



**Developing Your Modern Jazz Ensemble
Through Traditional Jazz Music**

**CLINICIAN:
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**DEMONSTRATION GROUP:
Louis D. Brandeis High School Jazz Ensemble**

**Texas Bandmasters Association
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Louis D. Brandeis HS Jazz Band, Demo group
Jesse Cuellar, Associate Director of Bands

1. Where to Start?

- LISTEN LISTEN LISTEN to Traditional Jazz music!
- Louie Armstrong, King Oliver, Earl Hines, Bix Beiderbecke, Sidney Bechet, Duke Ellington, etc.
- Jim Cullum Jazz Band- San Antonio, TX.
- Pandora- Jim Cullum Jazz Band Radio.
- Play Jazz music for your students as they walk in for class, or rehearsal!
- Make “reference” CD’s for your students, or create “reference” playlists.
- YouTube Videos of Traditional Jazz!
- Essentially Ellington HS Jazz Competition.
- Hal Leonard Dixieland Combo Paks.
- <http://www.halleonard.com>

2. Tune Selection & Demands

- Select a tune that is attainable for your ensemble.
- What is supposed to happen “around the notes” is never printed on the parts. Always listen to recordings to find common “stylistic” articulations. Notes followed by rests are usually approached short, “DIT” or “DOT.”
- THE MOOCHE, Duke Ellington.
- Demands Vibrato from lead players and pitch manipulation from Clarinets/Saxes. Use a unison tone or chord and manipulate pitch “mechanically” (using valves/keys) and “physically” (using just the embouchure).
- If no clarinets or soprano sax, write out parts for Alto/Tenor/Bari/Vibes. Include ALL instrumentation! A banjo is a great investment for your advanced guitar players.

- Demands Plunger technique from trumpets. Take time to practice the use of the plungers with the brass. Not just a “give and go” mute. As students become more comfortable with the plunger, incorporate pixie mutes and develop a new sound.
- Rhythm Section has a high demand to make the tune come to life.
- RIDING ON A BLUE NOTE, Duke Ellington.
- Offers solo opportunity for other members, such as Soprano Sax.
- THE CREOLE LOVE CALL, Duke Ellington.
- Incorporates all of the aforementioned and great selection for working *call and response* with students.
- ST. JAMES INFIRMARY, Traditional/ Arr. Paul Severson
- Great selection for creating a Jazz Combo.
- Demands every player develop their own musical personality and perform that way.
- Demands all performers perform as soloists as well as listen to each other.
- Overall: Director/Students must listen to as many recordings as possible to develop ensemble and solo ideas that are truly unique to the Band.

3. **Warm-Up Incorporation**

- Incorporate devices into warm-up before hitting the tune.
- Warm-up on Techniques and Style you are going to rehearse.
- Rhythm section can add different styles behind the bands warm-up. If you have more than one drummer in the ensemble, have them switch back and forth between drumset and vibes. Vibes players do what the wind players do in warm up.
- Have drumset players warm-up on aux equipment.
- Vibrato and Chord Manipulation through a Circle of 5ths
- Plunger techniques through Circle of 5ths- EXAGGERATE!!
- Application can easily be transferred over to something more modern like “A Night In Tunisia” by Dizzy Gillespie.

4. Resources

- **Essentially Ellington High School Jazz Competition**
- Wynton Marsalis, Director of Jazz At Lincoln Center.
- Free and easy for directors to sign up.
- <http://www.jazz.org>
- Six new charts are published and sent out every year.
- Compete against the best HS Jazz bands in the nation or enter for submit for critique.
- Competition is available online in May for all to watch.
- JALC provides Director Academy's on how to approach the music.
- **TUTTI AIR PLAYER!**
- <https://tuttiplayer.com>
- Tutti offers directors and students the opportunity to listen and see how JALC members rehearse and approach certain selections
- Search out grant opportunities for your Jazz band through *TJEA*, *TMEA*, etc.

5. Transfer the Traditional to Modern

- The techniques that the student must acquire for the traditional styles helps build confidence as soloists when playing more modern tunes.
- Encourage students to incorporate pitch manipulations and vibrato during their soloing.
- Find spots where the Rhythm section can trade a few bars and be featured. If the song is ABA form, add a percussion feature before the last 'A' section.
- Let your leads work together to interpret phrasing and style. This gives them more ownership of the ensemble. All you do is count off the band and let them take care of the rest!
- The idea of using plungers for Brass players, or any other type of mute, isn't a foreign concept anymore.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Brandeis High School Jazz Ensemble Demo Group

Bailey Hungate, Alto Sax
Bailee Sutton, Alto Sax (Class of 2016)
Mario Dominguez, Tenor Sax/Soprano Sax (Class of 2016)
Robert Silber, Tenor Sax
Jonathan Rodriguez, Bari Sax
Baylor Herrera, Trombone
Stephen Fagan, Trombone
Brantley Zinsmeyer, Trombone
Matthew Alvarado, Trumpet (Class of 2016)
Joshua Hancock, Trumpet (Class of 2016)
Robbie Bray (Class of 2016)
Christian Salazar, Trumpet
Aaron Franklin, Trumpet
John Garcia, Trumpet
AJ Magallan, Bass (Class of 2014)
Blake Rasmussen, Guitar/Banjo (Class of 2014)
Eric Jin, Piano
William O'Rourke, Drumset/Vibes (Class of 2016)
David Lozano, Drumset/Vibes

Texas Bandmasters Association

Mr. Mike Brashear, Executive Director
Mr. Steven Moore, TBA President
Mr. Richard Herrera, TBA Past President
Mr. Roland Sandoval, TBA Board Member

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