**Frank Ticheli**  (1958-Present)

American Composer and Conductor, Frank Ticheli, was born on January 21, 1958 in Monroe, Louisiana. In 1991, Ticheli joined the faculty at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music where he remains today as Professor of Composition. From 1991 to 1998, Ticheli was Composer in Residence of the Pacific Symphony.

Frank Ticheli received his Bachelor’s in Music from Southern Methodist University in 1980 and began teaching high school in Garland, Texas. He received his Doctoral and Master’s degrees in composition from The University of Michigan. His works are published by Manhattan Beach, Southern, Hinshaw, and Encore Music, and are recorded on the labels of Albany, Chandos, Clarion, Klavier, Koch International, and Mark Records.

Ticheli is well known for his works for concert band, many of which have become standards in the repertoire. In addition to composing, he has appeared as guest conductor of his music at Carnegie Hall, at many American universities and music festivals, and in cities throughout the world, including Schladming, Austria, at the Mid-Europe Music Festival; London and Manchester, England, with the Meadows Wind Ensemble; Singapore, with the Singapore Armed Forces Central Band; and numerous cities in Japan, with the Bands of America National Honor Band.

Frank Ticheli is the winner of the 2006 NBA/William D. Revelli Memorial Band Composition Contest for his Symphony No. 2. Awards from the American Academy of Arts and Letters include both the Charles Ives and the Goddard Lieberson Awards. Other awards for his music include the Walter Beeler Memorial Prize, and First Prize awards in the Texas Sesquicentennial Orchestral Composition Competition, Britten-on-the-Bay Choral Composition Contest, and Virginia CBDNA Symposium for New Band Music.

Ticheli has received commissions and grants from Chamber Music America, the American Music Center, the Revelli Foundation, the Pacific Symphony Orchestra, the Pacific Chorale, Worldwide Concurrent Premieres, Inc., Prince George’s Philharmonic Orchestra, the Adrian Symphony, the City of San Antonio, the Indiana Bandmasters Association and numerous universities.

## Works for Winds

[**Abracadabra**](http://www.windrep.org/Abracadabra) - 4 1/2 minutes, Grade 3

[**Amazing Grace**](http://www.windrep.org/Amazing_Grace) - 1994 - 6 minutes, Grade 3.

[**Amen!**](http://www.windrep.org/Amen%21) – 2009 - 3 minutes, Grade 2.

[**An American Elegy**](http://www.windrep.org/An_American_Elegy) - 2000 - 11 minutes, Grade 4.   
 *“Composed in memory of those who lost their lives at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999, and to honor the survivors”*

[**Angels in the Architecture**](http://www.windrep.org/Angels_in_the_Architecture) - 2008 - 15 minutes, Grade 5.

**Ave Maria** – 2003 – 4 ½ minutes, Grade 3.

[**Blue Shades**](http://www.windrep.org/Blue_Shades) - 1997 - 10 minutes, Grade 4 ½.

[**Cajun Folk Songs, Part One**](http://www.windrep.org/Cajun_Folk_Songs%2C_Part_One) - 1990 - 6 ½ minutes, Grade 3 ½.   
[**Cajun Folk Songs, Part Two**](http://www.windrep.org/Cajun_Folk_Songs%2C_Part_Two)- 1997 - 10 ½ minutes, Grade 4.

**Concertino for Trombone and Band** – 1987 – 13 minutes, grade 5.

[**Fortress**](http://www.windrep.org/Fortress) - 1989 – 5 ½ minutes, Grade 3.

[**Gaian Visions**](http://www.windrep.org/Gaian_Visions) – 1994 - 9 ½ minutes, Grade 5.

[**Joy**](http://www.windrep.org/Joy) – 2005 - 2 ½ minutes, Grade 2.

[**Joy Revisited**](http://www.windrep.org/Joy_Revisited) - 2005 - 3 ½ minutes, Grade 3.

[**Loch Lomond**](http://www.windrep.org/Loch_Lomond) – 2003 - 6 ½ minutes, Grade 3.

**Music for Winds and Percussion** – 1988 – 16 minutes, Grade 6.

[**Nitro**](http://www.windrep.org/Nitro) - 2006 - 3 minutes, Grade 4.

[**Pacific Fanfare**](http://www.windrep.org/Pacific_Fanfare) - 1995, 2003 - 5 ½ minutes, Grade 5.   
 *Band arrayed for antiphonal sound*

[**Portrait of a Clown**](http://www.windrep.org/Portrait_of_a_Clown) **-** 1989 - 2 ½ minutes, Grade 2.

[**Postcard**](http://www.windrep.org/Postcard) – 1994 - 5 ½ minutes, Grade 5.

[**Sanctuary**](http://www.windrep.org/Sanctuary) – 2006 – 9 ½ minutes, Grade 5.

[**Shaker Gift Song, A**](http://www.windrep.org/Shaker_Gift_Song%2C_A) – 2004 - 2 ½ minutes, Grade 2.

[**Shenandoah**](http://www.windrep.org/Shenandoah) – 1999 - 6 ½ minutes, Grade 3.

**Short Symphony** – *tentative title, in progress* - 15 minutes, grade 5.

[**Simple Gifts: Four Shaker Songs**](http://www.windrep.org/Simple_Gifts:_Four_Shaker_Songs) – 2003 - 9 minutes, Grade 3.

[**Sun Dance**](http://www.windrep.org/Sun_Dance) - 1997 - 5 minutes, Grade 3.  
[**Symphony No. 2**](http://www.windrep.org/Symphony_II_%28Ticheli%29) - 2004 - 21 minutes, Grade 6.   
 *Note: The movements may be played separately:   
 Movement 1: Grade 6; Movement 2: Grade 6; Movement 3: Grade 5*

[**Vesuvius**](http://www.windrep.org/Vesuvius) – 1999 - 9 minutes, Grade 4.

[**Wild Nights!**](http://www.windrep.org/Wild_Nights%21) - 2007 - 6 ½ minutes, Grade 4.

It is rare to find a contemporary composer whose compositions receive consistently high marks and laudatory reviews for originality, programmability, and teachability. The quality of Ticheli's work has already risen to a level where many of his wind- band compositions are now referred to as core literature. Eleven of his fifteen compositions for wind band or wind ensemble are on state contest lists. Seven of his compositions are included in the prestigious series Teaching Music through Performance in Band, Volumes 1, 2, and 3.

Even rarer is a composer who has proven his craftsman ship at all levels of technical difficulty. Too often, new compositions of leading wind composers resembles their previous works, however, Ticheli’s works are each uniquely different. Ticheli believes four elements make music interesting and enjoyable to listen to: 1. Aspects of singing and dancing with well constructed melodic and rhythmic schemes that don’t get predictable or boring 2. Authenticity with consistency in approach and application. 3. Textures that spark and that are transparent 4. Good counterpoint. When Ticheli’s works are analyzed, it is apparent that he takes into account all four of these elements to consistently create a unique and original compositions.

Ticheli’s compositions, ***Cajun Folk Songs, Fortress, Gaian Visions,*** and ***Postcard*** are included in *“Best Music for High School Band.”* Each piece has unique elements incorporated into the structure that can be used as the basis for comprehensive teaching. Each of his pieces are individual entities designed within its own parameters, not merely a carbon copy of a previous piece with minor alteratons.

Initial characteristics in Ticheli’s music include:

* Atypical approach to band orchestration. With a desire to challenge lower parts with melodic passages, Ticheli deliberately scores melody in second and third parts. This lets the players know they are important and encourages them to rise to the occasion.
* Restrained use of tutti scoring.
* A distinct form, separate and unique for each piece.
* Layered rhythmic schemes involving written and implied metrical stress or polymeters
* Development and manipulation of short motivic ideas, sometimes reduced to only a simple interval
* Limited use of percussion – utilizes percussion for maximum effect.
* Constant shifting of textures.
* Very few measures are repeated – emphasizing an importance on rehearsing everything carefully allowing the musicians to fully understand the music.
* Use of non-standard Harmonic structure, including modes and altered modes.
* All of his music requires more rehearsal time than comparative literature of most other composers.
* Ticheli doesn’t favor any one particular 20th century technique. He uses melodic fragmentation, augmentation, diminution, chromatic construction, tone clusters, polytonal moments, tri-tone based harmonic motion, note technique, implied poly-metric episodes, exotic scales, modes and altered modes.
* Exaggerated contrasting dynamics. Proper execution of subtleties’ and nuances in addition to balance and proper inflection create a constant rehearsal objective for directors.

***Postcard*** was completed in the summer of 1991 with its first performance on April 17, 1992, at Hill Auditorium in Ann Arbor, Michigan, by the University of Michigan Symphony Band conducted by H. Robert Reynolds. P***ostcard*** was commissioned by Ticheli’s friend, colleague, and former mentor, H. Robert Reynolds, in memory of his mother, Ethel Virginia Curry. He requested that Ticheli compose not an elegy commemorating her death, but a short energetic piece celebrating her life. In response, this brief "postcard" was composed as a musical reflection of her character -- vibrant, whimsical, and succinct.

***Postcard*** is one of Ticheli’s most advanced works for winds. It requires knowledagable musicians, performers and conductor to understand the composers five minute whirlwind of emotional contrasts and styles. It is suggested that giving students program notes is beneficial in order for them to see themes and subsequent variations and to realize how the composer develops them throughout the composition.

Full instrumentation is necessary to achieve all the color combinations Ticheli employs. Every line in the score has to be played with proper balance with the rest of the instruments as the piece is not constructed around one group of instruments or section. Employment of percussion is designed for maximum effect as to not “overuse” the percussion. The dynamic and character changes happen frequently and quickly throughout the piece. Ticheli utilizes quick crescendos and decrescendos occurring in the matter of a few beats. Players must shift dynamics, style, articulation, and mood from one beat to the next.

***Postcard*** is set in an ABA’ form. The piece begins with a 42 note Palindromic melody which is main theme in nature and based on octatonic scale. Ticheli uses a non-standard Harmonic structure with development of tritone E-A# throughout composition. The Lydian mode is used a lot throughout the piece. ***Postcard*** is an elaborate multilayer rhythmic scheme creating poly-meters and many implied and under-lying meters throughout the ensemble. The composition has an intricate dynamic scheme, allowing for the director and musicians to exaggerate every dynamic detail to its maximum effect. ***Postcard*** contains many highly independent instrumental lines and the passing of melody across instruments allowing each musician to play more independently, not relying on the leaders of each section.

Avoiding the tendency to slow down during softer more lyrical passages would be a difficult issue to control, emphasizing the importance of locking in on tempo where the divided beat never changes throughout the piece. Ticheli rarely, if ever, repeats a section of music using same orchestration or texture, thus an importance on rehearsal of the entire piece should be established.

Works Cited

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