

# Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Grades 6–9

February 2012

Hopkins — Monticello — Stillwater

## Purpose

The Middle Level Orchestra Festival offers orchestras constructive criticism and comments to improve the group's musical performance, improve the students' understanding of musical concepts, increase the students' understanding of music literature, motivate the students in their continuing study of music, set standards of excellence in musical performance and help students understand the relationship of their musical experiences to other life experiences. This is not intended to be a public concert. It is intended to be a learning experience, whether students are performing for judges' comments, listening as audience members, or participating in the clinic session.

MNSOTA hopes that every director will use the Middle Level Orchestra Festival in the way that best meets the needs of their students. Some might prefer to perform for comments only. Some might want to receive a rating, but choose not to share the rating with their students. Some might not tell students about Tier 2. Depending on how you present it, your students can experience a competitive atmosphere or a non-competitive festival.

**Please read all the rules carefully. Again this year:** Monticello High School is the only site designated for orchestras with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to perform for Tier 2 consideration; there is an additional fee for groups who advance to Tier 2; there is a ticket charge for the Tier 2 Concert.

## General Information — Tier 1

There are three sites for Tier 1: **February 14** in **Hopkins** at Hopkins Center for the Arts; **February 21** in **Monticello** at Monticello High School; **February 24** in **Stillwater** at Stillwater Junior High. **Again this year:**

- **Monticello is the only site where orchestras with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students can perform for Tier 2 consideration.**
- Orchestras that include 9<sup>th</sup> grade players can perform at any site if the orchestra is participating for Comments Only or Comments + Rating.
- Orchestras without 9<sup>th</sup> graders are welcome to apply to the Monticello site, but will participate only if there is still room in the schedule after all the 9<sup>th</sup> grade orchestras have been accommodated; we recommend you include a second choice

of site on your form in case Monticello is full.

Each festival site includes a warm-up room, performance and clinic facilities, a formal performance with a student audience, a written and oral critique, a 25-minute clinic, and the opportunity to be considered for Tier 2. Distinguished clinicians and adjudicators offer positive remarks and constructive criticism. A list of performance standards follows to guide your preparation. Directors are highly encouraged to have their students hear other orchestras

performing at the same site and use the topics on the judging form to help focus their listening. Each orchestra will receive an official MNSOTA certificate of participation.

At Tier 1, directors can choose from three levels of participation: Comments Only; Comments + Rating; Comments + Rating + Consideration for Tier 2. The grade requirements are slightly different for Tier 2 consideration. Please read the Grade Level Eligibility rules carefully when you select your level of participation.

## Tier 2 — March 26, 2012

All orchestras that qualify will be invited to participate in Tier 2. In order to qualify for Tier 2, orchestras must: apply for Tier 2 consideration; satisfy the grade requirements; and receive an overall Superior with Distinction

rating from both judges at Tier 1. There is an additional fee of \$75 for groups that advance to Tier 2; ticket prices for the Tier 2 concert will be \$10/adult, \$5/student, with 4 complimentary tickets per participating school.

The orchestras selected for the Tier 2 honor will: spend March 26 at Orchestra Hall; work with members of the Minnesota Orchestra; perform selections from Tier 1 in a concert; receive an ensemble trophy; make memories that will inspire their musical growth for years to come; be able to purchase CDs through their director.

MNSOTA is looking forward to working again with Jim Bartsch, Director of Educational Outreach with the Minnesota Orchestra, in organizing the Tier 2 experience.

## Festival Reminders

- All participants *must* perform from legally acquired copies of the music, in compliance with the Copyright Law.
- All groups should plan for a 2.5 hour commitment at your site.
- Monticello High School is the only site designated for orchestras with 9<sup>th</sup> grade students to perform for Tier 2 consideration; this enhances the experience for all, making it likely that all will hear groups similar to their own. (Orchestras that include 9<sup>th</sup> grade players can perform at any site if the orchestra is participating for Comments Only or Comments + Rating.)
- There is an additional \$75 participation fee for groups who advance to Tier 2 at Orchestra Hall.
- Ticket charge of \$10 for adult and \$5 for students for the Tier 2 concert, with 4 complimentary tickets per participating school.
- Rating forms, judges' recordings (2) and performance recordings (1) will be given to directors at the conclusion of their clinic. Directors should make sure they have all these items before leaving the Festival site.
- All directors will receive an email announcement of the contest results at the conclusion of *all* Tier 1 performances.

## Middle Level Festival Website

Information for participating directors will be posted on a special Middle Level Festival website. A link will be shared with directors who register for the event.

## Information and Eligibility

*Fees* — The festival fee is \$130.00 for each performing group and should be included with your application. Please make the check payable to MNSOTA. Mail both the registration form and the check to Festival Scheduler Sarah Chelgren Duffy. Applications will not be processed unless accompanied by the registration fee.

***Again this year: there will be an additional \$75.00 fee for all groups that advance to Tier 2. In addition, the Tier 2 Orchestra Hall performance will be a ticketed event : \$10/adult; \$5/student.***

*Acceptance* — Orchestras will be registered for the festival on a first come, first served basis, by date of postmark of complete application. *Incomplete applications will be ignored.* **THE POST-MARK DEADLINE for applications for all sites is December 9!** Some sites fill up, so you are encouraged to send the application form and payment prior to the deadline. You will be contacted when your application and registration fee have been received and assigned a time for warm-up, performance and clinic. A complete information packet with directions, restaurant locations, schedule and other details will follow when the schedule is complete. Additional information for participating directors will be posted on a designated Middle Level Festival website. Directors will receive a link to the website upon registration for the event.

*MNSOTA Membership* — The conductor of the orchestra must be a member of ASTA/MNSOTA. If your membership has expired, contact [www.astaweb.com](http://www.astaweb.com) to renew and send verification of membership to MNSOTA Member Coordinator Kathryn Buccola [kathryn.buccola@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.buccola@gmail.com). Your membership status will be verified before your application can be processed.

*Grade Level Eligibility* —

- In order to participate for Comments Only or Comments + Rating, orchestras must have at least some members in grades 6-9.
- To be considered for Tier 2, all of the students in the performing group should be in grades 6-9. Combinations of Grades 5 & 6 or Grades 9 & 10 should participate for Comments Only or Comments + Rating. (If your orchestra has special circumstances that you think might warrant an exception for Tier 2 consideration, contact MNSOTA President Deborah Sittko [dsittko@gmail.com](mailto:dsittko@gmail.com) before September 15 so the MNSOTA board can consider your circumstances at their fall meeting.)
- To be considered for Tier 2, orchestras with 9<sup>th</sup> grade players must participate at Monticello. (Orchestras that include 9<sup>th</sup> grade players can perform at any site if the orchestra is participating for Comments Only or Comments + Ratings.)
- Adults may not perform with any group at Tier 1, but may provide piano accompaniment.
- String or full orchestras may apply. If your literature deviates from standard instrumentation, please explain on the application.
- At Tier 1, students may participate in only one ensemble being considered for Tier 2. They may participate in additional ensembles participating for Comments Only or Comments + Ratings
- To be considered for Tier 2, all performers must be registered student members of their ensemble.
- All students who perform at Tier 2 must have performed at Tier 1. (Exceptions will be made for students who were absent from Tier 1 due to illness.) Any other exceptions to your Tier 2 roster must be cleared with the Festival Coordinator.

*Schedule* — The schedule for the day will be set on a 30-minute

rotation — please note that ensembles will spend several minutes waiting on stage after their performance before moving to the clinic location. Listening to other orchestras perform is considered to be an important part of the day's activities; please allow time in your schedule to listen to at least two other ensembles. Please help your students understand appropriate behavior in the festival setting. Students should not enter or exit at any time during a performance. Students should be respectful of the group performing.

*Food* — Directors should make arrangements to take students to a nearby fast-food restaurant for lunch. A list of available restaurants near each site will be posted on the Festival website.

*Recording* — Directors will receive a performance CD (1) and CDs with comments from each judge (2). MNSOTA is pleased that Westmark Productions will provide this recording service for the 2011-12 Festival.

*Judging sheets* — Judges' rating forms will be given to directors at the conclusion of their clinic.

*Festival Standards Guideline* — Please refer to the Judging Criteria, the Ratings information and the Rating Form to aid in the preparation of your ensemble. Contact Sarah Chelgren Duffy, [chelgrenduffy@me.com](mailto:chelgrenduffy@me.com), if you have any questions.

## Performance Requirements

- Each orchestra will prepare a minimum of three pieces. Performance time should be no more than 20 minutes. Selections are to be of contrasting styles. There may be two movements from the same work.
- Pop tunes and novelty pieces will not be considered appropriate literature. If you have concerns about a selection, contact Sarah Chelgren Duffy, [chelgrenduffy@me.com](mailto:chelgrenduffy@me.com), for a board decision. A list of pieces performed at the Tier 2 concert for the past two years is included to help you gauge the repertoire other directors are selecting. This is intended as a guide only and is *not* a required repertoire list for the Festival.
- Each orchestra must supply **four (4)** original scores for each piece. (Two are for the judges, one is for the clinician, and one is for the conductor.) Place a set of scores for the judges (2) and clinician (1) into separate manila envelopes. Label each envelope clearly with your school name, orchestra name, director name and performance time, and designate the envelope for "Judge 1," "Judge 2" or "Clinician." Fill out two rating forms and place one in each judge's envelope. Give these envelopes to the MNSOTA board liaison when you arrive; pick them up, along with your rating forms and recordings, from the board liaison before leaving the Festival.
- Duplicated scores will be accepted only if accompanied by written permission of the copyright owner. **Letters representing placed orders are not acceptable. In the event that scores do not arrive, ensembles will perform for Comments Only.** We recommend that you order scores in November to ensure delivery.
- All four scores must have each measure numbered.

## Compliance with the Copyright Law

- **All participants in the MNSOTA Middle Level Festival are required to perform from legally acquired copies of the music.**
- **Use of unauthorized photocopies for the judges, clinician, performers or director will result in disqualification for Tier 2 consideration and the ensemble will receive Comments**

Only (no rating).

- **Exception: “Emergency copying to replace purchased copies which for any reason are not available for an imminent performance is permissible provided replacement copies shall be substituted in due course.” (No. 1 of the Guidelines on Fair Use of Copyright Material.)** In this situation, a letter from the publisher/music vendor reflecting a *non-returnable* order for the printed music in question is required and should be presented to the MNSOTA board liaison in advance of the ensemble’s performance. Failure to provide this letter in advance of the orchestra’s performance will result in disqualification for Tier 2 consideration and the ensemble will receive Comments Only (no rating).

### Judging Criteria

*Musical Expression* — The performance should be expressive with distinguishable phrasing, evident and appropriate dynamics, emotional quality compatible to the mood, and stylistically correct.

*Tone* — The performance should have focus, warmth, consistency throughout the dynamic range, and various articulations appropriate to the literature choice.

*Rhythm* — The rhythm of the performance should be accurate with suitable and controlled tempos and tempo changes. Steady pulse, accurate rhythms and nuance of beat quality should reflect the meter of each piece.

*Intonation* — The performance should be in tune. There should be understanding of half and whole step relationships in each piece as well as the key signatures and their scales. Accuracy to printed pitches including accidentals is essential.

*Bowing* — The performance should exhibit control of bowings and articulations: accurate and consistent bowings, correct direction and placement of selected strokes, and variety of articulations.

*Ensemble* — The performance should exhibit quality ensemble playing: correct balance, blend, awareness of role(s), uniform execution, and eye contact with other members of the group as well as the conductor.

*Other Factors* — The performance should exhibit appropriate concert etiquette including good poise, proper posture, suitable appearance, stage presence, and attitude. Suitability of literature and other factors will be left to the discretion of the judges.

### Ratings

*5 Superior with Distinction* — This rating represents an outstanding performance in all major categories for all selections performed. Any deficiencies in the performances are considered minimal. There shall be no significant weaknesses. The conductor and students shall have demonstrated outstanding musicianship. An extraordinary level of performance.

*4 Superior* — This rating reflects a quality performance as a result of sound fundamental training. The performance will be rated as superior in the majority of major categories for all selections performed. There shall be few significant weaknesses. The conductor and students shall have demonstrated superior musicianship.

*3 Excellent* — This rating describes a sound performance with proficiency in many aspects with a need for improvement in some categories. The conductor and students shall have demonstrated excellent musicianship.

*2 Good* — This rating indicates good preparation, but a performance that is uncertain and holds numerous errors.

*1 Fair* — This rating indicates a performance that is lacking in the fundamental aspects of performance, understanding or preparation.

### Overall Ratings

The overall rating will be calculated as the sum of the ratings in each category: 32–35 = Superior with Distinction; 25–31 = Superior; 18–24 = Excellent; 11–17 = Good; 10 or less = Fair

To qualify for Tier 2, orchestras must receive an overall *Superior with Distinction* rating (32–35 points) from both judges. All qualified orchestras will participate in Tier 2.

### Notification of Ratings

Rating forms will be returned to directors, along with their scores and recordings, at the conclusion of their clinic. Since some directors choose a non-competitive experience for their students, *any* discussion of ratings at the event is inappropriate. We appreciate everyone respecting the confidentiality of the results until the official announcements. Judges, clinicians and site hosts are not in a position to discuss results at any time. Please contact Sarah Chelgren Duffy, [chelgrenduffy@me.com](mailto:chelgrenduffy@me.com), with any questions or suggestions.

### Pieces Performed at Tier 2 in 2010 & 2011

*This list of pieces performed at the Tier 2 concert for the past two years is included to help directors gauge the repertoire other directors are selecting. This is intended to serve as a guide only and it is **not** a required repertoire list for the Festival.*

Bach/arr. Isaac, *Brandenburg No. 5*  
Adriano Banchieri/Carl Strommen, *Renaissance Canzona*  
Jeffrey Bishop, *Declarations*  
Corelli/arr. Robert D. McCashin, *Sonata No. 8*  
Susan H. Day, *Midnight Rain*  
Elliot Del Borgo, *Dance Scenario*  
Doris Gazda, *Appalachian Sunrise*  
Handel/arr. Elliot Del Borgo, *Concerto for String Orchestra*  
Handel/arr. Velke, *Entrance of the Queen of Sheba*  
Franz Joseph Haydn/arr. Todd Parrish, *Symphony No. 44 “Trauer”*  
William Hofeldt, *The Gift, Halcyon, Lullaby, Twilight Ceremonial*  
Robert Longfield, *Momentum*  
Richard Meyer, *Mantras, Serendipity Suite, Spring Breezes*  
Deborah Baker Monday, *Conquistador!, For the Star of County Down*  
Kirt N. Mosier, *The Dance of Iscariot*  
W.A. Mozart/arr. Sandra Dackow, *Symphony No. 15 (Finale)*  
Soon Hee Newbold, *Mythos*  
Arr. Alice Rice, *Beach Spring*  
Rimsky-Korsakov/arr. Dackow, *Dance of The Tumblers, Alborada from “Capriccio Espagnol”*  
David Shaffer, *Bavarian Rhapsody*  
Alan Lee Silva, *Blue Ridge Run*  
Doug Spata, *Agincourt*  
Richard Stephan, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home, Variations on a Well-Known Sea-Chantey*  
Tchaikovsky/arr. Dackow, *Symphony No. 2 (Finale)*  
Tchaikovsky/arr. Elliot Del Borgo, *Serenade for Strings*



# Middle Level Orchestra Festival

Grades 6–9  
February 2012

Hopkins — Monticello — Stillwater

## Application Form

**Festival Fee \$130.00. Check payable to MNSOTA must accompany application.**

**Check your preferred date, and your level of participation.** If you are available for more than one date, number your preferences. If your first choice site is full when your application is received, you will be assigned to your second (or third) choice.

February 14 — Hopkins  
Hopkins Center for the Arts

February 21 — Monticello  
Monticello High School  
**\*\* To be considered for Tier 2,  
orchestras with 9<sup>th</sup> grade players must  
participate at the Monticello site.**

February 24 — Stillwater  
Stillwater Junior High School

**Check your level of participation (see Grade Level Eligibility Rules). This orchestra will perform for:**

Comments Only

Comments + Rating

Comments + Rating + Tier 2 consideration

*There is an additional \$75 fee if selected for Tier 2*

Mail application form and entry fee to: Sarah Chelgren Duffy,  
P.O. Box 46285, Plymouth MN 55446, [chelgrenduffy@me.com](mailto:chelgrenduffy@me.com)

**Registration POSTMARK Deadline is  
December 9 for all sites.**

### Event Cancellation Policy

Since events cannot be rescheduled, MNSOTA is committed to holding all events as planned. MNSOTA will cancel an event only in cases of a safety emergency (e.g. road conditions/weather), based on state advisories. If an event is cancelled, at the discretion of the board, a partial refund to participants may be considered after expenses have been paid.

Performing Group (at least some students must be in grades 6–9) \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

School Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Director \_\_\_\_\_ ASTA/MNSOTA Membership # \_\_\_\_\_ exp. date \_\_\_\_\_

Directors must be ASTA/MNSOTA members for their students to participate. Membership will be verified.

My membership is not current, but I have contacted [www.astaweb.com](http://www.astaweb.com) to renew/become a new member and have sent verification of membership to MNSOTA Member Coordinator Kathryn Buccola [kathryn.buccola@gmail.com](mailto:kathryn.buccola@gmail.com)

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ School Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Check number \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*A \$15 NSF fee will be charged for any returned check.*

Principal's signature (**required**) \_\_\_\_\_

**WORKS TO BE PERFORMED:** Each orchestra should prepare a minimum of three pieces. Total performance time is limited to 20 minutes. In January, directors will be asked to finalize their repertoire selections through an on-line form.

**You must bring 4 original scores (no copies) of each piece to be performed. All scores must have each measure numbered. Bring scores for judges (two sets) and clinician (one set) in separate, clearly-labeled manila envelopes. Fill out two rating forms and place one in each judge's envelope.**

**All participants in the MNSOTA Middle Level Festival are required to perform from legally acquired copies of the music. Use of unauthorized photocopies for the judges, clinician, performers or director will result in disqualification for Tier 2 consideration and the ensemble will receive Comments Only (no rating).**

### Complete the Seating Chart and Group Profile on the next page.

**Complete application for Tier 1 includes check, application form, current MNSOTA membership and seating chart. Incomplete applications will not be considered.**

Group Profile information is **required** to be eligible for Tier 2 consideration, and will be used for the Tier 2 program if your orchestra is selected. Groups who apply for Tier 2 but do not submit a Group Profile will play at Tier 1 for Comments + Rating.

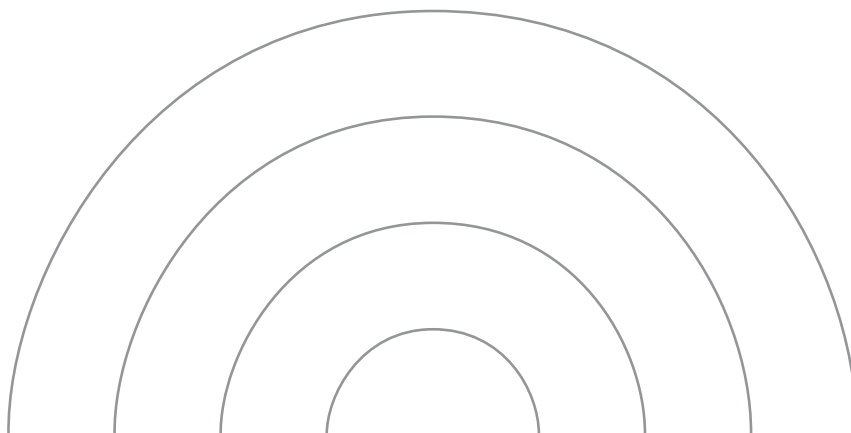
If a group needs to withdraw from the Festival, refund requests must be submitted to the board prior to the event and will be considered at the next board meeting.

# Middle Level Orchestra Festival

## Seating Chart — Required for Tier 1 and Tier 2

- Draw a detailed layout of the set-up of this orchestra. Use one X for each chair and a line — where each stand should be placed.
- Draw lines to show the separation between the sections.
- Indicate the location of the bass section.
- Write the number of chairs and stands needed in each row.

Do you need a piano?  yes  no  
(Please indicate the piano placement.)



# of chairs in each row    \_\_\_\_\_  
# of stands in each row    \_\_\_\_\_

## Group Profile — Required for Tier 2 consideration

Information will be used for the program for Tier 2 if your orchestra is selected.

**Groups who apply for Tier 2 but do not submit a Group Profile will play at Tier 1 for Comments + Rating.**

### Describe the *orchestra*:

Formal name (all students should be in grades 6–9) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students \_\_\_\_\_ Grade levels\* \_\_\_\_\_ Starting grade of string program \_\_\_\_\_

(\*To be considered for Tier 2, orchestras with 9<sup>th</sup> grade players must participate at Monticello.)

What music instruction do these students receive during the school day? List small groups, sectionals, lessons, general music, etc.

\_\_\_\_\_

How often does this orchestra regularly meet during and outside of the school day? \_\_\_\_\_

Director's name (please print the way you want it spelled in the program) \_\_\_\_\_

Noteworthy events for the ensemble or director (recent performances or awards) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Names of other orchestra teachers in your school orchestra program who have worked with these students \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the *school*:

Number of students \_\_\_\_\_ Grade levels \_\_\_\_\_ Name of building principal \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the *district*:

Number of string players in the district \_\_\_\_\_ Number of students in the district \_\_\_\_\_

Names of all string teachers in the district \_\_\_\_\_

Other information for the program (to be used space permitting):

\_\_\_\_\_



# Middle Level Orchestra Festival Rating Form

School \_\_\_\_\_ Orchestra \_\_\_\_\_

Performance Time \_\_\_\_\_ Director \_\_\_\_\_

Selections to be Performed \_\_\_\_\_

↑ *This section to be completed by the director in advance of the Festival. Include one completed rating form in each judge's envelope (2).*

## 5 Superior with Distinction

*Outstanding* performance in *all* major categories for *all* selections. Any deficiencies are minimal. *No* significant weaknesses.

## 4 Superior

Sound fundamental training. Superior in the *majority* of major categories for *all* selections. *Few* significant weaknesses.

## 3 Excellent

A sound performance with proficiency in *many* aspects with a need for improvement in *some* categories.

## 2 Good

Good preparation, but a performance that is *uncertain* and holds *numerous* errors.

## 1 Fair

A performance that is *lacking in the fundamental aspects* of performance, understanding or preparation.

### Musical Expression

style, phrasing, dynamics, emotion

### Tone

quality, focus, warmth, consistency

### Rhythm

tempo, meter, pulse, accuracy, nuance

### Intonation

pitch, accuracy, mechanical skill

### Bowing

articulation, uniformity, control

### Ensemble

balance, blend, awareness

### Other Factors

difficulty, poise, posture, appearance

### Total Score

32-35 Superior with Distinction  
25-31 Superior  
18-24 Excellent  
11-17 Good  
10 or less Fair

Judge's Signature \_\_\_\_\_