



**Design on a Dime: Designing Your Marching
Band Production and Color Guard
on a Budget**

CLINICIANS:

Nathan Ascano, Bob Royall

SPONSOR:

ATSSB

**Texas Bandmasters Association
2017 Convention/Clinic**

**JULY 20 – 22, 2017
HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

DESIGN ON A DIME: Effective Marching Productions on a Budget

Texas Bandmasters 2017

Planning—It's FREE!

1—What works for your band

Identify/establish the identity of your marching band:

- What level of musical performance, personality/theme shows (characterization), unique uniforms/props are you comfortable with?
- Is your band musically or visually driven?

Things to consider:

- The community/football fans see the band every week—will they be entertained?
- The students play this music for months—will the majority be challenged throughout the process?
- The judges will see the band once or twice—will they understand the show on the "first read"?
- At a large marching contest—will the band stand out amongst the competition?

2—The Storyboard (The Big Picture)

Sketch out the effects you would like to hear and see in this show:

- How does each section end? (This is, in many ways, more important than how each section begins.)
- How is the melody voiced? Is it always in the same voices, or does it move around?
- Is there something unique/unusual that will be added? Props?
- How can this show generate intrigue with the judges?
- How can this show demonstrate contrast? Loud moments vs. soft moments? Fast vs. slow?
- How does the guard reinforce the show?
- Can all of the effects be coordinated?
- How does the music link to the guard? Percussion? Props?
- Does your ensemble have the personnel (student-performers and teaching staff) to make this show work?

Does this show provide for good General Effect moments?

- Does the show generate intrigue in the beginning?
- Is there a musical/visual climax in the middle of the show?
- Does the show offer a variety of effects, or does it repeat the same effect over and over?

Things to consider:

- What are the impact points?
- How does the show generate tension? Find resolution?
- How long are the phrases? Are they all the same?
- How does the music contrast high vs. low?
- Does the music set the style of your group, and does the music align with the identity of the band?
- How is the music in terms of pacing? Does it "feel" right?
- Who are the soloists? Section features?
- Does the show offer variety? Or is it all "more of the same"?
- How does the show highlight your band's strength(s)? How does it minimize your band's weakness(es)?
- Will the audience enjoy this show? Judges? Students?

3—Time to evaluate (Hopefully before the music is arranged)

Can you affirm that the show has EVERY one of these elements?

- There is a clear beginning moment, middle moment, and ending moment.

- There is a memorable ending.
- The show has builds, climaxes, and ends with coordinated contributions from winds, percussion, and guard.
- There are clear high points and low points across the arc of the production.

Musical considerations as you prepare to arrange the show:

- Which sections should be featured prominently? Which sections are "works in progress"?
- Rank a possible soloist in each section on a scale of 1 to 10.
- What level does your top concert ensemble perform for Concert Contest? The show should be written 1-2 levels under.

Send the Storyboard to your arranger.

- This is your most concrete communication tool for your arranger.
- Make sure your arranger follows the Storyboard carefully.

My show planned for this year—it's not too late!

Colorguard

Costumes

- Custom
- In-stock
- DIY

Flags/Equipment

- In-stock
- Digital
- DIY

Recommended Resources

New:

marchingdesigns.com
fieldandfloorfx.com
winterguardtarps.com
thebandhall.com

Used:

Facebook—Colorguard Equipment Closet Sale
ttheguardroom.com
guardcloset.com
ntca-online.com/classifieds

Instruction/Choreography:

Local winter guard circuit website classified sections
 So You Think You Can't Spin" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEz6n-QucWk>
 Facebook—Texas Color Guard Directors
wgi.org (Instructional Videos)

Contact information

Bob Royall—bob@marchingdesigns.com
 Nathan Ascano—nathan.ascano@wpisd.com