

# Selecting String Orchestra Repertoire:

## A Conversation With Deborah Baker Monday, Brian Balmages, and Bob Phillips



### Deborah Baker Monday

Recently retired from teaching in the Logan City School District Orchestra Program, Deborah worked with 4th through 8th grade students in seven schools. A cello/bass specialist, she received her B.M.E. from Florida State University with an emphasis in strings and an M.M. in composition from the University of Alabama. She began working on a D.M.A. in composition at Louisiana State University while teaching in Baton Rouge.

Deborah is an active bass performer and private teacher. She has served as an adjunct bass instructor at Utah State University for several years and has been on the faculty of the ASTA with NSOA "Bass Fest" for three years.

Ms. Monday has published a number of pieces for string orchestra with several leading educational music publishers. She co-authored the *Strings Extraordinaire* collection and has presented various clinics at Music Educators' Conferences. In 1999 she was named the Utah ASTA with NSOA Elementary Teacher of the Year.

Deborah is sponsored by Kendor Music, Inc. ([www.kendormusic.com](http://www.kendormusic.com))



### Brian Balmages

Brian Balmages (b. 1975) is an award-winning composer, conductor, producer, and performer. His music for winds, brass, and orchestra have been performed throughout the world with commissions ranging from elementary schools to professional orchestras. World premieres have included prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall. His music was also performed as part of the 2013 Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service, which was attended by both President Obama and Vice President Biden. He received his bachelor's degree in music from James Madison University and his master's degree from the University of Miami in Florida. He is a recipient of the prestigious A. Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association and in 2016 was awarded the James Madison University Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Visual and Performing Arts (the first year the award was given). In the same year, he was commissioned by his other alma mater, the University of Miami, to compose music for the inauguration of the institution's 6th president, Dr. Julio Frenk.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys regular engagements with all-state and region bands and orchestras, as well as university and professional ensembles throughout the world. Notable guest conducting appearances have included the Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, College Band Directors Conference, American School Band Directors Association National Conference and others. Additional conducting appearances have included the Kennedy Center and Meyerhoff Symphony Hall as well as engagements in Australia, Canada and Italy. Currently, he is Director of Instrumental Publications for The FJH Music Company and Assistant Director of Bands and Orchestras at Towson University.

Brian is sponsored by FJH Music ([www.fjhmusic.com](http://www.fjhmusic.com))



## Bob Phillips

Pedagogue, composer, and teacher trainer, Bob Phillips is an innovator in string education. During his 27 years of teaching strings in Saline, Michigan, Bob built a thriving string program of over 700 students and was honored as teacher of the year 9 times by regional, state and national organizations. A recognized expert in the use of large group pedagogy and alternative styles, he has presented clinics throughout North America, Europe, and Australia. Phillips has authored over 19 book series that include 130 books for use in the classroom, including Alfred's revolutionary new method, *Sound Innovations for String Orchestra* and *Sound Innovations for Concert Band* as well as the ground breaking Philharmonic series. He has had over 140 works published for orchestras and bands and is an award winning ASCAP composer. His conducting resume includes professional, All-state, and youth orchestras.

Currently Bob is the Director of String Publications for Alfred Music. He has served as president of the American String Teachers Association and, in 2013 Bob was inducted into the University of Michigan School of Music Hall of Fame. Bob and his wife, Pam, are also part of the creative team for Barrage 8.

Bob is sponsored by Alfred Music ([www.alfred.com](http://www.alfred.com))



## Joanne May

Joanne May is in her eighth year as Assistant Professor of Music and Director of the Philharmonic Orchestra, Chair of the String Department, and music education instructor at Elmhurst College in Elmhurst, Illinois. She taught 33 years in public schools in Illinois and Missouri, serving as a teacher of strings, orchestra, band, choir, general music, and most recently as Music Department Chair at Glenbard East High School in suburban Lombard, IL. The Glenbard Township High School District honored her with a Distinguished Service Award, she was honored with Educator of the Year and Distinguished Service Awards from Illinois American String Teacher's Association, and she was presented with the Teacher Recognition Award for the Presidential Scholar Program in Washington, D.C. by the U.S. Department of Education.

Professor May has served as President of the Illinois American String Teacher's Association, Vice President of the Orchestra Division for Illinois Music Educators Association, and has recently been appointed National Chair of the Council for Orchestral Education for NAFME. Conductor, clinician, author, editor, and national board certified teacher, she has completed post-graduate coursework in Music Education, Suzuki Teacher Training, and Educational Administration & Supervision.

Joanne is sponsored by Elmhurst College ([www.elmhurst.edu](http://www.elmhurst.edu))