

Descriptions of the music by Steven Wampler

Asunder! – People’s lives don’t always go the way we wish and often events are out of our control. I wanted to write a mixed meter piece and the word “asunder” must have been in my subconscious. There is a lot of passion in this piece and a lot of rhythmic challenges for the ensemble

The Ebony Rag

The Furnace Inn March – The Furnace Inn of Elkridge, Maryland was established in 1744 with an iron smelting furnace added in 1750. Today, the Furnace Inn is a well known elegant restaurant well known to the Baltimore area on the banks of the Patapsco River. This is my tribute to a piece of American history.

Jingle Bells/The Dreidle Song - I like to end my concert with a combined piece so that my 4th grade band stays and hears the 5th grade band and gets a chance to play with them at the first concert. Both of these pieces work with the music from any beginning band book. The advanced group plays an intro and a strain and the beginners join them on the chorus. It’s a big tradition at my school that the kids all look forward to. Warning – Flutes and 1st Clarinets have to play in their upper registers.

Joshua – This is a spiritual put into a jazz setting with a chance for all of the sections to shine. There’s a trumpet solo, a sax soli section and a woodwind soli section with a big “Yeah!” at the end. My students love it.

March Chromatica – As a band director, I grew tired of teaching the chromatic scale without being able to make it relevant to my players. I wrote this piece and now, my students understand why we learn the chromatic scale.

Procession of the Statesmen – In the last several years, the Social Studies Curriculum in my county have a Simulated Congressional Hearing with a big opening ceremony with local dignitaries. This piece is written for the young students to process in, dressed in their finest attire. It includes triplets and dotted eighths/sixteenths.

Valor – When I taught at the high school level, one of my former students joined a Marine Band and was shipped to Iraq. In the Marines you are a rifleman first and everything else second, so this young man was in harm’s way every day. I gave a great deal of thought to the members of the Armed Forces whose lives are at risk every day and wrote this piece for them. There are little snippets of the Army Song and the Marines Hymn as well as the National Anthem. The percussion Battery represents the unrelenting sounds of combat.

Minikin – The term “minikin” means small or petite, and I originally set out to write a petite symphony, with the first movement being the Minikin. It has been performed as *Minikin for Strings* and *Minikin for Full Orchestra* with success.

The Merry Go Round – “Life is a merry go round” and this piece reflects the circus that we call life. It’s been performed for Strings and Percussion as well as Full Orchestra. It fits into the Minikin as a 3rd movement.

Pizzicato Humoreske – I wrote this piece for Chamber Orchestra and for strings alone. It’s a fun piece and gives the strings a workout on the chromatic scale, too! It works as a 4th movement of the Minikin.

Spirituoso for Strings – Saying goodbye to my border collie was one of the toughest things I’ve done in my life. She was so full of love and life and I wrote this song to celebrate the spirit of Lucy.

Battle of the Ironclads – 2012 marks the 150th Anniversary of the clash between the Virginia and the Monitor, the two ironclad vessels of the United States and the Confederate States during the Civil War. In reading the history, I found that both sides held prayers before lowering themselves into their unsafe vessels to do battle under the water level. The music gives reflection to the prayers, the steam powered motors and the ultimate sinking of the vessels.

Bio –

Steven Wampler is a native of Virginia. He entered the US Army as a bandsman and studied Music Education at the University of Connecticut with a B.S. and M.M. in Music Education. After teaching high school band in Barre, Vermont; Plainfield, Connecticut; Fairfax County, Virginia; and Howard County, Maryland for 22 years, he now teaches elementary band at Elkridge Elementary School in Elkridge, Maryland. If you can't find him playing and conducting music in the Maryland area, try looking for him at a poker table.

He has studied conducting with Larry Ratchiff, Dr. Dutch Cossaboom, Craif Kirchoff, Eugene Corporon, and Gary Green.