

TIME LINE: ITHACA HIGH SCHOOL BAND, 1953-67

(from *The Best We Can Be – the Story of the Ithaca High School Band, 1955-67*
by Frank L. Battisti and R. Bruce Musgrave [Meredith Music Publisher, 2010])

1953	Frank Battisti begins teaching instrumental music lessons at IHS.
December 1955	Frank Battisti becomes Band Director at IHS (1955). IHS Band begins series of annual school assembly concerts. IHS Band plays concert outside of Ithaca for the first time ever at Owego Free Academy, Owego, New York.
1958	Band travels to Cornwall, Ontario, Canada for concert at St. Lawrence Collegiate - the band's first trip outside of the United States. IHS Band commissions first piece from Warren Benson. Bach Honor Society established by Mr. Battisti and IHS Band members.
April 1959	IHS Concert and Marching Bands travel to Maryland and Washington, DC to present concerts in Annapolis and Westminster, MD and march in the National Cherry Blossom Parade.
May 20, 1959	Premiere performance of <i>Night Song</i> by Warren Benson – IHS Band's first commissioned work.
Sept. 3-7, 1959	First IHS Band Camp at Ithaca College camp in Danby Hills.
February 5, 1960	Mr. Battisti and band members travel to Rochester, NY to hear Eastman Wind Ensemble concert. Trips to these concerts continue for the next seven years.
March. 16, 1960 May 29, 1960	First IHS Band Parents' Night Frederick Fennell visits IHS Band for first time—visits continue through 1967.
September 1960	New Ithaca High School opened with separate Music Department Building.
May 19, 1961	Premiere performance of Vincent Persichetti's <i>Serenade for Band</i> , IHS Band's third commissioned work.
August 10, 1961 Nov. 21-27, 1961	First IHS Band Chicken Barbecue held at Stewart Park. IHS Band tour to Midwest. Marching Band performs in J. L. Hudson Parade in Detroit and at Cleveland Memorial Stadium for Cleveland Browns vs. New York Giants NFL game. Concert Band performs concerts in Dayton's NCR Auditorium and at Williamsville, NY High School.
May 2, 1962	Harvey Phillips guest soloist with IHS Band on two school assembly programs. Phillips-IHS Band relationship continues through 1967.
December 1962	IHS Band members commission Warren Benson to write a piece for Mr. Battisti as a Christmas gift. The piece, <i>Remembrance</i> , premiered in 1964.
January 1963 May 15, 1963	Repertory Band (later renamed Symphony Band) formed at IHS. Donald Sinta performs solos with IHS Band on school assembly programs—begins long relationship with Mr. Battisti and the IHS Band.
Nov. 21-24, 1963	IHS Band trip to New York City abruptly halted by the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. Performance at Yankee Stadium cancelled.
December 1963	IHS Band commissions Vincent Persichetti to write piece in memory of John F. Kennedy (<i>Turn Not Thy Face</i>).
January 1964	"Project Creativity" started.

February 26, 1964	Carl "Doc" Severinson performs solos with the band on their two school assembly concerts.
April 13-19, 1964	First IHS Band Contemporary Music Festival
April 23-24, 1964	IHS Invitational Band Festival
July 21-24, 1964	Ithaca Summer Youth Band (IHS Concert Band) performs at New York World's Fair and Rockefeller Plaza.
December 26, 1964	IHS Band performs in Buffalo, NY for Buffalo Bills – San Diego Chargers AFL Championship game.
March 12, 1965	Benny Goodman performs with IHS Jazz Ensemble at school assembly concert.
April 28, 1965	IHS Band premieres Barney Childs <i>Six Events for 58 Players</i> – first aleatoric piece written for high school band.
December 16, 1965	IHS Concert Band performs at Midwest Band Clinic in Chicago, Illinois.
May 11, 1966	IHS Band premieres three commissioned works by Alec Wilder, Warren Benson, and Walter Hartley on Spring Concert.
1966-67	David Borden becomes Ithaca Public Schools' MENC-Ford Foundation Composer-in residence.
October 2, 1966	IHS Band performs at New York's Yankee Stadium for New York Giants – Cleveland Browns NFL game.
February 12, 1967	IHS Band performs concert at Eastern Division MENC Conference in Boston, Massachusetts. Program includes premiere performances of two newly commissioned works and <i>Prisms</i> (for concert band and pre-recorded electronic sounds) by Herbert Bielawa.
May 4-14, 1967	Second IHS Band Contemporary Music Festival
May 17, 1967	IHS Band premieres three commissioned works by Warren Benson, Vincent Persichetti and Robert Ward. This is Mr. Battisti's final concert with the IHS Concert Band.
October 2, 1967	Mr. Battisti informs IHS Band students he is leaving Ithaca High School.
October 15, 1967	IHS Band performs in Buffalo, New York for Buffalo Bills – Oakland Raiders NFL game.
November 4, 1967	Farewell Banquet for Mr. and Mrs. Battisti at Cornell University's Statler Hotel.
April 1997	John Philip Sousa Foundation selects Mr. Battisti's Ithaca High School Concert Band for their Historic Roll of Honor of High School Concert Bands, 1920-1980. This Roll of Honor identifies high school concert bands whose musical excellence at the national level exerted historically significant influence on high school band programs.
June 23-24, 2006	The 1955-67 IHS Band "best ever reunion" in Ithaca, New York.
Oct. 12 & 17, 2006	Dual premiere performances of Dana Wilson's <i>Day Dreams</i> at New England Conservatory and Ithaca College. Work commissioned by former IHS Band students as a 75 th birthday gift to Mr. Battisti.
May 5 – 7, 2009	Concert and Celebration in Ithaca, NY marking the 50 th Anniversary of the Band's May 20, 1959 premiere performance of Warren Benson's <i>Night Song</i> , the Band's first commissioned piece.

**SUMMARY OF ITHACA HIGH SCHOOL BAND PROGRAM, 1955-67,
INCLUDING VISITING COMPOSERS, CONDUCTORS, SOLOISTS,
ENSEMBLES.**

1. Weekly Instrumental Music Lessons
2. Concert Ensembles:
 - Concert Band
 - Symphony Band
 - Small Ensembles
 - Jazz Lab Workshop/Ensemble
3. Marching Band
4. Solo and Chamber Music Recitals
5. Ithaca High School Band Commissioned Works Project
6. Project in Creativity
7. Guest Conductors, Soloists, Composers and Visiting Ensembles

Conductors

Frederick Fennell
 Clyde A. Roller
 Richard Franko Goldman
 Norman Dello Joio
 William D. Revelli
 Thomas Beversdorf
 Vincent Persichetti

Soloists

Benny Goldman
 "Doc" Severinsen
 Harvey Phillips
 Donald Sinta
 Robert Jaeger
 Jimmy Burke
 William Hebert

Composers

Vincent Persichetti
 Warren Benson
 Leslie Bassett
 Alec Wilder
 Walter Hartley
 John Huggler
 David Borden
 Robert Ward
 Norman Dello Joio

Visiting Ensembles

New York Brass Quintet
 Eastman Brass Quintet
 Ithaca College Wind Quintet
 Ithaca College Brass Quintet
 Eastman Wind Ensemble
 Michigan Symphony Band
 Luther College Wind Ensemble
 U S Air Force Band

**FINAL CONCERT PROGRAM CONDUCTED BY FRANK BATTISTI WITH THE IHS
CONCERT BAND ON MAY 17, 1967.**

Vincent Persichetti	<i>Turn Not Thy Face</i>
(world premiere performance)	
David Borden	<i>All-American; Teenage; Lovesongs</i>
(world premiere performance)	
Robert Ward	<i>Fiesta Processional</i>
(world premiere performance)	
Warren Benson	<i>Helix</i>
Harvey Phillips, tuba soloist	
(<i>Helix</i> premiered at the MENC Conference Concert in Boston, MA on February 12, 1967)	
Percy Grainger	<i>Lincolnshire Posy</i>
Frederick Fennell, guest conductor	
Warren Benson	<i>Leaves are Falling</i>

Note: Composers Vincent Persichetti, David Borden, Robert Ward and Warren Benson attended pre-concert rehearsals and the premiere performances of their pieces.

SELECTIVE LIST OF MAJOR PERFORMANCES BY THE IHS CONCERT BAND FROM 1955 - 67.

- April 28, 1965 Spring Concert, Ithaca High School, Ithaca, NY
Premiere performance of three commissioned works: *Designs Images and Textures* by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Leslie Bassett; *Star Edge* by Warren Benson with Donald Sinta, saxophone soloist; and *Six Events for 58 Players* by Barney Childs. All composers were present.
- December 16, 1965 Midwest International Band Clinic Concert, Chicago, Illinois.
Premiere performance of Alex Wilder's *Entertainment III*, guest conducted by Frederick Fennell. Other guest conductors on the concert were Walter Beeler and Dr. William D. Revelli. Donald Sinta, Leone Buyse and the New York Brass Quintet were the featured guest soloists.
- February 12, 1967 MENC Conference Concert, Boston, Massachusetts.
Concert consisted of five IHS Band commissioned works including the premiere performances of *Celebration* by John Huggler, composer-in-residence with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and *Helix* by Warren Benson, with Harvey Phillips as tuba soloist. The program also included Herbert Bielawa's *Prisms*, a work for pre-recorded electronic sounds and band.
- May 17, 1967 Spring Concert, Ford Hall, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY
Premiere performances of three IHS Band commissioned works; *Turn Not Thy Face* (in memory of John F. Kennedy) by Vincent Pesichetti, *Fiesta Processional* by Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Robert Ward and *All American; Teenage; Love Songs* by David Borden, Ithaca Public Schools composer-in-residence. All composers were present.

MAJOR PERFORMANCES BY THE IHS "LITTLE RED" BAND FROM 1955 - 67.

- November 26, 1961 NBC, CBS TV NFL game Cleveland, OH (New York – Cleveland).
November 25, 1963 CBS TV NFL game New York, NY (New York – St. Louis).
Eastern Division Championship Game
December 26, 1964 ABC TV AFL game Buffalo, NY (Buffalo - San Diego).
American Football League Championship Game.
October 3, 1965 ABC TV AFL game Buffalo, NY (Buffalo –Oakland).
October 2, 1966 CBS TV NFL game New York, NY (New York – Cleveland).
October 15, 1967 NBC TV AFL game Buffalo, NY (Buffalo - Oakland).

Frank L. Battisti

Frank L. Battisti is Conductor Emeritus of the New England Conservatory Wind Ensemble which he founded and conducted for 30 years (1969-99). During this time his performances and recordings with the Ensemble earned high critical praise and accolades. Battisti was also Principal Guest Conductor of the Longy School of Music Chamber Winds, Cambridge, MA from 2000 – 2008 and founder and Music Director of the Tanglewood Institute's Young Artists Wind Ensemble from 2000 - 2004. In 2005 he became the ensemble's Conductor Emeritus. As a guest conductor he has conducted wind ensembles/bands throughout the United States, England, Europe, Middle East, Africa, Scandinavia, Australia, China, Taiwan, Canada, South America, South Korea, Iceland and the former U.S.S.R.

Battisti commissioned and premiered over 60 works for wind ensemble by distinguished American and international composers including Warren Benson, Leslie Bassett, Robert Ceely, John Harbison, Robin Holloway, Witold Lutoslawski, William Thomas McKinley, Vincent Persichetti, Michael Colgrass, Daniel Pinkham, Gunther Schuller, Robert Selig, Ivan Tcheripnin, Sir Michael Tippett, William Kraft, Robert Ward and Alec Wilder. His commitment to contemporary music as well as his outstanding performances have earned him high praise from critics, composers and colleagues.

Past President of the U.S. College Band Directors National Association (CBDNA), Battisti is also a member of the American Bandmasters Association (ABA) and founder of the National Wind Ensemble Conference (1970), World Association of Symphonic Bands and Ensembles (1981), Massachusetts Youth Wind Ensemble (1970) and New England College Band Association (1981). He also served on the Standard Award Panel of American Society for Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) and the National Foundation for Advancement of the Arts Recognition and Talent Search Panel (ARTS).

Battisti has been the recipient of many awards and honors including Honorary Doctorates from Ithaca College in 1992, Rhode Island College in 2010, New England Conservatory of Music in 2012; the Ithaca College Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003, New England Conservatory Alumni Association Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008; the first Louis and Adrienne Krasner Excellence in Teaching Award from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1997, the Lowell Mason Award from the Massachusetts Music Educators Association in 1998, the New England College Band Association's Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999, American School Band Directors Association Edwin Franko Goldman Award in 1989, Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic's Medal of Honor in 2001 and the National Band Association's AWAPA in 2006. In 1986 and 1993 he was a visiting fellow at Clare Hall, Cambridge University, UK.

Battisti is the author of ten books including *Winds of Change*, *On Becoming a Conductor* and *The Conductor's Challenge* as well as numerous articles on wind ensemble/band literature, conducting and music education for national and international professional journals and magazines. He has also been an editor for various music publishers and is currently a consulting editor for *The Instrumentalist*.

Battisti lives in Leverett, Massachusetts with Charlotte, his wife of 62 years.