

Northwestern Blues

Seth Gamba

For STRING ORCHESTRA

Full Score

Instrumentation

1 Full Score
8 Violin 1
8 Violin 2
5 Viola
5 Cello
5 Bass
Optional Electric Bass Guitar
1 Piano (optional)
1 Drumset

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About the Composer

Seth Gamba is currently the orchestra director at the Elkins Pointe Middle School in Fulton County, Georgia, and the electric violinist in the rock band The Expats. He is well-known as a composer and adjudicator, having given presentations at the state and national level on topics including teaching rhythm, double bass pedagogy, and teaching class guitar. Mr. Gamba's orchestra has been featured at state conferences, and his compositions have frequently been performed at the annual GMEA conference. He currently has two compositions on the GMEA approved list for level 3 orchestra.

Seth Gamba grew up in Cobb County, Georgia, where he began playing the bass in the 6th grade public school orchestra. He is a graduate of Walton High School, and earned his bachelor's degree from Indiana University, with a double major in Double Bass and Civics. He has a Master of Music Education degree from the University of Georgia.

Program Notes

Northwestern Blues is a rockin' 12-bar blues in G with a blues-scale based melody, a funky bass line, drum set, and buckets of soul! **Northwestern Blues** will give your students the chance to explore rock, jazz, optional improvisation, and a host of fun extended techniques in an instrumental setting that guarantees a rockin' good time! **Northwestern Blues** was commissioned by Northwestern Middle School in Milton, GA for the 2022 GMEA conference.

Performance Notes

Northwestern Blues is a rock-jazz fusion piece intended to have straight eighth notes. If you prefer, however, it also works with a swing feel. If you decide to swing it, the drumset part would need to be modified for that purpose. Written-out solos are provided, but those can be replaced with improvised student solos. In fact, I recommend penciling in a repeat from measure 53 to measure 76 and letting as many students as you like take an improvised solo! The written solos are provided in every part, but solo 1 is optimized for a viola, cello, or bass player, as it does not include any E-string notes. Solo 2 is intended for violin. If you are using **Northwestern Blues** as a vehicle for teaching improvisation, you can use the written solos as section soli in between improvisations the way a jazz big band would do a shout chorus.

I have created a video tutorial on how to do the picking section in the violin and viola parts. You can find it on YouTube by searching for "Northwestern Blues Strumming Tutorial" or at this link: <https://youtu.be/kZgK1e2YWqA>

Editor's Note

Orchestral bowings and fingerings can be highly subjective and personal. The choices a string editor makes are designed to be pedagogically appropriate for specific grade levels while facilitating student musicality and honoring composer intent. The editorial additions in the following composition will provide guidance "right out of the box" for the non-string player and suggest some options for the advanced string specialist. Enjoy!

J. Cameron Law, String Editor

13

17

sfz *p* *mf*

3rd pos.

20

p *mf*

34

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

1/2 tacit

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59

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65 Solo/Soli 2

Musical score for measures 65-70. The score is for a solo/soli section for two players. It features a melody in the upper voice and accompaniment in the lower voice. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked *f* (forte). The dynamics are marked *div.* (divisi) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). The articulation is marked *sim.* (simile). The score includes a large 'X' watermark.

Musical score for measures 71-76. The score continues the solo/soli section. It features a melody in the upper voice and accompaniment in the lower voice. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The dynamics are marked *sfzp* (sforzando piano) and *p* (piano). The score includes a large 'X' watermark.

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