

# THE GIFT OF GIVING

(The Power of a Wish)

BRIAN BALMAGES

## INSTRUMENTATION

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- 1 Conductor Score
- 8 Violin 1
- 8 Violin 2
- 5 Violin 3 (Viola T.C.)
- 5 Viola
- 5 Violoncello
- 5 Double Bass



**Please note:** Our band and orchestra music is collated by an automatic high-speed system. The enclosed parts are now sorted by page count, rather than score order.



## THE COMPOSER

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Brian Balmages is known worldwide as a composer and conductor who equally spans the worlds of orchestral, band, and chamber music. His music has been performed by groups ranging from professional symphony orchestras to elementary schools in venues such as Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, Sydney Opera House, Toronto Centre for the Arts, and many more. He is a recipient of the A. Austin Harding Award from the American School Band Directors Association, the International Outstanding Contributor Award from Phi Beta Mu, won the NBA William D. Revelli Composition Contest with his work *Love and Light*, and is an elected member of the prestigious American Bandmasters Association. Balmages was awarded the inaugural James Madison University Distinguished Alumni Award from the School of Visual and Performing Arts. In the same year, he was

commissioned by his other alma mater, the University of Miami, to compose music for the inauguration of the institution's 6th president, Dr. Julio Frenk. His music was also performed as part of the 2013 Presidential Inaugural Prayer Service, which was attended by both President Obama and Vice President Biden.

As a conductor, Mr. Balmages enjoys regular engagements with all-state bands and orchestras as well as university and professional groups throughout the world. He has appeared in nearly all 50 states, with notable guest conducting appearances including "The President's Own" United States Marine Band, United States Air Force Band, The Midwest Clinic, Western International Band Clinic, Maryborough Music Conference (Australia), Teatro dell'Aquila (Italy), and others. Currently, he is Director of MakeMusic Publications and Digital Education for Alfred and MakeMusic.

## ABOUT THE MUSIC

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We sometimes forget what a powerful impact an individual can make. How a single person's actions can change a community for the better. How a music program can be so much more than just "band, orchestra, and choir." Well, it's not only time to remember this: it is time to *prove it*. All proceeds I receive from this piece will support the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Here is the powerful story...

Melody Jackson was a 16-year-old band student at Reeltown High School in Alabama. In the summer of 2023, she was diagnosed with adrenocortical carcinoma, a rare form of terminal cancer. Doctors said she would be lucky to have even a few more months. The community jumped into action. That fall, Melody was crowned homecoming queen. In addition, the school held a surprise graduation ceremony for her, giving her a class ring, cap and gown, diploma, and letterman jacket.

Yet, it was Melody who gave back to her alma mater through Make-A-Wish Alabama. The organization has long been known to grant wishes for children dealing with critical illness. It is quite common for children to wish to meet someone famous, or to take an incredible trip somewhere. But not Melody. In one of the most selfless wishes possible, Melody's wish was for her high school marching band to receive new uniforms. That wish was granted, and while Melody passed away on February 5, 2024, the school surprised the community that fall with the new uniforms while also taking time to honor Melody and her family. The school band was then invited to perform at the Alabama Make-A-Wish conference.

It is hard to comprehend anyone being so selfless, and this is a powerful reminder that the act of giving not only benefits the recipient, but is also a gift to those who donate, whether it is in the form of money, time, or countless other ways of giving. The gift of giving benefits everyone. In a world that often seems so full of anger, hate, and division, we need to do everything we can to highlight the beautiful aspects of humanity. Melody did, and so can we.

My hope is that giving will not end with the purchase of this piece. I hope that groups will hold fundraisers in their own communities: clothing drives, food drives, gift collections, volunteering in the community, supporting local shelters, rehab facilities, and more. Maybe all of us can be fortunate enough to receive the gift of giving.

The music itself begins with the painful reality of critical illness and the incredible stress it places on families. Even still, rays of hope peek through the clouds and a sweet melody attempts to provide comfort. There is a long build toward a section marked "Heartwarming." When Eric Thompson, director of bands at Reeltown High School, contacted me, he was hoping there could be a signature moment that symbolized when a wish is granted. Many families indicate that this moment was a turning point in treatment, and nearly all doctors say that wishes help relieve families from traumatic stress. My hope is that this music helps families and communities heal, and inspires people to give back and care for each other. Once again, let's show the world what the power of music can do.

*The Gift of Giving* is dedicated to Melody Jackson and the Reeltown High School Band. It is available in both concert band and string orchestra versions.

-Brian Balmages

DURATION: 5:30

for Melody Jackson and the Make-A-Wish Foundation  
**THE GIFT OF GIVING**  
(The Power of a Wish)

BRIAN BALMAGES  
(ASCAP)

Adagio con dolore (♩ = 76)

Violin 1  
Violin 2  
Viola (Violin 3)  
Violoncello  
Double Bass

2 poco rit. 9 a tempo

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vcl.  
D.B.

rit. 17 a tempo

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vcl.  
D.B.

div. always

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl. non div.

D.B.

19 20 21 22 23 24

rit. 29 a tempo

Vln. 1 *f* *mp*

Vln. 2 *f* *mp*

Vla. *f* *mp*

Vcl. *f* *mp*

D.B. *f* *mp* pizz.

25 26 27 28 29 30

rit. (♩ = 60) poco rit.

Vln. 1 *p*

Vln. 2 *p*

Vla. *p*

Vcl. *p* arco

D.B. *p*

31 32 33 34 35 36

38 a tempo

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vcl.  
D.B.

*p* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp*

37 38 39 40 41 42

div. pizz.

46

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vcl.  
D.B.

*p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p* *mp* *p*

43 44 45 46 47 48

arco

54

Vln. 1  
Vln. 2  
Vla.  
Vcl.  
D.B.

*mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mp* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

49 50 51 52 53 54

pizz. arco

60 con moto

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. *non div.*

Vcl.

D.B.

55 56 57 58 59 60

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

*f*

*div. always*

*f*

*f*

61 62 63 64 65 66

*molto rit.* 68 Heartwarming (♩ = 60)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl. *non div.*

D.B.

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*ff*

*div.*

*non div.*

67 68 69 70 71 72

poco rit. 76 a tempo

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. non div.

Vcl.

D.B.

73 74 75 76 77 78

accel. 84 meno mosso

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

79 80 81 82 83 84

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla. Solo p

Vcl. Solo p

D.B.

85 86 87 88 89 90 91

rit.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

*p*

*mp*

at the tip

tutti

div. V

92 93 94 95 96 97

99 Tempo I (♩ = 76)

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

pizz.

98 99 100 101 102 103

rit.

Vln. 1

Vln. 2

Vla.

Vcl.

D.B.

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

*pp*

arco

104 105 106 107 108 109