

# TUBA

## Performance Notes for All-State Band Auditions

by

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### **All-State Junior Tuba Solo 1A, Moderato**

This solo opens with a *cantabile* marking. Singing style is connected rather than separated, and there is usually a lot of dynamic contrast. Observe the slurs in the first line. Even though the notes in measure 5 are not marked slurred they should still connect. Save the articulation change for the *marcato* at pick-up to measure 7. In measures 9 and 11 make sure the listener can hear the accents on the quarter notes. Measure 14 is *forte* with accents, but it is also marked *maestoso*. This is achieved by keeping the tone full and round and not letting the accents get brassy. Be sure to play accurate dotted-eighths and sixteenths in measure 15. An interesting detail in both endings “a” and “b” is that the first two measures end with a slight difference. Measures 17 and 21 end with half notes and measures 18 and 22 end with quarter notes. Make sure you play these note lengths accurately. The half notes should release on the downbeat of the next measure and the quarter notes should release on count 4. In ending “b” the easiest way to make the contrast is to play both measures 21 and 22 in one breath.

### **All-State Clinic Tuba Solo 2A, Cantabile**

The changing time signatures and changing tempos concern some players. The easiest way to think of this is for the eighth note to remain constant all the way through the entire piece. By setting my metronome to 200 beats a minute I found could easily transition from one section to the next. *Cantabile* is singing style and usually means connected notes with added dynamic variety. The slurs create natural connection. In measures 4 and 7 continue the connected style, even though the notes are not marked slurred. The *Animato* has lots of dynamic contrasts and lots of details with articulation. Study it carefully. The *fermata* is open to interpretation. The player decides how long it should be held, and whether to go straight on or put in a break after it. Both options have musical merit, so if you like one better play it that way. Ending “b” has a tuning quirk in measure 47. On a BB-flat tuba when the D in the staff is played “open” following the lower octave D it sounds noticeably flat. Experienced players know this open D as the “flat fifth partial”. The easiest way to avoid this problem is to play the last four notes 1-2.

### **All-State Senior Tuba Solo 3A, Grandioso**

At a *grandioso* tempo and at a *forte* dynamic level the opening dotted-eighth/sixteenths are easy to play out of rhythm. Make sure they are accurate and do not play a triplet figure. In measure 4 some players choose to play *staccato* sixteenth notes. This can sound

choppy, so connected sixteenth notes are recommended. Measures 6 through 9 will test one's ability to play smooth slurs in a wide pitch and dynamic range. Make sure you observe the details. Measure 10 is marked *ff* and it starts with the F dotted-quarter followed by accented notes down an octave arpeggio. If the first note is too loud there is a tendency for the descending pitches to have a natural *diminuendo*. Play the first F loud, but make sure the pitches that follow are louder and accented. Measures 16-18 will test ascending and descending slurs while playing a *crescendo*. Get a full, deep breath after the half note in measure 15 and make sure to have a full consistent airflow all the way through to the downbeat of measure 18. In ending "a" some players have a tendency to be late after the sixteenth rest in measures 22 and 23. Practice with a metronome and make sure that the downbeats of measures 23 and 24 land right on the click. Some players wonder about the F-flats in measures 24 and 33. They are simply chromatic upper neighbor tones to the E-flats and they have a little more spice than F-naturals would have. Measures 26 and 27 in ending "a" and 35 and 36 in ending "b" are challenging for some players to hear when trying to figure them out one pitch at a time. Thinking of them as chords help many players hear them more easily. Measures 26 and 35 are B-flat minor chords and measures 27 and 36 are D-flat minor chords.