

Program Notes

(Selected writings by advanced credit students)

Concert Band

Dance the Joy Alive, by Nicole Piunno

Dance the Joy Alive written by Nicole Piunno won the composition contest for the Arizona State University Concert Band. The premiere performance for this piece was on April 23, 2018. The composer of the piece stated that in this piece she “is using dance as a metaphor for suggesting we can act our way to joy.” It’s the old fake it ‘till you make it mentality come to life in a piece of music. The idea that just acting joyful and happy and can subsequently alter your mood for the better. This piece is a great depiction of this adage. Enjoy!

Written by Cody Chapman, Baritone, Grade 12

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***Valiant*, by Katharina S. Mueller**

Valiant is a musical interpretation of an archetypal hero's journey. The intrepid melody that introduces the piece goes through several variations, illustrating a confrontation with opposition, a fall or defeat, then a somber time of introspection. Hope begins to build again, and then the original melodies return stronger than ever to finish out the piece. The piece is powered forward by the rhythmic pulse in the percussion, while euphonous brass lines soar, and woodwinds provide the poignant expression to each section.

*Written by Katharina Mueller, Baritone, Grade
12*

A note from the composer Katya Mueller about her experience of composing for the HHS Band:

Valiant is one of the two compositions I created for my Honors Program capstone project. In designing my capstone, I knew it would have to be something I'd enjoy pouring hours into, and music composition was the obvious choice. Valiant is by far the farthest-advanced piece I have written for concert band/wind ensemble, and has progressed my knowledge of band and composition at large exponentially. In light of Valiant, I have more band pieces in the works.

Valiant was composed specifically for the HHS band of 2019-2020. I composed solos for strong senior players of the band, and throughout the piece give featuring solo lines to many instruments. Having sat in a few seats of the band, I committed to creating parts that were both engaging and accessible for every instrument. This took into consideration which instrument sections had only a few players, and making sure those lean sections never played alone. I also tried to keep players busy, working especially to make all nine percussion parts interesting.

I was inspired by film music in writing Valiant. The works of John Powell (scored *How to Train Your Dragon*, the *Bourne* series), Ramin Djawadi (scored *Game of Thrones*, *Dracula*, *Iron Man*) and Hans Zimmer (scored too many things to possibly list). I also love the most epic and dramatic classical symphonies, some favorites including Mahler, Dvorak, and Elgar.

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Lady Gaga Dance Mix, arr. Ted Ricketts

Lady Gaga Dance Mix by Lady Gaga, arranged by Ted Ricketts, is an upbeat and funky mashup of songs from pop artist Lady Gaga, consisting of well known hits such as “Bad Romance,” “Just Dance,” and “Poker Face.” The strong low brass section and lively woodwinds add a new variation to the well known songs from one of the most familiar artists of our time.

Written by Haley Clough, Oboe, Grade 10

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***Byzantine Dances*, by Carol Brittin Chambers**

Byzantine Dances is written by Carol Brittin Chambers. The piece is written in the style of many Turkish dances. The beginning and ending are both faster whereas the middle is somewhat slower. The Zeybek dance, which is from the middle of the piece, symbolizes heroism and courage. The faster parts of the piece are written in the style of the Roma Gypsy dance.

Written by Silvia Hale, Flute, Grade 9

Program Notes

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Concert Choir

Sea Fever, by Amy Beach

The lyrics of this piece were originally from a poem written by John Masefield, a great poet and English writer. The poem conveys themes of wanderlust, as well as adventure and memory. The speaker of the poem yearns to travel across the sea, in a tall ship. In their journey, they intend to enjoy early morning mists, as well as the grey dawn breaking. They also want to see the wind pushing the clouds, and listen to the cries of the sea creatures. The story that the poem describes is also analogous to the desire to leave an intense current environment in favor of an exciting, adventurous, and challenging one. This piece was arranged by Amy Beach, who was a relatively famous American composer and pianist. She was one of the first female composers to succeed without the advantage of European training, and was acclaimed for her concerts that featured her own music that she performed in both America and Germany.

Written by Zachary Carter, Tenor, Grade 11

Program Notes

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Concert Choir

***Lineage*, by Andrea Ramsey**

Written in 2018 by Andrea Ransey, *Lineage* reflects the strength of our grandmothers. It was originally inspired, to empower females and celebrate how far they have come; however, it also reflects how far women still have to go for equality. The bluegrassy percussion feel of the piece reflects how women have overcome adversity over time, and asks us to reflect on what our ancestors did in order for us to be here now. By praising our grandmother's strength, *Lineage* is a true tribute to women who fought for the right to vote - the right to have our voices.

Written by Caroline Cassell, Alto, Grade 12

Program Notes

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Concert Choir

Sing my Child, by Sarah Quartel

Sing My Child, composed by Sarah Quartel, is a lively and fun piece with moments of pensive slowness. This piece takes you through a day of singing, dancing, and laughter. The music reminds us that whenever life gets dark and difficult, it is important to look to and find peace and light in these happy things. The composer, Sarah Quartel, is a Canadian composer and educator who is known for her fresh take on choral composition. Musically, this piece is dynamic and flows nicely, each part invoking a distinct tone and feeling.

Written by Lilly Kendall, Alto, Grade 11

