

Middle Level Orchestra Reading Session
Thursday, November 18, 2021
8:00 am, WMB 130

Beadle Middle School Chamber Orchestra

Beadle Middle School opened in 2001 and started out with a fairly small orchestra. Since then, the program has grown significantly as well as the orchestra programs in the entire Millard School district. This is a true testament to the support the Millard district has given to all of its music programs. There are 3 orchestras in the Beadle music program, 6th, 7th and 8th grade. Just recently the Chamber Orchestra was added and is an auditioned based group comprised of students in grades six through eight. The orchestras have performed at the ASTA Young Orchestra Festival, Millard Orchestra Festival and have performed at local elementary schools and nursing homes as well as school concerts given throughout the school year. Patti Clifton has been the director since Beadle opened its doors 21 years ago.

Patti Clifton –Director

Patti Clifton is a Nebraska native, born and raised in Omaha. She is currently in her 29th year of public school teaching. She started as a high school assistant director in the McAllen Independent School District in McAllen, TX and then taught middle school for the next three years. She moved back to Omaha and taught elementary orchestra for Omaha Public Schools. She has been teaching 4-8 grade orchestra in the Millard Public Schools for the past 21 years. Patti graduated from the University of NE at Omaha with a music education degree and then received her Masters in Violin Performance at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. There she received her Suzuki teacher training and certification. Patti enjoys being an active performer in the community. Past orchestras include the Flagstaff Symphony, Rio Grande Symphony, Corpus Christi Symphony, Omaha Symphony and currently Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra. In her spare time, Patti loves watching baseball and Nebraska football and playing golf with her husband Will. Patti and Will are owned by 3 dalmatians, Finley, Reggie and Baker and a cat, Audrey.

Shepherd's Hymn Beethoven / arr. Meyer gr. 2 2:00 duration.

Theme from Beethoven's Pastoral (6th) Symphony, Richard Meyer gives an excellent ensemble introduction to 6/8 time. G Major. Melodic content in all parts. Predominantly two-part writing, so almost no independent parts. String-crossing motives develop good bowing flexibility, with bowings and dynamic contrast carefully marked. Brief pizzicato phrase provides nice texture change. Opening call is presented in 1st violins and can be assigned to 1-2 soloists if desired.

El Toro Don Brubaker gr. 2 2:20 duration

A Spanish dance piece programmatic of a Madrid bullfight. 3/4 time in G Major. Counting rests and ties can present challenge for younger players. Plenty of staccato practice. Middle section involves a stop and ad lib segment featuring a conversation between the matador (solo violin) and the bull (solo cello). The fight resumes with castanet-like rhythm, accelerating to the end (if the students can stay together :-)!)

Del Whitman- Lincoln Public Schools- dwhit@lps.org



Del Whitman is in his thirty-something year as a music educator in Lincoln Public Schools, teaching orchestras at Lux Middle School and Lincoln East High School. He serves as department chair at East, supporting 7 other music staff in a department that received the NMEA Exemplary Program Award in 2018.

Mr. Whitman received his degrees from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville and the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He was NMEA Chair of Orchestra Affairs in 1995 and 2014, has received the Fretwell Outstanding Educator Award from BSA, was recognized as the NFHS 2020 Nebraska Music Educator of the Year, and is a two-time recipient of the Nebraska-ASTA Public School String Teacher of the Year.

He is an active member of the First Evangelical Free Church in Lincoln, and enjoys cello-gigging at weddings and churches in the area, while relishing home-time with his wonderful wife, Julie. He loves pineapple, basketball, can moonwalk, and once almost poked his eye out with the baton.

Ablaze
Chris M. Bernotas

Erin Aguirre (Central Middle School, Millard Public Schools) Guest Conductor

Grade 2.5 (Medium Easy)

Published by Highland/Etling 2014

Duration: 2:30

Program Notes:

This fierce concert piece takes the orchestra on an exciting musical journey. With strong rhythm and melodic themes, each section has the opportunity to perform important lines. Students will be challenged to perform with various emotional styles, including both intense and legato melodies.

Instrumentation:

This piece is written for string orchestra and includes an optional piano accompaniment, which doubles the string parts.

Technical Considerations:

- Key: G Major
- Time signature: 4/4
- Tempo: quarter note=136, no tempo changes
- Shifting: basses have brief passages in 1/2 and 3rd positions; all other parts are entirely played in first position
- Rhythm: whole, dotted half, half, quarter, eighth notes and rests, sixteenth (1e&)
- Articulation: slurs, staccato, accents

Range:

- Violin 1: D (open) - B (E string)
- Violin 2: B (G string) - G (E string)
- Viola: E (C string) - A (open)
- Cello: B (G string) - D (A string)
- Bass: E (open) - D (G string, 3rd pos.)

Note from Guest Conductor:

Students really enjoy this piece. The rhythms aren't too tricky, and it is easy to align the parts together within the ensemble. The variety of articulation and interesting melodic lines keep students engaged. Students also have success rehearsing this in small groups.

Fantasy on a Japanese Folk Song
Brian Balmages

Erin Aguirre (Central Middle School, Millard Public Schools) Guest Conductor

Grade 1.5 (Easy)

Published by FJH 2013

Duration: 3:00

Program Notes:

The haunting *Sakura* melody moves through stunning and beautiful transformations in this musical fantasy before finally coming to rest. Tonal centers switch between minor and major as traditional melodies intertwine with thoughtful countermelodies and contemporary harmonies. Simply gorgeous!

Instrumentation:

This piece is written for string orchestra and includes an optional piano accompaniment, which doubles the string parts.

Technical Considerations:

- Key: b natural minor, D Major
- Time signature: 4/4
- Tempo: quarter note=72, poco rit, rit, a tempo, meno mosso
- Shifting: basses have brief passages in 2nd and 3rd positions; all other parts are entirely played in first position
- Rhythm: whole, half, quarter, eighth
- Articulation: slurs

Range:

- Violin 1: C (G string) - A (E string)
- Violin 2: G (open) - E (A string)
- Viola: G (open) - B (A string)
- Cello: G (open) - D (A string)
- Bass: A (open) - D (G string, 3rd pos.)

Note from Guest Conductor:

This piece is perfect for building and/or reviewing skills in tone, dynamics, and phrasing. There are many opportunities to add vibrato as well. Students enjoy it, because it is not too technically challenging, and it sounds BEAUTIFUL.

Erin Birkestrand Aguirre is in her 23rd year of teaching. She taught middle school and elementary orchestra in Millard Public Schools (Omaha, NE) for 9 years. She taught violin at the Omaha Conservatory of Music and served as district orchestra director in the Great Bend (Kansas) school district. She is currently teaching English Learners at Millard Central Middle. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in music education from Luther College (Decorah, Iowa) and will complete a master's degree in literacy at the University of Nebraska at Omaha this spring. Erin has served as president of Nebraska ASTA and was the recipient of the chapter's Outstanding Public School Teacher award in 2014. She has presented at the Nebraska Music Educators conference and has served as an adjudicator throughout Nebraska and Kansas. Erin performs with Lincoln's Symphony Orchestra and the Mahr String Quartet. She lives in Omaha with her husband, two daughters, and Australian shepherd.

Zuma Breakers by Doug Spata

Grade - 1.5

Publisher – Highland/Etling (Alfred) - 2014 Performance Time – 1:45

Publisher Notes: Paying tribute to great artists like Dick Dale, The Ventures, and Jan and Dean, here is an exciting, fast-paced piece in the style of classic 1960s surf rock. Easy eighth and quarter note rhythms and a focus on first and second finger patterns make it approachable for beginners, and it's a fun way to apply lessons in reading G-string notes. The optional drum kit part adds flair to the rock style.

Teaching Highlights: First position for all instruments, accents, various dynamics, staccato, crescendos, repeats optional trap set

Aurora Borealis by Michael Hopkins

Grade – 2.5

Publisher – Belwin/Alfred – 2010 Performance Time – 3:05

Publisher Notes: An aurora is a natural electrical phenomenon characterized by the appearance of streamers of reddish or greenish light in the sky, usually near the northern or southern magnetic pole. The effect is caused by the interaction of charged particles from the sun with atoms in the upper atmosphere. In northern and southern regions it is respectively called aurora borealis, or northern lights, and aurora australis, or southern lights.

The eighth notes with a staccato indication can be played either detached and on-the-string or with an off-the-strings spiccato stroke. Quarter notes should be played with slight separation. In the G major section from mm. 40-72, the melody can be played more legato, and at m.56 the Violin 2 and Cello parts should be the most prominent. Strict observance of the dynamics will add to the excitement of the piece.

Teaching Highlights: e minor, pizzicato, crescendos, decrescendos, various dynamics, accents, 16th notes, melodies passed throughout orchestra, staccato, legato

Guest Conductor

Tom Miller, Alice Buffett Magnet Middle School, Omaha Public Schools

Thomas.Miller@ops.org

NMEA Middle Level Reading Session 2021



Tom Miller is a graduate from the University of Nebraska at Omaha where he holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education. Tom taught 4th-12th grade strings and high school show choir in Sioux City, Iowa for 7 years and is now in his 13th year at Buffett Middle School, where he directs the 5th – 8th grade Orchestras and the Buffett Drama Club. He has been on the teaching faculty of the Omaha Conservatory of Music, Leo Kucinski Academy of Music (at Morningside College), and is currently at SNJ Studios, where he also serves as the strings department head. He has been a recipient of the Nebraska ASTA Outstanding Teacher of the Year award and the Omaha Public Schools Alice Buffett Outstanding Teacher award. He currently serves as president-elect for Nebraska ASTA and serves as a sectional coach for the Omaha Area Youth Orchestras.

As an active performer throughout the community, he has also performed both nationally and internationally. As a professional bassist, he has played with Harry Connick, Michael W. Smith, Josh Groban, the Nelson Riddle Orchestra, the Mantovani Tour Orchestra, the North American Tour of Spamalot, as Principal Bass for the Sioux City Symphony (10 years), Orchestra Omaha, and served as a guest artist for the Jazz Series at Buena Vista University. He has also directed, been on stage, and in the pit orchestras for over 150 musical and theater productions.