



Reid Atkinson Designs, Inc. consultation for: [REDACTED] **High School**

[REDACTED] High School- OCTOBER 17 NOTES

Preface: These notes are really "next steps." There are SO many wonderful things happening right now. Too many to list. Because of that, these bullet points will tend to be more about enhancements, adjustments, etc. Know that the immense good work by the staff and students are profoundly respected!

PART 1

- When the students break from set, have them reach toward the prop with their free arm as if being pulled in by the light house.
- Soloist should emphasize the lower note pick up just a bit more so it doesn't get lost.
- Experiment with some alternate methods for the circles in the middle to float. Perhaps a chasse or, a simpler idea, half-time step with them reaching towards the middle of the circle.
- The opening impact GAVE me chills. That said, the build up to that in the brass doesn't demonstrate the same quality of sound and musicianship as the actual hit does. Just needs to be balanced so there are no early stick outs in the crescendo.
- Lets take all tosses for the color guard out. Juice not worth the squeeze.

PART 2

- Similar to the beginning, when the students flutter to the prop, have them reach towards it.
- The flutter looks more like a run right now. Shorter, faster steps will take care of that for you.
- The students who are traveling with the prop but don't have push responsibilities, experiment with them not marching but rather gesturing towards its. They can pause, let it pass, and then reach and flutter towards it again, like they are being drawn towards it.
- The original intent of the A/B rotating block was to use the facings as a means to emphasize the hairpin crescendos. I think playing it backfield exclusively is great because it clears way for the quote. But, those who are moving, experiment with have them go to trail, and then gesture towards the audience with the free hand. This will also coordinate with the quote when it says "we lay down our arms so that we can reach out our arms."
- Similarly, when that quote happens, all the students should also reach out their arms towards the audience.
- The four notes in m.25 should start softer so that has more room to grow.
- The brass feature feels heavy. I'd maybe consider sacrificing a little volume for clarity. Try to get it more dance-like in nature.
- If you are able to get more shape out of the bass/tuba obstinate I think that would help that not feel so repetitive. Try crescendo for 2 bars, decrescendoing for 2 bars, etc. Anything to add variety.
- The transition from the brass circles to block isn't great. In these moments, you can spend a ton of time cleaning OR just alter how they get there. I'd suggest a staggered release flutter on 1,3, 5, 7, 9, & 11 with the performers that end on the 45 yardline releasing first, the next file, then the next until its complete. If the last group can't make it in time, then have them



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leave on 9. Once they arrive at their dot they just hold. Now you don't have to clean the pathway and it looks produced. Not to mention they can make sure their cover down is set when they arrive.

- When the band flutter releases from the last drill development to the prop, gesture with free hand towards the prop. Similarly when it starts moving, have a few kids trail and gesture towards it and then flutter to catch up, as if its drawing them towards it.
- Continue to work the development into the circle. Feels a little frantic right now.

PART 3

- As the color guard soloist runs around the circle, try it with the silk exposed.
- Experiment with the band leaving set 21 in a sight ripple starting with the prop on S1 40. Have the kids take a looped pathway to their circle dot and when they arrive there, have them lunge around the circle with their free hand on the person's next to them's shoulder. They can then release on their step off to float the circle. This may make the development a little easier to catch and further draws upon the importance of connection that the show is emphasizing.
- The brass moment is such an incredible musical moment for them.
- Try the final hit without battery, or at least perhaps bring the battery in later. It will protect the "wind ensemble" moment you have. It may not work but worth a shot!
- Those who are at the prop should be reaching towards it. (Whenever this happens, they may need to step further away.)

PART 4

- I'd hold the low brass in various layers and textures here so you don't have to clean intervals.
- They are also pressing volume wise. The quote is the main focus point so I don't think they need to try as hard as they are to be heard.
- I think the triangle form will clean up if you make that all a body center dot.
- There are a few "heroes" from m.51-56 that are undercutting your dynamic contrast credit.
- I'd consider getting rid of the work in the color guard. If you have a standout person maybe keep them on flag, but the rest of them just dance. A lot can be forgiven during a show but the goodbye, right before the judge puts the number down, is one of the most important things to protect.

General Thoughts

This show is REALLY resonating with the audience! Congrats! The more you can continue to produce it and help drive the concept home, the deeper that will get.