



Writing for Wind Ensemble in the 21st Century

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History

- ‡ Developed out of the military band tradition of the late 19th and early 20th century
- ‡ Started in the early 1950s with the formation of the Eastman Wind Ensemble at the Eastman School of Music, and became popular in universities
- ‡ Wind ensembles utilized similar instrumentation to a military band, but model themselves musically after orchestras

Famous Wind Ensembles

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| ‡ Eastman Wind Ensemble | ‡ Cincinnati Wind Symphony |
| ‡ New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble | ‡ Tokyo Kosei Wind Orchestra |
| ‡ North Texas Wind Symphony | ‡ Dallas Wind Symphony |
| | ‡ Illinois Wind Symphony |

Issues in Writing for Modern Wind Ensemble

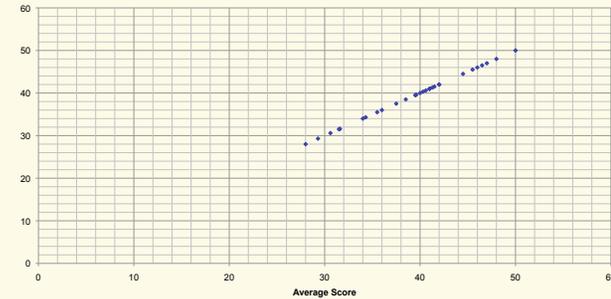
- ‡ Still regarded by some as just marches and military music
- ‡ Popularity in middle and high schools creates a market for composing specifically for young groups
- ‡ Wind ensemble not always treated as seriously as orchestra in academic curriculum

The Project

- ‡ Study of wind ensemble music since 1975
- ‡ Compiled list of composers and pieces from concert programs and recordings
- ‡ Chose a sample of three pieces from each composer, studied scores and recordings
- ‡ Evaluated and scored each piece based on a specific set of criteria:
 - ‡ Perceived function of piece
 - ‡ Use of texture
 - ‡ Favored and unique colors
 - ‡ Formal design of piece
 - ‡ Innovative vs. derivative pieces
 - ‡ Stylistic influences
- ‡ Each piece assigned a score out of 50 points based on its fulfillment of this criteria



Average Composer Ratings



Scoring categories (each scored 1-10 points): 1. Derivative→Innovative, 2. Formal Coherence, 3. Self-Regulation, 4. Transformation, 5. Wholeness

- ‡ Points on graph represent the averaged scores of one of the composers surveyed.

Conclusions on Successful Wind Ensemble Writing

- ‡ Dynamic use of orchestration and texture
- ‡ Interesting melodic and harmonic material
- ‡ Innovative use of form, sense of development
- ‡ Wide use of dynamic range of ensemble- not just loud band music
- ‡ Variety of influences, from Eastern music to jazz and popular music
- ‡ Creative use of the percussion section
- ‡ Use of extended techniques or unique sounds

Joseph Schwantner



Selected Composers: Average Scores & Pieces

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|
| ‡ Joseph Schwantner (50) | ‡ Frank Ticheli (41) |
| ‡ and the mountains rising nowhere | ‡ Wild Nights |
| ‡ David Dzubay (46.5) | ‡ Dana Wilson (40.3) |
| ‡ Myaku | ‡ Vortex |
| ‡ Michael Daugherty (44.5) | ‡ Eric Whitacre (40.6) |
| ‡ Brooklyn Bridge | ‡ Ghost Train Triptych |
| ‡ Karel Husa (48) | ‡ Donald Grantham (46) |
| ‡ Smetana Fanfare | ‡ Bum's Rush |

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