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Concert Report

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The Symphonic Bands: San Diego State and St. Augustine High School

On Sunday, October 26, 2014 I attended the San Diego State University's concert that was sponsored by San Diego State's School of Music and Dance. The concert consisted of two bands that both were symphonic. Before attending the concert, I went to eat Chinese food with my friend and we made our way to the concert. The concert was being played in the J. Dayton Smith Recital Hall and the tickets that we purchased were priced at \$5.00 each. When we got inside, we tried to find seats and I was amazed at how normal looking the auditorium was. It was like being in our normal sized classroom, but with a long stage upfront. I was dressed in casual nice clothes, while other audience members were dressed up in black and white suits and dresses. The audience was made up of a variety of people. There were other students, who were not playing just watching, family members of the performers, and others who just wanted to listen to music. The seating was like what you would find in a theater, many rows of seats that fold up. Most of the performers in the San Diego State Symphonic band looked to be undergraduates or possibly music majors at San Diego State. The performers in the St. Augustine High School band looked a lot younger. You could definitely tell that they were not college students.

St. Augustine's Symphonic band played first with all it's 40 members and played four songs; one of which had 5 movements to it. After St. Augustine's set, there was a little intermission so the stage could get set up for the next band. I did like the band, but I was really looking forward to hearing San Diego State's band. There are 62 members that make up the

symphonic band. That is a lot of students on one stage. Looking through the program, I noticed that the big section in the symphonic band is the flutes. I have always had a thing for flutes. Once intermission was done, San Diego State's Symphonic band played. I thought that they did a fantastic job. Conductor, Shannon Kitelinger did a great job in showing good leadership and control of his band. I was moved by the spirit of the symphonic band and the concert had a high level of intensity and energy to it, thanks to the explosive way the drums were played. I was so fascinated by the leadership each section leader had over their own section. Conductor Kitelinger explained and gave details about each of the pieces that the band played, and spoke about how he came to the realization that having a symphonic band could cause brain damage. This was due to the mixture of instruments used at one time such as the diversity in drums, tenor saxophone, trumpets, and flutes playing at the same time, but different things. Your mind is on musical overload.

I believe that it is true what Conductor Kitelinger said because I caught myself shaking my head while I was transfixed on the rhythm part of the piece. I was watching every single movement that was happening in front of me and soaking it all in because simply put, it was something exciting and new. I got goose bumps every time I heard the symphonic band followed by the escalating intense sounds of the flutes. I have always had a thing for the flutes, which is known for its rich historical existence. I just gravitate towards them to the point where it hits me right in the heart and soul. Although it is great that my ears pull me towards their beautiful sound, I experience it from a sad perspective. One of the special guest that was playing with the San Diego State's symphonic band was Tripp Sprague, a great musician in his own right. When I heard him play, I kept replaying the day that I lost my father. It was like Tripp was playing my feelings right in front of me with his solo and I noticed how his lips hugged the his mouthpiece

because I was sitting close, I started to get sad because I saw symbolism in that. I wanted to hug my father, but I realized he was not there sitting next to me; my friend was. My mind started racing with thoughts of sadness even harder when the drummer Richard played his solo. Every hit seemed to be aimed at my heart and my head; but that soon changed when he started playing with a lot of energy. He took me to another dimension. It was a place of aggression and masculine gestures. It was a roller coaster and wave of emotions that I felt during this concert.

Contrast to what I was feeling, I observed two people falling in love. I was so emotionally drained that I had to excuse myself for a couple of minutes and have a cigarette. After having my cigarette, I went back inside and made note of how many people fell asleep during the show. It seemed strange to me that people would fall asleep as the music kept getting louder and louder. I could see a lot because in the first three rows the seats had spot lights on them; and therefore, you could see what the people in those seats were doing. The movement really distracted me; however, I believe that the way the band was set up was perfect.

One piece that I really enjoyed was "Chester". "Chester" was written by William Schuman and it is based on the third movement of his New England Triptych. Schuman was a composer and arts administrator from Manhattan, New York. He was born into the Jewish faith and named after President William Howard Taft. He played violin and banjo, but his passion was baseball. He got his music start in performing for his high school and played weddings and bar mitzvahs playing string bass. His "Chester" is his most famous piece. It was based off of the William Billings' anthem of 1778. The song "Chester" was written around the late 1950's. I loved the melody in this piece and the tempo was fast. This song had a better feel to it than the other pieces played, I think. It made me feel better and think better things than missing my father.

I would definitely recommend to everyone to go see the San Diego State University

Symphonic band because you will experience so much that no words can describe it. They took me on a musical journey that it is hard for me to put in words. I experienced so many emotions that I am sorry to say that I was glad at the end of the concert because I was so emotionally drained, I don't think that I could have taken one more minute at the state I was in. It was a very moving experience and would recommend everyone to go to see this band. My only advice is to go and just experience, don't go and be upset that you are there and don't fall asleep because it's rude. These student musicians worked very hard to put on a show and it's just not right for people to fall asleep. I hope to go see the San Diego State University Symphonic band again in the near future and possible brings some more friends to support them.

Work Cited

San Diego State University: School of Music and Dance program. 26 October 2014. print

Schuman, William. Wikipedia. Online.

Very interesting report!
Thanks for your
personal comments!