

TBZ Monthly

A new monthly content service from Brad Edwards
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Welcome!

Here is the next issue. Thank you to everyone who has subscribed so far. I'm always looking for ways to connect with trombonists and I love having the opportunity to share with people in a way I hope will provide benefit. If you are getting this pdf without having subscribed and would like to subscribe to future issues, simply [follow this link](#).

Chances are this little digital publication will evolve over time. If there's something you'd like to see included, please reach out to me: brad.edwards6251@gmail.com. (IG: [@brad edwards trombone](#))

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A Pretty Good Melody

This is an adaptation of a melody from a new book I'm writing. Notice that the beat equals an 8th note.

Larghetto (♩ = c. 72)

pp
ff
p
pp
mf

Larghetto (♩ = c. 72)

pp
ff
p
pp
mf

Larghetto (♩ = c. 72)

pp

ff

p

pp

mf

Larghetto (♩ = c. 72)

pp

ff

p

pp

mf

A Useful Lip Slur

February 2023

This is useful for slide speed and accuracy. Listen to your tuning on the unisons.

The first staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingerings: 1, b4, 2, b5, 1, b4. The second staff shows: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingerings: 1, 6, 1. The third staff shows: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingerings: 1, #5, 6. The fourth staff shows: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingerings: 2, b2, 3, b6, 2, b5. The fifth staff shows: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingerings: 6, 2, 7, 2. The sixth staff shows: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. Fingerings: #5, 2, #6, 7.

Although tenor players may shy away from this one, they should at least give it a go.

The first staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3. The second staff shows: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3.

Technique / Rhythm Builders: Multiple Tonguing

The lips don't know what you're doing with your tongue. They only know what burst of air they receive. Strive for even-sound between the two approaches. This first exercise reminds me of marching percussion warm-ups.

Four staves of music for multiple tonguing exercises in 4/4 time. Each staff contains two measures of 'T' notes followed by two measures of 'K' notes, with a repeat sign at the end of each staff.

Perhaps you've played Finlandia by Jean Sibelius? There are different ways to approach those little fanfares. I like to lead with "K" on the pick-up note. This takes some getting used to.

Three staves of music for Finlandia fanfare exercises in 3/4 time. The first staff shows "KT" and "KTKTKT" patterns. The second and third staves show "simile" markings and more complex rhythmic patterns.

Free book sample: Simply Singing for Winds

This is from the first section of the [Simply Singing for Winds](#) book, *Building a Foundation*, a collection of 30 half-page pieces in varying styles.

Originally I was thinking this might be a separate book but ultimately concluded it wasn't substantial enough on its own. Years later, I returned to this idea of short style pieces in a recent book, [60 Vignettes](#).

Enjoy!

#24. Galloping Pesante

Ride through this with excellent intonation and rhythm. It should excite the listener!

$\text{♩} = 80 - 92$

a.

b.

#24. Galloping Pesante

Ride through this with excellent intonation and rhythm. It should excite the listener!

$\bullet = 80 - 92$

a.

b.

Playing Tip: Dealing with the “Bubble Up”



I think we’ve all dealt with this. You begin your warm-up and, all of a sudden, hundreds of thoughts bubble up from the depths of your mind.

- Did I feed the cat this morning?
- What did they mean when they said that?
- How many people liked my Instagram post?

Maybe those thought bubbles are more insidious:

- I’m a fraud, why am I doing this?
- Everyone is so much better than me.
- I hate my life

As we rush through our days, our minds are generally occupied/cluttered with the task in front of us (or distracted by our phones). However, there’s just something about concentrating on playing that seems to allow these little bubbles to rise up to the surface of our consciousness.

Some people practice in front of TV to distract the mind from these thoughts. At first this may seem like a cardinal sin but I’m not ready to discount it. The mind is multi-layered and complex. If that televised stimulus quiets destructive thoughts, maybe it can work as a Band-Aid. I have been known to watch a football game while I do high-repetition shedding of a difficult lick. For me, it has worked.

If you are familiar with the concepts of the [Inner Game](#) (a favorite of mine!), then you know about this simple dichotomy: Self 1 (the talker) and Self 2 (the doer). Self 1 tends to get in the way when Self 2 is perfectly capable of doing it very well without interference, thank you.

One useful trick is to give Self 1 something to do so it doesn't meddle and doesn't bubble up distracting thoughts. This is one reason why I like to immediately invoke creativity in my warm-up. Using a relatively simple set of notes, I slowly improvise in a very relaxed way. Placing upon myself the responsibility of generating something new each time forces me to focus on my musical goal and does a marvelous job of quieting those bubbles.

Another trick: memorize short passages.

Another trick: change the phrase-groupings of the notes.

There are loads of ways to keep your mind (Self 1) interested and invested in the musical outcome. If it's interesting to you, you'll have less trouble with "bubble up."



On Teaching and Playing: Breathing Exercises

I've seen so many breathing exercises over the years. Here's a common one:

Breathe in for 4 counts. Breathe out for 4 counts.

In for 3 counts. Out for 3 counts.

In for 2 counts. Out for 2 counts. (do it twice)

In for 1 count. Out for 1 count. (do it four times)

Here's the thing, I've never been a fan of this exercise. Is it useful? Maybe but something about it just hasn't worked for me. In lessons, when a student isn't breathing deeply enough, I like to do the "invisible balloon" exercise.



***Imagine a balloon is attached to your bell.
With three deep breath cycles,
gently inflate the balloon.***

As they fill that balloon, I sometimes use my hands to demonstrate the balloon getting bigger and bigger. Inevitably, their breaths are much deeper. The key is to keep it relaxed! Right afterwards, I have them play the passage again. It's usually better.

As to breathing exercises away from the instrument, it seems to me that the most practical one might be this:

Breathe in for 1 beat. Gently blow out for 3 beats.

Then..

In for 1, out for 4.

In for 1, out for 5.

and so on.

When performing, we often don't get time to take luxurious slow inhales but we must learn to take in air quickly in a relaxed way and release slowly and gently.

A Random Thought: Following the conductor (better than nothing)

For those of you inclined to work on orchestral excerpts, you may know the value of learning a piece in the context of the recording. There are some challenges here: if you simply follow the recording, you don't know what the conductor is doing so it's harder to play along through any tempo variations. Also, you might begin to play softer so as to hear the recording (or blast the recording loudly which might lead to its own problems). Still, it's better than nothing.

There are some other good options. One is available through subscription: [Alessi Music Studios](#). Besides other great content, a subscription gives you access to The Orchestra Machine. This is a synthesized orchestra for major excerpts with Mr. Alessi counting out loud to guide you through certain spots (since you don't see the conductor). Here's a free example of the [Tuba Mirum solo](#) from the Mozart Requiem. Of course, it is a synthesized orchestra. Still, better than nothing.

Another option is the [IVASI](#) system which projects a video of a conductor as you hear the recording of the music. They sell individual mp4 downloads (and bundles of excerpts on DVD). This is a great idea but, upon using it, my students and I found a small flaw. It became apparent that the conductor is also following a recording as opposed to leading a live orchestra. Given the slight delays involved in the process, we found that following the video conductor led to us being slightly behind the recording. Admittedly we didn't test the system exhaustively so maybe this isn't an accurate impression. I do like the idea! Better than nothing.

Think of live orchestra broadcasts. A camera is likely focused on the conductor the whole time. However, in the broadcast, someone in the booth changes to other camera angles in order to deliver a satisfying final package. However, that means that there exists a recording solely focused on the conductor. Stop to think about that. You could watch a major orchestra performance and just see the conductor. Assuming the audio and video are synced well, this finally would be the ultimate solution to play your excerpts with a live orchestra. That footage must be out there...somewhere.

This of course is assuming that the conductor is, well, *competent*. I have a cynical saying about conductors:

***For every 1,000 conductors,
900 of them should never be allowed near a baton.***

***Of the remaining 100 conductors,
90 of them are minimally adequate.***

***Of the remaining 10 conductors,
9 of them are actually good.***

And one of them is actually great.

I had a recent concert where the conductor (nice guy) was definitely in the 900. Usually, I get conductors in the 90. I've had a few in the 9. Once or twice in my life, I've had the privilege to work with that one-in-a-thousand conductor.

