Dear *Machine* Candidate:

Thank you for showing your interest in audition to become a member of *The Machine*! This packet is designed to help you become a better musician and to help you have a successful audition experience. Please read everything in this packet carefully and prepare all of the required material to the best of your ability! We are excited about your interest in joining us for what is going to be an exciting, innovative, and historical season for *The Machine* 2013.

Our primary goal is to offer you the best musical and performance experience possible. As you read through all of the audition pages in this packet, you will see that I am eager to answer your questions and make your audition experience as stress-free and positive as possible.

**Audition Dates**

**January 17 3:00 – 4:30**

**February 7 3:00 – 4:30**

**February 21 3:00 – 4:30**

**-Your initial steps for becoming a member of The Machine 2013**

1. Be sure to read all instructions and recommended preparation advice for each etude and skill exercise.

*2.* Be positive.

*3.* I would like to stress that the audition process is not solely based on the individual music audition. Other factors are important including ***attendance***, improvement, attitude, willingness to succeed, marching abilities, and ***responsibility***.

Best of luck,

John D. Ash

**AUDITION INFORMATION**

**TALENT** – Your abilities on your instrument as well as your marching abilities are very important in the selection process. It is equally important for us to see your development and improvement from week to week. You will be asked to perform all music and exercises on the audition material page.

**YOU SHOULD MARK TIME DURING EVERYTHING YOU PERFORM IN YOUR AUDITION**. Your ability to move your feet and play at the same time is a crucial part of your acceptance into the *The Machine.*

**ATTENDANCE** – Attendance is of course required.

**ATTITUDE** – As with any team sport, chemistry is very important towards success. The same is true for *The Machine*. Our band will be full of students who will do WHATEVER IT TAKES to make the ensemble great. It will be incredibly rewarding to be a part of this ensemble where all members work as hard as they possibly can, are extremely positive, and support both the staff, and more importantly, one another. Marching band tends to redefine members’ definitions of commitment, hard work, and camaraderie.

**HEALTH** – Being healthy is very important in marching band. Many members have become their healthiest while participating in this activity. Being in shape will allow you to better maximize your contribution and your fun. There are many sources available for advice on getting in shape. We will participate in an exercise program to ensure that everyone is physically capable of handling the load that will be thrust upon you.

**FEES / TUITION** – Your account status will have a direct impact on your membership in The Machine. Without your fees and fund raising contributions, we would not be able to operate as a marching band.

**It is ESSENTIAL that you keep your finances up to date as it affects your position with the band as well as all other members-**

Always get problems “out in the open” early rather than deal with them later. To do so will allow you more time to assess the situation and figure out a solution. There are probably no issues that we have not dealt with before, successfully.

**WHAT TO BRING TO BAND CAMP-**

**1. Your Instrument**. This includes concert or marching instruments according to what is available to you and what will best demonstrate your current skills.

2. **Your Mouthpiece.** Use the mouthpiece on which you currently play. Those members being selected to perform in the 2013 Machine ensemble may be asked to purchase a different mouthpiece. This will guarantee the ensemble sound we want for the horn line.

3. **Comfortable Clothes**. No blue jeans or restrictive clothes should be worn. Quality tennis shoes WITH socks are a must. Cross trainers work well.

4. **Gloves.** Marching band cotton gloves help protect the instruments. These can be purchased from your friendly band director for $3

5. **Valve Oil, Slide Grease**.

**AUDITION RECOMMENDATIONS**

BE PREPARED

⇒ Preparation is the key to success and a great way to help with nerves. The more you prepare yourself, the better you will play.

⇒ Find a practice routine that works for you and stick to it. Make a visible chart on a calendar that you will see every day. If consistent, scheduled practice becomes a habit, you will be amazed with your growth as a musician.

⇒ Play for as many people as possible. Family, friends, a tape recorder, etc. Private instructors, band directors and peers are also great choices. Their suggestions and criticisms may be incredibly beneficial.

⇒ Your biggest and best critic will always be YOU. Record yourself and make notes; the recorder never lies!

⇒ Your audition music does NOT need to be memorized, however, we will always encourage you to go above and beyond what is asked.

⇒ Practice while marking time. Many good marchers are surprised that their personal time demonstrated by their feet still needs improvement. Do not assume your feet are at the highest level of time-keeping.

⇒ Try to do “mock” auditions, perhaps while recording yourself. Play **straight through** all the required material at least ten times over several days prior to the audition. This is much like what will happen in the actual audition; though it is a player’s initial reactions to stop for mistakes, work to play through without stopping once you have a general command of the material. Again, try playing for as many people as possible.

DEALING WITH NERVOUSNESS

⇒ The first thing you should understand is that being nervous is normal. Once you understand that, it can become easier to deal with your nervousness. “Fighting” nervousness can bring about negative physical effects; instead, strive to “embrace” nervous feelings and focus that energy in a positive way. Recognize the nervousness, but move on. REMEMBER, being prepared is the biggest eliminator of nerves.

⇒ Breathe. Begin with deep breaths and demonstrate what you can do as a player.

⇒ It is likely that you will play something in your audition that will not go quite the way you would have liked. This happens even to the best performers. The manner in which you deal with those mistakes can be just as impressive as if you had played your piece perfectly. Do not stop for these mistakes; remember, you have already practiced doing this. Do not apologize for the mistakes or try to explain them, simply play. We have all been in your shoes many times. We all more than understand.

⇒ Your audition committee wants to hear how well you play and see you at your best as a musician, person, and potential member. Go into your audition with the mindset that you want to show off for the committee.

⇒ Presenting yourself as friendly, open, and confident is EXACTLY what we are looking for. When dealing with nerves, this may take a little “play-acting.” A common technique used by many auditionees in many fields. Believe it or not, even a smile can help.

⇒ Remember to aim your bell away from the person listening to you.

⇒ Be sure to ask questions if you are confused about anything you are being asked to play.

THE AUDITION ITSELF

⇒ Before you enter the audition room, be certain that your instrument is in good working condition

⇒ Staff members will be friendly and will help you with logistics of where to stand, which way to face, etc.

⇒ Face your bell off to the side of the people listening to you.

⇒ Always ask a question if you do not understand something.

⇒ Once you are finished playing, there will be a short conversation between you and various members of the judging panel. If you have any further questions, please feel free to ask at that time.

⇒ At the end of the audition, you will be given a rating:

“***1***” – Student has all skills necessary to be offered a position this year and is invited to join The Machine.

“***2***”– Student has most of the basic skills and experience to be considered for a position this year and is invited to next audition.

“***3***” – Student is encouraged to continue to work on musical skills, using the information gained during the audition in part as a way to improve on your fundamentals. Though not currently showing the basic skills and experience to be offered a position this year, the candidate should make the staff aware of their desire to become an alternate. This student will be required to attend everything.

**Finally**, I would like to stress that the audition process is not solely based on the individual music audition. Some other factors of consideration are preparation for audition, improvement between auditions, attitude, attendance, marching ability, and physical condition. All of these together will be the determining factors for being awarded a spot in the ensemble.

**Instrumentation:**

*The Machine* 2013 horn line will consist of 18-28 members in: 4-6 Bass Instruments, 4-6 Tenor Instruments, 4-6 Alto Instruments, and 6-10 Soprano Instruments.

NO ONE, regardless of experience, is guaranteed a spot. Veteran members must demonstrate continued growth and development in order to be considered for membership.