

COMMISSIONING SCOTT WATSON TO WRITE FOR YOU

Thank you for your interest in partnering with me to create a new work for your organization! I have a **unique compositional voice** whose musical language strikes a balance between tradition and invention. **You can hear sound clips** of most of my music by visiting my website (and clicking on the “Compositions” Tab):

www.scottwatsonmusic.com

My catalog (over 130 published pieces) includes music commissioned for state music conferences, honor band festivals, school/district commemorations (new arts wing, retiring teacher, etc.), guest conducting invitations, commemorating local history, the passing of a director or a student in band, or directors simply wanting to add to the repertoire with a piece customized for and dedicated to their ensemble. My music at all levels is frequently performed at the Midwest Clinic (Chicago), at various national and state MEA conferences, and in band rooms across the U.S. and around the world. Many are J.W. Pepper Editor’s Choice and Alfred Music bestsellers; several have been selected for annual Bandworld Top 100 lists. *To read endorsements of my work from past clients, please visit:*

<https://www.scottwatsonmusic.com/endorsements-composer-conductor>

If I write a concert band commission for your organization, there is a strong possibility it will be published. I am an exclusive composer for Alfred Music; Alfred regularly publishes my compositions in all their band series’. Other works of mine for concert band and string orchestra are published by Excelsia Publishing, Wingert-Jones, Hal Leonard, Barnhouse, and others.

COMMISSIONING FEE

A commissioning fee is calculated considering the project's complexity (difficulty level, length, instrumentation, any unique/special requirements), deadline (time given to complete the project), the likelihood of publication, and funds available (i.e., music budget, grant received, etc.).

For instance, a Grade 6 concert band piece with some special conditions (such as it must incorporate a school's alma mater, or be written for soloist + band, or band + SATB chorus, etc.) would cost much more than a brief Grade 1 concert band piece with no stipulations. **The commissioning fee typically includes me sending a tentative near-final draft of the score, the client sending me feedback, then me submitting a final version of the score (revised, if necessary) and a set of performance parts** (which may be copied as needed).

Here are some **general fee guidelines** based on projects I’ve done in recent years. The actual fee must consider stipulations from the client about the work, length, due date, and more. Of course, if you have a budget for your project – share it with me. If I can, I will work with you!

Grade (1-5)	Length (minutes:seconds)	Fee (with ~1-year lead time)
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5	5:00 - 8:00	\$5,000-7,500*
4	5:00 - 7:00	\$4,000-5,500*
3	3:00 - 5:00	\$3,000-4,500*
2	2:30 - 3:30	\$2,000-\$3,000*
1	1:30 - 2:30	\$1,500-2,000*

NOTE: Each commission is unique; quotes are provided as **guidelines to provide context for an actual quote. Also, there is some overlap in grade level pricing depending on length.*

DEDICATION

The score for a commissioned piece can include any dedication/wording you like.

Alternatively, you can leave that to me. It's always a thrill seeing the dedication (which usually includes the director, ensemble, and/or school) on the masthead of a published work. Those who perform the piece in the years to come will know the significant role you've played in contributing to the repertoire!

GETTING STARTED

At the end of this informational document is a sample commission "letter of agreement." For me to give you an exact quote for a commission fee, I need to discuss the following with you (in person, or by phone or video conference):

- Deadline
- Difficulty Level
- Length
- Instrumentation
- Special Requirements of the Commission (if any)
- Special Information/Dedications (if any)

If you are interested, the next step is for us to talk! Please contact me and we'll set up a time to discuss your project by phone or video conference. Then, **if/when you're ready to move forward, I can put together a "letter of agreement" (contract) tailored to your project with all the parameters and details discussed.** *If you need tips about funding, I can share ideas from the many schools with whom I've worked.*

I hope this document provides the information you need to proceed and that we can make music together!

Best regards, Scott Watson

drscottwatson@gmail.com

OPTIONAL: GUEST CONDUCTING, VISITING ARTIST, ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

When possible, **I enjoy interacting and collaborating with the students for whom I'll write.** I have guest-conducted rehearsals and concerts and served as **artist-in-residence for schools/districts** for anywhere from a day to a week. In one case, I visited a school for two days to conduct various activities to get things started, then came back weeks later for several days to wrap things up. Specific activities, developed and coordinated between the host and me, could include the following:

- Visits to your school to rehearse the commission (and, optionally, other grade-appropriate music I've written that you might want to perform).
- Appearing at the premiere of the commissioned work, and – under the right conditions (i.e., sufficient rehearsal time with your group) – conduct the premiere (as well as any other selections for which we make arrangements).
- Discussion with an ensemble, using audio examples, of my music and the process of composition, followed by a Q & A time.
- Engaging your ensemble (in subgroups of 15-25 students) in a technology-driven music creation activity. For this, we'd need student devices (i.e., laptops, Chromebooks, etc.) with access to the Internet. This could be a one- or two-session activity.
- Presentation/activity to ensemble and/or general music students on “the language of music” and the process of composing.
- Other activities suggested by the host director.

***FOR YOUR INFORMATION, THERE IS A
SAMPLE AGREEMENT ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE***

[LOOKING FOR CREATIVE WAYS TO FIND A COMMISSION:](#)

[Check out my article for the Alfred Blog on just that!](#)

SCOTT WATSON

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September 1, 2025

_____, BAND DIRECTOR
Your School
Your City, State 19111

Dear _____,

This will serve as my contract with you (the client) for a commissioned work for **Grade X** concert band. It is understood that the client has given the composer no restrictions as to the style, mood, character, program, or other criteria except that the work should fall into the conventions of instrumentation, difficulty, and length for a **Grade X** work for concert band. It is agreed that a **fee of \$X,000** will include the commission, score, and master set of parts (no additional engraving fees will be charged). A near-final score draft will be delivered for your consideration by Month, Date, YEAR, or earlier. You will have several weeks to review the draft and share any concerns, if any, for revision. The final version of the commission (score and parts) will be completed and delivered electronically (in PDF format) by Month, Date, YEAR, or earlier.

The score will include a dedication as directed by the client (i.e., including the name of the organization, director, city, and state, or as otherwise requested). This will also be included on the score if/when the piece is published. The copyright will remain with the composer. Although you have commissioned the piece, you may not duplicate it or sell recordings of it for other ensembles without permission from and possible additional consideration to the composer, with one exception: you are free to make/sell a recording of the premiere at your event if desired.

Though it should not be an issue based on the composer's past compositional history and artistic style, the client agrees that it may not declare this contract void based on a subjective evaluation of the piece. In the event that the commissioning group breaches this agreement, the commissioning group agrees to pay all costs incurred by the composer, including but not limited to collection costs, court costs, and attorney's fees. All parties to this contract agree that the jurisdiction for any dispute under the terms of this agreement shall be the state of Pennsylvania.

Please send a signed copy of this contract to secure the commission. A **deposit of \$X,000** (payable to Scott Watson) is due with the signed agreement. The **balance (\$X,000)** is due within three weeks (21 days) of receiving the piece.

I am thrilled and honored to be creating this new work for the students of the Your School Concert Band. Please let me know if you have any questions.

With regard,

Scott Watson, Composer

Date

First and Last Name, BAND DIRECTOR

Date

First Last Name, School Administrator

Date