

TOPS OVERTURE

This score is dedicated to the 3 baldies, music teachers and those who left TOPS from no avail of their own.

A Note from the Composer

This is the first time that I have composed anything so large in scope or for so many instruments, thus I apologise for the amount of many rests and intervals with unconventional fingerings in many parts. However, I did write this piece with the intention of conveying each instrument's distinct qualities in a graceful manner. The total playing time should be about five minutes.

This song portrays the experiences of every TOPS student. It all starts with the entrance exam, with teachers who aren't your friends and with other students equally unsure as you are. The mood generally brightens as you begin to realise that high school and TOPS isn't as bad as you think it may be as portrayed by the waltz at B. However, you soon realize with the melody at C that homework is always a problem to all students.

High school is always a battle. Whether it be fighting the tests, inadequate equipment or the transit. Hence, the hunting theme at D makes sense. Punctuated by battle drums and comments from nervous spectators, the theme becomes mean and minor. In the end, we are all victorious as the school year ends and for many, their time high school.

Analysis of the Piece

The song opens in a minor key with a trombone intro. A dark and mysterious sound is made from the opposing trombone line and the timpani tremolo. After the percussion crash at bar 10, various instruments have the eighth note chords. These should be played very lightly almost like a string pizzicatos. Be careful not to slow down at 19 with the high and low woodwinds' echoes. In fact, this section should speed up, leading into the next one.

The waltz starts with an eight bar clarinet solo. The string pizzicato part should be played very lightly here, it may even sound like a scherzo. The first beat should always be

played a little more and slightly longer. Bassoons and piccolo should not hesitate to come in on their one bar shows.

The third section is lead into by the trombones and bass clarinets. A strongly rhythmical section and a legato melody make up the theme of this section. The earthy rhythmical section should be played in a dark tone and may even be played pesante. Clarinets and saxophones should be careful of their overlapping arpeggios. The piccolo and flutes pick up on the legato theme so remember: plenty of air support.

The horns should play a soft **fp**, just enough to establish the hunting theme. The horns can play the grace notes as glissandos, they will suffice. Remember to stay together rhythmically in this section.

The hunting theme ends with a glorious victory march. The rhythm is established by the percussion section and the two bassoons to which trombones are later added. The piccolo solo is very important, if no piccolo is available, play it on a flute. Starting on bar 108, a round is started with various instruments coming in on 2 bar intervals. The melody after the key change at F should be very grand and proud. Please beware of intonation.