

## Texas Bandmasters Association Convention/Clinic July 21-23, 2022

# Teaching Correct Performance Style on a Concert March

CLINICIAN: Dr. Timothy Rhea

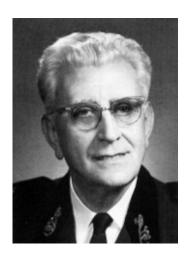
**DEMO GROUP: Tyler Junior College Band** 



## **Teaching Correct Performance Style on a Concert March**

Dr. Timothy Rhea

Assisted by the Tyler Junior College Wind Ensemble – Jeremy Strickland, Conductor
Texas Bandmasters Association Clinic
Friday, July 22, 2022 – 5:00 PM





Marches are original compositions conceived for the band. They represent true band music and if done properly, can represent great musical experiences for bands, conductors, and audiences. Marches are not difficult for many bands but are very difficult to play well. Generally, they are very misplayed.

To perform a march well, both the conductor and players must believe in this musical form. The medium is one of our most audience appealing, yet many conductors are reluctant to program these wonderful pieces. Is this in part due to an uneasiness involving proper interpretation and performance? As most components of march style have been handed down through an oral tradition, it is my hope that the following information will be of some benefit regarding proper performance of march style. When chosen carefully, marches can provide a significant musical experience for conductor, players, and audience alike.

## **ELEMENTS OF MARCH STYLE**

- Rhythm
- Articulation & Note Length
- Weights of Notes
- Phrasing
- Balance Blend Clarity
- Tempo
- Musical Issues (Dynamics, Instrumentation, Orchestration)

## REASONS TO PERFORM A MARCH

- Development of individual player technique active parts finger dexterity – full of scales
- Opportunities for the development of style, balance, and interpretation
- Audiences love marches
- Excellent opener or closer to a concert
- Involvement of the entire ensemble
- Development of embouchure and tonality

## STANDARD MARCH FORM

#### INTRODUCTION

- May be thought of as the fanfare
- 4-16 bars long
- Usually played marcato style
- Typically played at a forte dynamic level to catch the attention of the listener
- Usually, the shortest section of the march

#### FIRST STRAIN

- First prominent melody of the march
- Typically, 16 bars long with 4-bar phrases usually repeated
- Can be in major or minor mode
- Can use a variety of dynamics & instrumentation
- On the repeat of the strain, additional parts (such as countermelodies) may be added

## SECOND STRAIN

- Can be 8 to 32 bars long
- Second primary melody of the march
- May use somewhat different instrumentation from the first strain and may employ different dynamic levels
- Usually repeated

In some marches, a short **INTRODUCTION TO THE TRIO** may be heard. This introduction can be a repeat of the first introduction, a whole new separate melody, a fanfare, or a percussion soli.

#### TRIO

- Third primary melody of a march many times referred to as the "main melody"
- Often played legato style at a softer dynamic level and may feature woodwinds as opposed to brass
- Contrasting section of the march
- Usually a key (tonal center) change
- Usually, 16 to 32 bars in length

#### **BREAK STRAIN**

- Fourth main melody heard in a march
- Usually loud, intense, and marcato
- Strain literally breaks a gap between the two trio sections
- Generates excitement and provides contrast
- May resemble a conversation between woodwinds and brass
- Strain generally shorter than previous strain

#### **FINAL STRAIN**

- Usually played twice with a return to the break strain between the first and final playing
- Usually played at a softer dynamic level the first time
- Same melodic materials as the beginning trio
- Sometimes has added countermelody or obligato
- The final time to play the main trio melody is called the grandioso typically louder than previous playing of same melodic material and utilizes all players in the ensemble brings everything to a close
- Considered the most exciting part of the march and serves to instill the trio melody in the mind of the listener
- Last measure of the march may contain a *stinger*, but not all marches do

## I. Rhythmic Accuracy

- A. Maintain a steady pulse throughout the performance of a march. Subdivision of pulse is a must while beats and the subdivisions of pulse between beats must be placed in exactly the correct spot.
- B. Basic rhythmic structure (downbeats & upbeats) should be rehearsed for stability and accuracy by the percussion section, bass line and rhythm/harmony sections (usually French horns or trombones but can also include lower trumpets and saxes). The bass line must have length. In 2/4 or cut time, beat one is usually more weighted than beat two. Sometimes, the complete chordal structure may only appear in the French Horns (particularly true in Sousa marches).
- C. Avoid compression of notes that are of the same rhythmic value. Rushing tends to be the enemy of maintaining a steady pulse. This is particularly a problem near the ending of strains. When playing notes of consecutive values, make certain that the last two are not too close.



D. Keep the pulse steady during crescendos and diminuendos. Bands tend to rush during crescendos and slow during diminuendos.

## II. Articulation

Marches are generally played in a <u>detached style</u>. Attacks will be played firm and solidly. Accents are accomplished by increasing the weight and length of a note. Be careful of too much space between notes – should never sound choppy. You can always change the fraction – 4/5 sound & 1/5 if it makes better sense for your ensemble. There should be a slight release of each note before articulating the succeeding note. The tongue should never stop the sound (dah, not dut – tah, not tut).

## **EXAMPLES OF MARKINGS FOR INTERPRETATION:**

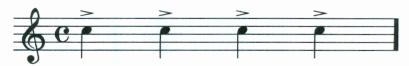
A. As written in a march:



Figure interpreted in detached march style - 50% sound, 50% silence



B. Normal accent = longer attack -75% sound, 25% silence



C. Housetop accent = hard attack -50% sound, 50% silence

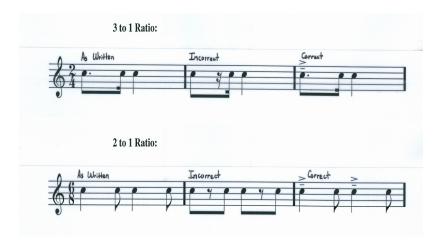


D. Detachment following short note, with long note being firmly articulated.



## III. Weights of Notes

A. The longer the note, the more weight it should receive. Note weights are generally associated with air as opposed to articulation.



- B. All phrases to peak on big note within the phrase this note must be identified within the phrase and be given the proper emphasis.
- C. All notes, whether melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic, must be directed toward the phrase peak.
- D. Seize the opportunity to make volume on "big" notes and show technique on "little" notes.
- E. Always look for the musical motives to expose.
- F. Be sure to bring out counter accents to the melodic line when available.
- G. Air must remain consistent to the end of EVERY note.
- H. Sounds must never be forced characteristic sounds by each instrument.
- I. Fast notes with too much weight result in the sound experience of a jackhammer. (tongue 2 /slur 2 to achieve better clarity)

## IV. Phrasing

- **A.** Notes of one beat and longer are to be held full value especially when tied across a bar line or followed by a rest or breath mark.
- B. All music is either ascending or descending to form a peak in the musical phrase.
- C. There is one climax to every phrase, but sub-climaxes may also exist.
- D. Consistent air stream is always a must. The air stream should not be interrupted between notes during a phrase.
- E. Sustained playing no breath at bar lines, air to end of phrase don't cheat.

## V. Balance – Blend – Clarity

- A. Order of balance:
  - 1. Melody
  - 2. Countermelody
  - 3. Harmony
  - 4. Rhythm

## ALWAYS BALANCE FIRST TO MELODIC MATERIAL

- B. Downbeat/upbeat rhythmic figures should be felt not necessarily heard. (This is particularly important in the marches of Sousa where much of the harmonic writing is scored in French Horn and tuba.)
- C. The balance of the harmonic materials should begin with proper balance within each section (i.e., trumpets, trombones, etc.).
- D. All parts are important do not edit out such parts as lower clarinet and trumpet.
- E. Intonation
  - 1. Unison
  - Chordal
- F. Clarity is defined as hearing each individual part during a performance by the full ensemble.

## VI. Tempo

The ultimate decision of tempo is dependent upon size and ability level of the ensemble. However, here are a few guidelines that have been compiled from a variety of sources.

- A. Standard American quick-step march (composed to accompany marching) 120 beats per minute with slight variations standard.
- B. American circus march (used to create an atmosphere of excitement)
   144 to 160 beats per minute.
- C. British marches 108-116 beats per minute.
- D. German/Austrian marches 104 to 112 beats per minute.
- E. Spanish *paso doble* 108 beats per minute.
- F. Italian marches 116 beats per minute or slower.
- G. French marches 126 beats per minute.

No matter what style of a march is being performed, there is some room for tempo variation. Every ensemble should find a tempo that feels most comfortable for that particular group. It is the job of the director to make certain that this chosen tempo is within the parameters of what is musically acceptable.

## VII. Musical Issues

- A. Dynamic contrast is a must for a musical performance.
  - 1. Vary dynamic level on the repeat of a strain. One way this may be accomplished is by the thinning of the instrumentation (delete specific instruments or lower part an octave). However, do not change the composer's original melodic, harmonic, or rhythmic concepts at any time.
  - 2. Rescoring high woodwind parts the first time through a trio is a great way to reduce dynamic levels.
  - 3. Consider removing the percussion section the first time through a legato strain.
  - 4. Using weights of notes is a great way to give marches dynamic contrast.

## B. The performance style of Sousa

- 1. The introduction and first strains were usually played as written.
- 2. The second strain was usually altered. The first time through, the dynamic level was adjusted to piano. Cornets and trombones did not play, upper clarinet parts were dropped an octave, and both piccolo and E-flat clarinet were dropped as well. On the repeat, all instruments were back in as written, playing fortissimo.
- 3. At the trio, the same instruments listed above were tacit and the upper clarinets were lowered an octave. Snare drum, bass drum, and cymbals may have been eliminated. Bells may double melody at the trio. If the trio is repeated, the dynamic would be piano the first time, pianissimo the second time.
- 4. The break strain ("dogfight") was played as written all instruments back in.
- 5. The final strain is usually played twice separated by the interlude or break strain. It was performed in the de-orchestrated fashion the first time through (as #2) at a dynamic level of piano. On the repeat, all instruments were back in at the break strain playing fortissimo through the end of the march. Climatic accents (bass drum/cymbal) were most common in the final repeat of the last strain and a "five stroke roll with flam attack" may have been added to give additional lift to the performance.

## C. Editions

The use of accurate and proper performance materials is of paramount importance in the performance of a march. There are many reputable editors that maintain the original integrity of marches. When using an edition of a march, choose those that only "clean-up" the march by removing misprints, clarifying dynamics and articulations, and provide a full score and larger readable parts. Editions by Frederick Fennell, John Bourgeois, Frank Byrne, John Paynter, Andy Glover, and others are very well done. Excelcia Music (formerly RBC) has released a march series entitled *Legacy of the March* in which all the marches recorded by the Texas A&M University Bands that are in the public domain that haven been released in edited form by Dr. Timothy Rhea. The Marine Band editions of Sousa marches – edited by Colonel Jason Fettig and Donald Patterson are excellent.

## **General Comments**

March style is achieved through the modification of printed notes. Correct style is achieved through 1) note weights and 2) note lengths – they must remain consistent across the ensemble or musical line.

Each strain of a march may require multiple approaches to style. For example, it is possible to have two styles (sustained melody with detached pulse) present at the same time.

William Revelli (University of Michigan) compares note weights to how we speak using the term inflection – how we speak and stress syllables makes the spoken work come alive – this is also true in music.

In regard to style, energy and drive are achieved from an emphasis of the main notes within a phrase.

Great example for describing note weights – basketball, volleyball, tennis ball

When playing consecutive notes of the same value, make sure the final note is always lifted – not clipped.

Consider picking a march that will challenge your ensemble while building technique but remember there is a fine line between music that challenges and achieving musical success.

Fundamental core of ensemble sound music always remains the priority.

In regard to balance, do not cover moving lines with long sounds.

Use of dynamics is a must. Nothing is more boring than three minutes of mf.

## **Percussion Comments**

The bass drum and cymbal players should stand next to one another near the back in the center of the ensemble. In the Sousa Band, one player played both instruments. Gus Helmecke, Sousa's bass drummer, was the highest paid musician in the band.

The bass drum should be played with a hard beater – lightly, except for accents. Accents are very important. The left hand should be used to dampen the non-batten head.

In original published traditional quickstep march editions, the cymbal doubles the bass drum part unless noted differently.

Cymbals should be German or Viennese (18 inch) and dampened with the body.

Use only one snare drum. Some marches may contain an additional field drum requirement. Make the decision between open and closed rolls.

Doubling a woodwind obligato on a mallet instrument is not representative of standard march performance practice.

Hard plastic or brass mallets should be used for bell parts.

Most timpani parts were added by someone other than the composer.

## SUGGESTED MARCH REPERTOIRE

## Timothy Rhea

#### **OUICKSTEPS**

Alexander, Russell - Colossus of Columbia - edited Bainum (Barnhouse)

Alexander, Russell – Southerner – edited Bainum (Barnhouse)

Alford, Harry – The Purple Carnival – edited Erickson (Schirmer)

Bagley, E.E. – National Emblem – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Barnhouse, Charles – Battle of Shiloh – edited Paynter (Barnhouse)

Boyer, T.B. – Joyce's 71st New York Regiment – arranged Lake (Carl Fischer)

Casto, John – Royal Bridesmaid – edited Rhea (RBC)

Chambers, Paris – Boys of the Old Brigade – edited Smith (Wingert-Jones)

Chambers, Paris – Chicago Tribune – edited Boyd (Ludwig)

Chambers, Paris – Northwind – edited Rhea (RBC) or Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)

Chambers, Paris – The Trombone Section – edited Rhea (RBC)

Cupero, E.V. – Honey Boys on Parade – edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)

Duble, Charles – Battle of the Winds – edited Rhea (RBC)

Duble, Charles – Bravura – edited Rhea (RBC)

Duble, Charles - Circus King - edited Rhea (RBC)

English, William – Royal Decree (Kalmus)

English, William – Tent City – edited Rhea (RBC)

Fillmore, Henry – Circus Bee – edited Foster (Carl Fischer)

Fillmore, Henry – The Crosley – edited Foster (Carl Fischer)

Fillmore, Henry – The Klaxon – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Fillmore, Henry – Rolling Thunder – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Fillmore, Henry – Trooper's Tribunal – edited Rhea (RBC)

Fucik, Julius - Entry of the Gladiator's/Thunder & Blazes - edited Ragsdale (Carl Fischer)

Goldman, Edwin F. - Onward Upward - edited Lisk (Carl Fischer)

Hall, Ralph – Independentia – edited Rhea (RBC)

Heed, J.C. – In Storm & Sunshine – edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)

Jewell, Fred – Battle Royal – edited Rhea (RBC)

Jewell, Fred – Quality Plus (Barnhouse)

Jewell, Fred – Radio Waves – edited Rhea (RBC)

Jewell, Fred – The Screamer – edited Rhea (RBC)

Jewell, Fred – Supreme Triumph – edited Rhea (RBC)

King, Karl – Barnum & Bailey's Favorite – edited Schissel (Ludwig)

King, Karl – Carrollton – edited Rogers (Southern)

King, Karl – Emblem of Freedom – edited Glover (Barnhouse)

King, Karl – Melody Shop (Barnhouse)

King, Karl – Mystic Call – edited Rhea (RBC)

King, Karl – Neddermeyer Triumphal – edited Rhea (RBC)

King, Karl – Ponderoso – edited Rhea (RBC)

King, Karl – Purple Pageant – edited Paynter (Barnhouse)

King, Karl – Robinson's Grand Entrée – edited Schissel (Barnhouse)

Losey, Frank – America First – edited Rhea (RBC)

McCaughey, Dwight - Porter's Catalina Band - edited Rhea (RBC)

Ribble, John – Bennet's Triumphal (OOP)

Seitz, Roland – Port Arthur – edited Rhea (RBC)

Ventre, Frank – Our United States (OOP)

#### **BRITISH MARCHES**

Alford, Kenneth – Army of the Nile (Boosey & Hawkes)

Alford, Kenneth – Eagle Squadron – edited Rogers (Southern)

Alford, Kenneth – H.M. Jollies (Boosey & Hawkes)

Alford, Kenneth – The Vanished Army – edited Fennell (Boosey & Hawkes)

Alford, Kenneth – The Voice of the Guns – edited Rhea (RBC)

Coates, Eric – The Dambusters (Studio)

Elliott, Zo – British Eighth (Carl Fischer) \*American composer, but British in style

Ord Hume, James – B.B. & C.F. – edited Rhea (RBC)

Vaughan Williams, Ralph – Sea Songs (Boosey & Hawkes)

## **CONCERT MARCHES**

Alford, Harry – The World is Waiting for the Sunrise – Euphonium Feature – (OOP)

Barber, Samuel – Commando March (Schirmer)

Bonelli, G. – Symphonic Concert March – arr. Falcone (Southern)

Delle Cese, David – Inglesina, Little English Girl – ed. Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)

Gould, Morton – American Salute (Belwin)

Grafulla, Claudio – Washington Grays – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Grainger, Percy - Children's March, Over the Hills & Far Away - edited Rogers (Southern)

Grainger, Percy – Gumsucker's March – edited Rogers (Southern)

Grainger, Percy – Lads of Wamphray – edited Krienes (Carl Fischer)

Halvorsen, Johan – Entry March of the Boyares – edited Fennell (Ludwig)

Hindemith, Paul – March from Symphonic Metamorphosis – arr. Wilson (Schott)

Ives, Charles – Country Band March – arr. Sinclair (Presser)

Jager, Robert – Stars & Bars (Presser)

Maltby, Richard – Hail to the Fleet (Shawnee)

Prokofiev, Sergi – Athletic Festival – arr. Goldman (MCA)

Prokofiev, Sergi – March, Opus 99 – arr. Yoder (MCA)

Richards, John – Golden Bear (Barnhouse)

Saint-Saens, Camille – March Militaire Française – arr. Hindsley (Hindsley)

Walton, William – Crown Imperial (Boosey & Hawkes)

Williams, Clifton – The Sinfonians (Belwin)

## **EUROPEAN**

Agapkin, Vasilij – Slavic Woman's Farewell – Russian –

edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones) or Rhea (TRN)

Blankenburg, Hermann L. – Action Front – German – edited Rhea (RBC)

Blankenburg, Hermann L. – Gladiator's Farewell – German (Boosey & Hawkes)

Fucik, Julius – Children of the Regiment – Austrian – edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)

Hanssen, Johannes - Valdres - Norwegian - edited Bainum (Boosey & Hawkes)

Leemans, Pierre – March of the Belgian Paratroopers – edited Wiley (TRN)

Lehnhardt, Julius – Die Ehrenwache – German (OOP)

Rauski/Seredy – French National Defile – French – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Rossini, G. - March for the Sultan Abdul Medjid - Italian - edited Townsend (Presser)

Teike, Carl – The Conqueror – German (Carl Fischer)

Teike, Carl – Old Comrades – German - edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones) \*Original Key

Von Blon, Franz – Flag of Victory – German – edited Rhea (RBC)

Von Blon, Franz – Sounds of Peace – German – edited Wiley (TRN)

Von Blon, Franz – Watch on the Rhine – German – edited Wiley (TRN)

Wagner, J.F. – Under the Double Eagle – Austrian – edited Rhea (RBC)

Zehle, Wilhelm – Army & Marine – German – edited Rhea (RBC)

Zehle, Wilhelm – Trafalgar – German – edited Rhea (RBC)

Zehle, Wilhelm – Wellington – German – edited Rhea (RBC)

#### **PASODOBLES**

Chovi, Pascual Perez – Pepita Greus (Editoral Musica)

Jovaloyes, A. – El Abanico – edited Fennell (Ludwig)

Lope, Santiago – Gallito (Boosey & Hawkes)

Marquina, Pascual – Cielo Andaluz (OOP)

Marquina, Pascual – Espana Cani – edited Weger (TRN)

Sadel & Tucci – Lola Flores – arr. Krance (Belwin)

San Migeul, Mariano – La Oredja de Oro, *The Golden Ear* – ed. Fennell (Ludwig)

Soutullo – Puenteareas – edited Weger (TRN)

Texidor, Jamie – Amparito Roca – edited Winter (Boosey & Hawkes)

#### YOUNG/DEVELOPING BAND MARCHES

Alexander, Russell – Olympia Hippodrome – edited Glover (Barnhouse)

Alford, Kenneth – The Mad Major – edited Fennell (Boosey & Hawkes)

Bennett, Harold – Military Escort – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Boorn, W.H. – Queen City (Carl Fischer)

Brahmstedt, H.K. – Men in Gray (OOP)

Cacavas, John – Days of Glory (Hal Leonard)

Farrar, O.R. – Bombasto (Carl Fischer)

Fillmore, Henry – Noble Men – edited Foster (Carl Fischer)

Griffith, Peter – The Courier Journal (OOP)

Hall, Ralph – New Colonial – edited Boyd (Boosey & Hawkes)

Howe, Jimmie – Pentland Hills (Southern)

Huff, Will – The Squealer (OOP)

Huffine, G. – Them Basses (Carl Fischer)

Hughes, A.W. – St. Julian (Carl Fischer)

Kendall, W.M. – Glorious Victory (OOP)

Kiefer, William – Kiefer's Special – edited Rhea (RBC)

King, Karl – The Lt. Commander (Barnhouse)

King, Karl – The Trombone King – edited Paynter (Barnhouse)

King, Karl – University of North Dakota (Barnhouse)

Klohr, John – The Billboard – edited Fennell (Carl Fischer)

Lithgow, Alex – Gippsland – edited Rhea (RBC)

Lithgow, Alex – Invercargill (Carl Fischer)

Mesang, Ted – Mighty Mite (Carl Fischer)

Panella, Frank – On the Square – edited Schissel (Barnhouse)

Panella, Louis – American Red Cross – edited Rhea (RBC)

Richards, John – Crusade for Freedom (Barnhouse)

Richards, John – Emblem of Unity – ed. Swearingen (Barnhouse)

## MARCHES OF JOHN PHILIP SOUSA (check Marine Band website)

Black Horse Troop – edited Fennell (Sam Fox)

Bullets & Bayonets – edited Fennell (Ludwig)

Federal – edited Rhea (RBC)

Free Lance – edited Revelli (Jenson)

From Maine to Oregon – edited Rhea (TRN)

Gallant Seventh – edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)

George Washington Bicentennial (Sam Fox)

Glory of the Yankee Navy – edited Schissel (Ludwig)

On Parade (Kalmus)

Pathfinder of Panama – edited Byrne (Wingert-Jones)
Pride of the Wolverines – edited Fennell (Sam Fox)
Rifle Regiment – edited Fennell (Ludwig)
Royal Welch Fusiliers (Theodore Presser)
Sempre Fidelis – edited Bourgeois (Wingert-Jones)
Solid Men to the Front – edited Byrne (Wingert-Jones)

**Dr. Timothy Rhea** is currently in his 30<sup>th</sup> year at Texas A&M University, serving as Director of Bands & Music Activities. He serves as administrative head of the Music Activities Program, is conductor of the University Wind Symphony, and oversees the Texas Aggie Band. Dr. Rhea holds degrees in music education and conducting from the University of Arkansas, Texas Tech University, and the University of Houston. During his tenure at Texas A&M University, Dr. Rhea has conducted the Texas A&M University Wind Symphony for conventions of the Texas Music Educators Association, the College Band Directors National Association, the Midwest International Band & Orchestra Clinic, the Western International Band Clinic, and the American Bandmasters Association. Additional concerts have included Carnegie Hall, and five European tours with performances in Ireland, England, Italy, Austria, Germany, and the Czech Republic. The TAMU Wind Symphony has released several internationally distributed recordings. In addition to conducting, Dr. Rhea maintains a very successful career as an arranger and composer with an output of over 300 pieces, to include over fifty published works. Dr. Rhea maintains an internationally active schedule as conductor, clinician, and adjudicator having appeared throughout the United States, Europe, and Australia. He has received the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Association, was selected as the Texas Outstanding Young Bandmaster of the Year, and has received the President's Meritorious Service Award to Texas A&M University. Dr. Rhea is Past-President of the American Bandmasters Association, and currently serves as Vice-President/Secretary of the John Philip Sousa Foundation, in addition to positions with several related professional organizations. He recently supervised the planning and construction of the new Texas A&M University White -Walker Music Activities Center which opened in July of 2019. In this new facility, the Dr. Timothy B. Rhea Concert Rehearsal Hall was named in his honor. In 2020, he received the Association of Former Students Distinguished Achievement Award in Administration from Texas A&M University.

Dr. Timothy Rhea
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## MARCH EXCERPTS USED IN TODAY CLINIC

American Legion – Charles Parker/ed. Rhea Bravura – Charles Duble/ed. Rhea Kiefer's Special – William Kiefer/ed. Rhea Wein Bleibt Wein – Johann Schrammel/ed. Rhea