

Rapid Fire Duffy Lecture!

- So much to say; so little time.
- Visit my web site, where the text for this entire presentation will be posted as: BandQuest Lecture.
- Visit www.duffymusic.com

BandQuest

BandQuest Concepts

1. Identify “significant” American composers from a variety of style areas.
2. Commission these significant American composers to write music for Grade 2 band (middle school).

**3. Develop a template:
what can composers expect
to find in the standard
middle school band.**

4. Arrange for composers to meet and work with specific middle school bands and their directors.

5. Develop curriculum to accompany the published music. Curriculum would be presented on a CD ROM.

1. Original Stable of “Significant” Composers

- John Cacavas
- Michael Colgrass
- Brent Michael Davids
- Thomas C. Duffy
- Baird Lancaster
- Libby Larsen
 - Tania León
- Bobby McFerrin
 - Chen Yi

2. Commissioned Composers

- Michael Colgrass
- Brent Michael Davids
 - Thomas C. Duffy
- Adolphus Hailstork
 - Libby Larsen
 - Tania León
- Robert Rodriguez
 - Alvin Singleton
 - Chen Yi
 - Judy Zaimont

Compositions

- Michael Colgrass
- Brent Michael Davids
- Thomas C. Duffy
- Adolphus Hailstork
- Libby Larsen
- Tania Léon
- Robert Rodriguez
- Alvin Singleton
- Chen Yi
- Judy Zaimont
- **Old Churches**
- **Grandmothers Song**
- **A+:...**
- **Wade N' Water**
- **Hambone**
- **Alegre**
- **Smash the Windows**
- **Ridgeview Centrum**
- **Spring Festival**
- **City Rain**

**3. Develop a template:
what can composers expect
to find in the standard
middle school band in terms
of:**

- a. instrumental range
- b. dynamic capability
- c. technical proficiency
- d. instrumentation
- e. extended techniques-
clapping, vocalizations, etc
- f. rhythm facility-tempo,
meter, syncopation

4. Arrange for composers to meet and work with specific middle school bands/directors.

- Film sessions
- Use sessions to assess the compositions
- Use sessions to update and adjust band “template”

5. Develop curriculum to accompany the published music. Curriculum would be presented on a CD ROM.

Project Mission Statement

“It meets a need...for repertoire that will challenge and nourish the students’ creativity, and for interdisciplinary teaching materials that are no less stimulating... ambition to help cultivate, at an age early enough to have a real impact, the next generation of consumers and supporters of new American music.”

Sounding Board, ACF, Volume
24, #10, Nov. 1997

Project Mission Statement

“New Band Horizons will not be a method book. That is, it will not be designed to teach students to play band instruments and will not compete with the excellent band-instrument method books currently available.”

Project Mission Statement

- What teachers tell us they need is music of real substance, by first-rate composers, that has been written with the technical abilities and limitations of young students clearly in mind. ‘A lot of music being written for school bands is either formulaic or watered down.’”

— Sounding Board, ACF, Volume 24, #10, Nov. 1997

What Should I Write “About?”

- **“If a piece is programmatic, they tend to love it. They have extremely fertile imaginations, and they truly enjoy using that part of their minds. They can hear conflict, resolution, joy, pain, excitement, confusion – but most pieces written for them don’t offer that spectrum (Old MacDonald Had A Band. etc.). **These kids have felt a great deal in their own lives, and while they may not be capable of accurately expressing themselves verbally or in writing, they can certainly recognize those emotional extremes in music.”****

What Should I Write “About?”

- “My students love music that is **beautiful**. It can be fast or slow, but it must be beautiful; expressive. They will accept anything that I put in front of them, and even though they may not like it at first, as they grow in their understanding of the piece, they accept and enjoy each one. As a matter of fact, the compositions that are usually their favorites are quite the opposite at first!”

— Laura Kautz Sindberg, Central Music Department, Waukesha, WI

What Should I Write “About?”

- **‘Deal with topics that are relevant to kids’ lives in a visible way**
(address things they face on a daily basis).”
 - Make Hiatt, State Music Resource Coordinator, Minnesota Center for the Arts
- “...(as) products of the TV age, if the music does not provide **instant gratification**, it has no worth in the eyes of the student.”
 - P. Brett Smith, Band Director, Mahtomedi Middle School, Mahtomedi, Minnesota

What Should I Write “About?”

- “Some things that do not always work well include:...contrived gimmicks or connections which are not authentic or directly related to the music. As far as jokes-my students do not like most of mine!”
 - Laura Kautz Sindberg, Director of Bands, Central Middle School, Waukesha, Wisconsin

What Should I Write “About?”

- “One of the things that I look for is technical accessibility. If the students are frustrated by technical issues from the outset, I’ve pretty much lost them for good despite the quality of the composition. I look for a piece that stays within their playable “good-sounding” range, but which is fairly complex harmonically. They really enjoy hearing thick chords, and how they fit into that sound. Unisons and octaves bore them to tears; they dealt with that sound as beginners, and they consider it “babyish.””

– Liz Jackson

What This Means, Maybe?

- Write music that is acceptable to kids
- Write music that is good
- Write music that is the right music to advance the art form
- Write music that makes kids want to play it.
- Write music that causes hedonistic pleasure through its performance or hearing
- Write music that has a program that is relevant to the lives of the young musicians.

- Include performance notes that address the neophobic tendencies of conductors. Carefully explain to them in writing in the preface how to perform the piece.

Complexity!!!

- **Instruments in the Band.**
- The instruments in the first and second year bands include the following: Flute, Oboe, Bb Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Baritone Saxophone, French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba, Timpani, assorted percussion, including keyboards, and many ensembles have a part for electric bass.

Melody

- **1st Year Band**
 - -Mostly steps and skips with larger leaps permissible in the woodwinds
 - -Very limited use of accidentals
 - -Mostly 4, 8, and 16 measure phrases, with adequate opportunities for breathing
 - -Simple two-part counterpoint (canon)
- **2nd Year Band**
 - -Steps, skips, and occasional leaps permissible in all instruments
 - -Predictable use of accidentals
 - -Primarily 4, 8, and 16 measure phrases
 - -Simple two or three-part counterpoint

HARMONY

- 1st Year Band
- -Unisons, thirds, fourths (limited), fifths, sixths, and octaves
- -Triads
- 2nd-Year Band
- -Primarily consonant intervals
- Suspended triads and seventh chords

KEYS

- 1st Year Band
- 2nd Year Band
- Concert Bb, Eb, and F major
- Concert Bb, Eb, F, Ab, and C major

Scoring/ Texture

- **1st Year Band**
 - -Melody for all instruments sometime during the selection
 - -All parts doubled by at least one other instrument
 - -Bass line in all low woodwind and low brass instruments
 - -no more than two rhythmic ideas occurring simultaneously
 - -two parts for flutes, clarinets, alto saxophones, and trumpets, only
 - -inclusion of short percussion soli
- **2nd Year Band**
 - -melody for all instruments sometime during the selection
 - -all parts doubled by at least one other instrument
 - -bass line in all low woodwind and low brass instruments, trombones may deviate occasionally
 - -two parts for flutes, clarinets, alto saxophones, and trumpets; two parts occasionally for trombones and horns
 - -inclusion of short percussion soli

Musical Maturity

- **1st Year Band**
- -Selections should have a strong musical pulse
- -a few ritardandos (ending in fermatas); no accelerandi (Tempo changes only after a fermata)
- -Limited dynamic variety
- -Predictable arranging and orchestration
- -Considerable repetition in percussion with limited use of rolls (no snare drum rolls on fermata notes)
- -Predictable binary or ternary forms
- **2nd Year Band**
- -Occasional meter and key changes
- -Limited use of ritardandos and accelerandi
- -Moderate dynamic variation
- -Predictable arranging and orchestration
- -Moderate use of repetition in percussion; moderate use of rolls
- -Primarily binary or ternary forms; moderate use of variation techniques

Endurance

- **1st Year Band**
 - -Performance time generally should not exceed 2 minutes
- **2nd Year Band**
 - -Performance time generally should not exceed 3 minutes, unless adequate resting time is provided (i.e., during percussion solis)