

## DAVID MASLANKA: COMPLETE REPERTOIRE FOR WIND ENSEMBLE

David Maslanka wrote 58 pieces for wind ensemble. 22 of these works have a featured soloist, solo group, or narrator. Certain pieces have entered the canon of standard works: Symphony No. 4, *Give Us This Day*, and *A Child's Garden of Dreams*, among others.

David hoped that some of his lesser-known works might find more performances. We encourage you to look through this list for unfamiliar titles and consider programming them. Scores and recordings for all works are available on [davidmaslanka.com](http://davidmaslanka.com).

### GRADE 2

Prelude on a Gregorian Tune  
(1980) 4'

Rollo Takes a Walk (1980) 5'

Variants on a Hymn Tune  
[solo euphonium] (1995) 5'

### GRADE 3

Collected Chorale Settings (2005)

Heart Songs (1997) 12'

Mother Earth – A Fanfare  
(2003) 3½'

Procession of the Academics  
(2008) 5'

### GRADE 4

Alex and the Phantom Band  
[narrator] (2002) 16'

Golden Light: A Celebration Piece  
(1990) 8'

Hell's Gate [solo saxophone trio]  
(1996) 17'

Husa (2017) 4'

Illumination (2012) 5'

Laudamus Te (1994) 13'

On This Bright Morning (2013) 9½'

Requiem (2013) 11'

UFO Dreams: Concerto for Eupho-  
nium and Wind Ensemble  
(1999) 17'

Hymn for World Peace (2014) 12'

### GRADE 5

California (2015) 10'

Give Us This Day: Short Symphony  
for Wind Ensemble (2006) 10'

Montana Music: Chorale Variations  
(1993) 16'

Morning Star (1997) 8½'

The Seeker (2016) 10'

Tears (1994) 12'

Testament (2001) 12'

A Tuning Piece: Songs of Fall and  
Winter (1995) 18'

Unending Stream of Life (Varia-  
tions on All Creatures of Our  
God and King) (2007) 25'

### GRADE 6

Angel of Mercy (2016) 17'

First Light (2016) 8'

Hosannas [with tenor solo]  
(2015) 26'

In Memoriam (1989) 13'

Liberation (2010) 14'

Saint Francis: Two Studies for  
Wind Ensemble (2015) 18'

Traveler (2003) 14'

### GRADE 6+

A Carl Sandburg Reader [solo so-  
prano & baritone] (2006) 41'

A Child's Garden of Dreams  
(1981) 35'

Concerto for Alto Saxophone and  
Wind Ensemble (1999) 45'

Concerto for Clarinet and Wind  
Ensemble (2014) 25'

Concerto for Marimba and Band  
(1990) 20'

Concerto No. 1 for Piano, Winds,  
and Percussion (1976) 20'

Concerto No. 2 for Piano, Winds,  
and Percussion (2002) 27'

Concerto No. 3 for Piano and Wind  
Ensemble (2016) 17'

Concerto for Saxophone Quartet  
and Wind Ensemble (2012) 33'

Concerto for Trombone and Wind  
Ensemble [with solo cello]  
(2007) 36'

David's Book: Concerto for Solo  
Percussionist and Wind Ensem-  
ble (2006) 39'

Desert Roads: Four Songs for Clari-  
net and Wind Ensemble  
(2005) 27'

Mass [SATB chorus, children's  
chorus, solo soprano & baritone]  
(1996, rev. 2005) 95'

O Earth, O Stars [solo flute, cello]  
(2010) 40'

Remember Me: Music for Cello and  
Nineteen Players (2013) 17'

Sea Dreams: Concerto for Two  
Horns and Wind Ensemble  
(1997) 32'

Symphony No. 2 (1986) 35'

Symphony No. 3 (1991) 49'

Symphony No. 4 (1993) 27'

Symphony No. 5 (2000) 40'

Symphony No. 7 (2005) 35'

Symphony No. 8 (2008) 42'

Symphony No. 9 [narrator]  
(2011) 75'

Symphony No. 10: The River of  
Time (with Matthew Maslanka)  
(2018) 40'

## PERFORMING THE MUSIC OF DAVID MASLANKA: GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESS

by Matthew Maslanka

David's music often poses significant technical challenges: high rhythmic complexity, fast or awkward passages, extremes of endurance and range, and transparent orchestration. Groups who perform this music will need to devote significant personal practice and rehearsal time to execute these works at a high standard. In doing so, however, many people overlook certain fundamental principles of his writing and, as a result, undermine all of their hard work.

The most basic rule is: *trust what's on the page*. Every subsequent item on this list elaborates this single principle. David was meticulous in his attention to detail and meant every single marking he made. His writing is overwhelmingly prescriptive: there is very little room for personal interpretation of most of his music. Where he has written "freely" or "ad lib.," your musical taste may be expressed. Otherwise, stick to the page.

In descending order of importance:

Tempo

Rhythms

Dynamics

Fermatas

Perserverence

Character

Intonation

Notes

**Tempo:** this is, along with rhythm, the most important aspect of David's music to play accurately. No other element more directly affects the character of the piece. It may feel incredibly fast ( $\text{♩} = 186$ ), incredibly slow ( $\text{♩} = 46$ ) or awkwardly in the middle ( $\text{♩} = 96$ ), but finding that tempo and trusting it will yield the right feel for the piece. *Morning Star* is marked as " $\text{♩} = ca. 180$ ". His tempos often include "ca.". This is an acknowledgement that we are all human and that some variation is expected. However, you should strive for 180 exactly. At 160, the piece feels leaden and joyless. At 200, it feels frenetic and out of control. By all means, practice at slower tempos for accuracy or work on ensemble, but come performance time, 180 is 180.

Slow down only when it's marked: he was very specific about when and how much to slow down. This may sound obvious, but our natural tendencies to pull back slightly at the end of phrases are often at odds with what he has written. Continue straight through unless other-

wise directed.

**Rhythms:** accurate, steady, and deliberate rhythms are absolutely crucial. Sacrifice everything else but tempo and rhythm. Two rhythms that show up over and over are  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$  and  $\text{♩} \text{♩} \text{♩}$ . On the first, make sure that the sixteenths are given their true, deliberate value, no matter the speed. Do not crush them together. On the second, make sure that the group is not late after the rest. Breathe before the beat, not on it.

**Dynamics:** David's music is typically an exercise in extremes: he often found the soul of his music in discomfort. For him, *pianissimo* was nearly as soft as it was possible to play and *fortissimo* was nearly as loud as possible. Most bands never get out of the mezzo trap. This is usually a product of fear. If you play too loud, the sound might get out of control and become ugly. If you play too soft, the sound may not speak or be inaudible. Practice true extreme louds and softs. David's music requires commitment and focus at those levels. He occasionally writes *ppp* and *fff*. These should be taken as the ultimate extremes: so soft it barely speaks, or so loud the sound is in danger of breaking. That quality of sound is his hallmark; playing it safe shortchanges the music and lessens its intensity.

Exaggerate *fp* < *ff* figures. They are effects and should be clearly audible as such.

**Fermatas:** Generally speaking, hold them longer than you want to. David loved the true heart of a tone. Holding fermatas allows the music to settle and find its true center. Only move once you have felt that resonance come alive and express itself fully. This goes for very loud and very soft equally.

**Perserverence:** simply put, don't give up! If a loud note is held for 5 beats instead of four, don't slacken for the last beat; push through! Many times, you will want to get softer sooner than is written. Remain at full force until it is written otherwise. Do not cut fermatas short before they have reached their true potential. Stay in the moment and dig deep for it. This will test your physical and emotional endurance as well as your aural presence. Meet the challenge and revel in it.

**Character:** exaggerate articulations and gestures. Short notes should be very short. Accented notes should be very accented. Make clear distinctions between slurred and tongued notes. Generally speaking, rhythmic gestures are front-loaded. If no other indication is given, emphasizing the beginning of the gesture will give a spring and life to the figure.

Exaggerate the mood of a passage: if it's silly, be very silly (looking at you, kazoos in *Rollo Takes a Walk!*). If

it's tortured, be very tortured (Mass: "Sophia, when you call me" – "I feel pools of blood/In my fingers and toes.")

**Intonation:** this is one of the most challenging areas of David's music. He often requires musicians to tune precisely while at the extremes of their range or dynamic curve. He also has many passages of chamber chorales. These kinds of passages make defects in tuning incredibly apparent. Once you lock in the tuning, though, a magical effect happens: the true center of the sound emerges. This quality lies at the heart of all of his music.

**Notes.** This is at the bottom of the list because people frequently get hung up on getting all of the notes that their time suffers or the character of the music gets lost. Of course, playing the right notes is important, but not at the expense of the foregoing.

If you play the music of David Maslanka exactly as written, with fearless commitment, if you work tirelessly and persistently through the rehearsal process, you will transcend those markings and live in his sound world. You will bring the audience with you on a spectacular journey. You and your musicians will rise to this challenge if you pose it in loving kindness. Take a breath in peace, allow silence to be felt, and then make beautiful sounds together.

## **THE MUSIC OF DAVID MASLANKA: A LEGACY OF COMMUNITY**

by Matthew Maslanka

If you're reading this, you've likely heard, played, or conducted one (if not many!) of David Maslanka's pieces. You have the direct experience of being transported by these works of profound beauty and power. He has inspired at least three generations of wind conductors to build their own ensembles so that they might play his music. He has inspired countless performers to become professionals and teachers.

Recently, I met a woman who told me of her struggles with suicidal depression. On the point of ending her life, she remembered dad's Horn Sonata. The piece so moved her that she found a new strength of will to come back from that brink. She showed me a tattoo on her wrist of one of dad's maxims: "just show up every day." She's now doing well and about to start a Master's program in horn performance.

I believe in my father's music. It speaks directly to the soul and brings people together around it. I have dedicated my life to preserving his legacy and helping support the community he has helped create.

If you find this music important to you, there are

many ways you can show your support. The easiest is to take a single mindful breath in peace. Please try that now. This is a gift you can give yourself and the world at any time.

Attend performances of David's music in your area. We are building as comprehensive a list as possible on [davidmaslanka.com](http://davidmaslanka.com). Support your local music community.

If you are a musician, find some friends and a piece of David's. Rehearse together. If you are so moved, perform it publicly.

If you are a director, program his music. There are many options for different levels of ensemble. Bear in mind the *Guidelines for Success* elsewhere in this hand-out. Look for works that are not commonly played; there are profound truths hiding in plain sight.

I am always available to answer questions, provide insight, or help rehearse. I have spent my entire life working closely with my father and his music and am able to offer a unique perspective on all aspects of his life and works. I do not take a fee for any guidance. I ask only that you consider a donation to the David Maslanka Foundation to help us preserve his legacy.

The Maslanka Foundation has several aims: archival, educational, and progressive. The Archive will preserve David's scores, papers, sketches, art, letters, books, and personal effects. We are transforming his studio in the beautiful Missoula Valley of Western Montana into a library and reading room. We will keep his space for researchers and composers to experience his environment.

The Foundation's educational mission supports research on David's music and philosophy, enable my outreach to performers, and make resources available online.

We will help support the next generation of composers by providing fellowships and residencies. We will also be creating festivals celebrating David's music and those composers who exemplify his ideals.

If you find these goals to be important to you, please consider a gift to the Maslanka Foundation to help us achieve them.

I hope that you will join me in preserving this special music for this and future generations. Breathe, be a part of your musical community, perform the works, engage with our online resources, and help support the Foundation's efforts. But most important: breathe.

For more information, you may visit  
[maslanka.org](http://maslanka.org) • [davidmaslanka.com](http://davidmaslanka.com)