

NSSBE Conference 2026 Reading Session

Peachy by Madeline Martson



Madelines's Works

Madeline Marston, of Oxford, Ohio, has been playing steel pan since the age of seven. She studied music at Miami University, where she was a member of the steel band under the direction of Dr. Chris Tanner. Since 2016, Madeline has regularly traveled to Trinidad, the birthplace of steel pan, to compete in the Panorama competition as a member of the Silver Stars Steel Orchestra, earning as high as third place. These experiences have allowed her to learn, practice, and perform steel pan at the highest level, and deepen her understanding of the rich cultural context surrounding the instrument, music, and pedagogy.

In 2018, Madeline earned a degree in Creative Arts from Miami University. In 2019, she spent a semester studying at the University of Trinidad and Tobago – National Academy for the Performing Arts. In 2023, she earned degrees in Special Education and Elementary Education. In 2025, she earned a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction. She is currently studying for a Master's in Music Education with the intention of teaching university steel band.

Madeline is passionate about sharing the immense knowledge and experience that she has gained in Trinidad with students in the United States through her compositions, curricula, guest artist appearances, and work as a master class clinician. As a composer, Madeline aims to write music that appeals to all audiences, develops player technique and musicianship, represents multiple cultures and genres, and features all voices of the ensemble.

Performance Notes

Peachy is a simple and uplifting tune with a happy and bright feel. Short and sweet, in an upbeat swing style. This piece is intermediate - good for all ages, beginning bands, beginning of the school year, or switching players on to non-primary instruments for this tune. Peachy was written with the intention of bringing a "girly" energy to a concert, providing students and audience with a moment that feels playful and uplifting. Students would benefit from rehearsing a swing pattern within a triplet grid, and practicing scales and arpeggios in the key of C. Repeated material in the A, D, and

G sections allows for an expedited rehearsal schedule, allowing for more time spent on the more challenging B, C, E, and F sections in the melody. In the absence of a double tenor section, a number of tenor and/or double seconds players could be given the double tenor music.

Cruise the Erie Canal by Jordan Morrison



[Jordan Morrison Music](#)

Jordan Morrison is an active composer, arranger, educator, and performer. As an educator, he has taught in public schools, private schools, non-profit programs, and private studios. He has been a full-time staff member at W.O. Smith since 2016 and was a volunteer prior to that. He has taught a wide variety of music courses including Jazz Band, Marching Band, Steelband, Concert Band, Rock Band, Orchestra, Choir, General Music, World Music, Music Theory, Audio Production, Music Composition, and many more. He also directs 3 steelbands through the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Vanderbilt University. Jordan has had the opportunity to serve by training and mentoring hundreds of teachers and thousands of students throughout his career. He has been a featured educator/clinician for Berklee's City Music Summit and Ohio Music Education Association Conference. As a composer and performer, Jordan has enjoyed a wide array of wonderful and strange opportunities. These range from a stadium performance for a bowling conference to composing the music for two seasons of a live soap opera, performing in a giant outdoor tent for a Motorcyclist Revival, and leading a virtual drum circle for people with cochlear implants.

Professionally, Jordan spends most of his time teaching, training, mentoring, composing, arranging, and recording. Personally, he loves spending time with his family, camping, gardening, hiking, and being mediocre at tons of hobbies.

Jordan is an active member of NSSBE (National Society of Steelband Educators) and serves on the organization's Education Committee. He is a proud endorser of Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets.

Performance Notes

Cruise The Eerie Canal is a bit spooky and would make for a great Fall/Halloween piece but is really appropriate for any time of year from a musical standpoint. It contains very simple rhythms which makes this a great piece for very early bands to learn. The

passing of quarter notes through the sections in part 3 makes for a great teaching moment and challenge while remaining accessible to beginners. The standard notation score ensures accuracy and consistency when teaching rhythms and octaves. The non-standard iconic music notation of the individual parts should allow bands who struggle with music reading skills to access this piece very easily without being overwhelmed. It will also allow a band to be taught by rote and then given a cheat sheet to help with recall. With Rehearsal Numbers, Colored Shapes, or song structure terms you have the choice to hold up fingers to call a section, say or hand signal with shapes, call out colors, or call out the song form to organize the structure in real time with your band.

Below you will find a parts list and the description of the Flex Series of compositions. I wanted to add a few things for you to know specifically for this piece.

- While there are only “written” parts for Drum Set and Congas, you should feel free to add Engine room parts as needed.

Ex: shaker playing 8th notes, Tambourine playing when the snare hits, Cowbell playing quarter notes...etc.

- With a bit of transposing, you could cover the melody with many different instruments including Flute, Clarinet, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone...etc.
- This piece is a great introduction to some key components of standard music notation. It can be utilized to help teach students about Rehearsal Marks, Repeat Signs, Measures, and Bar Lines as well as other non-notation-based music concepts like Song Structure, Octave changes, and beginning improvisation.

Parts List

- Tenor (Double Tenor can double this)
- Double Second
- Triple Guitar/Cello
- Six Bass (or Bass Guitar)
- Chording (Guitar/Piano)
- Drum Set & Congas (2 Players)

This composition is part of the Flex Series: Flexible Compositions for Flexible Steel Band

Flex Series Compositions features:

- Backing Tracks for Drums/Engine Room/Bass

- Open Instrumentation w/ parts for Guitar/Piano
- Notated engine room and drum set parts
- Easy to rearrange with color coded/numbered sections
- Plan ahead with the provided “Your Arrangement” Box or Call out the form in real time by saying the section number or use backing tracks w/ “Suggested Arrangement” box

Port of Spain by Nathaniel O’Neal



MauMau Music

Nathaniel O’Neal is the World Percussion Director at DuPont Hadley Middle School in Old Hickory, Tennessee. He teaches middle school students the fundamentals of music through the study of African Diasporic music. Students in the World Percussion Program can participate in multiple ensembles, including Steel Band, Brazilian Samba Bateria, Ghanaian Djembe Ensemble, and Puerto Rico Plena Ensemble. The

DuPont Hadley Steel Band has performed many concerts for the community, including collaborative concerts with Vanderbilt Steel Band and W.O. Smith Steel Band.

Nathaniel completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he studied with Dr. Julie Hill, Dr. Shane Jones, Dr. Josh Smith, and Dr. Dan Piccolo. Nathaniel completed his master’s degree in music education from Middle Tennessee State University, where he studied from Dr. Christopher Dye, Dr. Vannetta-Hall, and Dr. Jamila McWhirter.

Nathaniel studied abroad in many countries during his collegiate career. He studied the history and culture of the steel band in Trinidad & Tobago in 2016. He performed and competed in the St. Lucia Panorama, where his band, Laborie Stee Band, placed second out of ten bands. Nathaniel also studied djembe and gyl technique at the Dagara School of Music in Ghana.

Nathaniel is an active member of the Percussive Arts Society and the National Society of Steel Band Educators.

Nathaniel currently resides in Goodlettsville, Tennessee. Nathaniel is a proud endorser of Innovative Percussion sticks and mallets.

Performance Notes

Port of Spain is the capital city of Trinidad. This is an important place in the story of the steelpan's creation. This is a soca chart, a prominent music style in Trinidad & Tobago. Letter A is a unison section to get the whole group started. Letter B introduces a melody in the jumbie jam and tenor parts. The double seconds and triple guitars introduce a simple strumming pattern from Trinidad and Tobago. The bass part at B glues everything together. Letter C is a call and response section between high pans and low pans, which is found in many Panorama steel band arrangements. This is a great chart to teach students the unique qualities of soca music.

Elementary Steel Band Series Vol. 1

This collection of music was created with the elementary steel band. I saw that there was a need to have music prepared for our earliest steel band students. Each chart uses simple rhythms and a basic AB form with some slight variations. The instrumentation for each chart is jumbie jam plus a full steel band. You can teach just the jumbie jam part and play along with the provided backing track, or perform this piece with a full steel band. I have included the note names for the Jumbie Jam part to help students learn to read music. You may make changes to the music and adapt it to your ensemble. I hope this resource is valuable for our elementary school steel band programs.

Frangipani by Emily Lemmeman



[Boxfish Music Publishing](#)

Based in Austin, Texas, Emily Lemmerman studied the art of building and tuning pans with Ellie Mannette from 1998 to 2004. She now works as an internationally active pan tuner and was notably the first woman to tune for Panorama competitions worldwide, including in Trinidad. Emily is also active as a performer, clinician and composer. One of the earliest published female composers in the United States, her first arrangement was published by Hillbridge Music in 2003. A lifelong advocate of diversity as an essential and intentional part of pedagogy, Emily Lemmerman is especially outspoken in its impact within the world of percussion.

Performance Notes

Level I Rock in C. With glockenspiel and sleigh bells, of course! This is always a hit in performance. Not technically a Holiday tune, but anything with sleigh bells can pass!

I like to add metallic melodic percussion to this one- bells, vibes, etc. This can keep extra hands busy, if your band is overpopulated. They can follow the Lead part.

When assigning parts, I find it helpful to know the difficulty of each voice. The simplest parts in this tune are Bass, then Guitar/Cello, then Double Second. As with most of my arrangements, the Double Tenor part is designed for the more independent and accelerated player- it can be adapted for either Lead or Double Second, but don't leave it out!

Most of the rhythms are downbeat oriented, so you won't need a lot of time dedicated to coordinating syncopated voices.

From the beginning to letter A, all voices are unison except the bass. This means you'll be jamming right from the beginning! The DS voice and Lead change- in unison- at letter A. From here, the DS, GT/CEL and BS parts are unchanged until letter E. This is designed to be super-teachable, and keep as many kids engaged and involved at all times. You can encourage the background voices to memorize their parts, and to open their ears and listen to the melody to hear the change.

Letter C, Lead sticking: LLR LLR. Insist that the "C, CD" figure is stuck this way- a double left on the quarter notes keeps it cleaner. The rest of the melody should lay out simply.

At letter E, all parts except bass have unison rhythm. The challenge here is for the band to be aware of the form. Learn the first four bars- this idea happens identically 4x.

Letter F happens four times. The Bass and DS are the same as the beginning, the Leads are playing scalar rolls, the GT/CEL gets some melody. You can ask the Lead and DT to play their part from letter B as you teach the GT/CEL part- they match, and will keep hands busy in rehearsal. Drums- first two times as written, rock out on the ride for the third and fourth times, and add sleigh bells for extra color!

The end, letter G, is identical to letter E.

Take It Easy by John Willmarth



[John Willmarth Music](#)

John Willmarth is the Director of Steel Bands at Summerville High School. The Green Wave Steel Band is one of the largest high school programs of its kind, with 6 bands and over 100 students participating each year. In addition, he teaches private percussion lessons and serves as a faculty member for PATHWAY, a summer program that nurtures gifted and talented middle school students in the arts. He has previously served as an adjunct faculty member at

Charleston Southern University, the University of Kentucky, Centre College, and Director of Percussion at Summerville High School in Summerville, SC, McKinney High School in McKinney, TX and Lafayette High School in Lexington, KY. As a percussion consultant and clinician, he has worked with high school programs across the country and for Music for All (Bands of America), The Yamaha Corporation of America, and the Kentucky Governor's School for the Arts.

An active performer, Mr. Willmarth is currently the drummer and co-director for Word and Table; a contemporary worship service at Bethany United Methodist Church. He has extensive experience as a jazz musician, performing regularly in the Charleston area. In addition, he performs as a steel pan soloist for private and corporate events. A former member of the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps, he was honored to be a part of three Drum Corps International High Percussion awards and two DCI World Championships.

An active composer, Mr. Willmarth has written over 100 percussion compositions and arrangements published by John Willmarth Music, Musicon Publications, Row-Loff Productions, Sheet Music Plus, and TapSPACE Publications. His compositions have been performed at the Percussive Arts Society International Convention (PASIC) and the Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic. His series of books, The Sight Reading Workbook for Steel Band, is the first of its kind; a classroom method dedicated to developing sight reading skills on various types of steel pans in a group environment. In 2006, he received 2nd place honors in the Percussive Arts Society Composition Contest for his solo timpani piece, Bushido: The Way of the Warrior. An experienced arranger, he has written marching percussion books for numerous high schools as well as the University of Kentucky, the University of Iowa, and Charleston Southern University.

Mr. Willmarth earned a bachelor's degree in music education from the University of Kentucky under the tutelage of James Campbell and a master's degree from the University of Iowa in percussion performance where he studied with Dan Moore, James Dreier and John Rapson. He is an artist with Innovative Percussion, Evans Drumheads, and the Yamaha Corporation of America.

Performance Notes

This piece was written in 2016 for the Gateway Program in Dorchester School District 2 located in Summerville, SC. The program is made up of 3rd-5th graders who have been identified as gifted in the arts through an audition process. The program lasts 2 weeks in the summer and the students rotate through 3 different areas each day: piano, strings,

and steel band. At the end of the 2-week session, a showcase performance is presented for the parents and community. This piece was designed to be easy to put together with limited rehearsal time.

Here are some notes on the piece and some thoughts on composing for inexperienced musicians:

I find beginning a piece with the engine room is beneficial for young students because it establishes the time feel prior to the band entrance. This can help avoid a shaky start at the performance. Unison rhythms in the bass and strums help simplify the rhythmic demand on students and I find the “3-strum” or “tresillo” rhythm to be the most attainable strum pattern for young musicians. The most rhythmically complex moment in the piece (at ms. 17) is written in unison for ease of teaching and clarity/stability across the ensemble. A short engine room break at the end of A is useful for regrouping in case the ensemble begins to pull apart.

The texture at Letter B changes by utilizing a “call and response” approach, but like Letter A, there are basically 2 contrasting rhythmic parts happening for simplicity and efficiency of instruction.

A solo section can be added by looping the first 4 bars of A prior to restating the melody if desired. This allows soloists to play the F Major scale exclusively.

A “tag ending” is utilized, again, for simplicity and efficiency of instruction. The full ensemble crescendo (3 bars from the end) is a great opportunity to work on dynamic control as a group.

Squirrels by Liam Teague



[Wendeln Music Works](#)

Liam Teague is Professor of Music and Director of Steelpan Studies at Northern Illinois University (NIU), where he also leads the renowned NIU Steelband. Teague is the recipient of an NIU Board of Trustees Professorship Award (2022) and a Presidential Research, Scholarship and Artistry Professor Award (2018).

Hailed as the “Paganini of the Steelpan”, his commitment to demonstrating the great musical possibilities of the steelpan has taken him to throughout the world, and he has received many awards from his homeland of Trinidad and Tobago, including the Hummingbird National Award (Silver) and the Ansa McAl Caribbean Award for Excellence. In 2022, The San Fernando

City Council honored Teague with the Keys to the City of San Fernando, his hometown in Trinidad and Tobago. He is also the recipient of an Illinois Arts Council (IACA) 2023 Artist Fellowship Award. In 2024, the Fox Valley Orchestra honored Teague with its Champion of the Arts Award.

Teague has won several notable competitions such as the Trinidad and Tobago National Steelband Festival Solo Championship and the Saint Louis Symphony Volunteers Association Young Artist Competition. He has also performed with many diverse ensembles which include National Symphony Orchestra, Taiwan National Symphony, Czech National Symphony, Saint Louis Symphony, Panama National Symphony, Chicago Sinfonietta, Vermeer String Quartet, Avalon String Quartet, Hannaford Street Silver Brass Ensemble, River City Brass Band, Nexus, Dartmouth Wind Ensemble, Indiana University Symphonic Band, University of Wisconsin- Madison Marching Band, Nutrien Silver Stars Steel Orchestra, and the BpTT Renegades Steel Orchestra.

Teague has appeared in concert with Grammy-Award winning musicians Paquito D’Rivera, Dave Samuels, Zakir Hussain and Dame Evelyn Glennie, and has regularly collaborated with NIU colleagues Robert Chappell(multi-instrumentalist) and Faye Seeman(harp) with whom he co-founded the steelpan and harp duo Pangelic.

He has also presented and performed at several Percussive Arts Society International Conventions (PASIC) and educational institutions across the globe. Liam Teague has served as an adjudicator for many events including the International Pan Ramajay Competition and Virginia Arts Festival- Panorama Caribbean Music Festival.

Many of his compositions and arrangements are published with Mau Mau Music, Pan Press, Ramajay Music, Wendeln Music Works, and he has commissioned outstanding composers to write for the steelpan, including Michael Colgrass, Jan Bach, Libby Larsen, Andy Akiho, Deborah Fisher Teason, Joey Sellers, Ben Wahlund, Erik Ross, Kevin Bobo, David Gordon, Robert Chappell, Geof Bradfield, Casey Cangelosi, Gustavo Leone, Victor Provost, Etienne Charles, James Gourlay, and Reggie Thomas.

He served as steel band director at Birch Creek Music Performance Center in Door County, Wisconsin, and has also taught and performed at the California State University Summer Arts Camp and at the Interlochen Academy for the Performing Arts.

Teague is also the author of a steelpan method for beginners published by the Hal Leonard Corporation, the world’s largest publisher of print music.

Liam Teague has created arrangements for Panorama, the most celebrated steel band competition in the world, for Nutrien Silver Stars Steel Orchestra, Harvard Harps Steel Orchestra, Starlift Steel Orchestra, and Skiffle Steel Orchestra. He has many recordings

to his credit, including Hands Like Lightning, For Lack of Better Words, Panoramic: Rhythm Through an Unobstructed View, Open Window, and Sorcerer.

Performance Notes

"Squirrels" is dedicated to my son Jaden and daughter Jeida. One of my neighbors would always inquire about them by asking, "How are your squirrels doing?" My wife, Lorena, and I thought that it was very cute, and I felt that " Squirrels " would be a perfect name for this piece.

Great care has been given to providing a drum set chart to aid in identifying the correct grooves. When used tastefully, these will complement the song as well as the pan players and their parts. As always, use the drum set notation as a guide. Keep to the basic ideas and grooves first, then the drummer can add in personal touches as the band begins to feel comfortable.