

TBZ Monthly

A new monthly content service from Brad Edwards

Volume 3, No. 2. ~ February, 2024

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](#). 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](#))

In this issue:

1. A Pretty Good Melody
2. A Useful Lip Slur
3. Technique/Rhythm Builders
4. A Free Book Sample
5. A Playing Tip
6. Thoughts on Teaching and Performing
7. The Good Stuff: Pedagogy Quotes
8. A Random Thought

Enjoy!

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A Pretty Good Melody

A nice hearty dance to help stamp out Winter's chill!

♩ = c. 88

f

mp *cresc.* *mf*

f

p *cresc.* *f* *p* *ff*

f

mp *cresc.* *mf*

f

p *cresc.* *f* *p* *ff*

First system of musical notation (Bass clef, 4/4 time). The system consists of four staves. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The third staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking, followed by a forte (*f*) dynamic, a piano (*p*) dynamic, and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic.

Second system of musical notation (Bass clef, 4/4 time). The system consists of four staves. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking. The third staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking, followed by a forte (*f*) dynamic, a piano (*p*) dynamic, and a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic.

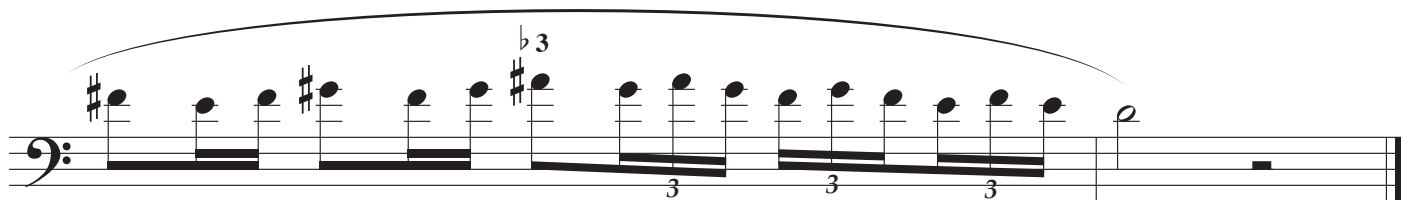
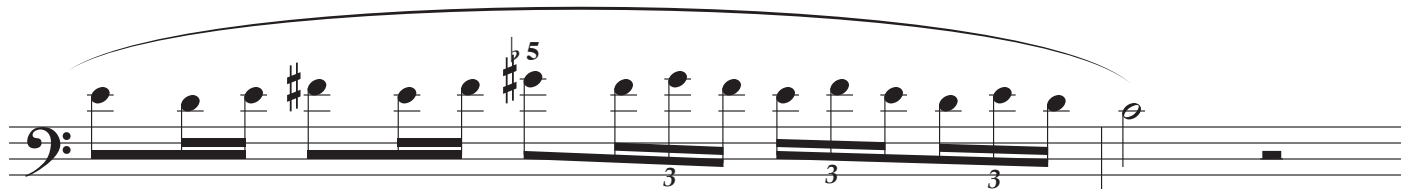
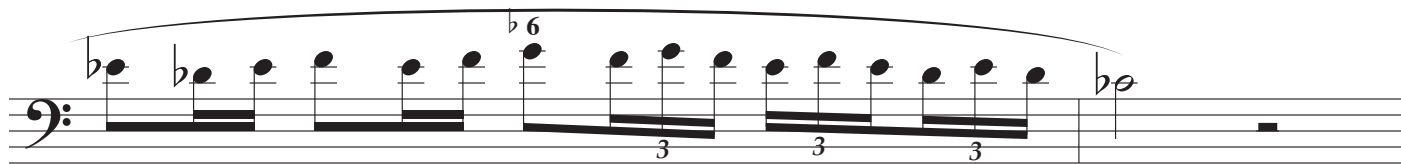
A Useful Lip Slur

February 2024

Here are some fun whole-tone doodles.

The image displays eight musical staves, each containing a whole-tone lick exercise. The exercises are labeled with numbers and key signature changes, indicating the starting point for the lip slur. The exercises are as follows:

- Exercise 1:** Labeled $b4$. The lick starts on $b4$ and ends on $b4$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 2:** Labeled $\#5$. The lick starts on $\#5$ and ends on $\#5$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 3:** Labeled $b5$. The lick starts on $b5$ and ends on $b5$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 4:** Labeled $\#6$. The lick starts on $\#6$ and ends on $\#6$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 5:** Labeled 6 . The lick starts on 6 and ends on 6 . It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 6:** Labeled $b6$. The lick starts on $b6$ and ends on $b6$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 7:** Labeled $\#7$. The lick starts on $\#7$ and ends on $\#7$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 8:** Labeled $b5$. The lick starts on $b5$ and ends on $b5$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.
- Exercise 9:** Labeled $\#6$. The lick starts on $\#6$ and ends on $\#6$. It features a triplet of eighth notes.



Technique / Rhythm Builders

Same basic tune but two different rhythms. If it's too easy, try having the metronome click on just 2 and 4.

♩ = c. 144+ (swung 8ths)

The image displays six staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time. The notation is written in a swung eighth-note style, with a tempo indication of approximately 144+ beats per minute. The first staff begins with a 4/4 time signature. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, with various rests and accidentals (sharps and naturals) throughout. The notation is spread across six staves, with the first staff starting with a 4/4 time signature and the subsequent staves continuing the melodic line. The final staff ends with a double bar line.

Free book sample: *The Melodious Bass Trombone*

January was kind of a busy month for me: In addition to a faculty recital, I managed to finish two books: [Patterns and Snippets for Tuba](#) and [The Melodious Bass Trombone](#).

The Melodious Bass Trombone is simply a transposition of the tenor version. Basically, the faster études were transposed down just a bit. Slower études go lower. The bigger trick, I found, was in the duet parts. I didn't want to just transpose them down since the harmonies would become too muddy. So I moved the duet to be above the bass most of the time (thinking that this duet part might be played by a tenor trombonist). That created a surprising number of counterpoint puzzles in need of solving. *That* took a while. This sample includes both the original étude and the duet part. Brian Hecht of the Dallas Symphony and Slide School was kind enough to write a foreword for this book...

In the world of brass playing, mastery of the bass trombone requires a delicate balance of technical precision and musical artistry. Brad Edwards, a distinguished figure in trombone pedagogy, has crafted an étude book that not only serves as a comprehensive practice ground for the instrument's fundamentals but also seamlessly integrates a variety of musical styles and expressions.

As one delves into the pages of this book, and many of the other books in Dr. Edwards' vast library of works, it becomes evident that he has approached the development of the trombonist with a keen appreciation for the musical journey. From the fundamental exercises that build strength and agility to the nuanced studies that cultivate interpretative skill, every aspect of these books is a testament to his commitment to fostering well-rounded musicianship.

The Melodious Bass Trombone is a valuable resource, not just for the aspiring bass trombonist but for any musician dedicated to the pursuit of musical excellence. The duets that accompany these songs are playful, well written, and easy to put together with a friend on a moment's notice.

May this book serve as a trusted companion on your musical journey, propelling you forward with each resonant note and nuanced phrase.

Brian Hecht
Dallas Symphony Orchestra
Slide School

Enjoy!

The Melodious Bass Trombone

Allegro con fuoco (♩. = c. 112)

30. *mp* *mf*

7 *mp*

13 *mf*

21 *to next section* ² *Fine*

26 *f* *mp*

31 *p* *cresc.*

37 *mf* *cresc.*

43 *f* *mp* *D.C. al Fine*

con fuoco = with fire

The Melodious Bass Trombone - Duet Part

Allegro con fuoco (♩. = c. 112)

30. *mp* *mf*

6 *mp*

12

21 *mf* 1 to next section 2 *Fine*

26 *f* *mp*

32 *p* *cresc.*

37 *mf* *cresc.*

44 *f* *mp*

con fuoco = with fire

Playing Tip: The Tuner, Friend and Enemy

Hmm, if only there was a word that combined “friend” and “enemy.” I’ll have to think about that. First, let’s get this out of the way: I have a clear favorite in the tuner department: those little Korg tuners, especially the CA-50.



Why do I love it so much? Because the center light glows more or less bright based on your tuning. With other tuners, you’re either perfect or you stink. Korg says, “Hey Buddy, you’re pretty close on that one.”

Tonal Energy is an amazing app but I don’t like the display because it’s too jumpy for me. It throws too much information at me trying to show how impressive it is.



And therein lies the problem with these visual tuners. There is the great danger of developing “tuner tone.” Your tone becomes uncertain, a bit unfocused and probably quite unmusical as you strive to make the little machine happy. Just when chromatic tuners first came out, I remember a trumpet-playing friend becoming obsessed with keeping the needle dead center all the time. We all watched (listened) in dismay as his once-gorgeous tone became weaker and weaker.

Remember these points:

- Tuners can be dangerous for tone!
- Tone is the most important thing.
- Strive for a beautiful sound that happens to be in tune.
- Use the little machine to calibrate your ear.

For the most part, these machines rely on a compromise system known of equal temperament, where all intervals are the same but none are as in tune as they could be with a little tweaking (more on that some other time).

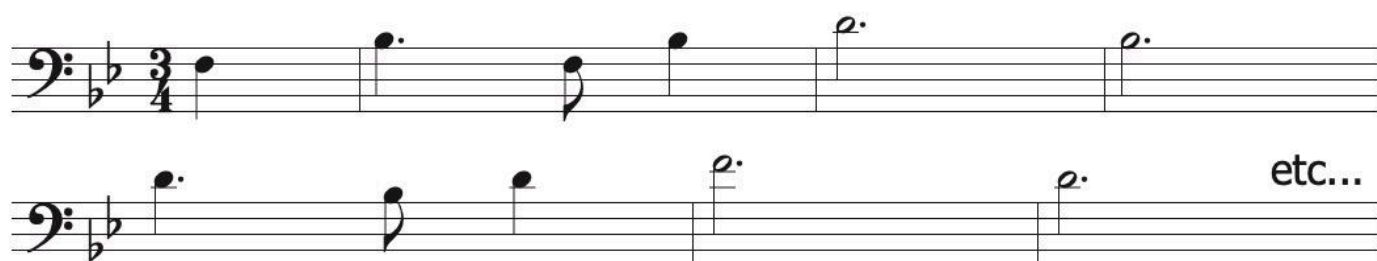
That said, I do have tuners on during my practice sessions. BUT I don’t stare at them. I work on getting a lovely, resonant sound and check in with the tuner from time to time.

Hmm, both friend and enemy.
Man, somebody should
invent a word for that...



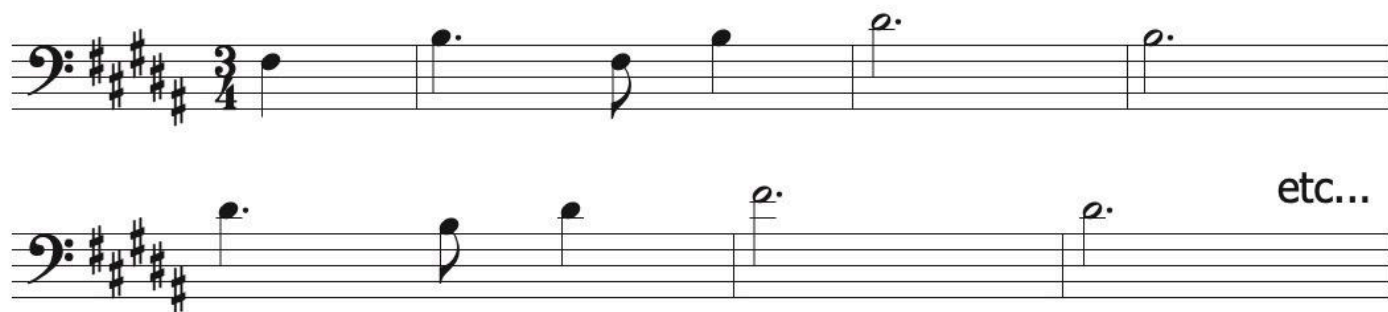
On Teaching and Playing: Ride of the Valkyries, Some Teaching Tips

This excerpt trips up many people because it poses both tuning and rhythmic challenges. Suppose I had a rare student who had never actually The Ride before. If so, I would start them with something like this:

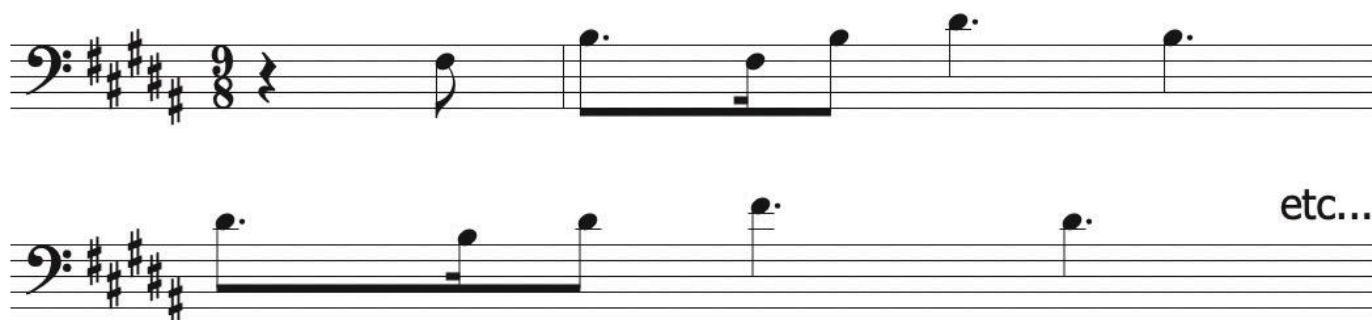


By placing it first in the key of B-flat major, a student is in a comfortable key and can develop a good sense of the intervals of the melody. By placing it in 3/4 time (and keeping the tempo down), a student develops a clear sense of the dotted rhythm while they are operating “on familiar territory.”

After spending a healthy amount of time in this key and meter, move the passage to B major. Spend time focusing on the tuning of the intervals, being aware of the small intonation corrections needed on the D-sharp and F-sharp. Be sure the slide is well-placed for that 5th position F-sharp to begin the passage.



Finally, show them the actual version in 9/8. Have them start by playing it with an 8th note pulse. Then, have them move up to the faster tempos. It is my belief that students rush in to play this excerpt fast before they have developed a strong sense of tuning and rhythm.



As with so much teaching, give them a ramp they can climb to a successful performance. Don't rush ahead trying to get quick results.



The Good Stuff - Trombone Pedagogy

Jay Friedman, the Principal Trombonist of the Chicago Symphony wrote a pair of articles in the ITA Journal in the late 1990's. The first was called "There Oughta Be Law) and the second was called "Dya ever notice."

In the first article, he wrote:

THERE OUGHTA BE A LAW against people who hate the CSO brass, who have never heard a concert, but go around saying that we play everything loud and long. (Next time I'll tell you what I think the CSO sound is really about).

In the second article he provided a wonderful explanation. Even though both articles can be found on his blog ([here](#) and [here](#))

However, something odd happened: he omitted some really important information in his second blog post! Namely, he doesn't include the big reveal: ***what he thinks the CSO sound is really about.***

Fear not, I keep back issues of the ITA Journal.



Here is the part that *was* in the article but *isn't* in the blog post:

“OK, I promised last issue to tell you what I thought the Chicago Symphony brass sound was all about. I don't want to make a big explanation of this, so the best phrase I can think to describe it is “life in the sound.” I believe this comes from the fact that the speed of the air is always faster at the beginning of a note, (loud OR soft), then in the middle or end, thereby creating its own reverberation, or a ringing sound. This gives the impression (repeat - only “impression”) of length. Dullness is usually the result of a note which starts with a medium or slow air stream that continues at the same speed (or even increases) throughout the duration of that note. If an entire brass section plays in a “life in the sound” style, it's almost as if 12 people were playing in a single unified solo style.”

ITA Journal, Vol 25 No 2, Spring 1997, p.16

Life in the sound

What a brilliant phrase! His observation that “Dullness is usually the result of a note that starts with a medium or slow air stream that continues at the same speed (or even increases) throughout the duration of that note.” Genius! As a teacher, I have pulled out this article more than any other. He absolutely nails it.

Want to hear a brass section playing with “life in the sound” style? Check out this Philadelphia Brass Christmas [recording](#) of “O Tannenbaum.” Nearly perfect.



A Random Thought: Stumbling Forward

A friend on Facebook likes to post bits of wisdom every day. Here's a recent one:

***The key to keeping your balance
is knowing when you've lost it.***

My simple comment: "1996."

That was the year our first child was born...right after I took my first tenure-track job...necessitating a self-move from D.C. to Iowa...while my wife was seven months pregnant. I'm now in my 28th year of full-time college teaching and, most of the time, it has felt like I've been constantly stumbling forward, never quite gaining my balance.

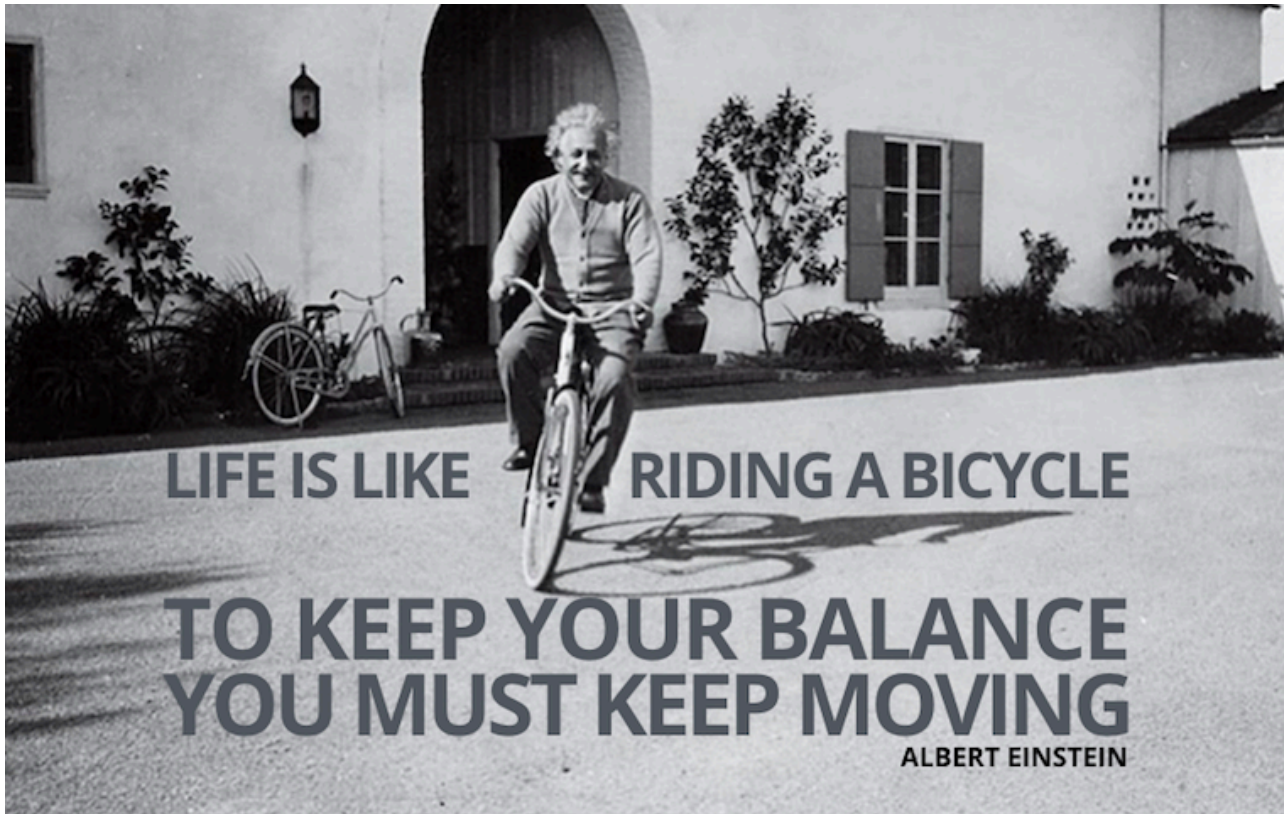
This, of course, isn't true. There have been times where I let my foot off the accelerator and rested but, reflecting on it, it doesn't feel that way. There was (and is) always that insistent voice saying, "You're falling behind! You need every minute to be productive."

Somehow during that time, I've managed to write books, compose pieces, earn my way up to full professor twice (two different schools) and, most importantly, try to be a good husband and father.

Always though, I'm thinking, "There's so much more you could be doing." Over time, I gather up analogies/sayings that help guide me. Here's a favorite:

***"My whole life
has been filled with disasters,
most of which never happened."***

And, of course, a favorite meme:



On the bright side, at least I'm not stumbling backwards!

Just for fun, here's another favorite meme:

