

## **Fantasy on a Theme by Sousa, Boysen**

Recording:

[FANTASY ON A THEME BY SOUSA \(kjos.com\)](https://www.kjos.com)

Based on Fairest of the Fair by JPSousa, this piece is a wonderful fantasy of sound and rhythm. Performed by the USAF Band of Flight at the National Museum of the USAF. Copyright Neil A. Kjos Music Company

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IJMx0bjlfuo>

Rehearsal notes:

This opening chorale in the low brass needs to be dark and warm. When the low reeds join in meas. 8, they need to put their sound inside the low brass. The chorale is based on motive #1 of the theme. (see analysis for motive reference)

Be sure clarinet 1 is heard in meas. 9. This is an original counter melody by Dr. Boysen. It returns often later in the composition.

I have asked more that one flute, if needed, to play in meas. 15 and ask the vibes to be more articulate. This is the first complete statement of the Fairest of the Fair theme. Needs to be heard. It is in augmentation.

Depending on the size of your clarinet section I would not play the fragments of this motive much louder but be sure it is not covered by the ostinato eighths.

Dynamic contrast in the ostinato adds lots of interest.

As this section develops more melodic fragments are presented. Balance to these. See my outline for reference that is included. Make sure these fragments sit on top of the texture.

Bring out low brass in meas. 37, this is a statement of first seven notes of the theme.

The section beginning at 38 has always surprised me as to how quickly students master the syncopated eighth note accompaniment. This section is just fun!

Beginning in meas. 45 the eighth notes on the and of the beat can be trouble. I have found that asking students to do at least two measure in a breath helps keep this in tempo.

The syncopated eighth notes at meas. 49 are motive #1 from the theme. (see my analysis for motive reference). The trombone and trumpet fugue are very cool, rehearse for precision.

Meas. 74 chorale from beginning is now in the WW.

The chimes at meas. 81, represent the number of years that Earle Dickinson, the BD to whom this piece is dedicated, taught at Jefferson High School. I ask the chimes to play one dynamic higher.

Tuba solo at meas. 92, this is a full statement of the theme.

Beginning in meas. 98 is a percussion transition using motive #2 passed between vibes, marimba and xylophone. Each measure shows an increase in dynamics that leads to a return of the Allegro tempo. I had to match mallet strength between vibes, xylophone and marimba so each entrance was more even dynamically.

Motive #2 is the basis for the next section. I asked the low brass to add space on their figure, motive #2 in augmentation, for clarity.

Meas. 120 is a return of meas. 38 at a different pitch level.

Meas. 127 is triple meter. The texture is more dense and the rhythmic interplay with the trombones playing motive #1 in augmentation really increase the energy and excitement.

Beginning in meas. 138 match volume and articulation with the fugal entrances of the counter melody.

Molto Ritard in meas. 145.

This last section beginning meas. 147 is so much fun! 3 layers of melodic interest. Balance is critical but it must be big!! Your horns will love their part!

Use a Tam-Tam not a gong. This needs to be big! Great percussion writing here.

The theme in the WW in diminution looks harder than it is. It lays well and I have never had a group struggle with this.

At meas. 161 I push the tempo. Brass are starting to tire. The 22 quarter notes return in chimes, bells and timpani.

Meas. 167, the whole notes need to get to the piano indication, so we get the last statement of motive #1 in WW and mallets.

Yes, Timpani, Bass Drum and Tam-Tam crescendo to the end!! It is wonderful!

Dr. Boysen has given us yet another exciting, fun, and musically pleasing composition. Play this often, your students will love it!