

FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT: A HERO'S QUEST

As the Marching Indians prepare to enter the second half of their first century, plans are being made for an outstanding spectacle of music and motion. New student leaders are stepping into the shoes of the outstanding graduating seniors, young artists are vying for spots on the guard and majorette lines, and instrumentalists continue to develop and refine their skills through rehearsal, study, and performance.

The 2009 field production of the Marching Indians is entitled "From Darkness to Light; A Hero's Quest"; the show is a musical depiction of the epic and universal struggle of light against darkness, peace against rage, and hope against despair.

The brass will open the show with a blazing, heroic fanfare which will be followed by the sensitive and elegiac theme from Michael W. Smith's *Freedom Battle*. The flowing grace of motion in the colorguard and majorettes will provide the perfect visual compliment to the gentle beauty of the woodwinds and front ensemble. The tender mood is shattered by the sudden appearance of the sinister and relentlessly driving "Mars" from Gustav Holst's suite *The Planets*. The second movement continues as a fantasia of dark and aggressive themes such as "Mars", "Dies Irae", and Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* are interwoven to depict the attempt of darkness to smother the spirit of the Hero. Aggressive drill writing, daring rifle, saber, and knife routines, and startling uses of color will underscore the growing threat of the darkness.

Flashes of hope appear but are overtaken and cut short as various sections of the band play phrases of the opening fanfare - "Salvation is Created", and "A Mighty Fortress". The forces of darkness continue to gather strength as the band pounds out the driving, asymmetrical rhythm of "Mars" leading into a furious display of percussive pyrotechnics as the Marching Indians feature their famous percussion section. With sizzling intensity and primal rage, the front ensemble and battery duel with each other as the winds and auxiliaries dazzle the audience with intricate formations and stunning choreography.

Just when it seems that darkness must surely triumph utterly, the band suddenly coalesces into a giant wedge and then, with the Marching Indians signature power sound, the band presses forward at full tilt to Holst's sublimely beautiful and majestic "Jupiter Choral" (also known as "I vow to Thee, My Country"). As the band pushes the audience back against the stands, the guard and majorettes will blanket the field in a wash of color and motion. It appears the show will climax in a majestic wave of sound, but then, with a sudden surge of motion and tempo, the band blazes forth in the final, triumphal strains of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, condensing their form into a tight knot of musical power framed by the guard and majorettes using massively visual oversized props. Striking a final pose reminiscent of the Phantom Regiment, the band salutes the audience and affirms the power of hope and the eternal spirit of the Hero. Be ready to be amazed!