

Northwestern Blues

Seth Gamba

For STRING ORCHESTRA

Full Score

Instrumentation

1 Full Score
8 Violin 1
8 Violin 2
5 Viola
5 Cello
5 Bass
Optional Electric Bass Guitar
1 Piano (optional)
1 Drumset

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PUBLICATIONS

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About the Composer

Seth Gamba is currently the orchestra director at the Elkins Pointe Middle School in Fulton County, Georgia, and the electric violinist in the rock band The Expats. He is well-known as a composer and adjudicator, having given presentations at the state and national level on topics including teaching rhythm, double bass pedagogy, and teaching class guitar. Mr. Gamba's orchestra has been featured at state conferences, and his compositions have frequently been performed at the annual GMEA conference. He currently has two compositions on the GMEA approved list for level 3 orchestra.

Seth Gamba grew up in Cobb County, Georgia, where he began playing the bass in the 6th grade public school orchestra. He is a graduate of Walton High School, and earned his bachelor's degree from Indiana University, with a double major in Double Bass and Civics. He has a Master of Music Education degree from the University of Georgia.

Program Notes

Northwestern Blues is a rockin' 12-bar blues in G with a blues-scale based melody, a funky bass line, drum set, and buckets of soul! **Northwestern Blues** will give your students the chance to explore rock, jazz, optional improvisation, and a host of fun extended techniques in an instrumental setting that guarantees a rockin' good time! **Northwestern Blues** was commissioned by Northwestern Middle School in Milton, GA for the 2022 GMEA conference.

Performance Notes

Northwestern Blues is a rock-jazz fusion piece intended to have straight eighth notes. If you prefer, however, it also works with a swing feel. If you decide to swing it, the drumset part would need to be modified for that purpose. Written-out solos are provided, but those can be replaced with improvised student solos. In fact, I recommend penciling in a repeat from measure 53 to measure 76 and letting as many students as you like take an improvised solo! The written solos are provided in every part, but solo 1 is optimized for a viola, cello, or bass player, as it does not include any E-string notes. Solo 2 is intended for violin. If you are using **Northwestern Blues** as a vehicle for teaching improvisation, you can use the written solos as section soli in between improvisations the way a jazz big band would do a shout chorus.

I have created a video tutorial on how to do the picking section in the violin and viola parts. You can find it on YouTube by searching for "Northwestern Blues Strumming Tutorial" or at this link: <https://youtu.be/kZgK1e2YWqA>

Editor's Note

Orchestral bowings and fingerings can be highly subjective and personal. The choices a string editor makes are designed to be pedagogically appropriate for specific grade levels while facilitating student musicality and honoring composer intent. The editorial additions in the following composition will provide guidance "right out of the box" for the non-string player and suggest some options for the advanced string specialist. Enjoy!

J. Cameron Law, String Editor

Musical score for measures 13-17. The score is written for a piano with five staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first staff is the treble clef, the second and third are alto clefs, the fourth is the bass clef, and the fifth is a percussion staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. A large, faint watermark 'SAMPLE' is visible across the score.

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27

29

1/2 tacit

pick* tutti

f

mf

$sfzp$

mf

p

mf

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

*Play in guitar position with a pick

[illegible]

59

50255207

Musical score for measures 65-70. The score is written for a solo/soli section. It features a melody in the upper staves and accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked *f* (forte). The dynamics are marked *div.* (divisi), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *sim.* (simultaneo). The score includes a large watermark reading "SAMPLE".

Musical score for measures 71-76. The score continues the solo/soli section. It features a melody in the upper staves and accompaniment in the lower staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked *f* (forte). The dynamics are marked *sfzp* (sforzando piano) and *p* (piano). The score includes a large watermark reading "SAMPLE".

77

sfz *p* *mf* *sfz* *p* *mf*

sfz *p* *mf* *sfz* *p* *mf*

mf *mf*

mf

mf

mf

[illegible]

SAMPLE

SAMPLE

More Music for String Orchestra

FULL ENSEMBLE WORKS

BLACKWOOD, MICHAEL

50250129 Rogue's Revenge (Grade 1.5)

An E minor driving rock beat and two sets of parts will allow you to combine absolute beginners and second year students with great success. The easier parts are all high 2s, simple rhythms, and use limited range. Advanced parts use 4th fingers, high and low 2s, and have some longer note values for developing counting skills. Adding a drumset helps keep the ensemble together.

CHAMINADE, CECILE

Levin, Andrew

50250143 Danse Creole (Grade 4)

This charming dance features translucent harmony as only Chaminade can write. There are dramatic moments of rubato that will force your group to grow musically. There is a need for some skill in bowing and a good deal of chromaticism along with some extended range.

GRAINGER, PERCY ALDRIDGE

Longfield, Robert

50250068 Three Movements from Lincolnshire Posy (Grade 3)

Long a staple of wind band literature, Lincolnshire Posy has never been set for any other medium. Robert Longfield has crafted this stunning arrangement for strings that has all of the Grainger style and spirit.

GRIESINGER, KATHRYN

50250105 Popcorn (Grade 1)

No bows required! This unison pizzicato piece for beginning strings and piano is perfect for the very first concert. Using only quarter rests and quarter notes of the D major scale, the upbeat tune gives students the chance to "pop" up out of their chairs in the middle section of the work. A delightful treat for young musicians and audiences alike!

KOLLER, INGRID

50250144 Adeste Fiddles (Grade 1.5)

A traditional carol with a distinctly non-traditional approach! Some old-time fiddling figures combine with the carol in a comfortable key of D major. Easy parts for violin, viola, and violoncello allow students who haven't advanced to extensions perform with success.

PACHELBEL, JOHANN

Svendsen, Johan Severin

52250498 First Finger Pachelbel (Grade 1)

REZNICOW, JOSHUA

52250538 American Sketches (Grade 4)

52250372 Eclipse (Grade 2)

50250133 Phantom's Night: Legends Of Cuba Road (Grade 2.5)

Perfect for your Halloween concert, this spooky piece in G minor has a good bit of divisi in the violins. There are two cello parts, one that shifts and one that does not. Special effects such as glissandi and tremolo abound, including heavy accents and easy double stops. Basses use half position extensively and there are many chromatic notes in all sections -- plus a cello solo!

ROSENHAUS, STEVEN

50250137 Tangled Tango (Grade 2)

Don't get your fingers tangled in the chromatic fingerings! Alternating arco and pizzicato makes things even more interesting (plus some hooked bowings for the fun of it). Everyone gets the melody, with the exception of the basses, who are kept occupied laying down the tango groove.

SAINT SAENS, CAMILLE

Hall, Percy

50250003 Danse Macabre (Grade 3)

There are very few cuts made in this eerie, phantasmal tour de force. At least two solo violinists are needed because of unusual tuning. Be ready for a frightened audience!

SANZ, GASPAR

Longfield, Robert

50250109 Canarios (Grade 2.5)

The guitar music of Gaspar Sanz retains its popularity to this day. This particular excerpt crackles with rhythmic vitality and a fascinating use of hemiola.

SEITZ, PAUL

52250362 Iowa Spring (Grade 2)

SHARP, THOM

50250080 Fiddle Faddle Hoedown (Grade 1)

Your first year players will fiddle their hearts out with this foot-stomper from Thom Sharp.

SMETANA, BEDRICH

Walters, Harold L.

50250071 The Moldau (Grade 3)

Smetana's epic My Country was exceeded in popularity only by his opera The Bartered Bride. The second of the six symphonic poems in the work describes the course of the Moldau River from its beginnings as two springs to its ends as a majestic and mighty river.

SVENDSEN, R. ANNE

52250338 Arpeggio Antics (Grade 1.5)

52250346 First Finger Suite (Grade 1)

50250087 Tango Por Uno (Grade 2.5)

An open string/first finger masterpiece, this work focuses on the tango rhythm and stretching that low first finger. Harmonically, there is some lovely, shocking dissonance -- just like a real tango!

TCHAIKOVSKY, PETER

Longfield, Robert

50250013 Nutcracker: Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy (Grade 2)

Every holiday concert needs music from Tchaikovsky's immortal ballet, The Nutcracker. Robert Longfield's masterful transcription brings Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy into the range of grade 2 string orchestras. The celesta part has been made more 'user friendly,' having been scored for piano but can be played on celesta if one is available. The March and Waltz of the Flowers have also been adapted for use by your string orchestra.

50250014 Waltz of the Flowers (Grade 2)

As with the other Longfield arrangements from The Nutcracker, the piano adds much support to the string orchestra. The beloved Tchaikovsky melody will allow your group to 'sing' with their best tones. The March and Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy are published separately. A classic you'll come back to time and again.

VIVALDI, ANTONIO

Frackenpohl, Steven

10250063 Allegro in D for Strings (Grade 3)

One of Ludwig's all-time best sellers, teachers and students love this work.

WOODRUFF, BUD

50250145 Cedar Hollow (Grade 1.5)

Cedar Hollow is a small valley in the Ozarks. This work captures the essence and tranquility of the area. The optional harp part will enhance the ensemble wonderfully if used, while skillful writing makes the work playable with no shifting.

SOLO STRINGS WITH ENSEMBLE

HEWSON, DAVID G.

Latham, Lynne

54260001 Baroque Fantastique (Grade 3)

An intense, 16th-note driven homage to the baroque with a thrilling solo cello part which ventures into thumb position. Reminiscent of Palladio from the diamond commercial. Orchestra grade 3; solo grade 4½.

MCMICHAEL, CATHERINE

50260005 Esperance (Hope) (Grade 3)

Esperance (Hope) ventures into the realm of French impressionism, with luscious, thick harmonies and colorful orchestration for strings and harp. An easy grade 3 for strings, it allows your harp soloist to shine through.

MIXED INSTRUMENT(S)/ VOICE(S) WITH ENSEMBLE

SHARP, THOM

50250098 Kitchen Poltergeist (Grade 2)

You can add percussionists to your orchestra. Just give them a couple wooden spoons and step back! That's because anyone can play kitchen utensils in this spooky, imaginative offering from Thom Sharp.

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