

FOREWORD

The field of music performance is very competitive and musicians are constantly competing against one another for positions in school bands and orchestras to professional symphonies. Students first experience this when they play for their grade school directors or solo and ensemble festivals held in most states.

A musician prepares for an audition by practicing a selection of music until there are no mistakes in pitch, rhythm, dynamics, intonation and phrasing. Although these elements are crucial when **performing** an audition, the most essential element necessary for **winning** an audition is musicianship. Musicianship can be defined as the ability to communicate the emotional content of the music. Music may be the only art that after one has mastered the performance of the written notes, the job has only begun!

I have chosen fifteen of my compositions (from previously published books, with the exception of PENTAGONAL PANIC, a new work) that I feel are appropriate for student solo auditions and contests. Most of these pieces have undergone additions and/or revisions of the original material to allow the musicians a greater display of technique and interpretation.

Observations and interpretations about each composition are included in this text to help the player better understand the form and emotional content of the music. I have also provided examples of how to interpret various sections to add that elusive element of musicianship.

I would like to share three words with everyone that uses this material. I learned them from my former teacher, Saul Goodman, of the Juilliard School of Music. These words have become the foundation of my teaching philosophy:

PRECISION, SENSITIVITY, MUSICALITY.

Precision refers to the technique one needs to master the execution of the music.

Sensitivity is the insight into the music that releases the emotional content.

Musicality results when the technique and interpretation combine to produce musicianship—the element that wins auditions!

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RUFF AND READY MARCH

The word “Ruff” in the title refers to the “drag” rudiment that dominates the character of this work. The music is written in an ABA form: A Opening theme, B Softer middle section, A Return to the main theme.

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Look for clues from composers in the tempo markings to get an idea of the character of the music. In this case, the composer uses the word *marziale* (march-like), to describe the music. The performer needs to portray this feeling by maintaining a strict tempo and marked emphasis on every beat.
2. A march-like character can also be represented by the sound of the rolls. Instead of playing a very closed roll, use more of an open (measured) roll, which will add to a marching feeling.

INTERPRETATIONS:

1. Play the drags as a closed rudiment; that is, with a bounce stroke — not as two separate strokes.
2. Use the center of the snare drum for all loud passages and play nearer to the edge of the drum for the soft (*piano*) section (Letter A).
3. Use the following, alternating, sticking for the eighth and two-sixteenth patterns for more control and an even rhythm. Lead with either the right or left hand.



4. The *forte piano* (*fp*) marking, two measures before Letter B, is best executed with an initial loud stroke on the roll, then, immediately continue with softer roll strokes.
5. The following sticking is suggested for the drag passage, beginning 3 measures after Letter C:



6. The final note, marked with a “wedge” accent, is louder than a normal accent. Since the dynamic of the final note is *ff*, this is the loudest note of the piece.

Timpani
Grade IV

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEY

Moderato ♩. = 76

F, Bb, D

f

4 **A**

F to F# Bb to A

p

cresc.

f

B

C

6

A to Bb F# to F

D

f