

A Pedagogical Guide to the Teaching of Selected
Transcriptions of Trombonist Ralph Sauer (b. 1944):

Annotations, Exercises, and Recording

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this project was to provide a pedagogical resource for students and teachers that highlights selected transcriptions of former Los Angeles Philharmonic principal trombonist Ralph Sauer (b. 1944), and how those works can be used in an applied instruction setting. The compositions include Bartók's *Romanian Folk Dances*, Debussy's *Syrinx*, Pergolesi's *Sinfonia in F*, *Sonata in B-flat* by Mozart, and Saint-Saëns *The Nightingale*.

The sections dealing with pedagogical concepts are presented as conversationally as possible to facilitate ease of understanding by teachers of any background and level. Educators who are not trombonists or are otherwise not wholly familiar with the presented repertoire can still be able to borrow phrasing directly from the document. The musical examples enable teachers to quickly identify sections of the work that may prove useful to students. At the time of this writing, there are no commercially available recordings of the chosen pieces as they appear from the publisher. Therefore, the recording is intended to render the music exactly as it is printed in the published version, and to be as free of personal musical interpretation as possible. The works were chosen to cover a range of ability levels, from early college through the graduate level. All the included pieces are published, as of July 2019, and available for purchase online from Cherry Classics Music.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to my wife, Kacy Bledsoe. My career has taken much of my attention after leaving ASU, and my wife has gently pushed me to be the best version of myself possible in every respect. She has not-so-gently encouraged me, when I needed it, to get things done even when it meant sacrificing time with family.

My parents have been supportive emotionally, financially, and otherwise throughout my entire life. They supported all of my musical dreams from the very beginning of my studies, and without them I would not have been so free to dream and pursue my passions as I have.

Mr. Ralph Sauer, whom I credit as my main trombone teacher. Before writing this document, I studied with him for several years and count him as a mentor, teacher, and friend. He taught that the trombone is a tool, and I am first and foremost a musician.

Finally, to the late Chuck Anger, my grandfather. My grandfather loved me unconditionally and was so proud of my accomplishments. He could not see me finish this degree, but I hope he knows I finally made it.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you firstly to Dr. Jere T. Humphreys for his support and guidance during the process of finishing this degree. Dr. Humphreys once stated that sometimes you “do the right thing just because it’s the right thing,” and that has made a deeply profound impact on me. I hope someday to be able to visit this kind of dedication to a student of my own and make the kind of impact Dr. Humphreys has had on me. Thank you to Dr. John Ericson for his willingness to help me finish this degree, and for teaching me lessons during my time at ASU that I did not know I was learning and would not fully see the value in until later in my life. Thank you to Dr. Rodney Rogers for being willing to serve on my committee, for being a kind teacher willing to work with my schedule and timeline. I am fortunate to have such dedicated pedagogues in my life.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview

This document, research, and accompanying compact disc are the culmination of ten years of teaching and performing the transcriptions of Ralph Sauer. Mr. Sauer was principal trombone of the Los Angeles Philharmonic for thirty-four years, and is known for his arrangements and transcriptions. The project is designed to provide a guide for teachers to use when teaching this material in hopes that it will encourage them to embrace repertoire that may not be wholly familiar. Secondly, the project aims to provide a reference recording for teachers and students since there are no recordings of these arrangements performed on the trombone. Lastly, the audio tracks were recorded and edited by the present writer to illustrate the value of being able to provide reference recordings for one's own students.

The present writer studied with Ralph Sauer several years. That study has provided valuable insights into how he approaches transcriptions and the teaching of them. The value in the study of transcriptions is well documented, but rarely is a student able to study the transcription with the person who envisioned its transfer from one instrument to another. Mr. Sauer is a master arranger, pedagogue, and performer, and his insights into the performance of works not originally for the trombone deserve to be preserved and passed down to future generations of students.

The accompanying recording is designed to give the student and teacher a reference point from which to start their study. The recording is intended to adhere closely to the printed edition of the works presented. Additionally, because the writer

recorded, edited, and mastered the recordings himself, this project is designed to showcase the value in being able to present a high-quality recording of one's own ideas and interpretations to students. Too often teachers are limited by available recordings and must rely on another performer to provide an aural illustration of how a work should be interpreted and performed. The recording accompanying this document showcases the value of a teacher creating his or her own reference recordings. In this case, it presents a nucleus of personal references for current and future students.

Selecting repertoire required considerable discernment because Mr. Sauer has an extensive catalogue of published transcriptions and arrangements. When selecting repertoire several criteria must have been met, aside from being Mr. Sauer's, in order to be included in this study, including:

1. Does this work present skills valuable for study alongside other standard repertoire?
2. Are the piano and trombone parts accessible to a wide enough audience that they can be used in multiple study and performance contexts?

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide a pedagogical resource for teachers with the intent to encourage them to use the transcriptions of Ralph Sauer in their applied teaching. The pedagogical directions are written plainly with the idea that teachers, regardless of their experience with the trombone or the repertoire, will be able to understand the directions and pass along this direction to their students. Finally, the purpose is to bring awareness to more of Mr. Sauer's transcriptions and their value in

applied settings. Mr. Sauer is meticulous in his adaptation of works to the trombone and his transcriptions provide an equitable performance experience for the both trombonists and accompanists.

Significance of the Study

At the time of this writing, there are no commercially available recordings of the presented works as they appear from the publisher. When teaching a new work with which the teacher is unfamiliar, it is valuable to have an informed opinion that one can reference easily. The writer has studied, performed, and taught these works numerous times over the last five to ten years, so the direction for the project came from personal experience and from having studied the works with Mr. Sauer himself in years prior to writing this document.

Recording Process

All audio was recorded on the stage in the Recital Hall on the campus of the University of West Florida. The Recital Hall is a space that is very friendly to brass, but small enough to provide a recording that is clear and not overly reverberant.

The trombone, an XO Brass 1236L with Doug Elliott mouthpiece, was recorded using a Superlux R102 active ribbon microphone. This microphone was chosen because ribbon microphones provide a very flat frequency response and thus a natural replication of the sound presented to them. Ribbon mics are the most popular choice for recording brass instruments because the flat frequency response creates the impression of warmth, whereas the microphone itself does not change or color the sound in any way. The R102 was chosen specifically because it has an active circuitry, which means that the signal is

stronger compared to passive ribbon microphones. Passive ribbon microphones have a very low signal output, which means that the preamp used must be of extremely high quality to ensure there is no noise introduced from the preamp itself. The active circuitry of the R102 amplifies this low signal output, which means that the audio interface used does not have to be of commercial studio quality to achieve a clean signal. The microphone was placed approximately five feet from the bell of the trombone, and was moved one foot off axis to avoid directional sound blasts from the trombone and to cancel as much sound from the piano as possible.

The piano, a Steinway grand, was recorded using two large diaphragm CAD M179 microphones set in a wide cardioid pattern. The wide cardioid pattern was chosen to enable the microphone to capture the entire range of sound emanating from the piano while rejecting sound from the trombone and reflected sound waves from the hall. One microphone was placed near the low strings and one near the high strings. This placement was chosen so that, when mixed, the audio would sound through speakers or headphones as it would when heard live.

The microphones were connected to a PreSonus VSL1818 audio interface connected via USB to a MacBook Pro with Logic Pro X as the Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). Each microphone was recorded onto a separate track for ease of mixing and optimizing levels in post-production.

Minimal processing was done to the audio itself after recording. The CAD M179 signals were panned slightly left and right respective to their positioning in the piano to create a natural stereo sound, but also to make space for the trombone in the mix. The

R102 was panned center to make the trombone sound as the most prominent voice. Levels were adjusted to ensure that the recording was loud enough to be played on consumer-level speakers and headphones.

The recording and editing process followed a rather traditional practice. Each work was divided into smaller sections and each section was performed until an adequate performance was achieved. Each section was then spliced together using the best takes from each session. Every attempt was made to capture the work as it would be performed live so that the student or teacher listening to the recording would not have unrealistic expectations for how the work should be performed. For example, no editing was done to create a phrase without a breath where one could not be performed completely in a live performance. Larger sections were used so that the student or teacher is able to hear how the work would actually sound in a performance, including pacing of dynamics, breath, and endurance considerations. The recording was intended to be a teaching tool and not a marketing vehicle for the performer.

CHAPTER 2

ROMANIAN FOLK DANCES

Program Notes

Béla Bartók (1881-1945) is among the best-known composers of the 20th Century. He studied at the Royal Hungarian Academy of Music in Budapest from 1899 to 1903. He developed quickly as a pianist but did not develop as a composer until after he completed his studies. Later, he worked with Zoltán Kodály to catalog and transcribe the folk music of Hungary.¹ Ultimately, the nationalistic flavor of these works would become a hallmark of Bartók's own compositional style.

Bartók wrote in a letter after World War I that he considered it his goal in life to continue the study of Romanian folk music.² These *Romanian Folk Dances* are among the folk melodies that Bartók transcribed during his time in Transylvania, from 1910 to 1912. Performance practice varies greatly in regard to rhythmic and expressive interpretation. Because originally these melodies were performed on the piano, Bartók remained simple and "true" in his musical settings. However, eventually the dances became at least as popular on the violin as on the piano because the ornamentations are particularly effective on the former. Students should be encouraged to listen to as many examples as possible and to strive to embrace the Romanian folk style and tradition.

¹ Halsey Stevens, "Béla Bartók." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. March 21, 2019. Accessed May 06, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Bela-Bartok>.

² Ibid.

Mr. Sauer chose to omit the Romanian names for individual movements, but for the purposes of reference and further research they are included here, together with their English translations.

Pedagogical Considerations

The most important element in the teaching and performance of this work is the embracing of the folk instrumental style and the understanding that much of the melodic line is gestural and open to rhythmic interpretation. The student should feel free to break from strict rhythmic interpretation as long as the integrity of the meter signature is maintained. The work is still effective as a recital or jury work when the rhythms are adhered to exactly as written, but advanced musicians will find opportunities to embrace a style of interpretation not usually open to trombonists. This work would be a welcome addition to the standard recital or jury repertoire for undergraduate and graduate trombonists. For undergraduates there is ample technique to stretch their abilities, and for graduate students the work would function well on a recital alongside other, larger works.

1. “Jocul ce bâta” (Stick Dance)³

The performer is given only a tempo marking of *Allegro moderato* at the beginning of this movement. Within the context of the tempo, the student should envision a dance-like character while maintaining an element of formality. The student should establish an expressive style and resist the tendency to shift the rhythmic pulse to the

³ Peter Laki, "Romanian Folk Dances." The Kennedy Center. Accessed May 6, 2019. <http://www.kennedy-center.org/artist/composition/4879>.

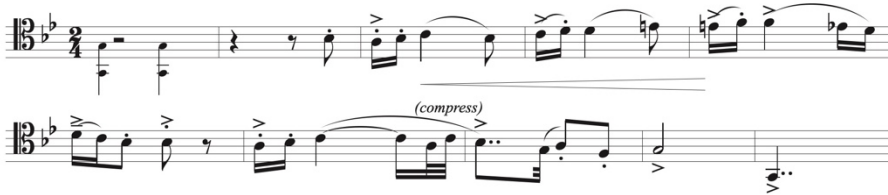
weak part of the beat. Mr. Sauer has adhered to the original notation by Bartók (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-10



When performing this movement, the student should establish style and rhythmic integrity by performing the passage like this (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 1, mm. 1-10



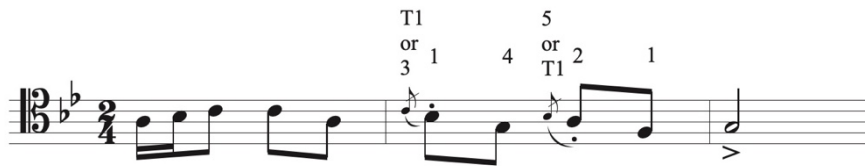
This work presents an opportunity for students to begin interpreting ornamentation that is not idiomatic, and to adapt those embellishments in such a way that pays homage to the original intent of the composer but is also effective on the trombone. One example of this ornamentation are the grace notes found in m. 16. Using traditional positions, the part would be performed as indicated in Figure 3.

Figure 3: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 1, mm. 15-17



To establish a consistent quality of slur, an alternate position can be used. In this instance, the use of the f-attachment to facilitate grace notes is acceptable and effective though it renders the passage less idiomatic. The passage would now be performed as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 1, mm. 15-17



Another passage that encourages the use of alternate positions that better serve the original intent of the composer is found in mm. 38-43 of the published version (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 1, mm. 38-43



The use of alternate positions as well as the f-attachment make this passage much more idiomatic and produces a musical line similar to the original orchestration by Bartók. When playing the mordent, the player must use alternate positions to achieve the desired ornamentation. The use of alternate positions also aids in achieving a musical style similar to the original intent of the composer (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 1, mm. 38-43



2. “Brâul” (Sash Dance)⁴

Though there is no metronome marking, the second dance should be performed at approximately 140bpm if possible. The sixteenth notes and five-tuplet figures may present a technical challenge for most trombonists. To maintain the folk style, the sixteenth notes and five-tuplets must stay tenuto legato. To facilitate this, trombonists

⁴ Ibid.

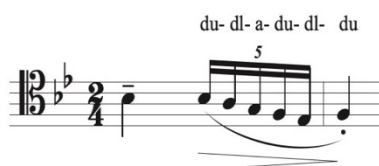
should use natural slurs and alternate positions where possible, and a doodle tongue when natural slurs are not possible. The five-tuplet in m. 6 provides an opportunity for trombonists to begin developing a doodle tongue in the symphonic style, even though the technique is more often used by jazz trombonists. Students with no prior experience with doodle tonguing should begin developing this technique as they would any other multiple-tongued syllabic pattern. Once basic proficiency with the syllabic pattern has been established, they can move on to these examples (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 2, m. 6

As written:



Played:



When the same melodic figure is repeated 8va, opportunities to use alternate positions and natural slurs abound. The use of these alternate positions and natural slurs allow the trombonist to more closely replicate the musical gesture as it might sound on the violin or piano. The usage of the multiple tongue in the upper register is generally too percussive, even when using a doodle-tongue technique. Figure 8 contains a solution that allows for natural slurs.

Figure 8: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 2, m. 22

3 2 2 1 3* 4

5

*requires light articulation
to avoid glissando

3. “Pe loc” (Standing Still)⁵

The third dance presents an opportunity for the trombonist to explore the use of a mute, as directed by Mr. Sauer. Traditionally, when a work calls for a mute but makes no designation as to a specific type, the trombonist would use a metal or fiber straight mute. In this instance, none of the original versions of this movement specifies the use of a mute, so the trombonist should feel free to explore the timbre of different types of mutes. Both the *solotone* mute and a traditional straight mute are effective. The use of a mute also means the performer should play a dynamic level above what is printed to adjust for the volume attenuation caused by the mute. In the accompanying recording a metal straight mute was used.

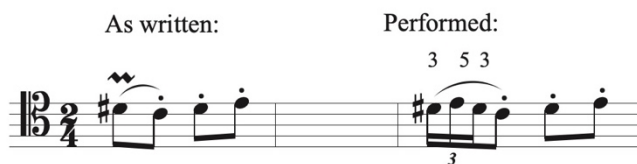
In the Székely⁶ arrangement for violin and piano, the violin uses artificial harmonics, which creates a thin sound devoid of the harmonic richness of a freely vibrating string. The use of the artificial harmonics forces the violinist to perform the

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ The arrangement by Zoltán Székely for violin and piano has become the most notable adaptation of Bartok’s work.

mordent as a glissando. There are several other ways a trombonist can perform these mordents. The trombonist could make use of a glissando much like a violinist would when playing the Székely arrangement (the present writer’s preferred interpretation), or he or she could make use of alternate positions to create a harmonic “flip” that moves to the correct note immediately above the principal note. Figure 9 depicts, first, the notation from the publisher and then how it should be performed rhythmically with position annotations to create a slide flip to the correct note (see Figure 9).

Figure 9: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 3, m. 5



There is a third option: creating a mordent. The student can perform a harmonic lip flip in the same position where the note played above the principal note would be the note that exists in the harmonic series in that position. Given the slow tempo of this work, this option is the least desirable as the listener is more likely to aurally identify the interval than the rendered gesture.

4. “Buciumeana” (Horn Dance)⁷

This movement should be played in a *cantabile* style that allows for rhythmic push and pull. The opening melody is marked *mezzo piano*, but should be played closer

⁷ Ibid.

to a *mezzo forte* dynamic level to allow for a marked echo effect four bars later when the thematic material is repeated. The first phrase should set the style for the remainder of the movement. Rhythmic push and pull is expected. Figure 10 illustrates the way the part appears from in the published edition.

Figure 10: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 4, mm. 3-6



The student should slightly elongate the first note of each bar and make up the time by slightly compressing the rest of the figure within the remainder of the beat. The dotted rhythms appear in pairs, and the first is often performed in a compressed style with the figure resembling a double-dotted eighth note followed by a thirty-second note. The second dotted rhythm is often interpreted as a pair of eighth notes with the first note being slightly elongated. In performance, the passage would be interpreted as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 4, mm. 3-6, Edited



The remainder of the movement should be interpreted in a similar manner. When the *ritardando* in the final two measures begins, the student should continue to perform the sixteenth notes in the dotted rhythm figure in a compressed manner and avoid stretching the sixteenth note to fit the rhythmic ratio as the passage comes to an end.

5. “Poargâ Românească” (Romanian Polka)⁸

This movement should be performed quite fast, but the teacher and student will need to make an informed decision together. The tempo of this movement should set the tempo for the next movement. Playing this movement too quickly will commit the student to an unmanageable tempo in the next movement. Of course, one can adjust the tempo and disregard the *l'istesso tempo* designation in the next movement, but for the purpose of adhering to printed tempo relationships, the accompanying recording has been adjusted to maintain the printed tempo relationships. In the upper register, the staccato eighth notes should not be shortened intentionally. As the tessitura descends, the student will find it necessary to play even shorter notes with a more compressed articulation to match the style of playing when the writing is in the middle-upper tessitura of the trombone. The character should remain playful, with a buoyant character and light articulation, throughout the movement.

The most significant speed barrier is the sixteenth note triplet figure found throughout the movement. There are three ways to execute this figure, which is written the same way each time it appears. The first iteration occurs in m. 7 (see Figure 12).

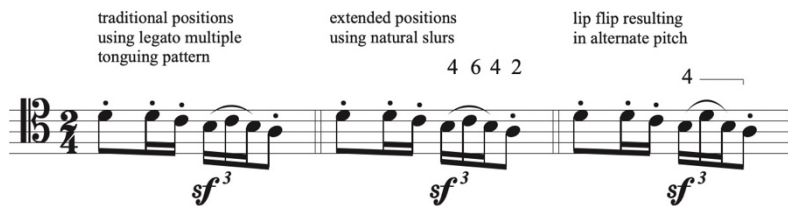
Figure 12: *Romanian Folk Dances, Mvt. 5, m. 7*

⁸Ibid.



Similar to the third movement, the trombonist can try to perform the figure as written in the standard slide positions, by performing a lip flip to the next partial in the harmonic series (which would result in a D4 being played in place of a C4), or use extended alternate positions to allow for the use of a natural slur. This passage has been recorded using standard slide positions as this technique achieves the desired effect while not creating additional undue difficulty for the performer. The three possibilities would be performed as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: *Romanian Folk Dances*, Mvt. 5, m. 7



6. “*Maruntel*” (Fast Dance)⁹

Technically speaking, the sixth movement tempo should be set by the tempo for the fifth movement. The technical limitations of the student will determine the tempo as the music is still effective even if the exact *L'istesso tempo* is not strictly maintained. The

⁹ Ibid.

student should look ahead to the *Piu allegro* marking in m. 17 to ensure that a noticeable tempo difference can be made compared to the opening sixteen-measure phrase.

The sixteenth-note triplet found throughout the *Piu allegro* section can be problematic because the fast tempo would require rather vigorous slide motion that is likely to interfere with the character of the work. The trombonist should perform this figure similar to ornamentation found previously in the work by playing a lip flip instead of adhering strictly to the printed notation. The use of alternate positions is a possibility, but some students may find coordinating those motions difficult. Learning to coordinate these fast exchanges using alternate positions can require significant practice of “against the grain” playing, whereby the trombonist makes use of natural slurs in conjunction with extended positions to facilitate the sound of a slur without having to use the tongue. The advantage of quick natural slurs is that the notes are played as written, but there is a high likelihood of coordination errors, resulting in no turn or ornament at all. The lip flip is more reliable for most players and achieves the same gestural effect.

From the publisher, the opening of the *Maruntel* has accents notated on the downbeats of the respective measures, which ensures proper style. The practice of accenting downbeats should continue through the *Piu Allegro* tempo change in m. 17. From the publisher, the part appears as shown in Figure 14.

Figure 14: *Romanian Folk Dances, Mvt. 6, mm. 17-20*



To maintain proper folk style and rhythmic propulsion, the student should perform the passage as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15: *Romanian Folk Dances, Mvt. 6*, mm.17-20, Performed.



CHAPTER 3

SYRINX

Program Notes

Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was a French Impressionist composer who wrote no solo works for the trombone. He was the 1884 recipient of the prestigious Grand Prix de Rome, which allowed him to live in Rome for two years at the expense of the state. Debussy's greatest musical influences were Richard Wagner, Aleksandr Borodin, and Modest Mussorgsky. Debussy himself broke from the traditional harmonic language of the time.¹⁰

Syrinx, for solo flute, was composed in 1913 but published posthumously in 1927 and was originally intended as incidental music to *Psyche*, a play by Debussy's friend Gabriel Mouray.¹¹

Pedagogical Considerations

When preparing this difficult unaccompanied work, the student should begin by understanding the mythology that inspired the piece. The publisher has provided a brief synopsis in the last page of the score. The Greek myth of Syrinx and Pan tells the story of the first set of pan pipes. It is important that the trombonist be concerned primarily with telling an aural story, as the rubato nature of this work allows for myriad phrasing

¹⁰ Edward Lockspeiser, "Claude Debussy." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. April 05, 2019. Accessed May 07, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Claude-Debussy>.

¹¹ Claude Debussy, *Syrinx for Solo Flute* / Bärenreiter Verlag. Accessed May 07, 2019. <https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/BA8733/>.

interpretations. Mr. Sauer has chosen to adhere strictly to the dynamics and expressive markings found in the original score. Given that this work was originally written for flute, the student should consider the dynamic range of that instrument and focus on musical storytelling rather than strict adherence to the printed dynamic markings. The student should set the *piano* dynamic based on the technique required to perform difficult passages. Attempting to play too softly will result in musically unconvincing execution, and will also increase the potential for missed notes and playing that is not as fluid as the style demands. Since the loudest passage in the work is marked *mezzo forte*, the student should play freely on the louder end of the dynamic range so long as the tone quality remains stylistically appropriate for the work.

The opening five measures provide little musical direction from Debussy. From the publisher, the part appears as shown in Figure 16.

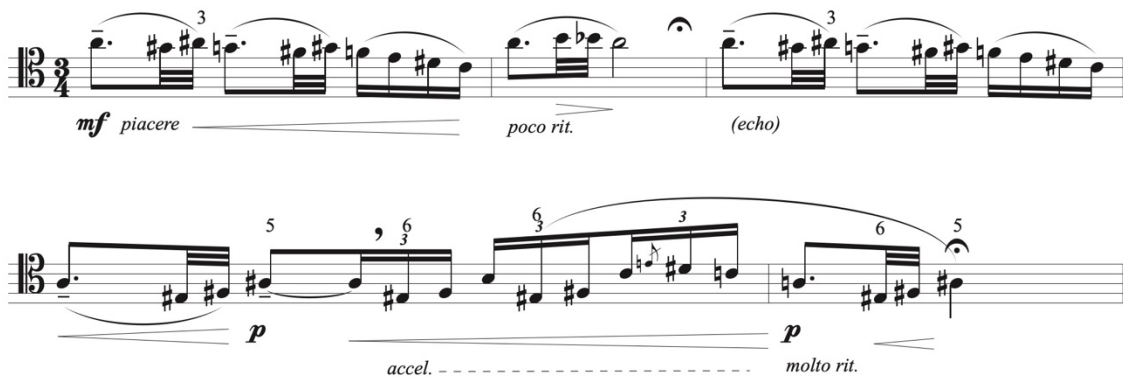
Figure 16: *Syrinx*, mm. 1-5



The student's goal should be to create an aural scene reminiscent of nymphs playing on the water. This can be achieved by judicious use of rubato as well as dynamic movement within the context of *mezzo forte*. The use of alternate positions is not

imperative, but it does allow the student to perform slurred passages in such a way that mimics the capabilities of the flute. Figure 17 presents an interpretation with the emphasis on dynamic variation and musical pacing.

Figure 17: *Syrinx*, mm. 1-5, Interpreted



The D5 in m. 8 is one specific example where the student must consider the dynamic capabilities of the flute relative to that of the trombone. On most trombones the D5 is naturally flat and will likely require the student to adjust the pitch up at the lips. The student should aim to preserve the overall dynamic scheme but should not feel as though the *piano* dynamic supersedes the importance of security, tone, and intonation.

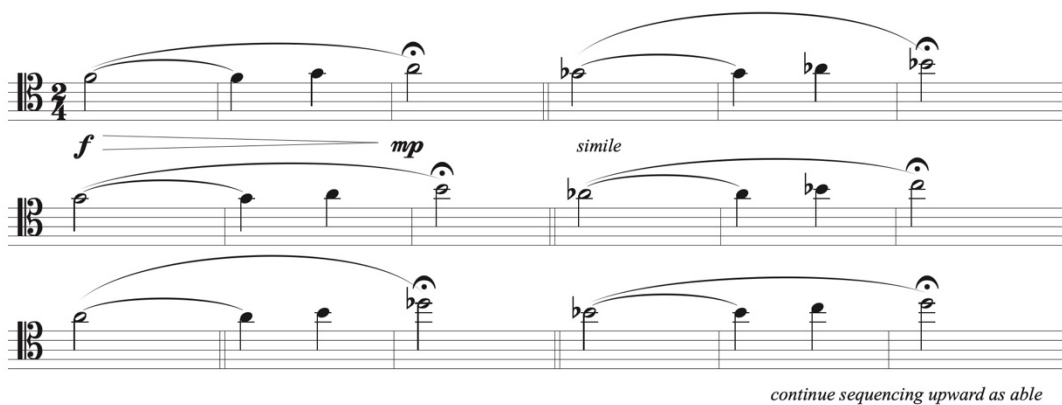
There are many ways to practice security in the upper register, but this particular passage might be best practiced by starting in a comfortable range and sequencing up by half-step beyond the written range as shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18: *Syrinx*, Upper Register Extension



If the student has access to the notes in the upper register but struggles with dynamic control, he or she should practice by progressively lowering the dynamic after establishing proper playing mechanics by performing at a comfortable volume. One example of proper dynamic training can be found in Figure 19.

Figure 19: *Syrinx*, Upper Register Dynamic Control



The mordent in m.23 and 24 would originally be played as a trill between the two eighth notes beginning on the upper neighbor. A true trill between the printed notes is not possible on the trombone and as such the ornament must be altered in such a fashion that

fits the capabilities of the instrument. The student could play a mordent just as Mr. Sauer has notated. For the purpose of this study, the writer has recorded the work just as Mr. Sauer notated it. More advanced students could attempt to play a trill as closely as the trombone is able, as the passage is rendered in the original manuscript. The student should use alternate positions to create a natural slur, then move between the two notes as quickly as possible before transitioning to a lip trill. The technique of creating the aural illusion of a trill is a skill advanced trombonists must learn in their studies to enable them to effectively perform works from the Baroque and Classic eras. Figure 20 shows the original notation, followed by Mr. Sauer's notation.

Figure 20: *Syrinx*, mm. 23-24, Mordent Notation Example



Mr. Sauer transposed *Syrinx* down to C from its original key of Db. This small transposition makes the work much more idiomatic, but several specific challenges to security still remain for the upper register. The work briefly ascends to Eb5 and remains in the upper register for extended periods of time. The student must practice in a smart and efficient manner and avoid developing bad habits while attempting to play in the upper register for extended periods of time. If needed, the student should develop playing skills in the upper register prior to attempting this work.

A convincing performance of *Syrinx* demands that the performer understand the French terms used in the score. One unusual Italian term, *perdendosi*, appears in the score, and means “dying away.” Since French expressive text is not used regularly in the trombone repertoire, a table is provided to aid in translation (see Figure 21, below).

Figure 21: *Syrinx*, French Translations

French Term	Translation
Très modéré	very moderately
Retenu	held back
Un peu mouvementé (mais très peu)	a little movement (but very little)
Cédez	slow down
Au Mouvemente	return to original tempo
En retenant jusqu'à la fin	holding back until the end
marqué	marked

Syrinx would fit well in an applied curriculum for very advanced undergraduate students or graduate students. The work presents no significant technical challenges in isolation, but when the difficulties are stacked as they are, this work becomes quite challenging for even highly advanced performers.

CHAPTER 4

SINFONIA IN F

Program Notes

Giovanni Battista Pergolesi (1710-1736) was an Italian composer of the Baroque era. Pergolesi died at the young age of twenty-six and did not enjoy much notoriety outside of Rome and Naples. Most of Pergolesi's recognition as a composer came well after his death, and numerous attempts by musical forgers to attribute works to Pergolesi lend some uncertainty to the authenticity of certain compositions, including the *Sinfonia in F*. Igor Stravinsky would later borrow themes from the *Sinfonia* for his ballet *Pulcinella*.¹²

Of all the works discussed in this document, the *Sinfonia in F* is the closest to being considered standard repertoire for the trombone. Mr. Sauer recorded the work in 1976 on an LP released by Crystal Records, but that recording is no longer available. Mr. Sauer published an updated edition in 2017 that corrects errata and includes minor changes to the last movement. The publisher includes the original published version, but for the purpose of this guide the newest edition is used.

Pedagogical Considerations

Mr. Sauer includes the original dynamics, which should be interpreted as if they were written for the trombone. The dynamic range of the cello, for which this work was

¹² Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Giovanni Battista Pergolesi." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. March 12, 2019. Accessed May 07, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Giovanni-Battista-Pergolesi>.

originally written, is considerably narrower than the trombone's range, and as such Pergolesi uses a wide range of dynamic markings. The softer sections should still be full and contain energy in the articulations. The louder dynamics should be considered within the context of the late Baroque era and played with an energetic quality of sound without being heavy or harsh. Mr. Sauer has regularly commented in his teaching about achieving a quality of sound rather than a quantity of sound when interpreting dynamic markings. The *Sinfonia* could not be a more appropriate example of Mr. Sauer's thoughts on dynamics. When performers encounter *piano* or *pianissimo* dynamics, they should strive for a soft quality of sound that still allows them to execute the passage with a resonant sound and effortless technique. When performing passages marked *forte*, the student should play with a full sound but should not sacrifice style for volume.

The opening movement is marked *Andante comodo*, but the tempo should be set using the sixty-fourth notes found in m. 8. The movement should be played in eight, or a subdivided four with an emphasis on sounding settled and unhurried. Though the work is performed in a subdivided manner, the student should still maintain the integrity of the strong and weak beats. For example, the second note in each eighth note pair should still be performed as slightly weaker in quality. Adhering to these basic musical principles keeps the musical momentum moving forward.

This work provides several opportunities to educate the student on Baroque ornamentation. In the opening movement, a mordent to the lower neighbor is indicated. The student should be aware of the notation of a mordent to the upper versus the lower neighbor. Mr. Sauer has adhered to tradition by indicating a mordent to a lower neighbor

with the presence of a vertical line through the mordent symbol. As trombonists do not often deal with ornamentation, the written notation and performance suggestion for both types of mordents have been included in Figure 22.

Figure 22: *Sinfonia in F*, Mordent Interpretation



The second movement, *allegro con brio*, should be played at a tempo that is stately and technically manageable by the student. To preserve the tempo relationships between movements, the student should look ahead to the final *allegro* movement and choose a maintainable tempo. The most common pitfall when students perform this work is selecting a tempo that is too fast to maintain for the duration of the movement.

Stylistically, the second movement should be felt in a large one to preserve a strong first beat and to avoid the tendency for the work to become heavy and lack buoyancy on the articulations. Dynamically, gesture should be more important than the exact dynamic marking specified. The movement itself is very repetitive, with the expressive element relying primarily on echo more than the sweeping crescendo or decrescendo. It is important to keep in mind that the cello is able to perform these passages with much more technical ease than is possible on the trombone. Often, in an attempt to adhere strictly to printed dynamics, the technical passages are unconvincing and sound difficult.

The *Adagio* movement presents an opportunity for students to explore their expressive playing abilities. The student should immediately work out the ornamentation found throughout the movement. The student should not feel compelled to perform the sixty-fourth notes in a perfect mathematical ratio relative to the surrounding notes. Some stretching of the time is permitted to avoid any harsh or uncharacteristic gestures, given the expressive nature of this movement and the technical limitations of the trombone.

This movement is very taxing physically, especially with all that surrounds it, so students should pace themselves musically to ensure that they are not overly fatigued in the final measures. There are many methods to achieve greater endurance on the trombone, but in this instance the student should begin by working on each movement in isolation, and then begin performing each movement in sequence to develop the necessary endurance to perform the piece through entirely without fatiguing to such a degree that the music suffers. Ideally, prior to a performance the student should be able to perform the entire work through twice in succession.

The *Allegro* is an important piece in the trombone repertoire because Igor Stravinsky borrowed this theme in his *Pulcinella Suite*. The theme appears there exactly as it is presented in the *Sinfonia*. Any students who advance to such a degree that they begin taking orchestral auditions will certainly encounter the *Pulnicella Suite* at some point in their preparation. Preparing the *Sinfonia in F* creates performance context around the *Pulcinella* excerpt and helps foster a global understanding of the orchestral trombone repertoire.

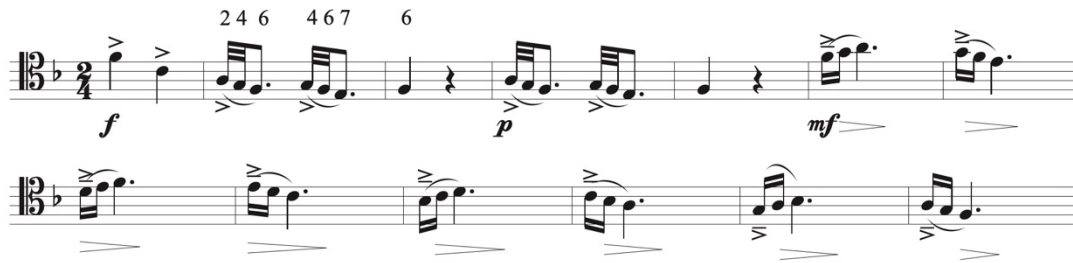
When performed at the proper tempo, the thirty-second notes in the opening phrase can be very problematic. Keeping a light style in the presence of a significant technical challenge is best achieved by using a doodle tongue paired with alternate positions. Using the standard positions results in turbulent slide motions that become noticeable in the sound.

It is very common for the perceived downbeat to shift by an eighth note in the second phrase, resulting in the upbeats beginning to sound as though they are the downbeats. The student should work to place weight on the downbeat of each measure without being punchy or breaking the lighter style. Often, achieving weight on the downbeat is best achieved by encouraging the student to remove weight from the remainder of the measure as if the entire measure has a decrescendo across the bar line. Figure 23 shows how the part appears from the publisher, and Figure 24 illustrates how the performer must perform the part to ensure a light style in the presence of technical challenges and to preserve the integrity of the downbeat.

Figure 23: *Sinfonia in F, Allegro*



Figure 24: *Sinfonia in F, Allegro*, Edited



The sixteenth note triplets after rehearsal letter I are another example in the trombone repertoire where a doodle tongue is a valuable skill. While the technique is commonly associated with the jazz idiom, it is appropriate to use it in the classical idiom when both agility and smoothness are required. Figure 25 presents one possible exercise for developing the doodle tongue. Special attention should be given to the “dle” syllable because frequently it is weak relative to the “doo” syllable. Should the student have difficulty with the doodle tongue, using a very light multiple tongue is the next most desirable technique. The student should use the lightest “d” and “g” syllables possible.

Figure 25: Doodle Tonguing Exercises

The image shows four staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, all in bass clef. The first staff contains vocalizations: "dū dle dū", "dū dle dū dle dū", and "similie...". The notes are quarter notes and eighth notes. The second staff continues with eighth-note patterns. The third staff features triplets of eighth notes with the vocalizations "dū dle a dū" and "similie...". The fourth staff continues with triplet eighth-note patterns.

Once the doodle tongue has been developed adequately, it can then be applied in context as presented in Figure 26.

Figure 26: *Sinfonia in F, Allegro*, mm. 48-49

The image shows two staves of musical notation in 2/4 time, both in bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). Each staff contains a triplet of eighth notes followed by a quarter rest. The vocalizations "dū dle a dū" are written above the first staff, and "dū dle a dū" is written above the second staff.

The tempo for this movement should be set by the thirty-second note figures as it is very easy to be overzealous when setting the tempo by the sixteenth notes and having to adjust later when the speed is simply too fast to perform the fastest notation. While this passage provides a technical showcase for the trombonist, the character must remain light and vibrant.

This work is already a staple of the jury repertoire, and it also works well as a recital piece for any level of student. This is especially true for the advancing undergraduate as it is slightly more nuanced than much of the Baroque repertoire typically performed by trombonists. Graduate students would be served well by studying this work for its value in the orchestral repertoire, but also as a recital selection that is not overly taxing yet is easily accessible to audience members who are not trombonists.

CHAPTER 5

SONATA IN B-FLAT

Program Notes

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) is one of the most recognized composers in Western music. From a very young age, Mozart showed an extraordinary talent for music. At the age of six his father, Leopold, a well-known composer and violin teacher, took him to Munich to perform at the Bavarian court. Mozart's father would go on to orchestrate an extensive tour to showcase his young prodigy. By the age of thirteen Mozart had been appointed Konzertmeister of the Salzburg court by the Archbishop.¹³

Mozart became well known in his lifetime as an opera composer and exceptional pianist. Mozart wrote no solo works for the trombone, but he did write several significant parts for the trombone in his operas and final *Requiem*. Numerous works have been transcribed for the trombone from Mozart's catalog with varying degrees of success, but the Sonata in B-flat for Bassoon and Cello is among the most successful adaptations.¹⁴

Though this work is published for bassoon and cello, music scholars today believe that the original instrumentation was for two bassoons because duos for pairs of winds

¹³ Sadie Stanley, "Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. January 23, 2019. Accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Wolfgang-Amadeus-Mozart>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

were popular in Mozart's lifetime. The Sonata in B-flat was composed in 1775, when Mozart was only nineteen years old and living in Salzburg.¹⁵

Pedagogical Considerations

The Sonata in B-flat affords teachers an opportunity to perform along with their students, or to have their students perform with one another. If the student is younger and less technically capable, the second trombone part provides an opportunity to grow without being overwhelming. In instances where the student is older or more advanced, the teacher should play the second trombone part and allow the student to develop a strong sense of musical leadership. The second trombone part would be best suited on a bass trombone to create a timbral distinction between the two voices, but with a few octave adjustments the part is easily accessible by a tenor trombone. The second trombone part was recorded using a tenor trombone on the included recording.

The most important consideration when performing this work is to balance the original instrumentation while still performing in a manner that is compelling to the listener and showcases the strengths of the trombone. Listening to recordings of the original instrumentation should be highly encouraged to learn Classical style, phrasing, and dynamic interpretation, but the role of the teacher here should be to encourage a performance that honors Mozart's original intent but also recognizes the different strengths and weaknesses of the two sets of instruments. For the purposes of this

¹⁵ "Sonata for Bassoon & Cello in B... | Details." AllMusic. Accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.allmusic.com/composition/sonata-for-bassoon-cello-in-b-flat-major-k-292-k-196c-mc0002364682>.

document, we will focus primarily on the first trombone part as the goal of this work should be to use the piece as a vehicle to spotlight the student.

The tempo of the first movement should be set based on how quickly the student can lightly articulate the short sixteenth note figures found throughout the work. Ideally, these sixteenth note passages should be performed using a very legato double tongue so that the tempo is derived musically instead of technically. If the student has not cultivated a legato double tonguing technique, that should be started immediately by having the student perform double tongued scales using the lightest “da” and “ga” syllables possible without sacrificing clarity. Emphasis should be placed on the air driving the rebound of the tongue instead of on the syllable itself. The emphasis being placed on air over tongue will become imperative when the work requires changes in dynamics from loud to soft while double tonguing. Figure 27 presents a progression of exercises to effectively train the student to develop a light legato double tongue.

Figure 27: Legato Double Tonguing Exercise

"G" Syllable Focus

1x: air only

2x: play as written

gah gah gah da ga da ga da *similie*

Airflow Focus

Repeat as necessary with attention to unintrusive articulation

d g d g d d g d g d g d *similie*

The entire movement contains only *forte* and *piano* dynamic markings, and as such the student is in control of the dynamic difference between loud and soft. This is an opportunity to recognize and be sensitive to the limited dynamic range of the cello and bassoon relative to the trombone. The trombone has limited technique relative to that of the bassoon and cello, and the student should base dynamic levels on what is musically compelling rather than on large dynamic changes. The *forte* passages should be full and

confident without becoming heavy or percussive. The *piano* passages are usually an echo, or used to allow the second voice to be heard for a moment. Due to the nimble nature of the opening movement, the student should strive for a subdued *piano* that does not allow the sound to become thin or unsupported.

The first movement allows the student to explore how to most effectively interpret Classical ornamentation. In the opening phrase, there are several instances where the student should use the f-attachment to facilitate the execution of quick turns mixed with natural slurs, as illustrated in Figure 28.

FIGURE 28: Sonata in B-flat, *Allegro*, mm. 1-10, Edited

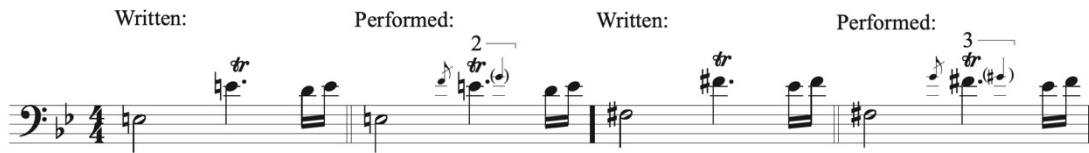


The trills found in measure twenty-six and fifty-seven present an obstacle for the trombonist as traditionally these would begin on the upper neighbor.¹⁶ There exists no possibility for the trombonist to perform either of the trills in the first movement as lip trills. As such, the trombonist should perform the trill by starting on the upper neighbor, then alternate between the next closest position that would create a natural slur. While this method results in a trill that is not a true half-step, it is the most desirable method

¹⁶ Rick Wilson, "The Trill in the Classical Period (1750–1820)." Historical Flutes Page. Accessed May 13, 2019. <http://www.oldflutes.com/articles/classicaltrill/index.htm>.

because other methods are less musically convincing. One possible method is presented in Figure 29.

Figure 29: Sonata in B-flat, *Allegro*, Trill Example



The second movement presents few technical challenges for the trombonist but provides a good vehicle for developing musical independence from the lower voice. Mr. Sauer has included numerous musical directions of his own not found in the original score. He has simplified several ornamentations to make them more accessible to the trombonist. Mozart makes use only of *forte* and *piano* dynamic markings, but the student should be encouraged to move around within that dynamic structure to create a compelling musical statement that engages the listener. Mr. Sauer has included several passages marked *mezzo forte*, which should encourage the student to adopt a quality of sound that is full and expressive but does not become labored or heavy due to the player striving to play loudly.

The final *Rondo* provides for an excellent display of technique for the developing trombonist because it sounds much more difficult to play than it is. Mr. Sauer has written out or simplified several of the ornaments from the original score. For instance, in the second measure in the original version, the performer would see a mordent, but Mr. Sauer has written out the ornamentation as it would be played. In the second measure, the student should play the F4 in fourth position to facilitate a natural slur, and take

advantage of the use of the f-attachment or alternate positions elsewhere to facilitate a light and effortless performance of the ornamentation. For instance, in m. 19, the student could use the f-attachment to play the entire measure to create a very smooth slur similar to that for the bassoon as illustrated in Figure 30.

Figure 30: Sonata in B-flat, *Rondo*, m. 19



Due to this being the final movement, the tendency is to try and perform this work as a finale. However, the student should not try to create artificial intensity or energy by performing this movement too quickly. Ideally, it should be performed at a tempo only slightly faster than that of the first movement.

This work fits well in an undergraduate curriculum as a duet between students or as a teaching vehicle for the teacher and student. The Trombone 1 part is technically challenging enough to be appropriate for advanced undergraduates or graduate students. The Trombone 2 part is simple enough to be played by lower level undergraduates.

CHAPTER 6

THE NIGHTINGALE

Program Notes

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921) was a prominent French composer known most notably for his opera *Samson et Delila* and his Symphony No. 3 (Organ). The latter is his most frequently performed work.¹⁷ Saint-Saëns was actively composing throughout the lifetime of Richard Wagner, but he remained largely unaffected by Wagner's influence. Instead, he opted to adhere to the more conservative French model, that of upholding form and polish as his focus.¹⁸

Saint-Saëns studied organ and composition at the Paris Conservatory and held church organist positions for much of his life. He also taught for a short time at the Niedermeyer school in Paris. Among trombonists, he is best known for his work for trombone and piano, *Cavatine*, which has become part of the standard repertoire, and his Symphony No. 3 (Organ), which contains an extended trio solo in the first trombone part. *The Nightingale* was written in 1902 for solo soprano as incidental music to his play *Parysatis*. Mr. Sauer adheres to the original written key of Bb, which is very idiomatic for the trombone.¹⁹

¹⁷ Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Camille Saint-Saëns." *Encyclopædia Britannica*. December 12, 2018. Accessed May 13, 2019. <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Camille-Saint-Saens>.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Camille Saint-Saens, "The Nightingale (Le Rossignol) for Trombone and Piano." Cherry Classics Music. Accessed May 13, 2019. <https://cherryclassics.com/products/2501>.

Pedagogical Considerations

This work is appropriate for undergraduates as well as graduate students. After establishing solid playing fundamentals, this piece would be a good choice for younger players performing in an area recital or masterclass as the work is not long and does not require much time spent rehearsing with a pianist. For more advanced players, this work would fit well in a degree recital as a buffer between larger works or as a musical change of pace. In an applied setting, the work highlights the necessity for preparing scalular passages with a legato tongue as well as confident and secure articulations in the upper register. In an applied context, this would be an appropriate work for the student who needs practice breaking away from the page and from a completely literal interpretation of rhythm.

The Nightingale is an excellent work to study independent timing, pacing, and musical gesture. The only technical difficulties this work presents are in the areas of the upper register as well as the long, cascading scale passages. The student should have a strong D5 to perform this work, as well as general technical proficiency due to the long cascading lines. It would serve the student well to perform from the score as the spatial layout encourages the performer to play leisurely, as a singer would.

The student should not try to retain a strictly mathematical relationship between all note values as the efficacy of this work is centered around conjuring a bird call found in the wild. The entire work is much like a cadenza, with piano rolls filling each call. The

opening statement should serve as the main musical call. When each gesture is repeated later in the work, the student should find a way to make each repetition unique in some way. For example, the thirty-second note gesture is repeated three times. Each time the gesture is repeated, the ending dynamic should grow slightly.

Learning to mimic the human voice is a lifelong pursuit for trombonists. For this work, the student should practice the piece using no articulation at all for the tongue. Traditionally, this would be sung to the vowel “ah”, and thus devoid of any vocal articulation created by consonant vowels. Eliminating articulation altogether will encourage the student to focus on a consistent tone quality and avoid having the tongue interfere with the sound. Eventually, the student should begin practicing each passage with the lightest articulation possible. It is also entirely appropriate to use purposeful *portamento* throughout the work to closely mimic the human voice. This *portamento* should never be a result of haphazard slide technique and should always be a purposeful expressive tool used for effect.

This work is very taxing from the perspective of endurance, and while technically it does not pose significant problems, it may require the student to build endurance in preparation for its study and performance. It would be wise to prepare for this work by repeating short scalar passages until the lips become fatigued. After several repetitions, the student should wait until later in the day or the next day to fatigue the lip again. Because this piece requires extended periods in the middle-upper register followed by a descent into the middle-low register, the student should model endurance practice around

the same idea. See Figure 31 for examples of how trombonists can train for endurance and the ability to remain supple at the same time.

Figure 31: *The Nightingale*, Endurance Practice



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APPENDIX A
COMPACT DISC TRACK LISTING

***Romanian Folk Dances* – Béla Bartók**

1. “Jocul ce bâta” (Stick Dance)
2. “Brâul” (Sash Dance)
3. “Pe loc” (Standing Still)
4. “Buciumeana” (Horn Dance)
5. “Poargâ Românească” (Romanian Polka)
6. “Maruntelul” (Fast Dance)

***Syrinx* – Claude Debussy**

7. Syrinx

***Sinfonia in F* – Giovanni Battista Pergolesi**

8. Andante comodo
9. Allegro con brio
10. Adagio
11. Allegro

***Sonata in Bb* – Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**

12. Allegro
13. Andante
14. Allegro

***The Nightingale* – Camille Saint-Saens**

15. The Nightingale

APPENDIX B

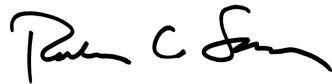
REPRODUCTION AND RECORDING PERMISSIONS

June 17, 2019

TO: Joshua Bledsoe

FROM: Ralph Sauer

You have my permission to record and copy any of my arrangements that are necessary for your doctoral project.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph Sauer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and a distinct "S" at the end.