

Good Music is Good Music: Identifying Quality Repertoire for Bands of All Levels

Richard LoPresto, Richard F. Bernotas Middle School, Crystal Lake, IL

Matthew Moore, William Fremd High School, Palatine, IL

Dr. Brian Shelton, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, TX

Fremd High School Wind Symphony, Matthew Moore, Conductor

The Midwest Clinic

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What is "Good" Music?

- 1) Form: Balance between contrast and repetition
- 2) Shape and design
- 3) Craftsmanship in orchestration: solo and *tutti*
- 4) Unpredictable (to build musical tension)
- 5) Avoids direct and obvious route
- 6) Consistent in quality
- 7) Consistent in style, avoiding trivial and/or unsuitable passages
- 8) Ingenious development
- 9) Genuine, not pretentious
- 10) Transcends historical importance and pedagogical usefulness

From *An Evaluation of Compositions for Wind Band According to Specific Criteria of Serious Artistic Merit* by Acton Ostling. Ph.D. diss., University of Iowa, 1978

What do we look for in quality repertoire?

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|------------------------------------|--|
| 1) Variety of styles | 4) Rhythmic variety |
| 2) Interesting scoring and timbres | 5) Interesting writing for all players |
| 3) Historical accuracy/relevance | 6) Teachable concepts |

Musical Examples

March del Mar: John O'Reilly, Grade 1.5, 1996, Queenwood/Kjos

Xerxes: John Mackey, Grade 4, 2010, Osti Music

American Riversongs: Pierre LaPlante, Grade 3, 1991, Daehn Music

Albanian Dance: Shelley Hanson, Grade 4, 2003, Boosey & Hawkes Windependence Series

All the Pretty Little Horses: Anne McGinty, Grade 2, 1998, Queenwood/Kjos

American Hymnsong Suite: Dwayne Milburn, Grade 4, 2006, Kjos

Whirlwind: Jodie Blackshaw, Grade 1, 2006, Manhattan Beach

Incantation and Dance: John Barnes Chance, Grade 5, 1963, Boosey & Hawkes

October: Eric Whitacre, Grade 4, 2000, Hal Leonard

Bloom: Steven Bryant, Grade 4, 2004, Hal Leonard

Soldiers' Procession and Sword Dance: Bob Margolis, Grade 1, 1992, Manhattan Beach

Vesuvius: Frank Ticheli, Grade 4, 1999, Manhattan Beach

Simple Gifts: Frank Ticheli, Movement 3, "Here Take this Lovely Flower," (published separately as **Shaker Gift Song**), Grade 2, 2002, Manhattan Beach

Where does one find quality repertoire?

- 1) Concerts and Festivals
- 2) Recordings
 - Klavier/GIA WindWorks Series (including North Texas and Cincinnati Conservatory)
 - Mark Custom Recordings (www.markcustom.com)
 - Naxos Wind Band Classics Series (http://www.naxos.com/series/wind_band_classics.htm)
 - *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* Recordings (<http://www.teachingmusic.org>)
 - Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra (<http://www.tkwo.jp/english/>)
- 3) Repertoire Lists
 - Douglas Akey (http://www.aboda.org/?page_id=349)
 - H. Robert Reynolds (<http://reocities.com/Vienna/opera/1276/hrrlist.html>)
- 4) Books
 - Dvorak, Thomas L. *Best Music for Beginning Band*. Brooklyn: Manhattan Beach Music, 2000.
 - Dvorak, Thomas L. *Best Music for Young Band*. Brooklyn: Manhattan Beach Music, 1986.
 - Kvet, Edward J. *Instructional Literature for Middle-Level Band*. Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1996.
 - Miles, Richard (compiler). *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, Volumes 1-7*. Chicago: GIA Publications.
 - Miles, Richard (compiler). *Teaching Music Through Performance in Beginning Band, Volumes 1-2*. Chicago: GIA Publications.
- 5) Websites
 - Manhattan Beach Music (www.manhattanbeachmusic.com)
 - J.W. Pepper (www.jwpepper.com)
 - Tim Reynish (www.timreynish.com)
 - Wind Repertory Project (www.windrep.org)
- 6) State Lists

In closing...

“All music offers opportunities for growth in musical knowledge and the development of basic musicianship and technical skills, but only great music provides experiences in which students can discover and feel the *expressive power* of music. Study and performance of high quality music affects an individual’s development of musical values and “taste” in a very positive way.”

Frank Battisti
from *Winds of Change*, Meredith Music, 2002, 241.

To Contact Us:
Brian Shelton – Brian.Shelton@tamuk.edu
Rick LoPresto – ralopresto@d47.org
Matthew Moore – mmoore@d211.org