

## **Demonstrated Learning: A Festival Performance, Adjudication and Workshop**

### **Seventeenth Annual Da Capo Conference – Saturday, January 21, 2023**

Today's workshop is Part I of a two-part series that is designed to help music educators thrive in the planning and execution of a festival performance. This morning we will hear an ensemble perform, and attendees are encouraged to listen to the ensemble as you imagine an adjudicator would listen; access the digital scores (QR code provided) and reference the assessment tools found in your registration packet.

The group has warmed up in the School of Music just like they would for a festival, and the ensemble will enter, be introduced, and perform in a "normal" festival format. The two adjudicators will present observations through written and recorded comments. Today's performance is being recorded for post-performance review. Following the live performance, the ensemble will receive a timed clinic. And to close the session, we will address festival performance assessment from an adjudicator's perspective.

In Part II, Erin Dodds will present "Planning for Learning: Negotiating the Musical, Administrative, and Logistical Elements of Festival Performance."

#### **THE ENSEMBLE:**

*Brandon Grade 8-9 Wind Ensemble*

Erin Dodds and Graydon Cramer, conductors

#### **THE ADJUDICATORS:**

Kevin Doell and Wendy Zander McCallum

#### **THE PROGRAM:**

*Arctic Wars*      Brian Balmages

*Canticle*          Douglas Wagner

#### **ASSESSMENT DOCUMENTS:**

Manitoba Band Association Family of Festivals Rubrics

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u-2\\_m5WbxwYY-UOcisb1\\_zo8z5uAxxFR/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u-2_m5WbxwYY-UOcisb1_zo8z5uAxxFR/view)

Con Brio Festival (Whistler and Sun Peaks) Checklist

<https://conbriofestivals.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/adjudication-sheet-concert-band.pdf>

#### **ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE:**

Berman, A. S., "Judgment Day," *Teaching Music*. August 2015, (pp. 30-34)

[https://nafme.org/wp-](https://nafme.org/wp-content/magazine/2015/Teaching%20Music%20Magazine%20August%202015.pdf)

[content/magazine/2015/Teaching%20Music%20Magazine%20August%202015.pdf](https://nafme.org/wp-content/magazine/2015/Teaching%20Music%20Magazine%20August%202015.pdf)

# **Making the Most of Performance Opportunities**

**Manitoba Band Association Band News - 2005**

**Wendy Zander McCallum, DMA**

Throughout the school year, concert band and jazz ensemble performances have diverse and significant roles in instrumental music education programs. Sometimes performances are scheduled to fit into a program's curricular sequence, while others have a specific social function in school activities or community events. Performance goals may include enhancing musical understanding, educating audiences about the program's curriculum, or creating assessment opportunities.

In order to take advantage of a performance as an educational opportunity, it is important to both set realistic goals *and* communicate these goals with ensemble members. In some instances, such as competitive festivals, failure to communicate performance goals results in an overly competitive environment. The following paragraphs serve as a checklist of what factors to consider when preparing young students for ensemble performances.

The more prepared young students are for unfamiliar territory, the better off they will fare. Because musicians become accustomed to their rehearsal space in a school's band room, it is important to prepare them to perform in unfamiliar spaces.

In addition to discussing an unfamiliar venue, consider discussing exactly what the performance schedule will be. The more informed that students are about the proposed schedule of events, the quicker they can adjust to your expectations.

During rehearsal time, review the warm-up schedule, performance routines, and stage etiquette that you anticipate. Provide as many details as possible well in advance and review carefully before the event. If students can run through the performance in their mind's eye, they can appreciate the experience to its fullest and pay closer attention to the composer's, conductor's, and clinician's musical expectations.

Additional preparation may be required for percussionists who are not only being asked to play in a new venue, but also on unfamiliar instruments. Find out as much information as you can about what percussion equipment will be provided and how the equipment will be configured. In jazz bands, soloists must coordinate movement on stage. Brent Campbell, a director at Vincent Massey School in the Brandon School Division, has students rehearse how to perform using microphones. Although amplification is not required in a typical band room, students must become accustomed to having a microphone and to using it effectively. In a jazz setting, musicians who use amplified equipment must be comfortable adjusting settings and checking for feedback from

the director during performance. In both concert band and jazz ensemble settings, soloists must be prepared to acknowledge applause during or after the performance.

The warm-up space for a performing ensemble may vary in size, temperature, and acoustics from a group's familiar space. To alleviate confusion and clutter, discuss where to place instrument cases and personal items. Consider transporting folders together in one central crate and have section leaders retrieve the music from a student music librarian. Establish a tuning protocol for individuals and sections and consider having a structured full ensemble warm-up that parallels the format of your regular rehearsal. A well-organized warm-up establishes a solid foundation for a successful performance.

There is often a very specific amount of time allotted to the warm-up room, so make sure you allow enough time to move to the stage area; students who are "rushed" are often unable to mentally prepare for the performance and cannot regain focus. Before the ensemble moves to the stage, take time to review your performance goals. Cheryl Ferguson, a director in Pembina Trails School Division at Charleswood Junior High, increases individual mental focus by asking students to "picture the face of the person they are playing for today." This strategy allows students to assess what is meaningful to them as individuals and adds another dimension to the performance experience. Taking time to highlight the *purpose* of the performance is as important as the performance itself.

A great deal of preparation for the actual performance also takes place weeks before the performance itself. Discuss the performance venue with the students. Share information about the acoustics of the hall, the number of chairs available for audience seating, and what you expect in terms of stage etiquette. Once on stage, students should automatically check the placement of their chair and height of their stand. Repertoire in student folders should be organized in concert order. By letting young musicians know exactly when to stand, how to acknowledge applause, when/how to tune, and when/how to accommodate percussion and personnel changes, the performance experience becomes increasingly familiar.

Imagery is a powerful tool when preparing students for successful performances. In the end, the technical security that an ensemble achieves in their band room can translate to musical independence on an unfamiliar stage. A well-prepared ensemble will appear confident and be prepared to play their best. Audiences and adjudicators make a wide variety of decisions about an ensemble's performance before they play a single note, and simple preparation can lead to a successful first impression.