

Razzberry Waltz

The Composer

Dan Adams is currently Band and Orchestra director at Wooster High School and Instrumental Music Coordinator for the Wooster City Schools in Wooster, Ohio. He received a Bachelor of Music Education degree from The Ohio State University and a Master of Music in Band Conducting from Northwestern University where he studied with John Paynter. Adams is active as an adjudicator, brass musician, and conductor. Memberships include the Ohio Music Education Association, ASCAP, College Band Directors National Association, and American Federation of Musicians Local 159.

Program Notes

An “offbeat” little tune, **Razzberry Waltz** might just well be the only waltz that can pique the interest and curiosity of that musician “of a certain age”. It is quirky, humorous, and above all, fun. Intentional dissonance, unusual sounds, approved “razzberries”, and clever special effects combine with the catchy melody in an engaging and enjoyable fashion. The name comes from a certain effect that most young performers are usually asked **not** to make. In this work, students have been **asked** to do what they may do best!

Performance Suggestions

Dissonances are presented throughout the work. Teach students that these dissonances should be emphasized for proper effect and balance. Play the lower pitch slightly louder than the higher pitch to achieve that balance.

The “razzberry” indicated in many parts refers to the sound made by sticking the tongue between the lips and blowing. To produce a mouthpiece buzz, remove the mouthpiece from the lead pipe and buzz through it just as if producing a tone on the instrument. Actual pitch is not important, but asking students to produce a concert G (the pitch written) would be valuable training.

Slanted lines between pitches ask the trombone players to move the slide without tonguing or otherwise stopping the air. Let all the “in-between” pitches sound with assurance.

Clarinets at measure 64 must play just on the mouthpiece and barrel, the remainder of the instrument resting on the player’s lap. Use a couple of fingers from the hand not holding the barrel and place them at the open bottom. Move the fingers up and down to produce a “wah-wah” effect.

To properly present this delightful piece to the audience, it will be important, and perhaps difficult, for the performers to maintain confidence and decorum. Have fun, but keep a straight face.