

Overture Center
FOR THE ARTS

RESOURCE GUIDE

2010/11 Season

OVERTURE ONSTAGE

A Performing Arts Series for Students



Drumline LIVE! | MON, NOV 29, 2010



Overture Center FOR THE ARTS

ABOUT OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Overture Center for the Arts fills a city block in downtown Madison with world-class venues for the performing and visual arts. Made possible by an extraordinary gift from Madison businessman W. Jerome Frautschi, the center presents the highest-quality arts and entertainment programming in a wide variety of disciplines for diverse audiences. Offerings include performances by acclaimed classical, jazz, pop, and folk performers; touring Broadway musicals; quality children's entertainment; and world-class ballet, modern and jazz dance. Overture Center's extensive outreach and educational programs serve thousands of Madison-area residents annually, including youth, older adults, people with limited financial resources and people with disabilities. The center is also home to ten independent resident organizations.

RESIDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Bach Dancing and Dynamite Society
Children's Theater of Madison
Kanopy Dance Company
Li Chiao-Ping Dance Company
Madison Ballet
Madison Museum of Contemporary Art
Madison Opera
Madison Symphony Orchestra
Wisconsin Academy's
James Watrous Gallery
Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra

Internationally renowned architect Cesar Pelli designed the center to provide the best possible environment for artists and audiences, as well as to complement Madison's urban environment. Performance spaces range from the spectacular 2,250-seat Overture Hall to the casual and intimate Rotunda Stage. The renovated Capitol Theater seats approximately 1,110, and The Playhouse seats 350. In addition, three multi-purpose spaces provide flexible performance, meeting and rehearsal facilities. Overture Center also features several art exhibit spaces. Overture Galleries I, II and III display works by Dane County artists. The Playhouse Gallery features regional artists with an emphasis on collaborations with local organizations. The Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters' Watrous Gallery displays works by Wisconsin artists, and the Madison Museum of Contemporary Art offers works by national and international artists.

RESOURCE GUIDE CREDITS

Executive Editor: Beth Racette

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Theatre Etiquette

- **Arrive on time**

Plan for possible delays in travel and parking. Please arrive 30 minutes prior to show time.

- **Students: Leave recording devices of any kind at home or in your backpack at school**

Video or audio recording and photography, including camera phones, are often prohibited by law and may disrupt the performance. They are not permitted and are considered very rude to the others around you.

- **Teachers: Turn off or silence all personal electronics**

Beeps, clicks, tones and buzzes and light pollution emanated by personal electronics such as watches, pagers, Bluetooth devices, cell phones, etc. interrupt the performance and spoil the theatre experience.

- **Observe the instructions of ushers**

The ushers are present to offer assistance, ensure rules are observed and provide guidance in the case of an emergency evacuation. Please show them consideration. You will be asked to exit to the left of the theatre at the end of the performance.

- **Be respectful**

While entering and exiting the theatre: Put your hands in your pockets or behind your back. Talk very quietly. Once seated: Do not talk. Keep your feet on the ground. Put your hands in your lap or fold your arms.

- **Abstain from eating or drinking inside the theatre**

Crackling wrappers and containers and food messes in the auditorium are unwelcome. Food, candy, gum and drinks should never be brought inside the theatre.

- **Avoid talking, waving and shouting during the performance**

Laughing and applauding are encouraged at appropriate times. Shouting to actors/friends is disrespectful to others. Save personal conversation for after the show.

If you must talk, please whisper very quietly.

- **Do not exit the auditorium during the performance except in the case of emergency**

If you must leave, please wait for an appropriate break in the performance. Teachers, please arrive early enough to escort students to the restroom prior to the start of the show.

- **Do not get onto the stage or place items on the edge of the stage**

To ensure the safety and security of performers and audiences, this behavior is strictly prohibited unless expressly permitted by a performer or staff member.

Theatre Etiquette (Cont.)

- **Dispose of garbage in proper receptacles**

Help preserve a pleasant environment by depositing all debris in appropriate receptacles.

- **Extend common courtesy and respect to your fellow audience members**

Civility creates a comfortable and welcoming theatre experience for all.

- **Bring very small children only to age-appropriate performances**

Small children easily become restless at programs intended for older children, and may cause distractions.

What's Important to Know?

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) are institutions of higher learning that were established before 1964 with the intention of serving the African American community. There are more than 100 historically black colleges in the United States, located almost exclusively in the Southeast.

The HBCU were established after the Civil War as places of dignity and hope where young people had an opportunity to become professionals instead of maids or laborers. Along with the private black colleges and universities founded later by the AMA, these reconstruction era schools became the backbone of higher education for African Americans.

It was in these bastions of higher education that the tradition of the show style marching band was born. The tradition began over fifty years ago at Florida A&M University, which has been long considered the nation's preeminent black college marching band school. HBCU marching bands began, as most do, as support for the college football team. They have since grown into a sport of their own, featuring characteristic high stepping, funky dance rhythms, and exciting musical repertoire ranging from classical to Top 40.

Celebrations of HBCU marching culminate in competitions such as the Big Southern Classic and the Bayou Classic. These competitions, which draw audiences of roughly 60,000 fans each, are a testament to the popularity of the sport. But it is only recently, with films such as *Drumline*, backed by a flurry of high profile marching band appearances that this tradition has begun to capture the imagination of the American public.



Summary

A drumline is a section of percussion instruments in a marching band. Drumlines can be found on both the high school and college level in marching bands, drum and bugle corps, and pipe bands. They also perform on their own, separately from a full band. While show bands and drumlines have always been popular on large college campuses with a strong football tradition, they gained wider fame with the 2002 film, *Drumline*.

There are two main components of a drumline. The battery is the section that marches on the field as a group. In the battery you'll find snare drums, bass drums, tenor drums and cymbals. The front ensemble does not move, but remains set in one place on the field. This section consists of instruments that would be impossible to play while moving: mallet instruments such as xylophones, marimbas, and timpani. You may also see congas, claves, gongs, bongos, tambourines, and other percussion instruments.

One of the big challenges of a marching band is “keeping it all together.” Unlike most other musical ensembles, marching bands perform outdoors (sometimes in bad weather) and are executing complicated choreography while they're playing. Here's where the drumline is essential; it provides the same important time-keeping function of a drum set player in a rock or jazz band. The popularity of marching band competitions has raised the standard of drumline performance. To win competitions, ensembles have to be excellent musicians and also come up with new and improved “tricks” and techniques every year.

Marching bands evolved out of military bands. Originally, instruments such as drums and bugles were used to direct the movement of troops on the battlefield or set a marching pace for soldiers. Many aspects of military bands survive today in marching bands—from the commands used to direct the formation (“About face!” “Forward march!”) to the precision-drilled marching formations and military-style uniforms. As music became less important in battle, military bands were increasingly used for ceremonial occasions and public concerts. New instruments were invented, and composers such as Johann Strauss and John Philip Sousa wrote music for brass and military bands.

Field musicians, particularly the drummers, had a long history of staging drumming competitions to demonstrate their skill. Separate from the military bands, these demonstration parade units consisted of the traditional field music units and color guards bearing rifles and swords. After World War II, the drum corps (bugles, drums, and color guards) shifted from parade activity to field shows. The field, often an athletic playing field, provided the space for more ambitious and complex demonstrations of marching maneuvers.

Today's marching bands typically include brass, percussion, and woodwind instruments. Some marching bands can have upwards of 300 members—plus dancers and color guard. The band featured in *DrumLine Live!* consists of about 30 band members and 5 dancers. They are a show band, the type of band most commonly seen during football halftime shows.

Summary (Cont.)

Part of the fun of a show band performance is watching the drill, where the band members arrange themselves into different formations on the field. The shapes they make can be geometrical, abstract, or even the school logo. New members joining the band are given a drill book, with diagrams of where they belong in each formation. Hours of rehearsal go into creating these drills and transitioning from one formation to the next. Band members may walk, march, or even dance into their positions, but every move is very tightly choreographed. There are all kinds of special steps and maneuvers used in the drill. Here are a few of the basic ones:

High step - a style of marching often used by HBCU marching bands that involves lifting the knee very high

- **Glide or roll step** - stepping gently on the heel with the toe pointed up, and then rolling forward onto toes before lifting the foot
- **Floating** - everybody moving together, without breaking up the design
- **Scattering** - each member moving independently
- **Marking time** - marching in place



Performance

Be a Theatre Critic

During the performance watch for:

- Facial expressions and actions
- Costumes
- Props
- Music and sound effects
- Lighting
- Vivid stories and word pictures



Play Your Part

You have an important role to play; it wouldn't be a performance without you! Your part is to pretend the play is real.

Part of this includes accepting certain theatre ways, or conventions:

1. Dancers tell the story with movement. Musicians tell the story with instruments and sound. Also, actions (blocking), and songs tell the story.
2. Musicians may play songs that tell about a story, their feelings, or a theme.
3. Dancers and Musicians may speak to each other and the audience.
4. A performer may play several different parts (doubling) by changing their voice, costume or posture.
5. Places are suggested by panels on the set, other staging cues and by props.

How to play your part:

A performance is different from television or a movie. The performers are right in front of you and can see your reactions, feel your attention, and hear your laughter and applause. Watch and listen carefully to understand the story. The story is told or the mood is set by the performers and comes to life through your imagination.

Words to Know

Xylophone - This instrument consists of a set of wooden keys (made of wood, plastic, or rubber) of graduating lengths. The keys are struck with mallets to produce their sound; the shorter the key, the higher the pitch.



Glockenspiel (GLOK-in- shpeel) - a set of tuned steel bars played with wooden hammers. It is pitched much higher than the xylophone and has no resonators. The marching-band version of this instrument, also known as a **bell lyre**, is shaped like a lyre and held upright.



Cymbals - This modern percussion instrument consists of two metal plates that are banged together to produce a clashing sound. Cymbals are also part of the drum set used in jazz, rock, and other contemporary music; among these is the *hi-hat*, a pair of cymbals mounted on a stand and operated with a foot pedal.



Bass drum - can be anywhere from 13” to 36” in diameter; the larger the drum, the lower the pitch. In marching bands there is a “bass line” with up to 5 band members playing bass drums of different pitches.



Snare drum - a small, wooden two- headed drum with “snare” —wires made of plastic, animal gut, or metal—stretched across its lower head. When the top drumhead is struck with wooden sticks, the snares vibrate against the bottom head, making a rattling sound.



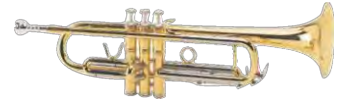
Cowbell - as its name implies, this metal instrument developed from the bell hung around a cow’s neck to help the herder keep track of its whereabouts. In music, you’ll hear the cowbell keeping the beat in salsa, pop, R&B, hip-hop, and other genres. Unlike its ancestor, this cowbell has no clapper. It is played by hitting with a stick, with different tones produced by striking different parts of the bell. Cowbells are also popular noisemakers at sports events.



Shakers, scrapers, and other percussion - these instruments add all kinds of interesting colors and effects to the band or orchestra. They include the anvil, castanets, chimes, claves, cowbell, güiro, maracas, ratchet, shekere, tambourine, temple blocks, triangle, washboard, whip, and wood block.

What's Important to Know? (Cont.)

Trumpet – the highest instrument in the brass family. It has a brighter tone than the cornet and flugelhorn, which it closely resembles. The trumpet is a versatile instrument, used in marching bands, jazz ensembles, and classical orchestras.



Cornet – a three-valved brass instrument similar to the trumpet, but with a deeper mouthpiece and a mellower tone. The cornet is used in military and brass bands, but not generally in a symphony orchestra.



Mellophone – a brass instrument used in marching bands in place of the French horn. Unlike the French horn, it has a bell that faces forward, so the sound travels in the direction the player is marching.



Trombone – a brass instrument that produces different notes using a slide instead of valves to change the length of the tubing. There is a regular (tenor) and the bass trombone. The bass version has two valves that allow it to play lower notes.



Euphonium (you-FO-nee-um) - a smaller, higher relative of the tuba. It can have three or four valves. There's a close relative to the euphonium called a baritone.



Tuba – the largest and lowest of the brass instruments, used in classical music and concert bands. They can have anywhere from three to six valves. The tuba is twice as long as the euphonium or baritone. In fact, if you uncoiled the tubing of a B-flat tuba, it would be 18 feet long!



Flute – a metal instrument played by blowing air against the edge (rather than into) the mouthpiece. The concert flute has 25 keys that open or close off holes along the length of the instrument. Different pitches are produced depending on which finger-holes are opened or closed and on how the flute is blown. Flutes were originally made of wood, which explains why they're in the woodwind family. They are unlike the other members of this group in that they don't have a reed, and they're held horizontally instead of vertically.



What's Important to Know? (Cont.)

Piccolo – a smaller version of the flute. Pitched an octave higher than the flute, it's the highest instrument in the orchestra or band. Piccolos are usually made from metal or wood.



Clarinet – a family of instruments of different sizes and ranges. Clarinets are usually made of wood, with metal keys. On the underside of the mouthpiece is a single reed, a thin strip of plant or synthetic material that vibrates when the player blows air across it.



Saxophone – an instrument invented in the 1840s by Adolphe Sax. Because it arrived on the scene rather late compared to other instruments, you won't often find the saxophone in classical orchestras. Though it is made of brass, it's considered a woodwind because it is played the same way as most of the other woodwinds; sound is produced by an oscillating reed and the different notes are produced by opening and closing keys. The smaller, higher-pitched saxophones are straight, but the larger saxes have a U-shaped bend that makes the bell point straight up. The instrument has a distinctive tone that has made it popular in pop, big band music, rock and roll, and especially jazz.



Post-performance

Suggestions for Discussion

Creation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities

The overwhelming majority of HBCUs opened after 1865 in response to the need to have institutions to educate newly freed slaves and to avoid admitting those newly freed slaves into the existing white institutions.

- Why were newly freed slaves unwelcome in existing white institutions?
- What do you think would have been different if the newly freed slaves had been allowed into the existing white institutions?
- What are the benefits of the creation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities?
- Why are most of the Historically Black Colleges and Universities located in the South East portion of the U.S.?

Brown v. Board of Education

A landmark decision of the United States Supreme Court that declared state laws establishing separate public schools for black and white students and denying black children equal educational opportunities unconstitutional. The decision overturned the *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision of 1896, which permitted segregation. Handed down on May 17, 1954, the Warren Court's unanimous (9–0) decision stated, "separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." As a result, de jure racial segregation was ruled a violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution. This victory paved the way for integration and the civil rights movement.

- How does Brown v. Board of Education play a role in the creation and progress of Historically Black Colleges and Universities?
- What is the relationship between Brown v. Board of Education and the Fourteenth Amendment?
- Who were some of the major players in the Civil Rights Movement? What was their contribution?
- Can you recall any other instances in History when Blacks were segregated or not treated as equals?

Instruments

The **percussion** family is the oldest, largest, and most diverse section of a band or orchestra. Its members include any instrument that is played by hitting, shaking, rubbing, or scraping. Some can play specific pitches (tuned percussion), while others do not (untuned percussion).

Instruments in the **brass** family are all made of metal tubing with a cup-shaped mouthpiece at one end and a wide opening (called the bell) at the other end. They are played by buzzing your lips against the mouthpiece to make the air inside the tube vibrate. As with the strings and woodwinds, how high or low a sound the instrument makes is related to its size; in a brass instrument, the longer the tubing, the lower the sound. The opening inside the tubing of a brass instrument is known as the bore. The size and shape of the bore also affects the way the instrument sounds.

Most members of the **woodwind** family were originally made of wood, but these days most often are made out of brass or another metal. Like brass instruments, the woodwinds produce their sound by making air vibrate inside a hollow tube. Instead of buzzing their lips against a mouthpiece, however, woodwind players blow air against or into an opening in the instrument. With most woodwinds, the player blows against a thin piece of wood called a reed. The flute and piccolo are a bit different; they don't have a reed and the player blows against the edge of the opening rather than directly into it.

- If you could (or do) play any instrument which one would you choose and why?
- What are some of the instruments typically seen in a traditional marching band?
- How can learning to read and play music benefit you in your everyday life?
- What types of skills must a person know in order to be successful in a marching band?

Step It Up!

With your class, come up with a few different and interesting formations. Decide whether or not you all want to move in exactly the same way. Practice transitioning from one drill to the next.

- Does it look better when you walk or march into position, or if you choreograph a dance (synchronized steps and movements) to get you from place to place?

Try this exercise again in two or more groups and challenge each other the way the bands do in Drumline. Remember: it's not just about the moves, but also about the energy and feeling you put into "selling" the drill.

- Which group moves better and why?
- Whose performance was the flashiest and most exciting? What did they do differently to stand out?

Imagine doing these drills while also playing an instrument. Consider how much hard work goes into preparing a marching band for a performance.

- Can you compare it to anything you do in your own life?
- How many hours a week do you think marching bands practice in order to prepare for a performance?

Design Your Own Halftime Show!

Does your school have a marching band? After you have seen the performance of DrumLine Live!, think about elements of the production that could be used by your school's band.

- Was there a piece of music you especially liked? A costume design? Props? Choreography?

Working with several classmates, create your own production design for a marching band number that could be performed by your school ensemble at halftime. Make sure to specify as much detail as possible. Find a recording of the music you would use and decide which marching-band instruments would play.

- Sketch the costumes, scenery, and props.
- Work out some of the steps for the choreography.
- Sketch the formation changes by using a diagram or any other creative method you can think of.
- Think about the lighting design.

Present your concept to the rest of the class.

- Which of your ideas did they like most? Take notes on the ideas you liked.
- How can you improve your idea and build on it?

AMERICAN GIRL'S FUND FOR CHILDREN

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OVERTURE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

Tom Carto, President & CEO

Susan Crofton, Vice President of Programming

Tim Sauers, Director of Education and Community Engagement

Beth Racette, Education and Outreach Manager

Karra Beach, OnStage Coordinator

Lauri Brenning, Resource Guide Writer

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201 State Street, Madison, WI 53703 | 608.258.4165
onstage@overturecenter.com | OVERTURECENTER.COM