

March 28, 2009

To: Orchestras, Boards of Directors and Educators
From: John B. Weaver – Bass Trombone; Aurora Brass, Mankato Symphony
Re: Maestro Kenneth Freed

I have had the joy and privilege of working with Maestro Kenneth Freed for nearly three years and have known Maestro Freed by reputation far longer, back to his days in New York City. Maestro Freed is a musician's musician, a gifted artistic interpreter and delightful collaborator.

The music is the thing with Maestro Freed. Under his baton, I have seen tremendous artistic growth in the orchestra. From my chair in the low brass section, I learned more about string technique before the break of our first rehearsal with Maestro Freed than during my entire musical career previously.

Complementing his command of repertoire is his wonderful manner on the podium. In rehearsals, there is a genuine sense of collaboration while sustaining a clear vision of what is expected of the musicians to achieve his musical goals. His wit and wisdom are the perfect foil that keeps the players "loose" while achieving the high level of performance his musical vision demands.

In performance, his conducting instills a sense of confidence that empowers the orchestra to "stretch," which creates a gratifying musical experience for musicians and audiences alike.

My tenure on the orchestra's artistic advisory committee (which Maestro Freed instituted), has given me the opportunity to see his interpersonal skills at work. With the united support of the board of directors, he is a tireless promoter of the organization and advocate for the musicians. His vision for educational outreach, his embracing of technology and commitment to service has expanded the perception of the symphony as a treasured asset for the entire region.

I look forward with anticipation to the next season with Maestro Freed, his support, and our continued artistic growth, both individually and as an ensemble.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. Weaver", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.