

**A
"SINGING"
APPROACH
TO THE TROMBONE
(and other Brass)**

1995 Revised Edition



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BREATHING

As for breathing, always remember *two basic things*: (1) SIT TALL and (2) SUCK AIR from the mouth, *not* the body. This will help to realize and use the full lung capacity. Several exercises designed to loosen and relax the breathing apparatus can be found on page 35.

BUZZING THE MOUTHPIECE

Mouthpiece buzzing is a very important part of playing the trombone, or any other brass instrument. It allows the player to produce music with the lips (singing with the lips as if they were vocal cords) without having to deal with any of the technical problems associated with the trombone itself. After practicing the mouthpiece enough so that buzzing is fairly easy, it is important that the player spend most of his mouthpiece time buzzing the actual music to be played — Rochut etudes, ballads, etc., as well as nursery rhyme tunes that can be played (sung) off the top of the head.

To begin mouthpiece practice, buzz first in the middle range, and extend in both directions. Make the high and low registers sound as free and easy as the middle range. Remember that the buzz is resonant like the human voice. Do not force the lips to buzz too high or loud -- control the buzz with the speed of the air. Always strive for a focused, centered, free sounding buzz in all registers. Using a lip vibrato helps to focus the sound. As soon as the mouthpiece is put into the horn, the resistance of the buzz will change. This is not of major concern and certainly not enough to *not* buzz the mouthpiece. Remember -- it is the approach that is important.

CONCEPT OF SOUND

Imagine, in the depths of your mind, what you think the greatest trombone sound in the world would be like. Use adjectives to describe this sound -- beautiful, singing, fat, clear, rich, full, smooth, round, dark, centered, warm, etc.

Play the following exercise:

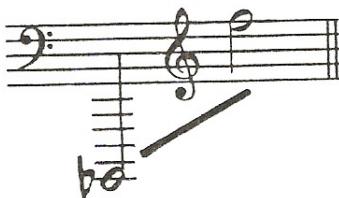
1



mf - f

A musical staff in 2/4 time, bass clef, with two measures. The first measure has a dotted half note followed by a rest. The second measure has another dotted half note followed by a rest. The dynamic marking *mf - f* is centered below the staff.

Starting with the middle F, try to hear your "imaginary sound" playing that note. Then, recreate on the trombone the sound you hear in your head. While playing the note, do not try to listen and change the sound of the note as it is being produced. Simply concentrate on the sound you hear in your head. Then, during the rest, recall what the note you played sounded like, and repeat the note, trying to make it sound closer to the sound in your head. Continue with an E, the G♭, alternating up and down by half steps until the entire range of the instrument is covered.



A diagram illustrating the range of a brass instrument. It shows a bass clef staff at the bottom and a treble clef staff above it. A vertical line of tick marks represents the instrument's range, starting from the bottom note (B♭) and extending upwards through several half-step intervals to the top note (F). A diagonal line connects the top note (F) back down to the bottom note (B♭), forming a loop that indicates the continuous nature of the instrument's range.

Remember -- while working on this and all of the following exercises, that the END PRODUCT (beautiful sound and music) is to be the predominant thought while playing. CONCENTRATE ON EVERY NOTE!

2



mf - f

A musical staff in common time, bass clef, with three measures. The first measure consists of six eighth notes: a B♭, followed by a G, then a B, then a G, then a B, and finally an A. The second measure consists of six eighth notes: a B, followed by a G, then a B, then a G, then a B, and finally an A. The third measure consists of six eighth notes: a B, followed by a G, then a B, then a G, then a B, and finally an A. The dynamic marking *mf - f* is centered below the staff.

3



A musical staff in 3/4 time, bass clef, with three measures. The first measure consists of six eighth notes: a B♭, followed by a G, then a B, then a G, then a B, and finally an A. The second measure consists of six eighth notes: a B, followed by a G, then a B, then a G, then a B, and finally an A. The third measure consists of six eighth notes: a B, followed by a G, then a B, then a G, then a B, and finally an A. The dynamic marking *mf - f* is centered below the staff.

Cover the entire range of the instrument.

The breathing tube may be used in the rest to aid in keeping the throat as open as possible. Use the air as fuel to continue the sound. Make each note smoother and richer than the last. Articulate these with a "dah" or "doo" syllable, when the tongue is needed. Repeat the exercise until the sound produced is the same as the imaginary sound in your head.



Once again, use the imaginary "greatest trombone sound" as a goal to aim for. Smoothness in the change of note is of importance here. Try to hear the trombone sound in your head "singing" the exercises as you play them. Remember to CONCENTRATE on each and every note! Repeat the exercises in all keys (major and minor) and in all octaves.

Moderately slow

6

mf/f

The key to this one is to always suck in the same amount of air during the silences, i.e. fill up over the length of 4 beats, over 3, over 2, and over 1.

The following studies are a continuation of singing one note at a time. Use **t** for the first note and then move down all positions as needed.

1 2 1 2 3 1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 5

1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 etc.

Remember—Sing from one note to the next without any breaks!

1 2 1 2 3 1 2 3 4 etc.

5 6 7

7 6 5 4 3 2 1 4 5 6 7

The musical score consists of six staves of handwritten music for bassoon. Each staff begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one flat. The music features various slurs, grace notes, and partial numbers (1 through 7) indicating specific partials to play. Dynamic markings such as 'v' and 'vv' are also present. The notation is fluid and expressive, typical of a performance guide or practice sheet.

Note:

Many possibilities exist. Try starting on different partials and positions, always slurring with a GREAT sound.

This exercise should be played without the aid of the tongue. Use a "ho" syllable to articulate each note. Breathe through the tube to keep the throat open. This exercise aids the lips to vibrate the desired pitch more readily. When playing, the sound should be even and free of "swells" and "wahs". Buzz the mouthpiece when necessary.

8



A musical staff in bass clef, 3/4 time, and a key signature of one flat. It starts with a dynamic 'f' and consists of six notes: a quarter note followed by a eighth note, a sixteenth note, a eighth note, a sixteenth note, and a eighth note. The notes are connected by vertical stems.

9



A musical staff in bass clef, common time, and a key signature of one sharp. It consists of two measures separated by a double bar line. The first measure contains six notes: a quarter note followed by a eighth note, a sixteenth note, a eighth note, a sixteenth note, and a eighth note. The second measure also contains six notes: a quarter note followed by a eighth note, a sixteenth note, a eighth note, a sixteenth note, and a eighth note. The notes are connected by vertical stems.

Cover the entire range of the instrument.

While playing these exercises, strive to maintain the same basic embouchure setting. All that changes during a ~~long note~~ or ~~short note~~ should be the speed of the air. To play louder, simply speed up the airstream. If, for example, the air for a ***pp*** note travels at 5 mph., the air for a ***ff*** note might travel at 60 mph. The airstream must, however, remain very intense at the lower speeds. When playing these exercises, try to achieve the effect of a stereo's volume being slowly turned up and down. Play each of these over the entire range of the trombone.

Handwritten musical score for page 10, measures 1-5. The score is in bass clef, 5/4 time, and consists of five measures. Measures 1-4 begin with a bass note followed by a dotted half note. Measure 1 has a dynamic of *p*, measure 2 has *mp*, measure 3 has *mf*, and measure 4 has *f*. Measure 5 begins with a bass note followed by a dotted half note, with a dynamic of *ff*. Measures 1-4 have a crescendo line under them, and measures 5-6 have a decrescendo line under them. Measures 1-4 end with a *ff* dynamic, and measures 5-6 end with a *ppppp* dynamic.

A musical staff with a bass clef at the beginning. The staff consists of five horizontal lines and four spaces. Above the staff, the number "11" is written in a large, bold, black font.

A handwritten musical score for bassoon, page 12. The score consists of two staves. The top staff shows dynamic markings: ***ff***, a crescendo line leading to ***p***, a decrescendo line leading to ***ff***. The bottom staff begins with a bass clef, a key signature of one flat, and a tempo marking of **12**. It features a series of eighth-note pairs with slurs, each pair consisting of a low note followed by a higher note. The dynamics for this staff are: ***p***, ***ff***, ***fff***, ***ff***, ***p***, and ***ppp***.

13

f

Strive to take as quick and relaxed a breath as possible.

$\text{♩} = 50$ Slow, beautiful even sounds

14

A musical score for page 14, featuring a single melodic line on a bass clef staff. The measure consists of ten eighth-note pairs, each pair connected by a vertical bar. The dynamics are indicated below the staff: *p*, *p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*, *ff*, *fff*, *ff*, and *f*. The measure ends with a repeat sign and a double bar line.

Keep the same beautiful sound!

Slow tempo with a beautiful sound

15

Musical score for bassoon, measures 1-4. The score consists of four measures. Measure 1: Bass clef, key signature of B-flat major (two flats), dynamic *mp*. Measure 2: Bass clef, key signature of B-flat major (two flats), dynamic *mp*. Measure 3: Bass clef, key signature of B-flat major (two flats), dynamic *p*. Measure 4: Bass clef, key signature of B-flat major (two flats), dynamic *p*.

Do these on many different notes in all registers

This exercise should be thought of as being one beautiful sound followed by another, glued cleanly together, and riding on top of a stream of steadily flowing air.

16



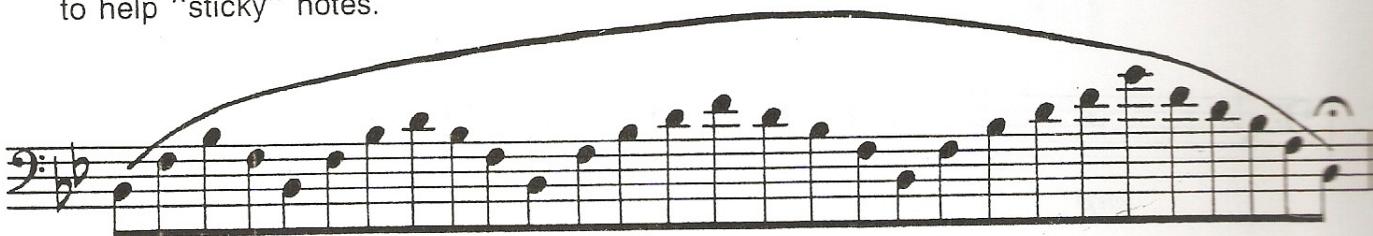
Do this exercise in all keys and octaves, all dynamics (***pp - ff***).  and  may also be added. When making a crescendo, think of steadily increasing air. Relate the speed of the air to mph., as mentioned before.

Play the following exercises as indicated below. Use different variations if desired.

ARTICULATION	1 tongued	2 slurred	3 slurred	4 slurred
DIRECTION	17	17	18	18
DYNAMICS	<i>ff</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>p</i>

Be certain that the sound is even, smooth and relaxed throughout. Buzz the mouthpiece to help "sticky" notes.

17



18

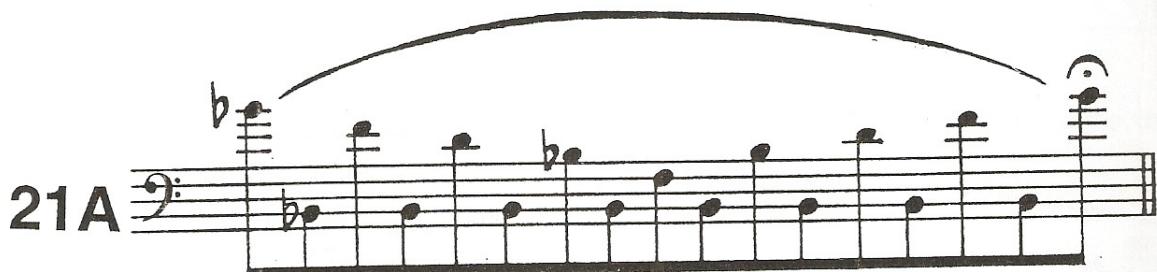
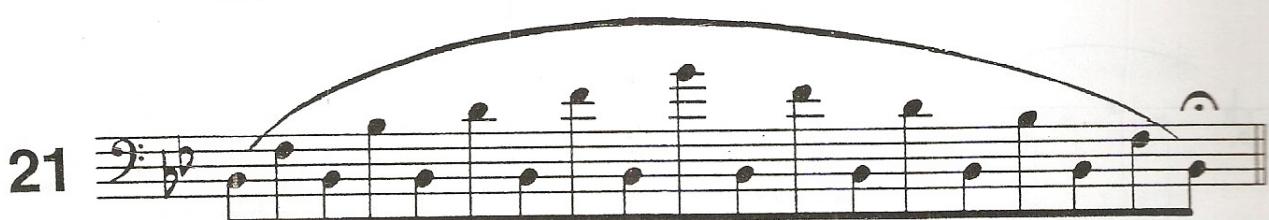
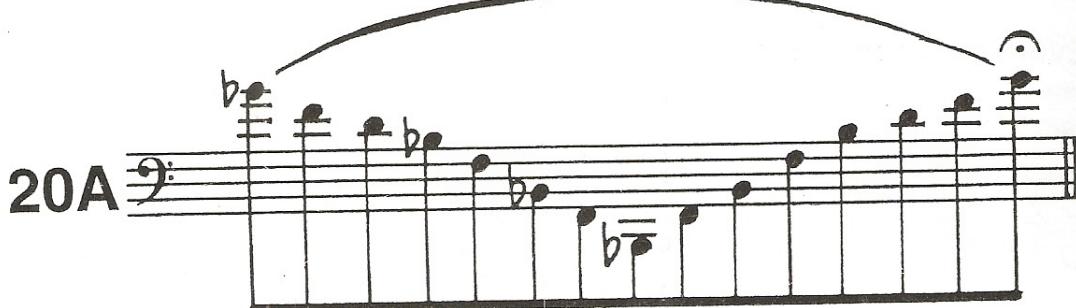
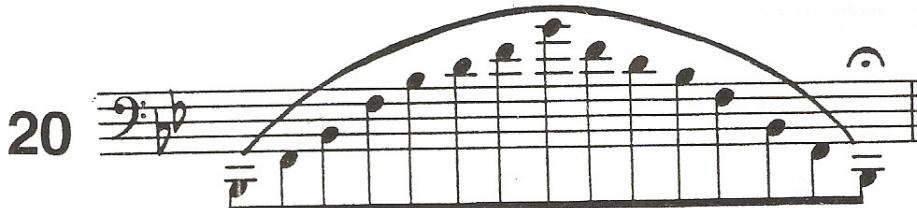


All Even, Matching Sounds

19

In all 7 positions

Play in all seven positions. Vary the articulation from liquid slur to very detached. Remember to buzz the mouthpiece when necessary.



Play in all seven positions -- both **p** and **f**.



Play this exercise without the use of the tongue (glissando), starting with a "ho" syllable.
Play softly and gently.

23

A musical staff for exercise 23. It consists of five horizontal lines. A series of small black dots representing notes starts at the bottom line and moves upwards towards the top line. A smooth, upward-curving line is drawn above the notes, spanning the entire width of the staff, indicating a glissando or smooth transition.

Play up chromatically at least to:

A continuation of the musical staff for exercise 23. It shows a similar pattern of notes moving from low to high, with a curved line above indicating a glissando or smooth transition.

Play the following exercises (with the indicated positions), tonguing only the first note of each sequence. Play each one smoothly, evenly and slowly. These may also be played down an octave. Vary the speed of the air.

24

Three staves of musical notation for exercise 24. The first staff is in common time (indicated by a '4' over a '3') and has a bass clef. The second staff is in common time and has a bass clef. The third staff is in common time and has a bass clef. Below the notes, specific tonguing instructions are written: 'T 2 V 4 V' under the first measure, '2 V 4' under the second measure, 'T 3 V 5' under the third measure, 'T #5' under the fourth measure, 'T' under the fifth measure, and 'T V' under the sixth measure.

A five-line bass clef musical staff. The staff contains various slurs and grace notes. Below the staff, several pairs of letters are written: T, V, T, 6, V, 6, T, V, V, V, V, V, T, V, V, V, V, V, and T. These likely represent fingerings or specific performance techniques.

Play this exercise both smeared (glissando) and slurred, but very loudly rather than softly.
Continue down chromatically as far as possible.

25

A musical staff in 12/8 time with a key signature of one flat. It features a series of eighth-note patterns with slurs and grace notes, similar to the exercise above but more complex.

Handwritten musical score for Exercise 24, consisting of five staves of bass clef music. The score includes various slurs and dynamic markings like 'p' (piano) and 'f' (fortissimo). Below each staff, letters T, V, 6, or 1 are written under specific notes to indicate performance techniques.

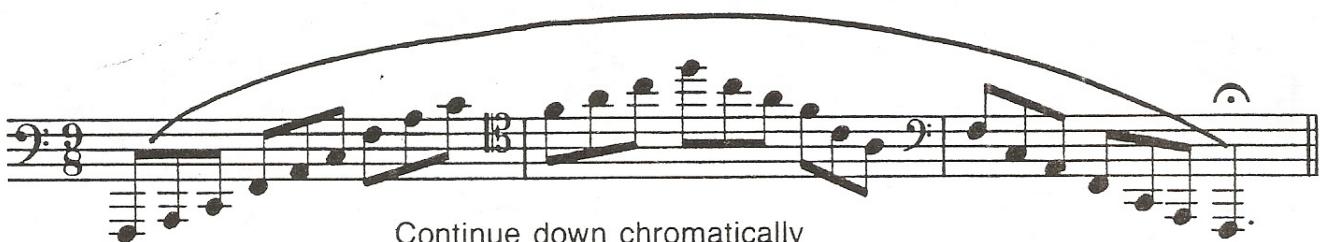
Play this exercise both smeared (glissando) and slurred, but very loudly rather than softly.
Continue down chromatically as far as possible.

25

Handwritten musical score for Exercise 25, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps. The time signature is 12/8. The score consists of two staves of music with slurs and dynamic markings.

Play this exercise both slurred and detached, **p** and **f**. Make the slurred version sound liquid smooth. The detached version should sound like a long string of identical sounding notes -- small bricks of sound.

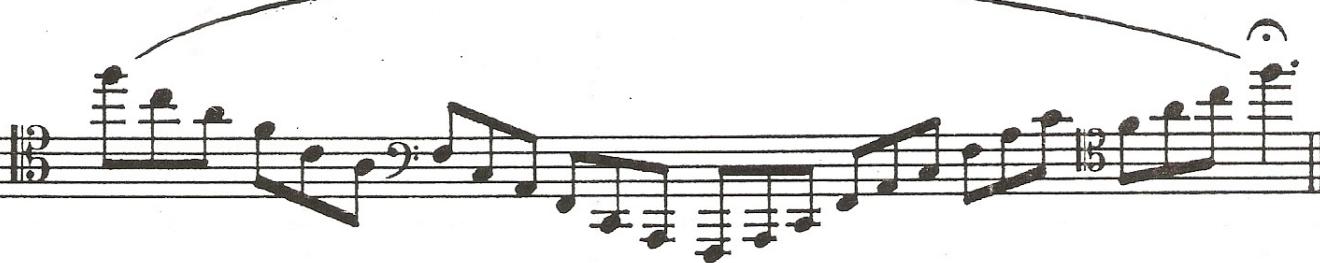
26



Musical staff for exercise 26. It consists of two measures of music in 9/8 time. The first measure starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a tempo marking of 13. The second measure starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a tempo marking of 13. The music features slurs and grace notes. A curved line above the staff indicates a melodic line.

Continue down chromatically

26A



Musical staff for exercise 26A. It consists of two measures of music in 13/8 time. The first measure starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a tempo marking of 13. The second measure starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a tempo marking of 13. The music features slurs and grace notes. A curved line above the staff indicates a melodic line.

Cover the entire range of the instrument.

These studies of intervals of a perfect fourth are invaluable for matching the sound of the upper and lower registers, as well as strengthening the upper range. Play them very smoothly and evenly. Make the upper notes sound easy and relaxed. Play both **p** and **f**.

27



Musical staff for exercise 27. It consists of two measures of music in common time. The first measure starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a tempo marking of 13. The second measure starts with a bass clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a tempo marking of 13. The music features slurs and grace notes. A curved line above the staff indicates a melodic line. The word "gliss." is written above the staff near the end of the first measure.



This one should be slow and soft, making a beautifully effortless, floating sound.

Adagio

28

3 5

pp

Do this exercise first without the tongue, smearing between each note (except where natural slurs occur.) Pay careful attention to the indicated alternate positions. Repeat the exercise, adding a very soft "doo" articulation where the smears were previously. Buzzing the exercise on the mouthpiece will help eliminate "sticky" notes. The slower, the softer, the smoother, the BETTER!

SLOW

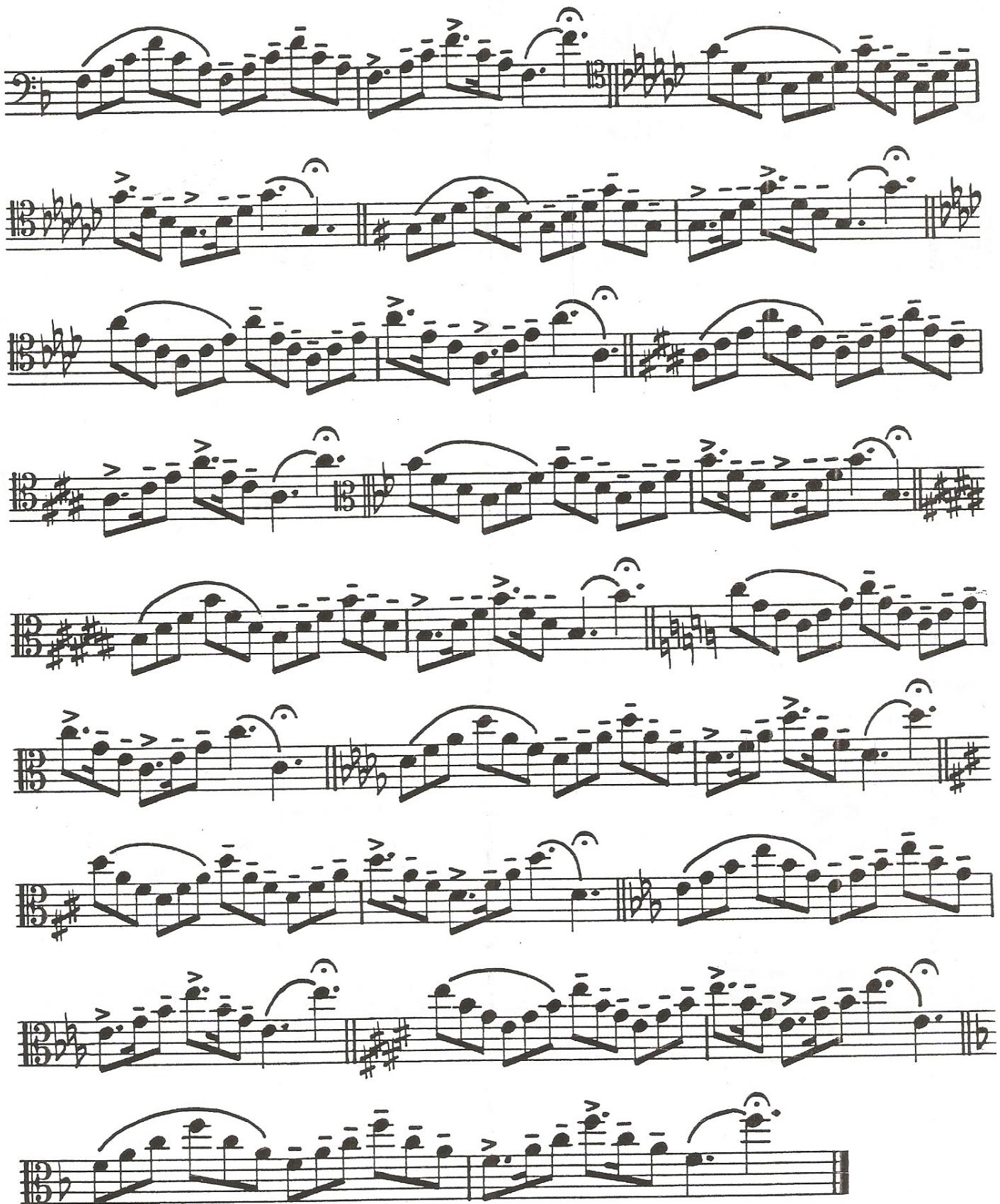
29

pp

Pay careful attention to each and every articulation in the next exercise; make sure they are consistent. Think "beautiful sound" throughout. Vary the dynamics and tempo.

30

The musical score consists of eight staves of bassoon music. The key signature starts at B-flat major (two flats) and changes to A major (no sharps or flats), then to G major (one sharp), then to F major (one flat), then back to E major (two sharps), then to D major (one sharp), then to C major (no sharps or flats), and finally to B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is mostly common time (indicated by '12'). The music is composed of eighth-note patterns with various slurs and grace notes, requiring careful articulation.



William Tell Studies

31

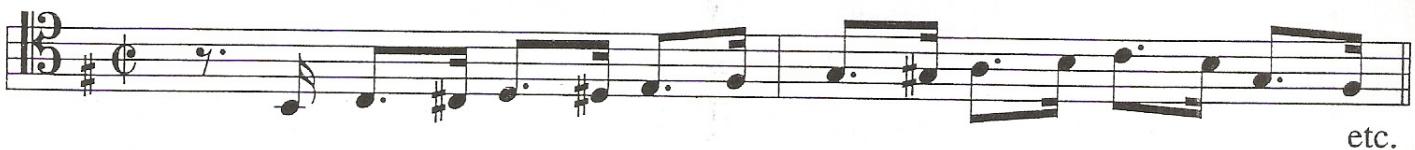
f

THEN PLAY

Do each two measures of moving notes like this. Also do variations I, II and III.

MAKE BEAUTIFUL SOUNDS

VARIATION 1

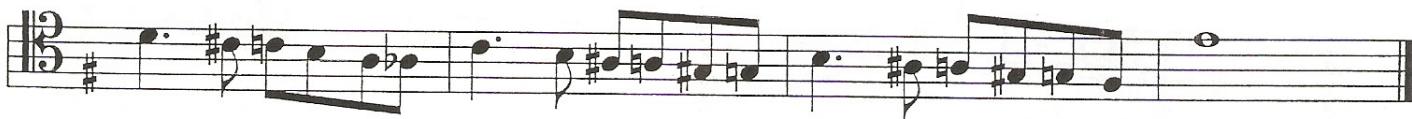


VARIATION II



To play these variations correctly, you **must** put the slide in the right place!

VARIATION III



Now play *William Tell* with the security you have gained through these studies.

CHICAGO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
 ORCHESTRA HALL
 WILLIAM TELL, OVERTURE CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604

TROMBONE III

G. ROSSINI

Andante. ($\text{d} = 54$) 23 A 24 Allegro. ($\text{d} = 108$) 30 B 8

Viol.

C

ff

D

E 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

p

p

Andante. ($\text{d} = 76$)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 5 6 7 8 4 20 F 13 G 17

p

*PPP
Fag. II.

Die mit * bezeichneten kleinen Noten werden nur dann mitgespielt, wenn die angegebenen Instrumente nicht besetzt sind.

LUCK'S MUSIC LIBRARY, 1744 SEMINOLE, DETROIT

Orch. B. 1079

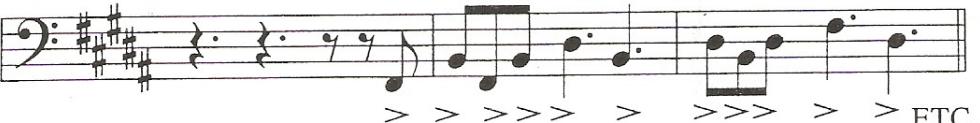
Die Walküre Studies

(1)

32 

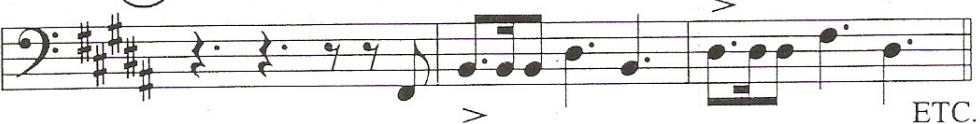
ETC.

(2)



> > >>> > >>> > > ETC.

(3)



> ETC.

(4)



> ETC.

Kill the wab-bit

(5)



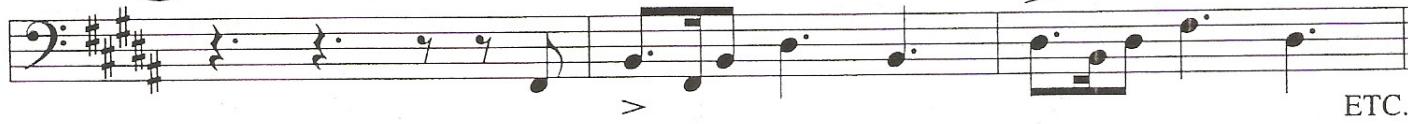
> ETC.

(6)



> ETC.

(7) AS IS !



> ETC.

These (of course) should be done up an octave as well.

Play *pp* through *ff*

The Ride

Wagner

A musical score for 'The Ride' by Wagner, consisting of five staves of bass clef music. The score is in 9/8 time. The first staff begins with a dynamic marking 'ff'. The second staff begins with a dynamic marking 'ff'. The third staff begins with a dynamic marking 'ff'. The fourth staff begins with a dynamic marking 'ff'. The fifth staff concludes with a dynamic marking 'ff'.

Zarathustra Study

33

The score consists of eight staves of handwritten musical notation for bassoon or double bass. The key signature changes frequently between staves, including major keys like G major and C major, and minor keys like A minor and E minor. The time signature is mostly common time (indicated by '3'). Dynamics are marked with 'ff' (fortissimo) at the beginning of each staff. Measure numbers 6 and 5 are indicated above the fourth and fifth staves respectively. The music features continuous eighth-note patterns with grace notes and slurs. The score is presented on five-line staff paper.

Further orchestral studies will be published separately soon.