

Ensemble

Title of Musical Selection

Second Suite in F

Composer

Gustav Holst

Performer(s)

University of Michigan Symphonic Band 2019

Observation #1

The Euphonium carries large portions of the more exposed melody such as around 4 minutes in, where the ensemble is quieter and the euphonium

Observation #2

~6:40 the melody is being passed around sort of in waves as instruments crescendo and decrescendo as other instruments take over the melody

Observation #3

7:19 the release from the ensemble is very stylistically appropriate. I wish that Michael Haithcock (the conductor) had taken more time to allow for tension to build before bringing the trumpets and the rest of the ensemble back in.

Observation #4

Towards the end of the second movement around 7:25 the ending melody gets passed around the ensemble ending on the tuba which is an odd occurrence and a bit hard to hear in this recording.

Observation #5

In Mvmt 3- Song of a Blacksmith it starts very staccato and loud, especially in comparison to the previous movement, but you can hear some instruments holding over a bit longer than others. You also see interesting percussion that's reminiscent of an anvil

What did you learn that will help you be a better musician/performer?

It's important to listen across to make sure you're fitting into the texture properly and it's important to listen to the lengths of the articulations being played by others in your section.

Choose one performance aspect that was exemplary and describe how we can use this example to improve our ensemble performance.

In the first movement- March and the end of the fourth movement- Fantasia on the Dargason you can really hear how the ensemble is listening for the soloists at any given point and you can see how they're making eye contact with the conductor for help with dynamics. It's important to always be aware of how loud soloists are actually playing in the moment vs what they should be playing

Title of Musical Selection

Sunrise at Angel's Gate

Composer

Phillip Sparke

Performer(s)

Nagoya University Wind Ensemble

Observation #1

The percussion and the solo melodies at the beginning of the piece make me feel like this is music that I would actually hear at the opening of some heavenly gate.

Observation #2

I enjoy how this piece showcases different sections of the band. There are sections with just brass, just woodwinds, just low brass, just percussion, and etc.

Observation #3

The different colors used in this piece are translated well by the ensemble. It sounds like they really understand the imagery in this piece.

Observation #4

The group does really well at exaggerating the dynamics. Even though I don't know the piece, I feel like I can tell what the various dynamic levels are, even within just a couple of measures.

Observation #5

Even though there is a fast section it still sounds really peaceful like the beginning of the piece, just more triumphant. The ensemble does a really good job of keeping the same peaceful character in the faster section.

What did you learn that will help you be a better musician/performer?

I did some research on what Angel's Gate is and found out that is a formation in the Grand Canyon. Now that I know the story behind the piece, I understand it a bit more as well as what the performers were trying to tell to the audience. Having an understanding of what you're playing and its meaning can translate to an even better performance.

Choose one performance aspect that was exemplary and describe how we can use this example to improve our ensemble performance.

All sections in this ensemble had really great articulations that were very clear and created resonance for the entire group. This is something that everyone in our ensemble could work on by making sure that they match the people around them with regards to articulation. Being on the same page will make us sound more united.