



IMPORTANT DATES:

- 3/3/2020 - POTENTIAL PALACE THEATRE PERFORMANCE
- 3/26-3/27/2020 - TOUR of WATERBURY
- 4/2020 - DR. JIMENEZ MASTERCLASS, Date TBD
- 4/30/2020— SMALL ENSEMBLE CONCERT, 7:00PM
- 5/13/2020— SPRING CONCERT, 7:00PM
- 5/22/2020 - HIGH NOTE FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE
- 5/24/2020— MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

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KHS Music Musings

JANUARY 2020

From the Podium

December has come and gone and our first performance of 2019-2020 has passed. The students did really well leading up to the concert, really working hard to try and squeeze in all of our music around the lost days (snow days). The kids and I are always excited when the first concert ends as it gets the nerves out for so many students who have never performed before. It is also exciting as they have outgrown the first few songs that they learned, they really want harder and more mature music.

It is very clear in the concert which songs are built for a younger band (*Bringer of War*, *Gentle Winds*, *At The Edge of Chaos*) as those songs had "less" going on than the other songs and the themes are less devel-

oped and the parts are significantly simplified in comparison to the other songs that fully flesh out the themes better. For me, the best songs from the Concert were *Uncharted* and *Little Red in the Hood*. Both of these were played very cleanly, and the kids really enjoyed the songs. Everyday leading up to the concert they would get very excited to play them and it showed in their performance.

Before we left for Winter Break we listened to a bunch of the songs we are considering for the second half of the year, and we started working on one of them, *Fires of Bandai*.

The Percussion class has already gotten a good start on the second concert as well, as they have done

some work on their Mallet Medley and will be starting their first new Battery Cadence as well.

Looking ahead, the second half of the year is intense with the amount of stuff to come. We may potentially be performing at the Palace Theatre for the "Celebrating Community through the Arts" Concert in March. We also have our second annual Tour of Waterbury in Late March (more details on page 2 of the newsletter), plus our annual Masterclass with Dr. Fernando Jimenez in April. On top of this we celebrate our work at the Small Ensemble Concert in April, Spring Concert in May, and the High Note Festival at the end of May. It is going to be a very busy second half of the year, I'm excited to get started!

-Mr. Knecht

Choral Notes

December is a short school month to begin with, but with the concert in the middle it seems to fly right by. This winter the concert was a successful one for the choir! The choir performed four different songs in all different styles.

The first song was "Hodie! Alleluia." This song has a Latin text. Students are not as accustomed to singing in a foreign language. I decided to introduce a Latin text as it is standard for much choral repertoire and it is also not as difficult to pronounce as some other languages. The students handled the language and the music well and sang the song successfully.

Another song the choir performed was "Amid the Cold of Winter." This song was the first song the choir learned and it was a favorite of the group. This song combined two classic Carol's - "In the Bleak Midwinter" and "Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming." The song began with a duet which was beautifully sung by Ahmad Tate and Jose Berberena.

The next song was "Slow Dancing in the Snow." This song has a 50's feel and very quickly became the group favorite. The simple harmonies came together beautifully in this fun, energetic song.

The final song the group performed was "All On A Starry

Night." This song was by far the most difficult song the choir performed. This song was a four to five part a cappella song. That means that there was no accompaniment. The harmonies were intricate. Students learned about dissonance, suspensions, and resolutions. Though this song was difficult, the students rose to the challenge and performed it very well.

Overall the winter concert was a success for the choir. We have already begun preparations for the spring concert and are very excited for the music to come.

-Ms. Pape

Composer of the Month



Gustav Holst was one of the premier English Composers of the early 20th century. Holst is best known for his orchestral suite titled, *the Planets*. This piece has seven movements, one for each planet excluding Earth. The melodies from this symphony have been used throughout a wide range of media, from commercials to sporting events, cartoons, and movies. The most famous of these pieces are *Mars, Bringer of War*, and *Jupiter Bringer of Jollity*.

Holst was a professional

trombonist while he attended school in the 1890's. By the early 1900's he abandoned playing professionally and turned to composition and teaching to make money. He worked as a teacher for the St. Paul's Girls' School from 1905 till his death, and also served at Morley College from 1907 to 1924. This is where he also composed most of his well known pieces.

In 2011, a BBC documentary, *Holst: In the Bleak Midwinter* (titled after one of his pieces), charted his career and accomplishments.

Holst was also very important

to the evolution of the Band Music, as in the early 20th century band music wasn't considered "serious music." Holst's two Suites for Military Band, the *1st Suite in Eb* and the *2nd Suite in F*, have long been considered staples of the wind band repertoire, and are widely considered to be among the best ever compositions for the genre. He was among the musicians (with Ralph Vaughan-Williams) who ushered Band music as we know it today to be taken seriously by composers.

**"To stop the flow
of music would
be like the
stopping of time
itself, incredible
and
inconceivable."
-Aaron Copland**

KHS Band Tour of Waterbury Returns

Last year we did our first ever "Tour of Waterbury" and this year we will hopefully cement this as an annual activity. Last year's tour was a huge success and we are going to try it again this year.

The Tour of Waterbury is a 2 day event where the Band travels to the 7 elementary schools and 1 middle school that feeds into our program. This year it will be done on

back to back days in late March, as a way to close out Music in our Schools month. Each performance is about 25-30 minutes long, we play a couple songs (2-3 depending on time) and we also introduce the instruments and demonstrate each of them. After each show we quickly gather up our stuff, load the bus, and travel to our next performance location.

The day ends up being a great experience for both the other schools but also for our students. Our desire is to make more excitement at the elementary level for instrumental music. It also serves as a recruitment tool for our middle schools feeder (West Side) as they get to see what they may be a part of when they hit high school.

Conducting Masterclass

Every year in January I start teaching a voluntary masterclass on how to conduct. It is a great experience as it is way more than just waving your arms around. The students learn specific patterns that they follow in the music, along with how to read a musical score, and more importantly how to lead the band (instead of the band leading them).

The students learn score reading, rehearsal leading, along with how to prepare performers to play, how to cue sections, dynamics, and conduct the "expression" of a piece of music.

Every year the students who partake have the opportunity to actually conduct our band in rehearsal as a part of their practice. When we get closer

to May I hold a competition among the students to determine this year's Leonard Bernstein Award winner, and that person gets to conduct the band at the Spring Concert.

This has become one of the big annual awards each year, and I encourage any student who is remotely interested in learning how to conduct to participate as it is a great learning experience.

Celebration of Community Through The Arts

For the past few years the city has put on a performance of music and the arts at the Palace Theatre with all of the performances being by the schools. We have not been able to participate for an array of reasons mostly stemming from student's being unable to attend. This has been because the performance typically takes place in May, which is a nightmare of a month in terms of field trips, schools events, concerts and everything else.

This year the performance will be held in March, so there will be fewer potential conflicts and hopefully we can take advantage of our

opportunity to perform on the stage at the Palace Theatre. A permission slip will be sent home later this month with more details and needs to be signed by all students who plan on attending.

Once we know that we have enough students for the performance, we then need to pass an audition. A committee from the city will come to Kennedy and the band will play through the song that we would perform at the event. That song will either be a song we just started, *Fires of Bandai*, or one from the last concert, *Little Red in the Hood*.

If we meet all the criteria and are selected to perform, the performance would be on March 3rd. The students would miss the day of school while attending the dress rehearsal, and then the performance would be that evening.

This will be a great opportunity, so I hope we have enough student interest to participate this year. Please be on the lookout for the permission slip and make sure to turn that in before the end of the month.

Stupid Music Humor



The Mount Rushmore of... My Favorite Musicals

Every month I list my opinions of the top 4 of a particular subject. This month I am going to focus on my top musicals that I've seen. I've had the pleasure of seeing many musicals on Broadway as well as at the Shubert and the Bushnell. I haven't been able to go as much in recent years, and there are many I wish I could see, but that is a list for another month.

- 1) *Phantom of the Opera* - This Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is one of the most famous musicals ever put together. It was also the first music I ever got to see and the one I've seen the most.
- 2) *Les Miserables* - This epic musical has some of the most recognizable songs in all of music theatre. The movie really failed to bring the musical to life (especially Javert) but the stage production is nothing short of amazing. It is also a very large cast, and very demanding parts, which makes it even more impressive.
- 3) *Ragtime* - This ensemble musical depicts the treatment and segregation of three different groups, the Whites, The Blacks, and the Immigrants. Each of these groups tells their own story, and despite the tension and conflict present throughout, it ends with a beautiful depiction of what America was meant to be.
- 4) *Into the Woods* - This musical had the unfortunate situation of being up for awards the same year as *Phantom of the Opera*, and if it wasn't for that it may have taken home the biggest prizes that year at the Tony awards. This musical really created a "Shrek" type mash-up of fairy tales and even told the "what happens after happily ever after" in a very unexpected way.

Instrumental Music Student of the Month

January

Jaden Lawrence,

Senior, Percussion and Alto Saxophone

Jaden has been in the music program all four years of his high school career and has established himself as a great contributing member of the band and percussion section.

As a freshman, Jaden was a percussionist with prior experience and some great potential and talent. He quickly established himself as one of the stronger performers in a challenging percussion class.

As his high school career moved on he joined band as well as percussion

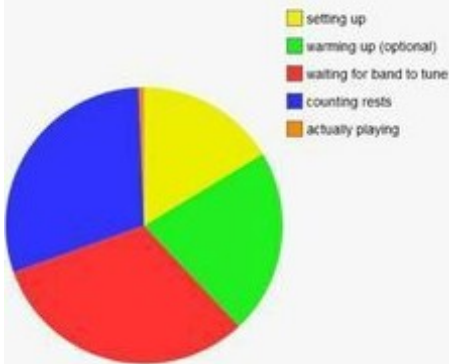
and took up alto saxophone. He excelled with that the same way he excelled with Percussion.

This year, Jaden acts as the primary percussionist and is routinely asked to play the most challenging percussion parts. He does incredibly well, not only with his playing, but also with his freestyle dances in the back of the room when we are not working on his part.

Previous Winners

- Sep.. - Victoria Soto
- Oct. - Ronald McNerney
- Nov. - Ludmila "Lulu" DePaula
- Dec. - Luis Quinones
- Jan. - Jaden Lawrence

Concert Band for Percussionists



Vocal Music Student of the Month

January

Hailee Fontanez,

Senior

Hailee is new to choir this year but has quickly become a very important part of the Alto section. Her dedication goes beyond the classroom and she can be found practicing her parts on her own time. Hailee's commitment to the group makes her a very important asset. I am very proud of all she has accomplished this year and can't wait to see what the rest of the year will bring.

Previous Winners

- Sep. - Kira Howell
- Oct. - Heidi Atuaful
- Nov. - Elizabeth Dolloff
- Dec. - Abraham Melendez
- Jan. - Hailee Fontanez

