures** – Is it something your students have been exposed to, or will you have to teach it?

**Ranges** – Will your students be able to play the ranges required with their most characteristic sound?

**Scoring** – Do you have to rescore a good deal of the piece? Is it an “old-school” piece where the voicing isn't favorable?

**Technique** – Can your students actually play the notes, or will they be “faking” it?

**Tempo** – Is the tempo too slow for your band to sustain, or too fast to play well?

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## What's the Score?

**Articulation** – Will your woodwinds be able to articulate; will brass or flutes need to work on multiple tonguing?

**Transparency** – How exposed is the piece? Is the harmonic language too thick/foreign for your group to understand?

**Length** – Is it long enough that your students won't get bored? Is it short enough that they won't be out of chops by the end?

**Movements** – How many times do you need to start a piece from silence? This can be challenging for young groups and groups looking for that "perfect" recording.

**Fingerings** – Where does the music fall on the instruments? Do you have access to someone who can give you alternate fingerings?

**Ornaments** – How much time will you have to devote to learning new styles of grace notes?

**Solos** – Does it fit your list?

**Quality** – Is it a good vehicle to teach your students about music, or is it redundant? I said redundant.

**New Piece?** – Are you comfortable making stylistic choices on your own, or do you need a reference?

**Logistics** – Is there a time limit on your performance? How much equipment will percussionists have to move? Do you even have all the equipment necessary (synthesizers, exotic percussion – beware)?

This is the process we go through. Don't think that this means you can only play something you're good at. In fact, you have to know that line where you push your students just hard enough to flourish and learn. You need to know how many new skills you will need to teach because a new skill should be practiced every day. At the end of the day, it is important that you pick music you and your kids will enjoy learning through practice and performance. Why waste time beating away at a piece for months, when neither you nor your students enjoy the piece? It's your turn to give the kids the kinds of positive experiences you received from your time as a performer (which led you to become a music educator).

### The last thing:

Your students should not be the only one learning from these experiences; we all must never stop learning.

*Gloria Ramirez is in her 37th year of teaching, currently as the Director of Bands at Langham Creek High School in the Cypress Independent School District. Prior to coming to the Cy Fair District, Ms. Ramirez taught in the Humble and Spring Independent School Districts. Ms. Ramirez's concert ensembles are consistent UIL Sweepstakes recipients and have been recognized as "Best in Class" at various festivals. Her groups have advanced in the TMEA Honor Band competition numerous times at both the high school and middle school levels. In 2007 Ms. Ramirez received the Leadership and Achievement Award as Co-Director of the Class AAAAA TMEA State Honor Band. Her bands have been selected as a National Wind Band Winner as well as a Commended Winner on several occasions. Ms. Ramirez' ensembles have performed at The Midwest Clinic, Music for All National Festival, Carnegie Hall and Symphony Hall in Chicago, Illinois. The Lobo Marching Band was awarded the John Philip Sousa Sudler Shield award for excellence in marching in 2007 and the marching band recently earned its 28th consecutive 1st division rating at the UIL Marching Contest. Ms. Ramirez is listed in "Who's Who Among America's Teachers", Teacher of the Year, and Nominated for the 2016 Music Educator of the Year. She is an active clinician and adjudicator throughout the United States having presented several clinics at The Midwest Clinic, Texas Bandmasters Association Convention/Clinic and CODA in Norman, Oklahoma.*

*Alex Denton is in his 5th year of teaching at Langham Creek High School in Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District. He has consistently received straight 1s in UIL performances. Mr. Denton marched with the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps from 2008-2010, serving as horn sergeant in his final year.*

*Marshall Thomas is in his 4th year as Assistant Director and Director of Percussion at Langham Creek. He is a graduate of the University of Houston. Under his direction the Langham Creek Symphonic band has earned consistent 1st divisions at UIL contest. The Langham Creek Percussion Ensemble has earned superior ratings at several local festivals and most recently performed at the Sandy Feldstein National Percussion Festival as part of the Music for All National Festival. Marshall is a proud educational endorser of Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets.*



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# The Midwest Clinic Performances 2017

Congratulations to these Texas schools who were selected to perform at The Midwest Clinic in Chicago.

## BANDS

North Shore Senior High School Wind Ensemble  
Shane Goforth  
Houston, TX

Summit High School Wind Symphony  
Chris Kanicki  
Arlington, TX

Wylie High School Wind Symphony  
Todd Dixon  
Wylie, TX

Arbor Creek Middle School Honors Band  
Rylon Guidry  
Carrollton, TX

Lamar Middle School & Fine Arts Academy  
Symphonic Winds  
James Hairston  
Austin, TX

T.A. Howard Middle School Honor Band  
Nathaniel Neugent  
Arlington, TX

Cedar Park Winds  
Christopher Yee  
Leander, TX

## ENSEMBLES

The University of Texas  
Butler School of Music  
Saxophone Ensemble  
Stephen C. Page  
Austin, TX

UTEP Horn Choir  
Richard Lambrecht  
El Paso, TX

Vandegrift High School  
Percussion Ensemble  
Joe Hobbs  
Austin, TX

Creekwood Middle School  
Percussion Ensemble  
Ariel Gammons  
Kingwood, TX

## ORCHESTRAS

Martin High School  
Symphony Orchestra  
Jamie Ovalle  
Arlington, TX

Plano Senior High School  
Chamber Orchestra  
Brian Coatney and Chris Tran  
Plano, TX

Hill Country Middle School  
Symphony Orchestra  
Rachel Horvitz  
Austin, TX

Sartartia Symphony Orchestra  
Sophia Hsieh  
Sugar Land, TX

# NAMMB Contest Awards

Congratulations to these bands and directors who had outstanding performances at the 2017 State Military Marching Band Contest:

## CLASS 2A

1st Place Timpson High School  
2nd Place West Sabine High School

## CLASS 3A

1st Place New Diana High School  
2nd Place West Rusk High School  
3rd Place Beckville High School

## CLASS 4A

1st Place Spring Hill High School  
2nd Place Cleveland High School  
3rd Place Pittsburg High School

## CLASS 5A

1st Place Lindale High School  
2nd Place Huntsville High School  
3rd Place Hallsville High School

## CLASS 6A

1st Place Lufkin High School  
2nd Place Montgomery High School



# 2017 U.I.L. Marching Contest State Champs

**Congratulations to all these 1A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:**



**Winner: Whiteface HS • Director: Dan McCasland**  
**Assistant: Nora Brazil**  
**Drum Majors: Averi Dockery, Keely Coffman, Abi Dockery**  
**Program Title: American Honor**

- Booker HS.....Danyelle Adkins
- Bronte HS.....George Tomes
- Cross Plains HS.....Cathryn Rasbury
- Eden HS.....Brittany Lozano
- May HS .....Brian Flenniken
- Nueces Canyon HS ..Ted Buhrts
- Ropes HS .....Justin Mauldin
- Rotan HS.....Jessica Watkins
- Santa Anna HS .....Matthew Sowell
- Springlake-Earth HS.David Rogers
- Throckmorton HS ....Jerry Barker
- Water Valley HS .....Judy Owen
- White Deer HS.....Lee Brossette
- Whiteface HS .....Dan McCasland

**Congratulations to all these 2A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:**



**Winner: Clarksville HS • Director: Roderick Boyce**  
**Assistant: Eric Shimanek**  
**Drum Major: La Whitney Roberts**  
**Program Title: A Hero's Quest**

- Clarksville HS .....Roderick Boyce
- Falls City HS .....Steven Wolf
- Forsan HS .....Jim Rhodes
- Ganado HS.....Joe Barrow
- Harper HS.....Charles Sanders
- Honey Grove HS .....James Edwards
- Irion County HS.....Brian Tillman
- Kerens HS .....Brian Smetzer
- New Deal HS.....David Speer
- Olney HS .....Rodney Bennett
- Panhandle HS.....Nick Stephenson
- Sabinal HS.....Dawn Henry
- Seymour HS .....Scooter Miller
- Shiner HS.....Zachary Sims
- Sundown HS .....Mike Glaze
- Timpson HS .....Rhonda Daniel
- Union Grove HS.....Brandon Garmon
- Valley Mills HS .....Jon Schriver

**Congratulations to all these 3A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:**

C.H. Yoe HS..... Craig George  
 Canadian HS ..... Jennifer Webber  
 Clifton HS ..... Keith Zuehlke  
 Clyde HS..... Bruce Morgan  
 Crane HS..... Daniel Todd  
 Farmersville HS..... Scott Cross  
 Holliday HS..... Melanie Hadderton  
 Howe HS..... Angie Liss  
 Industrial HS..... Houston Cummings  
 Luling HS ..... Coral Rios  
 Mineola HS ..... Chris Brannan  
 New Boston HS ..... David Landry  
 New Diana HS..... Michael Moody  
 Odem HS ..... Steven Rash  
 Queen City HS ..... Billy Vess  
 Santa Gertrudis HS... Arthur Sholtis  
 Santa Rosa HS ..... Dale De La Fuente  
 Tolar HS ..... Bobby Yerigan  
 Troy HS ..... Rustin Honeycutt  
 Whitesboro HS..... Jim Cude



**Winner: Mineola HS • Director: Chris Brannan**  
**Assistants: Jim Best, Dago Gonzalez, Jennifer Turner**  
**Drum Majors: Randi Brannan, Lena Hughes**  
**Program Title: Soliliquy - Shakespeare's Trio of Plays**

**Congratulations to all these 5A Bands and Directors who competed in the state competition:**

Aledo HS..... Joey Paul  
 Bel Air HS ..... Manny Talamantes  
 Birdville HS ..... Mike Cheripka  
 Bryan HS..... Jason Noyes  
 Cedar Park HS ..... Steve Wessels  
 Crosby HS..... Kevin Knight  
 Del Valle HS ..... Armando Martinez  
 Dripping Springs HS .... Keith Lancaster  
 Forney HS..... Mark Poole  
 Georgetown HS ..... Justin Smith  
 Hanks HS..... Horacio Gomez  
 Highland Park HS ..... Reagan Brumley  
 Horizon HS ..... Raul Candelaria  
 Lone Star HS ..... Timothy Golden  
 Lopez Early College HS.. George Trevino  
 Lubbock HS ..... James Snider  
 Lumberton HS ..... Tim Pallone  
 McCallum HS..... Carol Nelson  
 Pioneer HS ..... Arnold Salinas  
 Porter HS ..... Brian Best  
 Poteet HS ..... Cody Newman  
 Prosper HS ..... John Alstrin  
 Richland HS ..... Jason Bird



**Winner: Cedar Park HS • Director: Steve Wessels**  
**Assistants: Evan VanDoren, Christopher Yee, Roland Chavez, Justin Sullivan, Marcus Neudigate**  
**Drum Majors: Alyssa Fielding, Kendyl Morris, Tyra Thompson, Emily White**  
**Program Title: The Steadfast Tin Soldier**

Rio Grande City HS..... Eric Garza  
 Roma HS ..... Dena Laurel  
 Rouse HS ..... Jason Robb  
 Sharyland HS ..... Neil Nelson  
 Southwest HS..... Jeff DeMaagd  
 Stephen F. Austin HS..... Brian Frock  
 The Colony HS..... Michael Larkin  
 Tomball HS ..... Chris Yancey  
 Tomball Memorial HS ... Andy Easton  
 Wakeland HS ..... Tanner Smith  
 Waxahachie HS ..... Rich Armstrong  
 Willis HS..... Chris Allen

## CREATIVE TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE METRONOME USE – A GUIDE FOR ANY INSTRUMENT (PART 1)

by Jim Bailey

A metronome is an invaluable tool for musicians seeking to develop solid time and feel. However, musicians often struggle to achieve a healthy balance between a stimulating routine and a mind-numbing experience. This tool serves us well in its traditional use (following the click), but it may be time to explore a more creative and artistic approach. In this article, I will present easy and effective alternatives to developing good time using a metronome.

Many people think that using a metronome means turning it on at the beginning of your practice session and off at the end. In this case, you are using the metronome as a crutch more than a tool. It is often easy to spot students who fall prey to this, because they can play a musical excerpt with a metronome very well until it is shut off and they are asked to play it again while maintaining tempo on their own. Their ability to feel steady pulse is hindered because they are more used to playing time with the metronome than keeping time themselves. Here are a few suggestions to help enrich your time with a metronome:

1. Hit more than just the standard times (100, 112, 120, 132, etc...). The idea behind this is to decrease the intervals between your tempo adjustments and increase your sensitivity to steady time. You are teaching yourself to feel the difference between 110 and 112, instead of 100 and 120. A famous musician was quoted saying, "No one plays truly in tune, the greats just catch it before others do." The same is true for time. Increase your sensitivity to time, and improve your ability to maintain steady time.

2. Rhythms, like harmonies, need to be resolved. Let's face it, syncopations scare a lot of musicians. More times than not, these syncopations end on an up-beat or another unfriendly count. Use the metronome to find and solidify the quarter note pulse in a given syncopation directly after the syncopation (thus giving it a resolution). The more you can identify and feel the quarter note through rhythms of this nature, the more you will be able to master (and internalize) these difficult rhythms.

3. Swingin' with the met - set the metronome to a comfortable tempo and play your favorite exercise or etude with the click representing the upbeat. This method is common among drum set players where the click represents the hi-hat. After experimenting with this, try the same exercise with the click representing other notes of a subdivision (maybe "e" or "a" of a 16th note based exercise.) Now you are getting creative with your use of the metronome. There are plenty of possibilities here, so explore as many as possible.

(This article will conclude in the next *Bandmasters Review*.)

Currently JIM BAILEY maintains his position as Educational Relations Manager for D'Addario where he manages education outreach initiatives. Jim has served as an Associate Caption Head and percussion instructor for the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps from 2002 to 2005. He has presented clinics seen across the United States, Japan, and Europe.

## CREATING STANDARD ARTICULATION CONCEPTS FOR THE DEVELOPING PERCUSSIONIST (PART 1)

by James Campbell

The challenge of creating musicality when playing percussion is that the mallets move up and down, but the music moves side-to-side. It can be difficult to connect musical expressions with other instrumentalists who use air and bow motions to create their musical phrases. Creating articulation on percussion instruments can be an elusive pursuit because these instruments don't sustain like wind or string instruments.

Discussing the differences between articulations and styles can be confusing to young percussionists. In their early years, students should understand the following: staccato refers to light starts and short duration; legato refers to soft starts and full duration. As students gain experience, they should display awareness for more nuances that will create a deeper understanding and communication of articulation concepts as they relate to blending with the other musicians in band and orchestra.

**A percussionist's mallet grip, volume, and touch** on the instrument will affect the tone quality of the start of the sound and the length and color spectrum of the sustained tone. When I teach, I often find my articulation ideas are more obvious when I first demonstrate these concepts on timpani, since it has clear pitch and a long sustain, and then transfer the techniques to other percussion instruments.

The following guidelines will provide you with strategies to achieve proper stylistic blend with others.

**LEGATO: A directive to perform a certain passage of a composition in a smooth, graceful, connected style.**

- Maintain a light touch on the mallets at the grip point (fulcrum).
- Use a very fluid, full stroke with a natural rebound to create a legato start.
- Allow the percussion instruments to sustain naturally.
- As the percussionist gains experience, softer implements and changes in playing area (center, edge, tonal area on drums; center, nodal, off-center on keyboards) will enhance the legato articulation.

(**STACCATO, TENUTO AND MARCATO** will be covered in the conclusion of this article in the next *Bandmasters Review*.)

Additional Resource:

*The Drum and Percussion Cookbook*, published by Meredith Music Publications.

JAMES CAMPBELL has received worldwide recognition as a performer, pedagogue and author, and is a respected figure in the development of the contemporary percussion ensemble. Currently Provost's Distinguished Service Professor of Music and Director of Percussion Studies at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, he also holds the positions of Principal Percussionist with the Lexington Philharmonic, drummer with the Kentucky Jazz Repertory Orchestra, and Past-President of the Percussive Arts Society. He is a member of the Drum Corps International Hall of Fame and the Bands of America Hall of Fame.

## THE MANY B-FLATS ON THE SAXOPHONE

by Neal Postma

**B**-flats are a source of so many issues for young saxophonists, with the important question being,... Which fingerings should we be using? Here are three acceptable fingerings, with each use defined by their context.

1. **The bis key.** The bis fingering involves the B-key and small key (bis key) between the B and A keys. Both keys should be pressed by the first finger alone—I always, always, always teach this fingering first! This is the easiest of the fingerings, and is the most functional. Currently, I use this fingering for about 95% of the B-flats I play overall.

2. **The side key.** For the side B-flat fingering, use the B and A keys on the left hand and the bottom side key on the right hand (the side keys are the three stacked on top of each other). Many teachers start their students on this fingering, using the logic that it is more difficult to play and therefore it is better to teach this one first or it will never be used. There is some truth to that, I suppose, but I still do not teach this fingering initially. The problem with this fingering is you are using two hands instead of one, which is never as accurate, and the side key is often loud, clunky and clumsy.

3. **The third fingering** is the B key on the left hand and the E key on the right hand. Note that it is NOT the F key on the right hand—this fingering for Bb is incredibly flat, by nearly a quarter tone! Some beginner books still list F key as acceptable, which it is not—so frustrating!

**So, when to use which?** As stated above, I use bis whenever possible and most of the time because of the speed and lack of key noise. The only time I recommend using the side key is when playing between B and Bb. Sliding on the bis key can be problematic. That being said, and I will break with MANY saxophonists here, I recommend sliding when going from Bb to B, as sliding up is fast and clean enough to be effective. But when going from B down to Bb I use the side key. So, yes, I do recommend using a different fingering in scales whether going up or down. I find this to be the cleanest and most effective in these situations.

**What about other fingering?** Bis accounts for 95% of my B-flats, and the side key accounts for 4.99%. I only use the third fingering in very rare circumstances—the most common is moving quickly from F# to Bb when the Bb is followed by a B-Natural or vice versa. Think about that one for a second—in the average hour-long solo recital, I use this fingering usually once, if at all. So while it is one to be aware of, it is not one that is used all that often!

*Saxophonist and pedagogue NEAL POSTMA holds degrees from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music (MM) and the University of Colorado (BM) and is currently a DMA Candidate at the University of South Carolina where he serves as an Instructor of Music Appreciation. He is also on the faculty of Claflin University teaching applied lessons on saxophone. As a concert saxophonist Neal has performed across the United States, Europe and Asia. He has given recitals at universities and various regional, national and international conferences.*



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