



SENIOR NOAH HANKINS sings along as the fourth period jazz band plays "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch" in preparation for the upcoming Winter Fantasia events.

Arts prepare for annual winter wonderland

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The auditorium echoes with bells, voices, and choirs of instruments throughout the night. Although each group traditionally has their own performance, at Winter Fantasia they unite their talents together every December. Fantasia is

one of the biggest showcases of the school year performed by the band, orchestra, choir, and handbells students. With nearly one-third of the school together on one stage, it is a true sight to witness. Since these performances debuted in 1996, they have been a huge local favorite to the public.

"It is often the hottest ticket in town, evident by us selling out three performances in three days," said choral director

Angela Hampton. "We've added a fourth performance this year because we turned so many people away that wanted to come. I also like the fact that we combine our groups on this show. We don't get to collaborate with each other very often, so this is a unique experience."

For some staff, Fantasia is a wondrous memory from being a student and playing on the stage.

"It's awesome [to be back to conduct Fantasia]," said band director Briston Hatchell. "It's cool to be able to come back and help lead an annual program that I participated in my years at Floyd Central."

Countless school days and after-school rehearsals go into preparing for the grand holiday concert that will be enjoyed by the public and student body.

"Fantasia is a celebration of our music department," said

Hampton. "There is something for everyone with a wide variety of musical styles and groups. It gives our audience the opportunity to see all of our musical group, so they are getting a broad picture of what we have here at FC."

In the students' eyes, Winter Fantasia can have millions of different musical meanings.

"Fantasia is a loud amazing mess of so many musical instruments," said senior

euphonium player Bailey Walker. "Once the whole music department gets on stage it's overwhelming but amazing."

Even though Fantasia is an annual event, there are always minor tweaks and changes follow.

"At first, it was just the most advanced ensemble from each organization that participated," said Hampton. "It has evolved into every music student participating. We are just about at maximum capacity on the stage, so we may have to reduce the number of groups involved at some point in the near future."

As Fantasia draws closer with each passing day, the students and directors work to perfect and tune each piece for the shows to come.

"In our rehearsal, we are nonstop practicing and learning new ways to improve our sound," said sophomore choir member Sophie Ketterer.

With efficient technique, the students strive to exceed their goals with each rehearsal.

"In handbells, we work on our pieces every day to make sure that we have it concert ready for the days of the performances," said senior handbell member Renee Sisloff.

Each group may work equally hard, but they all function differently in their own rehearsal environment.

"We work of course but we also like to have fun," said Walker. "We can be serious when we need to but we still manage to have a good time with our peers."

Although the students work hard as individuals in school, they also attend a large after-school rehearsal in order to become comfortable with performing along with over one

hundred other students at the same time.

"Before Fantasia all of our ensembles come together and we work as one unit to perfect our songs that we perform together as a full ensemble," said Ketterer.

While everyone is on task and working hard, some of the freshman dream and imagine the delight of their first Fantasia.

"I just imagine it being a really fun and cozy atmosphere just because so many people look forward to this event each year," said freshman viola player Megan Carey. "I [also] imagine my first Fantasia to be a little hectic, to be honest. There is just so many people in the music department at our school that I can't imagine all of us on one stage."

For some students, everyone being together is the highlight of Fantasia.

"Hearing and seeing everyone together on stage is always a spectacular moment," said Ketterer. "It's truly a magical feeling."

Even just hearing the other groups is satisfaction for some members.

"My favorite part of Fantasia is when we have the band, orchestra, and choir all out on the stage," said sophomore trumpet player Brendan Sturgeon.

Along with the musical magic comes the beauty of friendships and bonds made and strengthened during these miraculous nights.

"When you wait backstage to perform you definitely make some laughs," said Walker. "It's always a bit hectic but it's constant jokes and laughs."

Fantasia may be a fantastic musical opportunity, but it is also the most wonderful time

of the year for these young musicians to make memories.

"My favorite memory from Fantasia was playing board and card games with other band members while waiting for our time to go out on stage," said Sturgeon.

For some of the students, the music is enough of a memory maker for them.

"The music for Fantasia is just so classic," said freshman choir member Tanner Brown. "Performing these songs with my friends links memories to the music for me."

Many of these musicians have an influence on their fellow students without even realizing it. While great things happen behind the stage, even more memories and iconic moments are witnessed on stage as well.

"My favorite part of Fantasia is always in 'Sleigh Ride' when the trumpet player plays with the horse mask on," said junior violin player Alison Chaleuphonh.

While many students look forward to the Fantasia performances of their future, the seniors have one last set of shows until they to say farewell to the snow-covered stage.

"Handbells has been a part of my life since seventh grade," said Sisloff. "I'm going to miss the atmosphere of Fantasia and sharing how cool handbells are to the audience and all the other FC musicians."

Though some are sad for this end, some seniors can't wait to see the end of this wonderful experience to come to a close.

"I'm very excited for this last experience of it," said Walker. "It's one of many nice closing events for my senior year."

This year's Winter Fantasia performances continue tomorrow at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.



Brooke Miller/The Bagpiper

JUNIORS MADDIE HANKINS AND TESS RUTHERFORD sing along with the rest of the choir on Nov. 20, 2018.

Performance Dates

Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 6 at 7 p.m.
Tomorrow, Dec. 8 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

Performance Groups

Symphony Orchestra	Handbells
Wind Symphony	Jazz Band
Accidentals	A Capella Choir
Intermediate Wind Symphony	Baroque Strings
Men's & Women's Choirs	