

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.
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A Pretty Good Melody

July 2023

I don't think I've done any fanfares for a pretty good melody. Well, let's fix that.

The musical score is written in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of eight staves of music. The key signature starts with two sharps (F# and C#) and changes to one flat (Bb) after the third staff. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets (marked with a '3'), slurs, and dynamic markings including *ff* (fortissimo), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *f* (forte), and *cresc.* (crescendo). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together in groups. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

First staff of music, treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Key signature: three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The staff contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, many with accents (>). A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present below the staff.

Second staff of music, treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Key signature: three flats. The staff continues the melodic line with triplets and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *ff* (fortissimo) below the staff.

Third staff of music, treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Key signature: three flats. The staff features more complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *ff* (fortissimo), and *f* (forte) below the staff.

Fourth staff of music, treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Key signature: three flats. The staff continues the melodic development with triplets and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *ff* (fortissimo) below the staff.

Fifth staff of music, bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Key signature: one sharp (F-sharp). The staff contains a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, many with accents (>). A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present below the staff.

Sixth staff of music, bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Key signature: one sharp. The staff continues the melodic line with triplets and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *ff* (fortissimo) below the staff.

Seventh staff of music, bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Key signature: one sharp. The staff features more complex rhythmic patterns with triplets and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *ff* (fortissimo), and *f* (forte) below the staff.

Eighth staff of music, bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Key signature: one sharp. The staff continues the melodic development with triplets and accents. Dynamic markings include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *cresc.* (crescendo), and *ff* (fortissimo) below the staff.

In high school, I didn't own a trigger. This didn't stop me from trying to play the bass trombone parts in the Lehigh University jazz band. Using my trusty King 3B, I just lipped down the "trigger" notes!

Years later, I think this 'cheat' may have helped me win my first job with the Air Force Band since the audition included both tenor and bass excerpts.

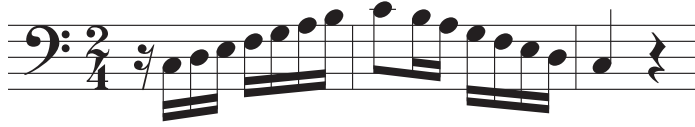
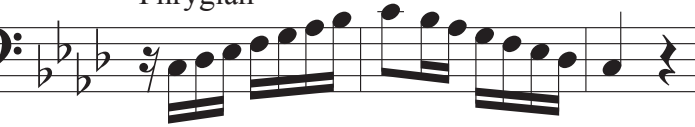
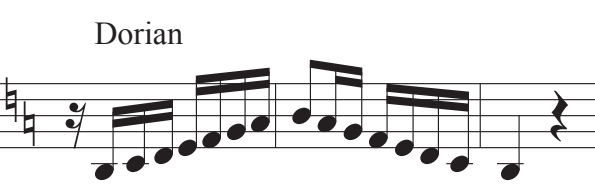
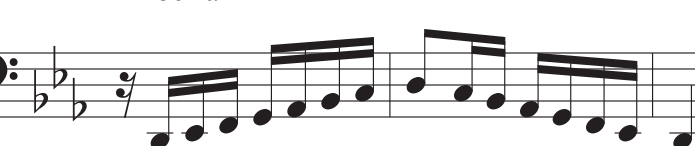
This slur toggles between bending the pitch completely with the lips, bending down and then popping the trigger for the low note, and executing a clean slur. You may find it helpful.

The image displays seven staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time, illustrating various lip bending and slurring techniques. Each staff contains three measures: a lip bend exercise, a lip bend with valve exercise, and a clean slur exercise. The exercises are numbered 1 through 7, with the final staff labeled 'lip down to pitch'.

- Staff 1:** Labeled 'lip bend, no valve' and 'clean slur'. Exercise 1 shows a slur from G2 to F2.
- Staff 2:** Exercise 2 shows a slur from E2 to D2.
- Staff 3:** Labeled 'lip bend, then valve'. Exercise 3 shows a slur from D2 to C2, with a valve symbol (V) above the slur.
- Staff 4:** Exercise 4 shows a slur from B1 to A1, with a valve symbol (V) above the slur.
- Staff 5:** Exercise 5 shows a slur from G1 to F1, with a valve symbol (V) above the slur.
- Staff 6:** Exercise 6 shows a slur from E1 to D1, with a valve symbol (V) above the slur.
- Staff 7:** Labeled 'lip down to pitch'. Exercise 7 shows a slur from C1 to B0, with a valve symbol (V) above the slur.

Technique / Rhythm Builders

Taking a scale through different modes is great for building slide accuracy!

Ionian (major) 	Dorian 
Phrygian 	Lydian 
Mixolydian 	Aeolian (minor) 
Locrian 	Ionian (major) 
Ionian (major) 	Dorian 
Phrygian 	Lydian 
Mixolydian 	Aeolian (minor) 
Locrian 	Ionian (major) 

Ionian (major) Dorian

This block shows the first two scales of the first system. The Ionian (major) scale is written in bass clef with two flats (Bb and Eb) and a 2/4 time signature. The Dorian scale is written in bass clef with three flats (Bb, Eb, and Ab) and a 2/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Phrygian Lydian

This block shows the next two scales of the first system. The Phrygian scale is written in bass clef with four sharps (F#, C#, G#, and C#) and a 2/4 time signature. The Lydian scale is written in bass clef with three flats (Bb, Eb, and Ab) and a 2/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Mixolydian Aeolian (minor)

This block shows the next two scales of the first system. The Mixolydian scale is written in bass clef with two flats (Bb and Eb) and a 2/4 time signature. The Aeolian (minor) scale is written in bass clef with three flats (Bb, Eb, and Ab) and a 2/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Locrian Ionian (major)

This block shows the last two scales of the first system. The Locrian scale is written in bass clef with four sharps (F#, C#, G#, and C#) and a 2/4 time signature. The Ionian (major) scale is written in bass clef with two flats (Bb and Eb) and a 2/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Ionian (major) Dorian

This block shows the first two scales of the second system. The Ionian (major) scale is written in bass clef with two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Dorian scale is written in bass clef with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Phrygian Lydian

This block shows the next two scales of the second system. The Phrygian scale is written in bass clef with two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Lydian scale is written in bass clef with three sharps (F#, C#, and G#) and a 3/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Mixolydian Aeolian (minor)

This block shows the next two scales of the second system. The Mixolydian scale is written in bass clef with one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Aeolian (minor) scale is written in bass clef with two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Locrian Ionian (major)

This block shows the last two scales of the second system. The Locrian scale is written in bass clef with two sharps (F# and C#) and a 3/4 time signature. The Ionian (major) scale is written in bass clef with three sharps (F#, C#, and G#) and a 3/4 time signature. Both scales are played in eighth notes.

Free Book sample: The Melodious Trombone

A new book! This one dropped on the first day of summer, June 21st. I wrote it starting in early 2023, carving out little bits of spare time.

Why?

For any book, I need to feel a compelling reason for it to exist. Here's the argument for this book: nearly everybody uses Bordogni but there are some problems with this collection of vocalises:

1. The Bordogni études go high early. By #6 they range up to A4. Also, these early leaps can be tricky if this range isn't already under your belt. Having reached this high, they don't really develop further in terms of range.
 - a. Solution: write a book that approaches range development more methodically, allowing the player to build over time. Also approach these higher notes with some care, allowing time for preceding breaths and so on.
2. The Bordogni études get into grace notes from the beginning. #1 likely wasn't written by Bordogni. Doug Yeo wrote a [thoughtful article](#) about this. These grace notes may be fine for singers but pose challenges for trombone players. What's more, if we think about our orchestral and solo repertoire, grace notes don't play a big role.
 - a. Solution: hold off on grace notes until later in the book, keep them more simple and idiomatic to the instrument.
3. The Bordogni études get into a bit of a musical rut. Taken individually, they're lovely pieces but, as a whole, they do begin to sound alike after a while. Having taught for a while, I've seen students groan about doing "yet another Rochut."
 - a. Solution: more variety of style, rhythm, and harmonies.
4. Later Bordogni études get rather long, sometimes running over two pages.
 - a. Solution: keep études to a single page.
5. Good efforts have been made to add a duet part to the Bordogni études but none of these were from the original composer. He did write some duets (not often used by trombonists but they do exist).
 - a. Solution: offer duet parts from the outset.
6. Also, I just really love writing melodies!

Here is étude #15 and its accompanying duet part. Enjoy!

The Melodious Trombone

Gemächlich (♩ = c. 72)

15. *mp*

4

8 *mf*

11 *mp*

16 *mp*

21 *cresc.* *rit.* *mp*

a tempo

25 *cresc.* *f*

Detailed description: The musical score is written for a single melodic line in bass clef, likely for a trombone. It consists of seven staves of music. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked 'Gemächlich' with a note value of a quarter note equal to approximately 72 beats per minute. The score includes various musical notations: slurs, ties, triplets (indicated by a '3' over a group of notes), and dynamic markings such as *mp* (mezzo-piano), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *cresc.* (crescendo), *rit.* (ritardando), and *f* (forte). The first staff begins with a measure number of 15. Subsequent staves are numbered 4, 8, 11, 16, 21, and 25, indicating the starting measure for each line. The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets or slurs. The dynamics range from mezzo-piano to forte, with crescendos and ritardandos used for expressive effect. The piece concludes with a final double bar line on the seventh staff.

Gemächlich = unhurried

The Melodious Trombone - Duet Part

Gemächlich (♩ = c. 72)

15. *mp*

4

8

mf *mp*

12

16

mp

20

rit. *cresc.* *mp*

a tempo

25

cresc. *f*

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in bass clef. It begins at measure 15 with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The music features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, often grouped in triplets and connected by slurs. There are several crescendo and decrescendo hairpins throughout the piece. At measure 20, there is a ritardando (*rit.*) marking followed by a crescendo (*cresc.*) leading to a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The tempo changes to 'a tempo' at measure 25, where the music becomes more rhythmic with eighth notes. The piece ends at measure 25 with a forte (*f*) dynamic and a final crescendo hairpin.

Gemächlich = unhurried

Playing Tip: More Air?

Yes, sometimes “Use more air” is the right advice. We certainly hear it enough. But there are problems lurking here.

Breathing should be relaxed: it isn’t an athletic event. *The Breathing Gym* can be useful. It was created by excellent musicians and educators but I’ve never wanted to spend so much time on breathing exercises. Take an appropriate breath. It should be quiet and with minimal friction. It should be natural - not something contrived and artificial.

Breathe appropriate to the music: Many young players take in too little air, probably because they are surrounded by other young musicians who haven’t learned to produce big resonant sounds. For them, “more air” can be good advice. But remember that a really deep breath creates the tension of excess air pressure inside the lungs. That air wants to rush out. If you are playing something softer, all that excess air pressure will be an impediment.

Lungs deal in pounds, lips deal in ounces: using a piece of tissue paper, take a deep breath and blow against with a lot of force. Your lungs can generate a lot of air pressure! However, the delicate muscles of your embouchure can’t handle all that air pressure. In most instances, they only need ounces of air pressure to vibrate best. If you overblow them, a variety of problems can crop up.

Blow for resonance: resonance is the most vibration for the least effort. If you blow air across an open bottle or a straight mute, you may be able to experience this. Blowing fast air doesn’t get you the best vibration. You learn to gauge the air flow to create a nice resonant tone. Your embouchure is quite similar except that there are variables of range and possibly dynamics to consider. *Still, many people force more air than is needed for a resonant vibration.*



On Teaching and Playing: Individuals vs Systems



In my years of teaching, I have sometimes felt the desire to create an all-encompassing system. For example: In the freshman year, students will do these études, learn these scales, and prepare these excerpts, etc. Systems have a certain appeal - they're unified, they mirror the syllabi of non-skill-based courses like calculus or physics. They're clean.

However, every carefully-crafted system I have built came crashing down like a house of cards when it encountered the real world.



Maybe a better analogy is a dam failure. First one crack (exception) appears, then another and another. Eventually, the dam collapses.



General principles hold up but it seems there are more exceptions than not. So, where does that leave us?

The answer is **compromise**. I treat each student as an individual - I teach the person in front of me. However, there needs to be some fairness that similar students are held up to similar demands and expectations. If one student gets an A working on much easier material - even if it is appropriate to their needs - another student playing much harder material may feel slighted. Fairness counts when grading is involved.

One example of **compromise**: I have started using an “arpeggio toolkit” - one page per key - which guides students through the usual variety of arpeggios: major, minor, subdominant, etc. I ask all the students to work through these keys but I’m flexible on memorization and speed. The key thing is relaxation and beautiful sound.

Another example of **compromise**: In my studio handbook, I offer up a roughly graded list of recommended repertoire and then converse with each student about what to work on. I love when a student suggests a piece but I try to be mindful that, at some point, they should work on the “biggies” - David, Grøndahl, Lebedev, etc. I also try to be mindful of promoting the works of under-represented composers.



It’s a tricky balancing act!

A Random Thought: Humpbacks and Brahms

This past June, my wife and I went on a “retirement” trip around the North Atlantic. By the way, I’m only “retired” in June! I’m still teaching at ASU!

In Akureyri, Iceland, we went out on a RIB (rigid inflatable boat) to do some whale-watching.

Previous trips we’ve taken never yielded any actual whales.

So, we donned these heavy suits...



...and set out gliding across an Icelandic fjord. The weather was quite nice and our luck was good. We had almost ten sightings: Minke whales and Humpback whales. Here are some actual photos taken from our outing:



As successful as this outing was, each of those sightings was brief. No spectacular whale breaching events or anything like that. Most of our team was spent heading out to the sites and straining our eyes, trying to spot a whale. I'm guessing that's how most of these trips go. Still, we enjoyed it and we were satisfied!

Hmm, waiting around a long time for a brief special moment. Whatever could that have to do with orchestral trombone playing?

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Sinfonie Nr.1 c-Moll

Posaune I (Alt)

Johannes Brahms, op. 68

Un poco sostenuto-Allegro, Andante sostenuto,

Un poco Allegretto e grazioso tacet

Adagio

Va.

Fag.I

string.

poco a poco

a tempo

Ob.I

wait ... wait ... wait ... **beautiful chorale!!** ... wait ... wait ... wait

