

WHRHS NEWS 2016 Winter Orchestral Concert

Some 187 student musicians at Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) delight audience at annual Winter Orchestral Concert



Flooded by the bright stage lights, WHRHS Director of Bands and Orchestral Music Paul McCullen, left, and the Wind Ensemble accepts the applause from the audience at the Winter Orchestral Concert. The Ensemble performed eight pieces, including the solemn "Kaddish" in memory of the late Juan Carlos Cruz, the WHRHS Teacher and Coach who died earlier this semester. The Ensemble brought the concert to a close with a sprightly rendition of Lerov Anderson's familiar, "Sleigh Ride."



WHRHS Percussionists, from left, Premath Kalekar, Alex Overzat and Craig Mandelbaum, prepare to present one of 19 pieces performed at the Winter Orchestral Concert by the Concert Band, the Orchestra and the Wind Ensemble.



Some 187 student musicians in three orchestral configurations entertained the audience in the Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Performing Arts Center (PAC), Wednesday, Dec. 14, while also demonstrating their mastery of the music they played. Some of the Concert Band wait in the corridor just outside the door onto the PAC's backstage before the start of the concert.

WARREN TWP. – Some 187 student musicians in three orchestral configurations entertained the audience in the Watchung Hills Regional High School (WHRHS) Performing Arts Center, Wednesday, Dec. 14, while also demonstrating their mastery of the music they played.

WHRHS Director of Bands and Orchestral Music Paul McCullen conducted his students through some 19 pieces. While some of the pieces were drawn from the canon of classical musical artistry, such as from J.S. Bach, many came from the folk music in the British, Welsh, and Eastern European traditions. There were also some Medieval tunes included.

The Concert Band opened the evening with "Festive Sounds of Hanukah." The Wind Ensemble closed the concert with a sprightly rendition of Leroy Anderson's familiar, "Sleigh Ride," complete with the crisp whip sound and other song appropriate garnishes such as the clip clapping of horses' hooves, produced by some creative student percussionists. The overall affect painted a most authentic picture of a winter's "Sleigh Ride."

The Wind Ensemble presented an utterly solemn performance of "Kaddish," by W.F. (William Francis) McBeth (1933-2012), an American Composer. Kaddish is an ancient Jewish prayer sequence used to honor the dead, and McCullen indicated that its inclusion in the Winter Concert was in acknowledgement of the passing this Fall of WHRHS Teacher and Coach Juan Carlos Cruz.

The String Orchestra added spice to its menu of stellar performances on the night, with a break in its customary classical decorum to add electronic amplification to some of its strings. The Orchestra played in a darkened house -- the better to show a dazzling light show on ceilings and walls of the band shell on stage, and out into the audience in the auditorium. They intentionally and theatrically ignored the billowing fog around the musicians' feet spewing from fog machines stage left and stage right for a spirited rendition of a couple of tunes from the Tran Siberian Orchestra Songbook.

"Our concert showed a vast array of music in the canon tonight," said McCullen. "Our students played with such grace and musicality, they weren't just 'playing the notes' but were performing with a maturity that at times is difficult for even adults to convey. It is a wonderful feeling to be able to share such an experience with not only the students but also the community."

Mark your calendar: The Spring Orchestral Concert will be held at 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 7.

There are some 98 student musicians in the Concert band, 31 in the Orchestra, and 58 in the Wind Ensemble. They are:

Concert Band: Oboe, Jason Allen; Flute, Catherine Baker, Taylor Burton, Tina Chen, Sophia Cho, Susan Choy, Phillip Ding, Tamara Hadzic, Jenna Hansen, Deepa Irakam, Roopa Irakam, Staphanie Ju, Abigail Kotar, Alanna Margulies, Then Nguyen, Ishani Shah, Maria Shanahan, Yvonne Tang, Jacquelin Toscano, Caroline Xiong, and Vivian Zhang;

Clarinet, Patrick Alto, Katherine Buser, Glen Diamond, Juliet Keselmen, Calvin Khaddee-Wu, Nicoletta Koconis, Andre Christopher Meier, Alexandria Minetti, Neha Saju, Ryan Schuler, Mayur Sharma, Amanda Soliman, and Justine Wang;

Bass Clarinet, Alex Fenning-Owoo and Michael Midthassel; Bassoon, Elizabeth Baker;

Alto Sax, Anthony Basilio Aquino, Benjamin Binstocck, Nathan Chon, Ian Chung, Nathaniel Holl, Aditya Loganathan, Manuel Melo, Ashwin Menon, Victor Osoliniec, Shray Parimoo, Abigail Pedroso, Pedro Ruizdiaz, John Schmitt, Sam Schwartz, Clement Shao, and Maya Zhang;

Tenor Sax, Patrick Dempsey, Tyler Horvath, Kyle Merritts, and Michael Waiman; Baritone Sax, Shan Jhaveri, Benjamin Kosakowski, Christopher Trovato, and Sam Wittmaack;

Percussion: Calvin Davis, Justin Coleman, Brennan Hector, Olivia Hu, Eric Isaacs, Morgan Kyer, Jack Onufer, Annabell Pu, Natalia Sosniak, Matthew Tankel, Victoria Tartivita, Alexander Tortorielio, and Stockton Van Weele;

Horn: Thomas Fahy, Mira Macleod, Hannah Marszalek, Andrew McAvoy and Ngocthy Mguyen;

Trombone: Shea Keenan, Omar Lateef, Nicole LoCascio, Alexandria Logan, and Emily Thompson;
Euphonium: Chad Huang, Emma Kotar, and Matthew Mandelbaum;

Trumpet: Peter Bosco, Elliot DeGuilo, Christopher Gianakis, James Lavender, Miah Manning, Anthony Motta, Elisabeth Russo, Emmaline Stoddard, Cullen Van Skiver, Leo Yan, and Kevin Zu; and Tuba, Benjamin DeGuilo

In the Orchestra are: Violin I, Kaliegh Brunner, Catherine Cai, Emma Godkin, Niharika Lyer, David Ki, Amy Larakornpichit, Annamaria Newmark, and Carter Rosen;

Violin II, Jenny Li, Annabel Liao, Bolai Lin, Jamie Linton, Renato Lopes, Erin Neilsen, Luis Rodrigues, Alyanna Tam, Eris Ulaj, Jocelyn Wang, Jack White, and Nandini Yellamelli;

Viola, Zoe Golkin, Manthan Naik, Kimberly Walters, and Jaimie Yue; Cello, Alive Chi, Daria Monti, Spencer Shao, and Aria Stoddard; Bass, Anjali Blow and Kimberly Dang; and Piano Helen Yang.

In the Wind Ensemble are: Oboe, Jeremy Cui; Piccolo, Ishika Agrawal; Flute, May Lee, Cathleen Luo, Laura Osborne, Lindsey Shi, Jessica Yan, and Cherlin Zhu;

Clarinet: Stella Hung, John Kolibachuk, Emma Marszalek, William Narayanan, Diane Sarrico, Katie Tan, and Olivia Xu; Alto Clarinet, Katelyn Bareheiko, Bass Clarinet, Kartik Hoover and Hannah Stanicki;

Alto Sax, Timothe Iroudayassamy, Andrew Morrison, Brady Pilsbury, Emilie Ricciardi, and Sanjay Subramanian; Tenor Sax, Karthik Irakim and Andres Marquez; Baritone Sax, James Narayanan and Brandon Tang;

Horn, Hannah Balla, Taylor Hestvik, Caroline Rucker and Benjamin Watkins; Trumpet, Ryan Branco, Erik Elbrecht, Brandon Huang, Carl Peterson, and Matthew Schaefer;

Trombone, Mitchell Allen, Christopher Barry, Jack Horan, Cristina Sarrico and Christopher Strona;
Euphonium, Andrew Muller; Tuba, Ethan Marmolejas;

Percussion, Shioli Banerjee, Pramath Kalekar, Craig Mandelbaum, Alexander Overzat; and Annika Schmidt;

Additional Musicians: Bass, Anjali Blow and Kimberly Dang; Bassoon, Elizabeth Baker; Clarinet, Glen Diamond and Ryan Schuler; Euphonium, Matthew Mandelbaum; Percussion, Justin Coleman and Natalia Sosniak; Trombone, Alexandria Logan; and Trumpet, Elliot DeGuilo;