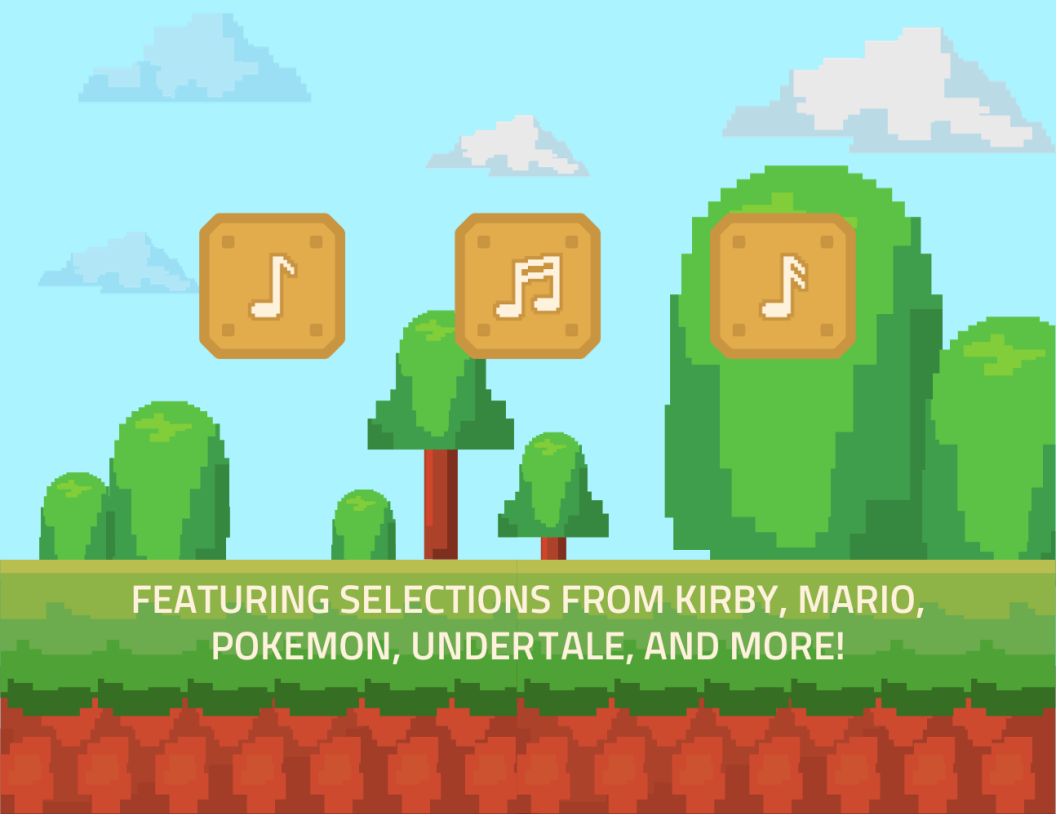


WMGSO PRESENTS

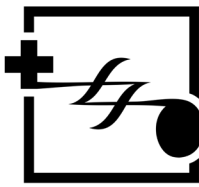


A VIDEO GAME MUSIC RECITAL

**JANUARY 6, 2024 - 7PM EST
FALLS CHURCH, VA**



**FEATURING SELECTIONS FROM KIRBY, MARIO,
POKEMON, UNDERTALE, AND MORE!**



WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN

Gamer Symphony Orchestra

The Washington Metropolitan Gamer Symphony Orchestra (WMGSO) is a community orchestra and choir whose mission is to share and celebrate video game music with a wide audience, primarily by putting on affordable, accessible concerts in the D.C. area.

Game music weaves a complex melodic thread through the traditions, shared memories, values, and myths of an entire international and intergenerational culture. WMGSO showcases this music that largely escapes recognition in professional circles.

The result: classical music with a 21st-century twist, drawing non-gamers to the artistic merits of video game soundtracks and attracting new audiences to orchestral concert halls.

About Our Music Director



Jamin Morden attended Northwestern University, dual majoring in French Horn Performance and Music Education. After he completed a master's degree in French Horn Performance at Yale University, he moved to Maryland to teach instrumental music in Montgomery County Public Schools. Jamin is also involved with Symphony of the Potomac and the Maryland Band Directors' Band.

About Our Choir Director



Anthony Khong is an active musician, educator, and arts administrator and is native to the D.C. area. Prior to his work in community choirs, he served as a chorus teacher in Fairfax County. Anthony holds a master's in Arts Management from George Mason University, and a bachelor's in Music Education from James Madison University, where he studied voice and clarinet.

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WMGSO relies on the generosity of our Supporters to defray the costs of everything from venue rental to music license purchases. We are incredibly grateful for the generous donors whose contributions sustain WMGSO. To learn more about the benefits of becoming a WMGSO Supporter, please speak to a member of our staff in the lobby, or feel free to contribute online at wmgso.org/donate.



Diamond

Those who give at the Diamond level (\$200 or more) receive VIP Seating for two for our seasonal concerts for the next year, a supporter pin, and their names listed in our website, concert programs, and video credits for one year.

charliesbeats	Bruce Hendrickson	Susan Noonan
Sy Chen & Wen-Li Lu	Jeremy Hersh	Matt Reba
Dr. Elspeth Clark, Dr. Jeffrey Huo & Amelia	Michael Hoehner	Rachel See
Zeynep Dilli	Jarel Jones	Gregory Wicks
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	Scott & Jessie Luxenberg	Cindy Zhang



Platinum

Those who give at the Platinum level (\$100 to \$199) receive an exclusive tote bag, a supporter pin, and their names listed in our website, concert programs, and video credits for one year.

Deborah Ashcom	Mom & Dad Fong	Dr. David Porter
April Barber	Michael Ikeda	Romel Punsal
Brandon Barber	The Marinellis	David Werner
Amanda Cavanagh	Jessica Metcalf-Burton	Mom & Abby Worth
Janet Cavanagh	Douglas & Jennifer Milewski	Elizabeth & Sean Young
Kendall Daines	Mitch & Laura Miskimins	



Gold

Those who give at the Gold level (\$50 to \$99) receive a supporter pin and their names listed in our website, concert programs, and video credits for one year.

Kevin Barefoot	Hector & Darlene Garcia	Fabio Moreira
Doug Benner & Marye Miller	Marcos Garcia	Sean Murphy
Meredith ChenLu	Jan & Jack Hencke	Susan Schappert
Alison Chilson	Paul Henry	Benjamin Shrager
David Crisler	Richard Hollands	Lisa A. Shrager
Jean Crisler	Michael Lum	David Wang
Jing Fong	Scott McNees	Lori Wicks
Will (not your attorney) Frank	Roger Metcalf	



Silver

Those who give at the Silver level (\$25 to \$49) have their names listed in our website, concert programs, and video credits for one year.

ArcaneAria	Bill Hill	Sam Scurci
Colin Achilles	Stephanie Hoey	Breeana Shields
Kevin Coakley	Robert Jefferson	Jaden Sims
Texas Coynes	Kimberly Johnson	Sally Taber
Kai Diaz	Home Marinelli	Joshua Turner
Sarah Elkins	Rob Metzger	Seth Whitsitt
Dustin Ewry	Walter Okada	Wayne Wiley
Sophia E. Garcia	Les & Lisa Peters	Kimberly Wissman
Michael Hannemann	Catherine Pollack	Erin Zellers
Jeneen Hardegen	Anne Marie Porter	

WMGSO is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Please consult your financial advisors to determine whether your contribution may qualify for a tax deduction.

Performer Bios

Rachel See

French Horn

Rachel first performed with WMGSO as a substitute in 2021 and was so thrilled by the experience, she joined as a full member in 2022. She regularly performs with the Symphony of the Potomac and has previously been a regular member of the Loudoun Symphony, Capital Pride Symphonic Band, and the Richmond Philharmonic Orchestra.

As a lawyer focused on AI risk management, Rachel makes GLaDOS and other video game references professionally. She is currently trying to find time to complete both *Starfield* and *Baldur's Gate 3* and indulges in quick *Hades* and *Brotato* runs when away from her home gaming setup.

Fabio Moreira

Tuba

Fabio joined WMGSO during the 2018 spring season after seeing WMGSO perform at MAGFest. He is originally from Brazil and has been playing tuba since sixth grade.

He sinks most of his game time into first-person shooters, rhythm games, racing games, and action games. Some of his favorites include *God of War Ragnarok*, *Rock Band*, the *Uncharted* series, *The Last of Us* series, *Baldur's Gate 3*, the *Halo* series, and *UNDERTALE* (all of which also include some of his favorite video game music). Outside of gaming, you can find him mountain biking or hiking.

David Crisler

Trombone

Formerly an oboist, David fully committed to the trombone dark side in 2018, and in 2022 he joined WMGSO on the bass trombone. He also plays bass trombone for the Prince George's Philharmonic and can occasionally be spotted elsewhere playing various low brass instruments...or oboe.

David enjoys speedrunning and playing custom levels in *Celeste*, both of which he showcased in a WMGSO/Games Done Quick speedrun event last fall. His other gaming achievements include holding the speedrun world record in the 2021 roleplaying game *The Good Life*, 100% completing every 3D *Mario* game, and coaching his college's *League of Legends* team for seven years.

John M. Ball

Trumpet

In the summer of 2021, a WMGSO recruiting post on Reddit thawed John from the ice in which he had been frozen for 15 years. Taking trumpet in hand, he brought it to his lips and sounded a mighty doot that experts have since called “not actually a note.” One lengthy training montage later, he auditioned and was welcomed into his new home for musical gaming enthusiasts.

In his free time, John can often be found playing assorted classic and retro games, or occasionally holding non-gamers hostage while describing the artistic vision of *NieR: Automata*. He is currently gawking in dumbfounded admiration while playing *Outer Wilds*, which he has hopefully finished by the time you read this.

Maggie Suarez

Flute

Maggie joined WMGSO during the 2021 fall season. She has been playing the flute for more than 16 years. Maggie is also a flutist for the DC Army National Guard’s 257th Army Band, “The Band of the Nation’s Capital.”

In addition to making music, she enjoys playing pickleball and video games with her husband and friends. Some of Maggie’s favorite games include *Stardew Valley*, *Terraria*, and *New World*.

Thomas Ashcom

Piano

Thomas officially joined WMGSO as a choir member in the fall of 2018 and soon acquired the roles of Choir Accompanist and Repertoire Editor. Aside from also being a staple music arranger for the ensemble, Thomas writes and produces his own original work under the username Zip Zipper.

As for games, he tends to seek titles with a not-so-serious style and framework, such as games released by Nintendo, as they often have the playful soundtracks he prefers. Some recent games he’s enjoyed include *The Legend of Zelda: Tears of the Kingdom*, *Have a Nice Death*, *Pikmin 4*, and *Born of Bread*.

Hojin Yoon

Alto Saxophone

Soon after graduating and leaving the gamer symphony orchestra at University of Maryland, College Park, Hojin joined WMGSO in the fall of 2021. Music and video games have been immense sources of joy in his life, and he loves both the community and competition. His collegiate *Hearthstone* team “Burrito Boys” even made it to top 8 in North America. Nowadays, he can be found playing rogue-likes like *Wildfrost* in between *League of Legends* and *Deep Rock Galactic* games.

Zeynep Dilli

Piano

Zeynep joined the choir in the WMGSO’s first full season in the spring of 2014 and has also performed with piano and recorder since. She is WMGSO’s Library Branch Director. She is also half of the piano/French horn duo Freeform with Jamin Morden, WMGSO’s music director; and the keyboardist in the Haven Scratch Band, also composed of WMGSO members.

Ever since she started arranging for WMGSO in 2015, she hasn’t had much time to play video games since there’s just so much video game music to play. Some of her favorites have been *UNDERTALE*, the *Mass Effect* trilogy, *Chrono Trigger*, *Planescape: Torment*, *Portal/Portal 2*, *Theatrhythm Final Bar Line*, *The Legend of Zelda: The Ocarina of Time: Bastion*, *Diablo II*, *Final Fantasy VII*, *Final Fantasy VI*, *Outer Wilds*, and *Horizon: Zero Dawn*, the last three of which she still needs to finish.

Amanda Cavanagh

Ensemble Manager/Emcee

Amanda joined in 2016 as a soprano in the choir and became Ensemble Manager of WMGSO in 2020. When she isn’t answering emails, volunteering for events, or planning music opportunities, she volunteers with MAGFest all year round. Her favorite game series is *The Legend of Zelda*, so much so that she named her cat Zelda.

Technical Crew

Technical Director

David Werner

Stage Crew

Dan Serino

Stream Director

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Audio Engineers

Mollie Cave &

Camera Ops

Romel Punsal

Cory Lemons

START!

The following pieces are performed by our brass quartet: Rachel See on French horn, Fabio Moreira on tuba, David Crisler on trombone, and John M. Ball on trumpet.

Pokémon Fanfare

Pokémon Red and Blue (1996)

Junichi Masuda

Arr. David Crisler

Iconic from the first three notes, the fanfare that opens the title screen movie in the Generation 1 *Pokémon* games set a tone of adventure and discovery that would define a decades-long franchise. Even more impressively, composer Junichi Masuda was able to express all of this in barely 10 seconds of music! This short arrangement builds on the original, aiming to further explore its musical ideas while setting the same tone for this evening's musical adventures.

Jesters of the Moon

Final Fantasy IX (2000)

Nobuo Uematsu

Arr. Adam Zerance

In 2000, SquareSoft released *Final Fantasy IX*. The story has some similarities with *Lord of the Rings*. Playing the part of Grima Wormtongue are *Final Fantasy IX*'s Thorn and Zorn, two court jesters that manipulate the ruler into doing the bidding of Kuja. This is their song.

Fusion & Lumina

Brave Fencer Musashi (1998)

Tsuyoshi Sekito

Arr. Thomas Ashcom

The overarching story of *Brave Fencer Musashi* is the quintessential hero's tale, but every single design aspect, including the music, makes it an enchanting and remarkable experience, especially for an early PlayStation game. The eponymous character wields two swords, one named Fusion that can absorb enemies and temporarily harness their abilities, and another named Lumina that is restored with the unique power of five elemental scrolls. This arrangement uses two very heroic themes from the game.

The following pieces are performed by Maggie Suarez on flute and
Thomas Ashcom on piano.

The Pitch Black Tunnel

Kirby and the Forgotten Land (2022)

Jun Ishikawa, Yuuta Ogasawara,

Hirokazu Ando & Yuki Shimooka

Arr. Thomas Ashcom

This most recent addition to the *Kirby* series draws many mechanical and aesthetic parallels to *Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards*, which was the first title featuring the title character in 3D graphics. In the *Forgotten Land*, Kirby can acquire a menagerie of power ups, some that he characteristically assimilates from his enemies and others by inhaling objects much larger than him.

The middle of this arrangement uses a theme that plays in levels where Kirby eats a big lightbulb, allowing him to see in complete darkness. Another, more springy theme sandwiches the middle, making the whole arrangement in essence like going from one side of a dark tunnel to the other.

Big-Bean Vine

Kirby's Epic Yarn (2010)

Tomoya Tomita

Arr. Jamin Morden

Games featuring the loveable pink puffball Kirby often hold a reputation of being a little easier, or perhaps more accessible than other platformers. Certainly the music is characterized by a warm, inviting aesthetic that creates a comforting simplicity. Like the games themselves, though, the soundtracks often contain significant depth if one is willing to look a little closer.

“Big-Bean Vine” is pure saccharine joy, allowing not a single bitter thought to dampen our spirits. While the arranger doesn’t suspect any intentional reference, he finds Tomita’s original tune distinctly reminiscent of Alan Menken’s music in the films of the Disney renaissance (*The Little Mermaid*, *Lion King*, and *Aladdin* in particular). In the case of this arrangement, any resemblance is absolutely intentional.

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and car bumper!

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*The following pieces are performed by Hojin Yoon on saxophone and
Zeynep Dilli on piano.*

Rosalina's Story

Super Mario Galaxy (2007)

Koji Kondo, Mahito Yokota

Arr. David Crisler

In one of the more inspired additions to *Super Mario Galaxy*, players can take a break from the action to listen in as Rosalina reads from a storybook in her library. The fully illustrated book at first seems like a cute children's book narration of her backstory. The inner chapters, however, tell the strikingly poignant tale of a young Rosalina struggling to come to terms with her mother's death while searching for her own place in a lonely universe.

This arrangement is a response to the storybook's deeper aspects, twisting fragments of melodies from Rosalina's observatory and library into a reflection of her emotional state in those chapters. The arrangement draws heavily on harmonic and stylistic techniques used in the first movement, "Elégie," of Francis Poulenc's *Sonata for Oboe and Piano*. A tragic work itself, the sonata was dedicated to the memory of Poulenc's contemporary Sergei Prokofiev and would be Poulenc's final composition.

Look out for WMGSO's next
Full Ensemble Concert!

Northern Virginia Community College
Saturday, May 18, 2024

Tickets on sale soon!



Pontan Palace*Bomberman (DS) (2005)***Morihiro Iwamoto***Arr. Thomas Ashcom*

The modesty of this game's title is due to the fact it was the first *Bomberman* made for the Nintendo DS. The console's dual-screen operation gave more sense to the level designs expected in typical *Bomberman* games, but not much else about this particular game is noteworthy. Even the soundtrack can be repetitive and awkward, so this arrangement uses heavy variation to breathe life into the two distinct melodic themes found in game.

The following pieces are performed by our brass quartet: Rachel See on French horn, Fabio Moreira on tuba, David Crisler on trombone, and John M. Ball on trumpet.

Welcome to the World of Pokémon*Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire (2002)***Go Ichinose & Morikazu Aoki***Arr. Dan Serino*

Prepare to embark on a journey through the Hoenn region with our brass band rendition of “Welcome to the World of Pokémon” from *Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire*. This arrangement, highlighting the original soundtrack's brass-heavy charm, features trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba and channels the excitement of starting a new *Pokémon* adventure. Join us as we capture the essence of wide-eyed wonder and anticipation in this brief homage to Hoenn.

Ghost Kingdom*DANCERUSH STARDOM (2018)***Tomoaki Hirono***Arr. Chris “CTL” Lee*

It is March 2018. “Party Rock Anthem” has been a meme staple for years and popularizing the shuffle. Konami sees this opportunity and releases *DANCERUSH STARDOM*, designed for freestyle dancing with a major focus on shuffling. That October, “Ghost Kingdom” was released to celebrate the spooky season, and out came all the aspiring choreographers who could fulfill their dreams of combining shuffling with the “Thriller” dance. The shuffling undead draw near!

PAUSE

Level 2 – START!

The following pieces are performed by Maggie Suarez on flute and Thomas Ashcom on piano.

In the Thrall of the Serpent King

Old School RuneScape (2013)

Ashleigh Bridges (Mod Ash)

Arr. Cindy Zhang

In the western provinces of Gielinor (*RuneScape's* overworld), there lies a cursed land called Zul-Andra. Nothing grows from its dead soil, and the only food source is eels, which are controlled by the fearsome, titular Serpent King, Zulrah, who players can fight for rewards. Before reaching Zulrah, the player must first learn Zul-Andra's horrific history: its residents have formed a religious cult that worships Zulrah by regularly sacrificing one of their own to Zulrah in exchange for access to eels. The player must convince the cult leader to let them be the sacrifice so that they can be transported to Zulrah's shrine.

This arrangement starts with Zul-Andra's chilling, hypnotic theme, representing the cult's feverish, deathly devotion to Zulrah. It then transitions into the combat theme that plays while fighting Zulrah, its frantic pace capturing the chaotic terror of dodging Zulrah's venomous attacks and vicious snakelings.

Hoenn Vibes

Pokémon Ruby and Sapphire (2002)

Pokémon Emerald (2004)

Go Ichinose & Morikazu Aoki

Arr. Cindy Zhang & Dan Serino

This arrangement celebrates the flute's rightful place as the musical main character throughout the *Pokémon* Generation 3 games (*Ruby*, *Sapphire*, and *Emerald*). The Hoenn region where the games take place is a picturesque vacation getaway, abundant with beaches, jungles, volcanoes, and hot springs.

"Hoenn Vibes" takes the listeners on an audio journey with the *Pokémon* trainer, traveling through beautiful Hoenn. Starting from the opening credits, our flute soloist and piano accompanist tell a story of arriving in Littleroot Town and Oldale Town, making your way through gym towns like Dewford Town and Fortree City, and a brief pit stop at Verdanturf Town before finally defeating the Elite Four and obtaining the ultimate achievement: becoming a jazz flutist.

The following pieces are performed by Hojin Yoon on saxophone and Zeynep Dilli on piano.

The Sax Trials of Peppino Spaghetti

Pizza Tower (2023)

Ronan “Mr. Sauceman” de Castel &

ClascyJitto

Arr. Cindy Zhang

The indie hit game *Pizza Tower* is considered by many as the spiritual successor to *Wario Land*, right down to protagonist Peppino Spaghetti resembling Wario in character design. “The Sax Trials of Peppino Spaghetti” invites you to follow along as our saxophone soloist and piano accompanist narrate the pizzeria-owning protagonist’s trials and tribulations through platforming levels and boss fights. Groovy tracks like “Unearthly Blues,” “Theatrical Shenanigans,” and the renowned “It’s Pizza Time!” hype up Peppino Spaghetti’s journey up the Pizza Tower to defeat the antagonist Pizzaface.

Shifting Temple

Into the Jungle (2021), a mod for *Celeste* (2018)

Aeden Eric B. & Itay Gur (thegur90)

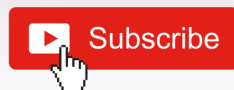
Arr. David Crisler

The *Celeste* mod *Into the Jungle* is a fully fledged game in its own right, with five chapters of custom art assets, new gameplay gimmicks, and, of course, original music.

This arrangement is based on the B/C-side remix for Chapter 4, Shifting Temple, a level that mixes puzzles with leaps past pits and traps in an ancient temple, culminating in a boulder chase sequence. Featuring syncopated melodies over an unsteady 5/4 groove, this track brilliantly captures the flashy fun of the challenging platforming it accompanies.

Keep an eye on WMGSO’s YouTube channel for the latest in our professionally recorded video game music!

www.youtube.com/wmgso



The following piece is performed by Maggie Suarez on flute, Hojin Yoon on saxophone, and Zeynep Dilli on piano.

Secret of the Forest

Chrono Trigger (1995)

Yasunori Mitsuda

Arr. Zeynep Dilli

For its fans, *Chrono Trigger* is often an example of a perfect game, but the more musically inclined among those fans often point out one glaring design defect: if you know your way through the forest area in which “Secret of the Forest” plays, you can get through it before the piece loops once, so you can in theory never hear the whole of it.

This is a tragedy, since even within this soundtrack so full of gems, “Secret of the Forest” is extraordinary. It manages the rare feat of being an atmospheric piece of music that has a clear melody and also employs both functional and non-functional harmony. Depending on the mood of the player or the listener, it can be meditative and soothing, or questing and exploratory. Layered and complex, this track has both the mystery its title promises, asking questions, while incorporating phrases that are clearly answers. Who knows what we will find among the whispers of the forest creek, dewdrops dripping from leaves, wind high up in the canopy, birdsong, and animal noises?

The arranger dedicates this arrangement to Jer Roque, for enabling an entire community of video game music (VGM) musicians and for his love of this piece in particular.

The following pieces are performed by our brass quartet: Rachel See on French horn, Fabio Moreira on tuba, David Crisler on trombone, and John M. Ball on trumpet.

Once Upon a Time

UNDERTALE (2015)

Toby Fox

Arr. David Crisler

Serving as a sort of overture, “Once Upon a Time” sets out many of the musical ideas that will develop over the course of *UNDERTALE*’s playtime. This arrangement begins with a largely straightforward treatment of the original, but, like the game itself, there’s a second playthrough. This time around, the arrangement explores the themes more freely, playing them off of each other and changing harmonic context to offer a fresh perspective on a set of themes that are otherwise quite familiar.

Loud and Sweet

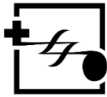
Mario Party 4 (2002)

Ichiro Shimakura

Arr. Dan Serino

“Loud and Sweet” is a video game music arrangement inspired by the Booksquirm mini-game in *Mario Party 4*. As players deftly scurry through small holes to avoid getting squashed by a giant book, the music captures the game’s quirkiness.

Crafted in a second-line style reminiscent of New Orleans’ lively brass band culture, this arrangement features trumpet, horn, trombone, and tuba, infusing the *Mario Party* series’ playful spirit with the energetic vibe of a street celebration. “Loud and Sweet” invites the audience to clap along and experience the fusion of video game nostalgia and lively brass instrumentation in a brief yet memorable recital performance.



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