

ARRANGING FOR SMALL MARCHING BANDS

KEEPING IT SIMPLE AND FOCUSED

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WHAT SIZE DETERMINES A SMALL MARCHING BAND?

- **DOES IT MATTER?**
- **LESS THAN 5 WIND PLAYERS PER PART WILL DETERMINE SCORING AND VOICING**
- **LESS THAN 2 PERCUSSION PLAYERS PER PART WILL DETERMINE SCORING AND VOICING**

ATTITUDE AND PHILOSOPHY

- **SMALL BANDS CAN ACHIEVE THE SAME LEVEL OF EXCELLENCE AS LARGE BANDS**
- **FOCUS ON QUALITY VS QUANTITY**
- **THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX IN TERMS OF SHOW DESIGN**
- **USE THE ENTIRE FIELD**
- **DO NOT TRY TO SOUND LIKE A DRUM CORPS**

GLOBAL SHOW DESIGN

- **THE DESIGN OF THE FIELD SHOW FOR SMALLER MARCHING ENSEMBLES SHOULD STILL HAVE SIMILAR CHARACTERISTICS OF LARGER GROUPS.**
- **IMPACT POINTS, GENERAL EFFECT, AND EMOTIONAL CONTOUR ARE ALL COMPONENTS THAT SHOULD BE PRESENT IN A PROGRAM, REGARDLESS OF THE ENSEMBLE'S SIZE.**
- **AVOID LONG MUSICAL SUSTAINS**

GENERAL CONCEPTS

- **AVOID PERFORMING LARGE SYMPHONIC WORKS**
- **STAGE WIND INSTRUMENTS CLOSE TOGETHER FOR SECTION FEATURES**
- **USE ELECTRONICS TO ENHANCE THE PROGRAM**
- **ENSURE THE MARCHING TECHNIQUE AND EXECUTION IS ALWAYS AT A HIGH PERFORMANCE LEVEL**
- **CONSIDER AVOIDING OR USING SHORT BALLADS/SLOW MUSIC CHOICES**

INSTRUMENTATION

- **TRY TO ACHIEVE BALANCED INSTRUMENTATION WITHIN CHOIRS**
- **IF IT CANNOT BE ACHIEVED WITH CURRENT PERSONNEL TRY TO SWITCH INSTRUMENTS, PLAYERS OR PERSONNEL AND WORK FOR TOTAL ENSEMBLE BALANCE**
- **ALWAYS STRIVE FOR PYRAMID BALANCE**

INSTRUMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

WOODWINDS

- **WORK TO HAVE A COMPLIMENT OF FLUTE, CLARINET, ALTO, TENOR AND BARITONE SAXES**
- **BARITONE SAX WILL FILL OUT THE BASS VOICE**
- **ARE BASS CLARINETS NEEDED?**

BRASS

- **WORK TO HAVE A FULL COMPLIMENT OF TRUMPET, MELLOPHONE, TROMBONE/BARITONE, TUBA**
- **ARE TROMBONES NEEDED?**

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTATION

BATTERY

- **ALWAYS USE PYRAMID BALANCE**
- **IT IS ACCEPTABLE TO NOT USE AN INSTRUMENT (I.E., OMIT TENORS, USE 2 BASS DRUMS, ETC.)**
- **BATTERY COULD BE A HYBRID WITH THE PIT AND GROUNDED OR CONCERT PERCUSSION**

FRONT ENSEMBLE

- **WORK FOR A HIGH QUALITY BALANCED SOUND WITH EXEMPLARY TECHNIQUE AND HIGH QUALITY INSTRUMENTS**
- **CONSIDER USING 4 MALLETS FOR MORE DEPTH TO THE SOUND AND Mallet KEYBOARD AMPLIFICATION**
- **CONSIDER USING ELECTRONICS**

ELECTRONICS

- **BAND WILL SOUND BIGGER AND BETTER**
- **LESS PERFORMERS REQUIRED TO PRODUCE A DEPTH OF SOUND**
- **THE SOUND SYSTEM CAN BE USED FOR OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM**
- **PURCHASE A QUALITY P.A. SYSTEM (AMPLIFIER, MIXER AND MICS)**
- **MIC AS MANY INSTRUMENTS AS YOU WANT (OR HAVE A BUDGET FOR)**
THE MOST COMMON ARE: VIBES, MARIMBAS, XYLOPHONE, BELLS, AUX. INSTRUMENTS
- **ELECTRIC BASS IS A GREAT OPTION!**

ARRANGING FOR WINDS

KNOW YOUR BAND'S INSTRUMENTATION

- **DIVIDE THE BAND INTO CHOIRS – ALWAYS HAVE A CHOIR!**
- **WOODWINDS (SATB)**
- **BRASS (SATB)**
- **BATTERY (SATB)**
- **PIT (SATB)**
- **ELECTRONICS**

KNOW YOUR STUDENTS' RANGE AND ABILITY LEVEL

- **WRITE FOR THE MEDIAN LEVEL OF YOUR BAND**
- **WRITE FOR THE POWER RANGES OF THE BAND**
- **ONE OF THE MAIN PITFALLS IS WRITING TOO MANY PARTS – KEEP IT SIMPLE AND FOCUSED**

LAYING OUT THE SCORE

WINDS

COMMON VOICE DOUBLINGS

SOPRANO-FL, CL, TPT 1

ALTO – A SAX, TPT 2, MELLO

TENOR – T. SAX, T. BRASS

BASS – B. SAX, T. BRASS, TUBA

***TENOR AND BASS DOUBLINGS MAY NEED
TO OCCUR BASED ON NUMBERS***



A musical score for a winds section, showing ten staves. The instruments listed on the left are: Flute, Clarinet in Bb, Alto Sax, Tenor Sax, Baritone Sax, Trumpet in Bb 1, Trumpet in Bb 2, Horn in F, Baritone, and Tuba. Each staff contains a single measure with a whole rest, indicating that all instruments are silent for this measure. The key signature is one flat (Bb) and the time signature is 4/4.

PERCUSSION & ELECTRONICS

**SYNTH PADS/STRINGS AND MEDIUM MALLETS WILL
PRODUCE A SUPPORTIVE/WARM SONORITY**

**ALL BASS VOICES DOUBLE (B. SAX, TUBA, ELEC. BASS,
L.H. SYNTH, LOW MAR.)**

**REMEMBER PERCUSSION IS A SEPARATE VOICE NOT A
DOUBLE**

AVOID MALLETS DOUBLING WOODWINDS – WHY???



A musical score for a Percussion & Electronics section. The score is written for a 4/4 time signature and features ten staves. The first five staves are for melodic instruments: Synth Strings (treble and bass clef), Bells (treble clef), Vibraphone (treble clef), Marimba (treble clef), and Timpani (bass clef). The next five staves are for percussion: Percussion 1 (bass clef), Percussion 2 (bass clef), Snareline (bass clef), Tenorline (bass clef), and Bass Drums (bass clef). All staves show a single measure with a whole rest, indicating that the instruments are silent for this measure.

FULL SCORE

Flute

Clarinet in Bb

Alto Sax

Bass Sax

Baritone Sax

Trumpet in Bb-1

Trumpet in Bb-2

Horn in F

Baritone

Tuba

Synth Strings

Bells

Vibraphone

Maracas

Trumpet

Perussion 1



















Perussion 2

Drumline

Tambores

Bass Drums

POWER RANGES
GENRALLY WRITE IN THE
STAFF AND SLIGHTLY
ABOVE THE STAFF

	Sounding (Concert Pitch)	Written (Transposed)
Piccolo* / Flute <small>*Sounding pitch is 8va from written)</small>		
B♭ Clarinet		
Alto Sax		
Tenor Sax		
B♭ Trumpet		
Mellophone		
Trombone		
Baritone (B.C.)		
Tuba		

SMALL BAND INSTRUMENTATION

**THERE MAY BE A NEED TO WRITE
EASIER/ALTERNATE PARTS**

BE VERY JUDICIOUS ABOUT MULTIPLE PARTS

A musical score for a small band, consisting of 8 staves. The instruments listed on the left are: Flute, Clarinet in B♭, Alto Sax, Trumpet in B♭ 1, Trumpet in B♭ 2, Mellophone, Tenor WW/Brass, and Tuba/B. Sax. The score is written in 4/4 time. The Flute, Clarinet in B♭, Alto Sax, Trumpet in B♭ 1, Trumpet in B♭ 2, and Mellophone parts are written on treble clefs. The Tenor WW/Brass and Tuba/B. Sax parts are written on bass clefs. The key signature is one flat (B♭). The score is empty, showing only the staves and clefs.

KEY SELECTION

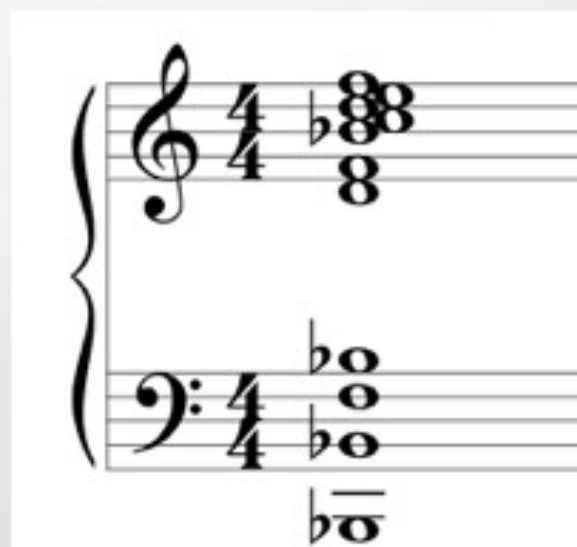
- **KEY SELECTION IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHOICES FOR AN ARRANGER**
- **FLAT KEYS ARE BEST USED BECAUSE THEY ARE THE MOST RESONATE**
- **BEST KEYS TO USE ARE: F, B^b, E^b, A^b, C MAJOR AND RELATIVE MINOR KEYS**
- **THE MORE FLATS A KEY CONTAINS, THE DARKER THE TONE QUALITY CREATED BY A BAND; THE MORE SHARPS, THE BRIGHTER THE TONE**

ORCHESTRATION

- **IT IS BEST TO THINK OF SATB WITHIN YOUR ENSEMBLE AND USE THOSE VOICINGS TO ORCHESTRATE**
- **ALWAYS THINK ABOUT PROJECTION AND POWER – FEWER LINES ARE BETTER**

USE THE OVERTONE SERIES TO ORCHESTRATE IMPACT POINTS

- **BB OVERTONE SERIES AS A VOICING GUIDELINE**
- **FROM BOTTOM TO TOP**
 - **OCTAVE**
 - **5TH**
 - **4TH**
 - **3RD**
 - **3RD**
 - **4TH, ETC.**



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

- **LET'S REVIEW SOME EXAMPLES**

STAGING

- **GENERAL RULE...**
 - **WHENEVER THERE IS A MELODY, THEIR NEEDS TO BE VISUAL REPRESENTATION AND/OR COLORGUARD SUPPORT**
- **WHO IS PLAYING THE PRIMARY LINE AND CAN THEY BE SEEN AND HEARD?**
- **PERCUSSION – KEEP THEM IN THE PULSE AREA FOR SUPPORT AND RHYTHMIC CLARITY**
- **CONSIDER USING THE SWEET SPOT ON THE FIELD – BETWEEN THE 30 YARD LINES AND IN FRONT OF THE FRONT HASH**

FINAL THOUGHTS

- **WRITE TO YOUR ENSEMBLE'S STRENGTHS**
- **DO NOT TRY TO OVER PLAY OR OVER BLOW – ALWAYS WORK FOR A SONOROUS, RICH SENSE OF TONE**
- **BE CREATIVE, BUT ALWAYS STAGE YOUR ENSEMBLE SO THE MELODY CAN BE HEARD**
- **WORK TO BALANCE YOUR ENSEMBLE SOUND BETWEEN ALL ELEMENTS (WINDS, PERCUSSION & ELECTRONICS)**

QUESTIONS AND ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION



GOOD LUCK & THANK YOU!!!

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