

Dear WSMA Honors High School Orchestra Musicians:

Greetings! I hope you are all having a great summer! It's been well over a month since we were at camp, yet your smiling faces and the music sounds we made are fresh in my mind. The WSMA Honors Camp was truly a wonderful experience in that we came together to study some great orchestra repertoire.

Thank You: Due to the pandemic, *none of you had ever experienced an in-person High School Honors Camp*. Thank you (especially those on the shy side) for stepping out into the Honors Camp experience to be a part of something bigger than yourself, to meet new people, and to share your talent. The Works in Progress performance on June 25th was inspiring. We did an honorable job, especially with the limited time and energy available to us! Of course, our concert had many areas for improvement, and the approaching October concert with our combined desire to do well, will be our compass for a wonderful final performance!

In preparing for the October conference performance, it is VERY important that you practice consistently every day to improve your skills and your understanding of the repertoire! You will conquer your part by practicing hard parts correctly at an extremely slow tempo (rather than attempting a fast tempo and accidentally reinforce mistakes)! Also, you are practicing your instrument and your TONE while you study the repertoire. Get help from a private or a public-school teacher not only with the difficult sections, *but on improving as a player*. Please read carefully my notes on each of the pieces below.

MAMBO: You gave great energy on this one! Let's strive for even more!

- Practice the syncopated rhythms, *even if you think you have it!* (Especially coming in after a 16th note rest!)
- TEMPO: We were at about quarter note = 110, and we'll perform it near or at 120 for October. Practice at half tempo, $\frac{3}{4}$ tempo, and full tempo. You may want to set your metronome to play 16ths at the slower tempo to check for accuracy. Record yourself to find areas for improvement.
- All attacks must be CLEAN and you must exaggerate the articulations: *sfz, regular accents, and the staccato*

AS THE HEART SOARS: We had a fine tempo! Let's strive for clarity!

- Tidy the 16th note melodies in the polyphonic sections! (bars 34-54 and 106 to the end) Even when it's slurred, these notes must be clear and precise (strings: left hand articulation); note the 16th rests which function as lifts
- EVERYONE: tune every note! Cellos-you know where. Woodwinds pay attention to the intonation bars 81-84.

ADAGIETTO: Thank you for being flexible and watching me! Let's delve into the music!

- We need actual piano and pianissimo dynamics where indicated.
- Make phrases much longer (especially violins when you play the melody); each note stretches into the next!
- Tune **EVERY NOTE**;
- Approximate quarter-note tempi for October: (if you haven't yet, look up the German terms in your parts!!)
 - Beginning → 40
 - Fliessend (flowing) sections at 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ approach 60;
 - Rehearsal 2 → 50
 - Rehearsal 3 → 40
 - 4 after Rehearsal 4 → 34
- 1sts/celli/basses: Hold out the last note much longer!

OVERTURE: Great start on the classical style, let's exaggerate it now! The tempo was good.

- Everyone, especially winds: Exaggerate the short articulation! All non-slurred notes have space between them!
- Everyone: we need an actual piano dynamic where indicated!
- Brass: Practice coming in clean! HORNS: Every time you walk by your horn (which sits waiting by your bed), pick it up and play the 1st note. TROMBONES: We may write a part for you-so be on the lookout!
- STRINGS: woodshed needed on all fast sections! 1st violins, there were some funky early entrances in the June recording, make sure you are counting the rests correctly at bars 158 and 162!

WINDS OF POSEIDON: This was our best piece on June 25th, nice job everyone!

- WE NEED TO HEAR THE BASSOONS and piano at 40, 71, and 169 (everyone shhh!)
- WIND TUBES: Awesome! If you can come in quieter and have your sound evolve, that would be even better
- STRINGS: We need shorter articulation from you (marcato) in the action themes (beginning bars 61 and 159)

Honors Orchestra Members: Each and every one of you has a very important contribution to make to this concert. You have the opportunity, through your individual work and when we convene for rehearsal in October, to create a lasting memory of a fine performance not only in your own hearts and minds, but in the hearts and minds of the audience. The music will be an inspiration to others. That being said, the performance is actually not the end goal (of course most conductors would disagree) it's about YOU becoming a better player and individual. When you strive for these things, it creates more self-confidence and personal sparkle which ripples to those around you to be the best that they can be! This is the magic of music, we uplift ourselves through the PROCESS of practice and then we get to uplift ourselves and others again through the PERFORMANCE.

In conclusion, please embrace your worth and your own personal power. Please recognize that the little things you do every day, whether it be smiling and saying "hello" at someone new in the hall, or practicing your instrument, all make a difference not only in your life, but the lives of others. Keep the progress going that we made at camp, and know that even better experiences are on the horizon. Our October presentation will be one of many wonderful performances that you will have as an orchestra musician. Be well, and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Barbara Rhyneer

Dr. Barbara Rhyneer
2022 WSMA Honors Orchestra Conductor