

A CURRICULUM FOR TUBA PERFORMANCE IN A COMMERCIAL BRASS
QUINTET

BY

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Submitted to the faculty of the
Jacobs School of Music in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree,
Doctor of Music,
Indiana University
December, 2013

Accepted by the faculty of the Jacobs School of Music,
Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Music.

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Preface

While a curriculum for any type of performance could be synthesized by theoretical reasoning based upon knowledge of how to learn any new genre or style of music, it is tradition that students turn to leaders in the field to gain insight and knowledge into the specific craft that they wish to pursue. While pure scholarship and study of a repertoire is an excellent way to gain insight into a performance arena, time spent in the field actually performing a certain style of music as a member of a professional ensemble gives a perspective that is intrinsically valuable to a project such as this.

In addition to the sources listed in the bibliography and the extensive research done concerning this project, I have been a member of the Dallas Brass Quintet since September of 2010. I currently continue to serve as their tubist. Being a member of this ensemble, which is one of the most active touring commercial styled brass quintets in existence today, has greatly informed me concerning this project in terms of the demands of this type of performance. As I prepared to write this document, I took inventory of the skills and preparation that have allowed me to perform successfully in a commercial brass quintet. Prior to joining this ensemble, I was fortunate to have experienced very influential chamber music coaching sessions in both classical and commercial styles. While an undergraduate student at the University of Illinois, I worked with Ronald Romm, a founding and former member of the Canadian Brass. Romm's guidance influenced my vision of what a tubist should strive to contribute in a brass quintet. During my two years as a member of the New Mexico Brass Quintet, I was fortunate to work with Sam Pilafian, founding member and former tubist of the Empire Brass. Through

brass quintet coaching sessions, tuba masterclasses, and numerous question and answer sessions, his instruction on the subject of this paper were extremely influential as well. For my study at the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, I was fortunate to study with Dan Perantoni, founding member and present tubist with the St. Louis Brass Quintet. Perantoni has influenced my approach to not only tuba performance, but how to properly prepare for successful performance in non-classical chamber music settings. His guidance has been critical in development of my own style as well as how to approach this topic.

In addition to these experiences on tuba, I have also been actively performing on bass guitar and on double bass for approximately 14 years and 8 years respectively in various jazz and commercial styled settings. My minor instrument at the University of Illinois was jazz double bass and I continued the study of this instrument at the University of New Mexico where I studied both classical and jazz performance on double bass. While these experiences were not in a brass quintet setting, they have significantly influenced my approach toward performing commercial styles of music and my performance on tuba has been significantly enlightened from my background as a bassist.

While this project is not intended as a memoir of my personal tuba study or performance history (or anyone else's), it does aspire to give a new and original insight into this type of performance and offer suggestions for tuba students and teachers to consider in the hope of creating stronger tuba performances in this genre for the future.

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Introduction

Since the patent of the tuba in 1835,¹ the instrument has grown in many respects. Originally conceived as an orchestral instrument, the tuba went on to be used in a number of different roles as a bass instrument. Not all of these were classical; during the 1920s, the tuba served as the bass instrument in early jazz ensembles.² As the tuba became accepted academically, tuba studios began to form at major universities across the country, beginning with Rex Connor at the University of Kentucky in 1960.³ This occurred shortly after the formation of the New York Brass Quintet and its rise to acclaim as a chamber ensemble. Because of these events, the repertoire for the tuba as a solo instrument as well as the pedagogy for tuba in performance in band and orchestra began a period of great growth not only in repertoire, but in pedagogy as well. While there have always been unique approaches to teaching tuba, the majority of the pedagogy comes from the orchestral tradition as this genre of performance places the greatest physical demands on the performer. The famous tubist and master teacher Arnold Jacobs, former tubist in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, is in many ways the progenitor of modern methods of teaching tuba as well as brass instruments' first scholar on the subject of breathing.⁴ The majority of modern tuba study is based on Jacobs' heritage.

¹ Antony Baines, *Brass Instruments: Their History and Development* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1976), 250.

² Gunther Schuller, *Early Jazz* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 101.

³ Whitney Hale, *Ensemble Invited to Play at National Conference*,
<http://news.uky.edu/news/display_article.php?artid=3069> (October 2012)

⁴ Brian Frederickson, *Arnold Jacobs Biography*,
http://www.windsongpress.com/jacobs/AJ_Biography.htm (August 2012).

There are many fine approaches to teaching undergraduate tubists throughout the country. Most programs are designed with the idea of teaching young tubists to become great musicians through preparing them for careers in orchestral and band performance as well as chamber music settings. An area of performance rarely given much time or thought is the preparation for performance in a commercial brass quintet or simply performing non-classical music in a quintet setting. It is this skill set that this project aims to address. Because many of the existing ideals behind teaching tuba already lead to a mastery of the instrument in terms of range, intonation, articulation, and sound quality, this project is not intended to serve as the framework of an entire undergraduate tuba curriculum or even of a chamber music curriculum. What it does set out to do is isolate the specific instances of areas in tuba performance that require extra attention and mastery to convincingly perform in a commercial brass quintet. Because academic training rarely emphasizes performance of non-classical music, there is a need for this topic to be included in all major tuba programs. While mastery and knowledge of the classical repertoire remains the keystone of a tuba curriculum, the field of commercial music continues to grow larger through chamber music.⁵ There are very few major quintets in this country that do not regularly perform commercial music in their concerts, and it is also becoming more common for commercial pieces to appear on recitals by student groups as well. In fact, it is becoming increasingly common that a piece of music from some commercial style be included in a modern quintet program. For the aspiring

⁵ Deanna Swoboda, “The 21st Century Musician: Designing a Successful Career in Music.” presented at the International Tuba and Euphonium Conference, Tucson, AZ, May 2010.

tubist, this skill set may be as important to their career as learning the major orchestral repertoire.⁶

In addition to the ability to perform at a high level in a commercial brass quintet, it is the aim of this project to structure the elements of performance study so that they also contribute to the cumulative musical knowledge of students in a way that strengthens their musical performance of any genre. In many ways, studying this particular aspect of performance will inform tuba students of important inflections, stylistic choices, and techniques on the instrument that will improve their performance in classical styles as well. It will also aim for them to become more consummate performers for orchestral pops concerts and will be especially helpful in preparation for solo performances.

⁶ Richard White and Kevin Sanders, “Hustle and Flow: Everything They Did Not Tell You in Music School.” presented at the International Tuba and Euphonium Conference, Tucson, AZ, May 2010.

A Brief History of the Brass Quintet and Its Emergence into Commercial Music

For any course of study concerning performance of a musical genre, it is informative to gain the perspective of the history behind that genre so as to be aware of the performance tradition from which it has grown. This is certainly the case with the study of performing in brass quintet because it is a relatively new type of performance, at least in contrast to other forms of classical chamber music. Identifying the main groups and the pieces associated with them will allow students to become more knowledgeable about the field and have a stronger reference point for their own performances.

Prior to World War II, the main piece of brass chamber music was the Francis Poulenc Sonata for Horn, Trumpet and Trombone.⁷ While five part music for brass instruments has been performed for centuries, what is considered the brass quintet today became a viable chamber ensemble post World War II and was not precipitated until 1954 by the formation of the New York Brass Quintet. Also during this period, there was significant growth of public school instrumental music departments in America as well as growth of the music industry; these factors contributed to the formation of brass ensembles.⁸ “Evidence seems to indicate that the brass quintet was an American creation.”⁹ It is important to consider that some brass quintet pieces in the standard repertoire had been written much earlier, for instance the Victor Ewald (1860-1935)

⁷ John Shoemaker, “Music for Brass Comes Into Its Own.” *Music Educators Journal* (Vol. 58 issue 1, 1971): 37.

⁸ Shoemaker, “Music for Brass Comes Into Its Own,” 37.

⁹ W. L. Jones, Jr., “The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey.” (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 23.

Quintets were composed from 1888-1912;¹⁰ however, overall the genre of brass quintet is considered a post World War II ensemble. “To make a case for the ensemble’s existence preceding 1947, composition for the ensemble, the existence of both professional and amateur ensembles, and the instrumentation for the ensemble would have had to remain constant for a sustained period of time before 1947. Based on the above premise, it is the author’s opinion that the brass quintet was not conceived as a standard chamber music ensemble prior to 1947.¹¹” Inspired by the formation of brass ensembles during this time, there were composers around the world composing for what had become the standard brass quintet instrumentation after World War II: two trumpets, horn, trombone, and bass trombone/tuba.¹² Composers such as Eugene Bozza, Ingolf Dahl, Henry Cowell, Barney Childs, Carl Busch, Robert Sanders, and Albert Schmutz had already started composing for what would become the standard brass quintet instrumentation in the 1950s. However, what today is known as standard quintet instrumentation was only one of the possible forms of brass ensemble for which compositions were written. It would be the formation of the New York Brass Quintet that is largely responsible for establishing the instrumentation of today’s brass quintet.¹³

The precursor to the New York Brass Quintet was the New York Brass Ensemble.

“The founding of the New York Brass Ensemble signaled the initiation of the brass

¹⁰ John Ericson, *PSA: On the Ewald Quintets and that Ewald/King “Symphony for Brass,”* < <http://hornmatters.com/2011/06/psa-on-the-ewald-quintets-and-that-ewaldking-%E2%80%9Csymphony-for-brass%E2%80%9D/>> (October 2012).

¹¹ W.M. Jones, Jr., “The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey.” (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 13.

¹² W.M. Jones, Jr., “The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey.” (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 1.

¹³ W.M. Jones, Jr., “The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey.” (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 24.

quintet as a standardized chamber music ensemble.¹⁴” This was an ensemble of brass professionals from around the city of New York, who were interested in brass chamber music. While many of their rehearsals and performances were purely recreational, the ensemble served the purpose of “bringing the players together in the belief that brass chamber music was a viable medium in music performance, and second, by introducing audiences to the concert possibilities of brass ensembles.¹⁵” The New York Brass Ensemble disbanded in the early 1950s, thus leaving its members to continue brass chamber music on their own. Both Robert Nagel and Harvey Phillips had performed with the New York Brass Ensemble, and their desire for continuing brass chamber music was the impetus for the formation of a brass quintet.



The original members of the New York Brass Quintet.¹⁶

¹⁴ W.M. Jones, Jr., “The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey.” (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 22.

¹⁵ O. Metcalf, “The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance.” (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 8.

¹⁶ *Official Website of the New York Brass Quintet*. <http://newyorkbrassquintet.com/> (June 2012).

The New York Brass Quintet was founded in 1954 with members Robert Nagel (trumpet), John Glasel (trumpet), Frederick Schmidt (horn), Erwin Price (trombone), and Harvey Philips (tuba).¹⁷ While there were many different members of the ensemble over the course of the ensemble, there were only three tubists that served as members of the group. Harvey Phillips continued as the founding tubist until 1966 with the exception of 1956-57 when he served as tubist in the United States Army Field Band. During these years, Herb Wekselblatt served as interim tubist. After Phillips left the ensemble, Thompson Hanks would replace him on tuba in 1967. Hank would continue as tubist until the New York Brass Quintet disbanded at the International Brass Conference held in 1984.¹⁸

¹⁷ O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 3.

¹⁸ *Official Website of the New York Brass Quintet*. <http://newyorkbrassquintet.com/> (June 2012).



The final members of the New York Brass Quintet .¹⁹

During its first four years of existence, the New York Brass Quintet primarily played on the East Coast of the United States in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore through Young Audiences, Inc.,²⁰ While the idea of these concerts was to play music for children, programs often consisted of what would become the standard repertoire for the quintet such as Eugene Bozza's Sonatine, the Robert Sanders Quintet, the Ingolf Dahl "Music for Brass Instruments," as well as transcriptions such as Giovanni Gabrieli, Johann Christoph Pezel, and Anthony Holborne.²¹ The New York Brass Quintet was performing over 100 concerts a year for Young Audiences, Inc., totaling over 570

¹⁹ *Official Website of the New York Brass Quintet*. <http://newyorkbrassquintet.com/> (June 2012).

²⁰ O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 22.

²¹ O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 22.

public school concerts during their first four years as a group.²² This demanding schedule began interfering with each member's other professional engagements. This caused them to leave Young Audiences to pursue their own performances.²³ While this obligation to Young Audiences, Inc. eventually became debilitating to the group, it is important to note that an important factor in the success of the New York Brass Quintet was that they were performing regularly from the moment of their formation, thus gaining performance experience as a group and establishing the brass quintet as a marketable and successful ensemble. There was a demand for this new music.

After leaving Young Audiences, Inc., the New York Brass Quintet set out to concertize at a high level as well as increase the size of the brass quintet repertoire.²⁴ Both of these goals were achieved as the quintet became busy performing at colleges and universities, thus providing the model for faculty brass quintets, today a standard feature of music schools across the country. They also enlisted the aid of artistic management and performed in the most prestigious concert series in New York, thus elevating brass chamber music to the level of other ensembles.²⁵ They would continue performances across the United States as well as European tours, which brought the sound of the brass quintet to European audiences and musicians. It was on these tours that the English trumpeter Phillip Jones was inspired to form a quintet within his Phillip Jones Ensemble. In Phillip Jones' own words:

²² O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 23.

²³ O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 24.

²⁴ O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 24.

²⁵ O. Metcalf, "The New York Brass Quintet: Its History and Influence on Brass Literature and Performance." (D.M. dissertation, Indiana University, 1978), 25.

“...the biggest excitement was when Robert Nagel came to England with the New York Brass Quintet, and he opened my eyes to what you can do with a tuba. So, after hearing Nagel play an hour’s work of all sorts of tunes, along came John Fletcher and we quickly got going on the quintet...”²⁶

In this manner, the New York Brass Quintet was an inspiration for new brass quintets to form in both metropolitan areas as well as academia. “There is rarely a school of music without a faculty brass quintet or a metropolitan area without at least one gigging quintet as part of its scene. The New York Brass Quintet is directly responsible for this monumental achievement.”²⁷

In addition to performances in academic or music festival settings, the New York Brass Quintet performed for a larger demographic than brass professionals and musicians. They regularly performed for public concerts that brought a new sound to a general audience and presented music that had not been heard before, often because they were the first to perform it.

The New York Brass Quintet was also successful in building the repertoire for the brass quintet. One of their early mainstays in their repertoire was Bozza Sonatine.²⁸ They also became known for their performances of the Alvin Etler “Quintet.” Through their travels and desire to expand the repertoire for their ensemble and others like it, they would be responsible for such pieces as *Quintet, opus 73* by Malcolm Arnold, *Bis* by Eugene Bozza, *Golden Suite* by Henri Sauguet, and *Quintet, opus 79* by Vagn Holmboe, as well as dozens more. By the end of their career, the New York Brass Quintet had commissioned or premiered works by Malcolm Arnold, Eugene Bozza, Jacob Druckman,

²⁶ Donald Hunsberger, “The Phillip Jones Brass Ensemble,” *The Instrumentalist* (Vol 34, no. 8 1980): 25.

²⁷ Mike Forbes, “New York Brass Quintet 50th Anniversary” *ITEA Journal* (Vol. 32 (2) 2005): 80.

²⁸ Eugene Bozza. “*Sonatine*” (Alphonse Leduc, 1951).

Alvin Etler, Edmund Haines, Iain Hamilton, Vagn Holmboe, John Huggler, Karel Husa, Collier Jones, Vincent Persichetti, Henri Sauguet, Gunther Schuller, and Alec Wilder.²⁹

While the New York Brass Quintet began inspiring new works for brass quintet, another group joined the cause. The American Brass Quintet was founded in 1960 with the major difference in ensemble being the American Brass Quintet's use of bass trombone instead of tuba.³⁰ "We decided to use bass trombone in the ensemble make-up because we felt the sound of the tuba was too overwhelming for chamber music."³¹ This along with the aim of the group to extensively perform early music written for cornetti and sackbuts, led to the choice of the bass trombone as it provided a more historically accurate timbre.³² After a decision to not perform transcriptions, they have continued to perform exclusively art music, spanning from music of the Renaissance and Baroque eras to modern compositions written exclusively for them, most notably compositions by Eric Ewazen.³³ They "...have commissioned over one hundred works for brass quintet, including works by Jan Bach, William Bolcom, Gunther Schuller, Virgil Thomson, and Charles Whittenberg."³⁴

While the New York Brass Quintet established the instrumentation of the modern brass quintet as well as building the repertoire for the ensemble, no group has made a

²⁹ *Official Website of the New York Brass Quintet*. <http://newyorkbrassquintet.com/> (June 2012).

³⁰ W.M. Jones, Jr., "The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey." (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 28.

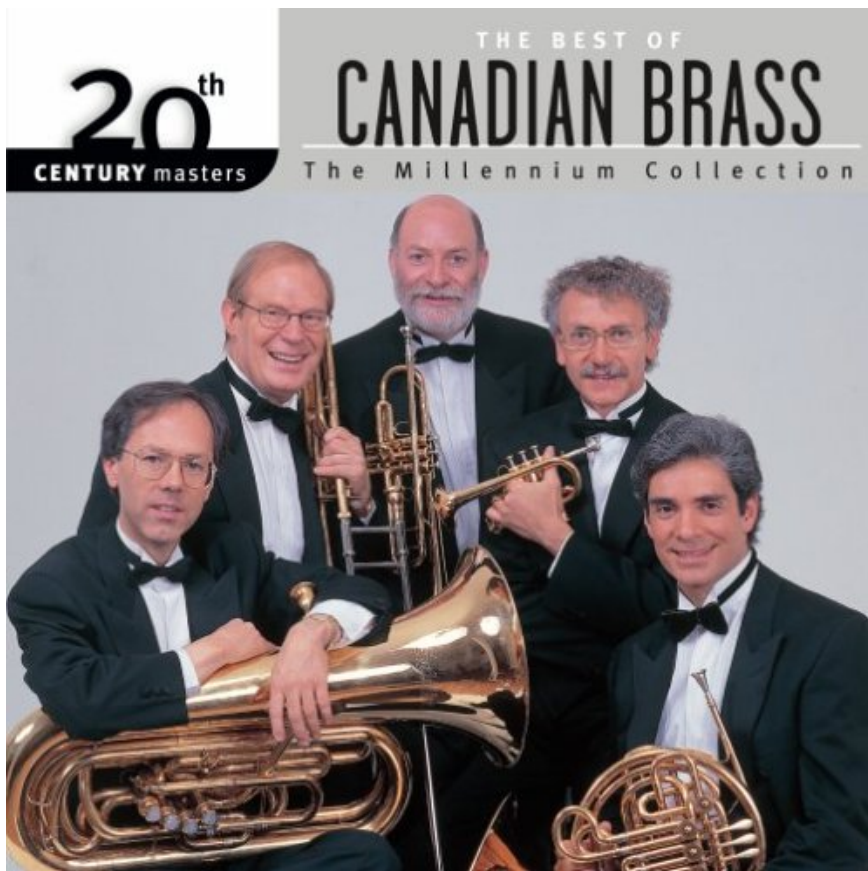
³¹ Shakespeare, Margaret. "The American Brass Quintet: Still Shining (From Sea to Sea) after Thirty Years." (*Chamber Music America* 8, 1991: 20). cited from Jones, 29

³² W.M. Jones, Jr., "The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey." (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 30.

³³ *American Brass Quintet*. <http://www.americanbrassquintet.org/> (August 2012).

³⁴ W.M. Jones, Jr., "The Brass Quintet: An Historical and Stylistic Survey." (D.M.A. dissertation, University of Kentucky, 1998), 29.

more significant impact on the brass quintet genre than Canadian Brass. Formed in 1970 by tubist Chuck Dallenbach and trombonist Eugene Watts, the Canadian brass shaped the genre not only by brilliant performances, but also by taking the brass quintet in a new musical direction. Over their 40 years of existence and over 100 recorded albums, they have become one of the best known chamber ensembles to the general public as they have created an “entertainment product using classical music as a hook.”³⁵



The Canadian Brass³⁶

Although the Canadian Brass started in a similar fashion to other brass quintets, it has been their imagination as well as their virtuosity that has raised them to unparalleled success. This imagination has manifested itself in the repertoire the group performs, the

³⁵ Stephen Nadel, “Life in a Brass Quintet.” *The Horn Call* (vol. 28 (3) 1998): 51.

³⁶ Canadian Brass. *20th Century Masters: Millenium Collection, The Best of Canadian Brass*. [sound recording] Decca, 2005.

recordings it produces, and the collaborations it has accomplished. It even has expanded into the group's performance attire, as they are known for their combinations of sneakers with tuxedos and suits to show the juxtaposition between formal and fun.³⁷ Of course, what has continued to make "the silliness possible is masterful playing."³⁸ While these imaginative accomplishments are not purely musical, it is necessary to acknowledge the expansion of the repertoire as well as entertainment opportunities now available to brass quintets because of the Canadian Brass.

As the Canadian Brass has recorded over 100 albums in the last forty years, they have greatly expanded the typical genre of brass music. In addition to recording classics like Gabrieli and other brass favorites, the Canadian Brass has recorded music from Renaissance to jazz to world music and left very little untouched in between.³⁹ While covering this gamut of material, they have commissioned or arranged on their own hundreds of arrangements. Some of their most popular have been the jazz settings for quintet by Luther Henderson. Ronald Romm, retired trumpet with Canadian Brass commented, "No one can come close to what Luther does with the jazz adaptations- he calles it 'jazzicalization.'⁴⁰" The Canadian Brass has also published much of their music in various volumes and collections. This is an excellent resource for students, amateurs, and professionals alike.

³⁷ Christine Stinson, "Canadian Brass: Fun with Great Music." *Teaching Music*, (Vol. 4 (4) 1997): 38.

³⁸ Karen Deans, "The Eclectic Surprise of the Canadian Brass." *Music Educators Journal* (Vol. 74 (4) 1987): 58.

³⁹ *Canadian Brass.com*. <http://canadianbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁴⁰ Ezra Adams, "Life After the Canadian Brass: An Interview with Fred Mills and Ronald Romm." *International Trumpet Guild Journal* (Vol. 25 (4) 2001): 9.

Another resource the Canadian Brass has produced is its catalog of recordings. With over 100 albums, their recordings are continually played on radio stations across the country.⁴¹ These recordings have and continue to serve as great references for students learning to play brass instrument in a multitude of styles. They have also sold an impressive number of these compact discs with total sales being over two million worldwide. Many of their albums have scored Billboard chart positions, most recently their “Stars and Stripes: Canadian Brass Salutes America” peaked at #2 on the Billboard Classical Chart.⁴² They have also released videos, which serve as educational tools for students as well as allow the public to enjoy their musicianship, showmanship, and humor.⁴³

In addition to their prolific recording and arrangement output, the Canadian Brass has collaborated with many of the most prestigious organizations in the music world. “Canadian Brass is currently Artist in Residence at the University of Toronto after having been Chamber Quintet-in-Residence for many years at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California, and has created an innovative brass summer course at the Eastman School of Music.”⁴⁴ They have also collaborated with El Sistema, the acclaimed global music education program in Venezuela and are newly associated with the Conn-Selmer Institute.⁴⁵

Through all of these projects, the Canadian Brass has created a brand that transcends classical music and has brought the brass quintet before the public eye.

⁴¹ *Canadian Brass.com*. <http://canadianbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁴² *Canadian Brass.com*. <http://canadianbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁴³ Gurtman & Murtha. “The Canadian Brass Live!” *Music Educators Journal* (Vol. 76 (9) 1990), 62.

⁴⁴ *Canadian Brass.com*. <http://canadianbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁴⁵ *Canadian Brass.com*. <http://canadianbrass.com/> (August 2012).

Founding trumpeter Fred Mills succinctly states, “The Canadian Brass solidified the genre of brass quintet and really defined where it was going.”⁴⁶ In addition to concert halls, Canadian Brass has performed on “The Tonight Show”, “Today” and “Entertainment Tonight,” and recently to more than half of a billion television viewers for Chinese New Year. They have appeared as guest artists on Evening at Pops with John Williams and the Boston Pops, Beverly Sills’ Music Around the World, numerous PBS specials, including a celebrated appearance on Sesame Street.⁴⁷ These types of entertainment-based performances have shaped the current brass model and have created the new genre of commercial brass quintet to which so many groups aspire today.

While there are many brass quintets that have risen to popularity, very few have come close to the triumphs of Canadian Brass. While almost every brass quintet will still play some classical repertoire, the number of quintets mimicking the commercial style of Canadian Brass is growing. A major reason for this is that the larger public appeal of a more commercial or pops show makes an ensemble appeal to a larger audience, thus making more bookings possible. This commercial brass quintet style is mainly adopted by ensembles that exclusively tour for their performances actively concertizing across the United States, as well as internationally. It is contrasted by the ensembles that only perform art music and focus on new repertoire for the brass quintet to present in a concert or recital format.

In addition to Canadian Brass, there are other quintets that continue to concertize in a commercial brass quintet style. In the unsteady business of chamber music, a number

⁴⁶ Ezra Adams, “Life After the Canadian Brass: An Interview with Fred Mills and Ronald Romm.” *International Trumpet Guild Journal* (Vol. 25 (4) 2001): 9.

⁴⁷ *Canadian Brass.com*. <http://canadianbrass.com/> (August 2012).

of groups will maintain busy schedules for a few years before it becomes impossible to maintain touring on a grand scale or members move on to other opportunities. A few groups have continued despite these challenges. Some of the more notable ones are Boston Brass, Empire Brass, and Dallas Brass.

The Boston Brass has been in existence approximately 26 years. To create their concert experience, they treat their audiences to a wide variety of musical genres. They also have the similar goal of Canadian Brass to use classical music to create a fun and entertaining event.⁴⁸ The group often performs its own arrangements, which is an effective method for a group to establish its own voice. Additionally, they perform many different programs throughout their season. In addition to their continually evolving “regular” program, they have a Stan Kenton Christmas concert with additional brass players, collaborations with Imani Winds, as well as working with bands and orchestras, and string quartets.⁴⁹

One of the most virtuosic groups in the brass quintet world is the Empire Brass. Originally formed in 1972, the group went full time in 1981 and quickly became known across the world as one of the leading brass quintets.⁵⁰ “Empire Brass has always been a group driven by virtuosity and tries not to be a commercial or “show” group.⁵¹” Although their intention is not to be an entertainment group, their repertoire is still incredibly diverse, featuring pieces from the Baroque era to jazz and Broadway tunes.⁵² Throughout their career, they have contributed a number of recordings on the Telarc label as well as

⁴⁸ *Boston Brass*. <http://www.bostonbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁴⁹ *Boston Brass*. <http://www.bostonbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁵⁰ Stephen Nadel, “Life in a Brass Quintet.” *The Horn Call* (Vol. 28 (3) 1998): 51.

⁵¹ Stephen Nadel, “Life in a Brass Quintet.” *The Horn Call* (Vol. 28 (3) 1998): 51.

⁵² *Empire Brass Quintet*. <http://www.empirebrass.com/about.html> (August 2012).

had a significant presence in the Far East as well as Europe. In addition to the brass quintet, they will occasionally augment the ensemble with a percussionist or organist depending on the repertoire.⁵³

Another quintet in the entertainment genre is the Dallas Brass. An immediate distinguishing feature of this ensemble is the addition of drums and percussion to the traditional brass quintet instrumentation.⁵⁴ It was founded in 1983 and has grown to be one of America's foremost musical ensembles.⁵⁵ Their repertoire ranges from classical masterpieces, Dixieland, Swing, Broadway, Hollywood, and patriotic music.⁵⁶ In addition to their concert season, the Dallas Brass is dedicated to the inspiration of future musicians through their "Music in the Schools" project that involves a day long residency involving clinics, rehearsals, individual instruction, with a concert serving as the final event.⁵⁷ While Dallas Brass has performed in many of the most prestigious halls in America as well as abroad in addition to performances with symphony orchestras, this dedication to music in schools remains a part of nearly every performance.⁵⁸ They have also strived to develop a show that is very accessible. Founder of Dallas Brass and director/trombonist, Michael Levine states, "A Dallas Brass concert is intended for the entire family. Our ideal audience has a range in ages from 5 to 95."⁵⁹

⁵³ *Empire Brass Quintet*. <http://www.empirebrass.com/about.html> (August 2012).

⁵⁴ Dallas Brass, "Small Ensembles Clinic: Music for Life." (clinic presented at Texas Music Educators Association, San Antonio, TX, Feb. 11, 2011).

⁵⁵ *The Official home of the Dallas Brass*. <http://www.dallasbrass.com/> (August 2012).

⁵⁶ Mike Forbes, "The Dallas Brass" *ITEA Journal* (Vol. 31 (2) 2004): 70.

⁵⁷ Dallas Brass. "Small Ensembles Clinic: Music for Life." (clinic presented at Florida Music Educators Association, Tampa, FL, Jan. 13, 2012).

⁵⁸ Dallas Brass. "Small Ensembles Clinic: Music for Life." (clinic presented at Kansas Music Educators Association, Wichita, KS, Feb. 26, 2011).

⁵⁹ Mike Forbes, "The Dallas Brass" *ITEA Journal* (Vol. 31 (2) 2004): 70.

In addition to the aforementioned ensembles, there are a number of quintets operating at a regional level as well as new quintets growing into touring concert groups. While the repertoire for this idiom continues to expand through all of these ensembles, it is informative for an aspiring student to be aware of the contributions of the above ensembles. They have made the major contributions to the formation and continued practice of the genre.

A Curriculum Addressing the Skills Needed by a Tubist in a Commercial Brass Quintet

Description of the Role

Each genre of performance makes demands on the performer and on his or her ability on the instrument. As the genre of brass quintet continues to evolve and move further into the commercial realm, the role of the tubist becomes more demanding for a number of reasons. The most important role of the tubist in a commercial brass quintet is that of the bass voice. This is conventionally a role filled by an upright bass in a modern jazz setting or by an electric bass in a rock, pop music, or jazz fusion setting. While the instruments easily sound in the same range and share a similar range of pitches, there are obvious differences between playing these different bass instruments. Because the tuba is a wind instrument and not a member of the string family, there is the need to mimic a different type of instrument by manipulating the air stream and using more conducive articulations.

Because a tubist in a commercial brass quintet needs to imitate so closely the sound shape, color, and articulation of a bass guitar or double bass, it can be a smart idea for an aspiring quintet tubist to learn to play these instruments on at least an elementary level. The great tubist, Gene Pokorny, Principal Tubist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, has stated, “I think it is great for tuba players to study other bass instruments because when learning to play string bass...tubists will absorb some of the tonal characteristics and technical capabilities of the instruments. This way a tuba player can

more accurately imitate the sound and character of the other instruments on the tuba.⁶⁰”

This same principle may be applied to tuba performance in a commercial brass quintet setting. One of the most notable performers on both tuba and bass is J. Samuel Pilafian, a founding member of the Empire Brass. While not a necessary part of any tuba curriculum, the practice of learning a minimum of an elementary level of electric bass and double bass would greatly benefit an aspiring brass quintet tubist in acquiring a concept of note shape and sound production from these instruments.

⁶⁰ Thomas Bough, “The Tuba World of Gene Pokorny.” *The Instrumentalist* (Vol. 57 (12) 2003): 13.

Chord Consciousness

A main skill of a tubist in a commercial brass quintet is chord consciousness. While this is an important skill for all performers, it is particularly important for a tubist. In this musical setting, tubists are usually the most important accompaniment part performing the bass line. While most of this responsibility means playing mostly roots, it is important to know where the group is in a particular chord structure. It is the tubist's job in this role to "steer" the ensemble through the phrase, and on a larger level, "navigate" through the piece. It is also important for a tubist to be aware of situations when they are not playing just root notes. It is common for the fifth of the chord to be played on beat two of a simple bass part, but there are other notes that need to be easily recognized. The third of a chord needs to be lowered significantly for the ensemble to be in tune. These are often found in tuba parts wherever the composer or arranger has a first inversion chord. If the tubist plays the third of a chord too high as the lowest voice, this means that all the other voices of the quintet have to adjust accordingly. This can create problems for any ensemble, as it is very difficult for higher voiced instruments to raise or lower their pitch enough to make the chord sound in tune. Given the scenario of a third in the root being placed too high, the resulting chord will sound high in relation to the chord progression that it is a part of, which is equally distracting. It is also common for the composer/arranger to use a leading tone in the bass part from one bar into the next. While this is sometimes the root of a diminished chord, the tubist needs to play it as a leading tone into the next bar instead of the root of a diminished chord or as a lowered third. This will give the music more forward momentum and show the rest of the ensemble where the pitch of the new chord will be.



Example 1: This excerpt from Luther Henderson's arrangement of "Maple Leaf Rag" shows examples of the tuba part moving from chord to chord by the use of leading tones.⁶¹

There are a number of ways to prepare for this skill. The tubist must come to a quintet with chord consciousness well ingrained in his or her own musicianship. Fortunately, most of this skill is reinforced by a school of music's theory and aural skills sequence that is mandatory for all music majors. Working on sight-singing and aural dictation is an excellent way to develop chord consciousness and apply it to a performance situation away from the tuba. The isolation of this exercise is paramount in allowing the ear to develop this skill. Too many times students blame other aspects of their tuba playing instead of recognizing their deficiency in this area. Another benefit to the tuba player is gained from a mandatory piano sequence. While the requirements for piano performance varies widely from different schools, nearly all programs require all music majors to be able to perform simple chord progressions and/or perform pieces of music involving simple chord progressions.

In addition to the professional training developing tubists receive from their school of music's core music curriculum, there are basic harmonic progressions to study in nearly all music that they perform on their instrument. In the commercial brass quintet repertoire, many of these harmonic progressions are simpler than the ones encountered in

⁶¹ Excerpt from Tuba part to Scott Joplin. Arranged by Luther Henderson. *Maple Leaf Rag* (Brassworks Music, 1992) 1.

the solo or orchestral repertoire. A book of studies, which specifically makes a point to instill a strong sense of chord consciousness, is the “First Book of Practical Studies for the Tuba” by Robert Getchell.⁶² While this book is often considered too elementary for collegiate study, there are many aspects of this book that will help a tuba student hone their skills. In fact, the simplicity of the studies is one of its benefits as the simple chord progressions in its exercises are very similar to the chord progressions of many common brass quintet pieces in a light jazz style.

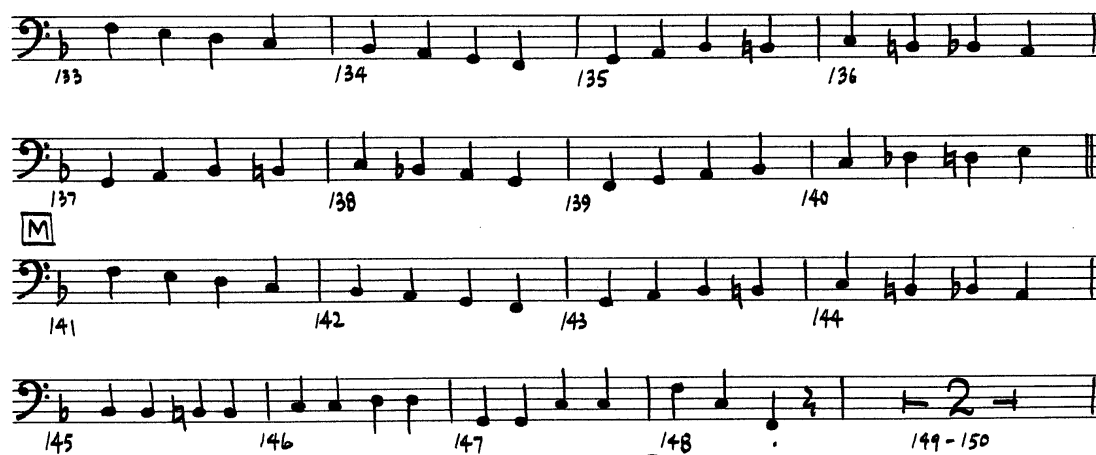
⁶² Robert Getchell. *First Book of Practical Studies for Tuba* (Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 1955), 1.

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Example #2: Etude #14 from the Getchell “First Book of Practical Studies for Tuba” shows bassline movement with no rests, simple chord progressions, and slight rhythmic variation .⁶³

⁶³ Robert Getchell. *First Book of Practical Studies for Tuba* (Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 1955), 7.



Example #3: This excerpt is similar to the Getchell due to its simple rhythms and scalar and simple intervallic movement.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ Excerpt from Tuba part to Fats Waller. Arranged by Luther Henderson. *Handful of Keys*. Southern Music Publishing Company, 1933, 4.



Example #4: Although displaying more rhythmic variation than the Getchell etudes, this excerpt shows similar methods of moving from one chord to another and simple stepwise movement.⁶⁵

In addition to these tuba studies, students who are serious about performing in a commercial brass quintet will continue to study more jazz chords after mastering the simpler chord progressions from the Getchell book and their core music classes. Studying jazz chords and their structure through jazz tunes will greatly benefit young musicians as they will continually reinforce their core theory and aural skills as well as explore new possibilities in terms of harmonic possibilities, chord substitutions, chord voicings, altered chords, slash chords, etc., thus growing their harmonic language. This will

⁶⁵ Excerpt from tuba part to James F. Haneley. Arranged by Luther Henderson. *Back Home in Indiana*. Canadian Brass, 1993, 2.

prepare their ears for the type of sounds that they will hear from their commercial brass quintet. While traditional classical training will be of great benefit for a basic harmonic language, hearing and creating these new sonorities will be an equally important part of the commercial tubists' knowledge base.

Evenness of range

While it is important for all brass musicians to master their instruments to the point that their response and characteristic sound is the same throughout the full range of the instrument, this is particularly important for the tubist in a brass quintet. As an ensemble refers to the lowest voiced instrument to gauge intonation, the tuba part's notes must be clear and have a consistent sound for the rest of the ensemble to rely on for pitch and the group's timbre. A thin or weak sound in certain ranges of the tuba's range creates intonation difficulties for other members of the group and leads to a weak performance. In the situation of a commercial styled brass quintet, this necessity becomes magnified. When the tuba player is playing the part of a walking bass line, the tuba is functioning as a one-person rhythm section. The bass line part in a commercial brass quintet shows the other players where the beat is, what the chord is, and hopefully does so in a way that creates a strong stylistic feel or groove for the other members of the ensemble to play above. A suggestion from jazz bassist Rufus Reid to aspiring jazz bassists is applicable to tuba students in this setting. It is to "always assume that you are the only harmonic and rhythmic substance."⁶⁶ An inconsistent sound in the extreme lower or higher ranges will not only possibly throw off the intonation of the ensemble, but also break up the groove that the tuba has been keeping. It is important to smooth out these inconsistencies in response to ensure a steady sound that will create the effect of a solid rhythm section. Most common difficulties in this area occur in the low range of the tuba as lower notes are either "swallowed" and sound weak and unsteady or are "blatty," meaning they jump out of context for being too loud and a note shape inconsistent with the surrounding line.

⁶⁶Rufus Reid. *The Evolving Bassist*. (Teaneck, New Jersey. Myriad Limited, 2000), 66.

ST. JAMES INFIRMARY

Tuba

Adagio $\text{♩} = 69$

(Opt. 1 = 63-66)

Arranged by
LUTHER HENDERSON

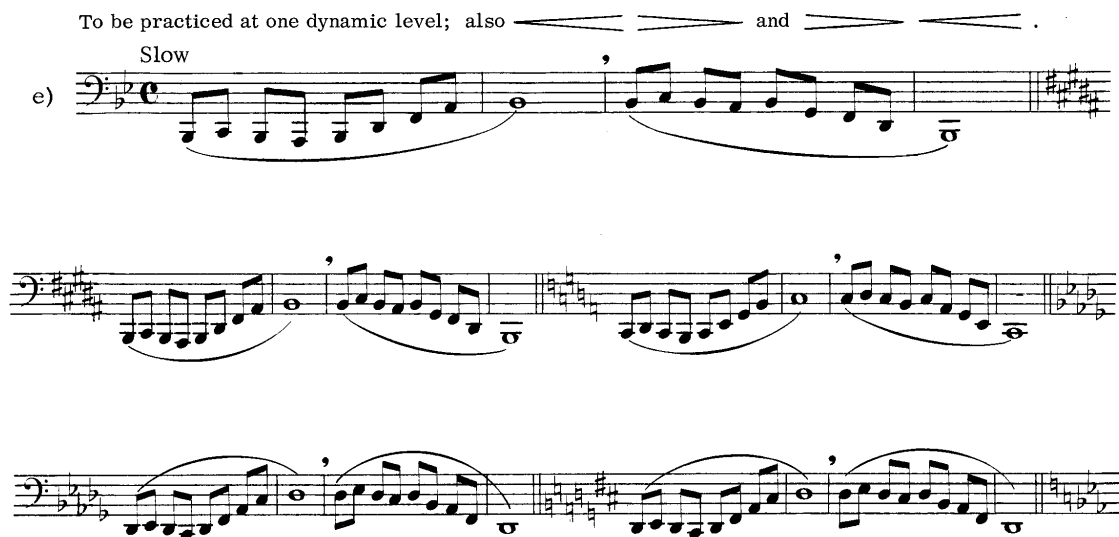
The musical score for the Tuba part of "St. James Infirmary" is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of Adagio (69 bpm). It spans 33 measures across six staves. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as rests, eighth notes, quarter notes, and chords. Measure 10 is highlighted as an example of a low walking bassline. The score ends with a "sim." (simile) marking in measure 33.

Example #5: This excerpt from Luther Henderson's arrangement of "St. James Infirmary" displays an example of a low walking bassline in measure 10 with the appropriate accent marks to ensure clarity and length.⁶⁷

The main reason this is a larger concern for the tubist in a commercial brass quintet is that the tuba parts are simulating a bass instrument instead of written explicitly for the tuba, which is the way that art music was composed for brass quintet. Instead of idiomatically written parts written as an active solo line in a chamber music setting, the

⁶⁷ Excerpt from Tuba part to Irving Mills. Arranged by Luther Henderson. *St. James Infirmary*. Brassworks Music, Toronto, 1986, 1.

tubist in a commercial brass quintet is often faced with smooth bass lines mimicking either a jazz double bass style of playing or a bass guitar part. The evenness across the range of the instrument achieved on either of these string instruments is quite consistent due to the nature of their sound production. The vibrating string creates different pitches based on the left hand's position on the fingerboard, thus changing the length of the string. The sound quality is consistent as the fingerboard and string are consistent material. The tubist is faced with a more complicated situation of manipulating the air to reproduce the consistent sound response of their string counterpart.



Example #6: The turn study is an excellent exercise for building a consistent and beautiful sound throughout the entire range of the tuba.⁶⁸

A staple exercise of tuba studies is the turn study shown above. This exercise was popularized by Arnold Jacobs as an effective means of practicing airflow through a musical line. It also addresses evenness of sound across the entire exercise. It is printed in the “Advanced Band Method” printed by Hal Leonard. There is a section in the back of

⁶⁸ Harold W. Rusch, *Hal Leonard Advanced Band Method with Special Studies by Arnold Jacobs*. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1963), 50.

the book with special studies by Arnold Jacobs. For additional instructions for this exercise, Jacobs suggests that these exercises are to be practiced at one dynamic level, also with a crescendo for one bar and a decrescendo in the second, as well as a decrescendo in the first bar and a crescendo in the second.⁶⁹ While the printed exercise in this Hal Leonard book starts on a low Bb below the staff and goes up to a middle C on the piano, it is highly beneficial for a tubist to practice this exercise across the entire range of the instrument. In addition to the previously mentioned evenness of sound, this is also an excellent exercise for developing comfort in all key signatures. This is essential for any serious student and something that an aspiring brass quintet tubist should not only master, but also become aware of any intonation tendencies in a given key. While this is a common exercise for an undergraduate tubist, the true benefit of the exercise will be reaped with careful listening for a consistent and even sound across the entire register of the instrument as well as maintaining proper intonation. Concerning the group of exercises the turn study is part of, Jacobs writes, “Great care must be used so that the tone doesn’t sound forced or strained.”⁷⁰ Jacobs continues with advice that is pertinent to all tuba playing, particularly chamber music settings. “The sound must be of prime importance in these studies.....A constant effort must be made by the student to think musically.”⁷¹

While considering the teachings of Arnold Jacobs concerning evenness of range, it is important for a tubist to remember Jacobs’ discoveries concerning the relationship

⁶⁹ Harold W. Rusch, *Hal Leonard Advanced Band Method with Special Studies by Arnold Jacobs*. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1963), 50.

⁷⁰ Harold W. Rusch, *Hal Leonard Advanced Band Method with Special Studies by Arnold Jacobs*. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1963), 48.

⁷¹ Harold W. Rusch, *Hal Leonard Advanced Band Method with Special Studies by Arnold Jacobs*. (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1963), 48.

between air flow and air pressure. The relationship between the air speed in different ranges is vital to mastery of an even range. Jacobs principle concerning the rate of flow and its corresponding air pressure informs tubists of adjustments they need to make in their sound production to correct inconsistencies in sound.⁷² It is most common for inexperienced tubists to not move their air fast enough for the higher range of the instrument and to compensate for their slow flow rate by increasing air pressure. This will create a thin pinched sound that will be out of the aural context of the middle register. Conversely, in the low range, a tubist may create too fast of an air stream for a low register note and the note will sound out of context and not “settle” in its proper timbre.

The practice of scales is another method of preparation for the evenness across the range of the tuba demanded by a commercial brass quintet. While scales are something that all beginning tubists spend time playing as they begin to learn the instrument, these are easy to neglect by university level students. In recent years, the practice of scales has received more attention due to the successes of tubist Alan Baer, Principal Tubist of the New York Philharmonic, and the scale routine that he developed to aid his orchestral performance training.⁷³ His insight on using scales to achieve evenness of sound across the entire register of the horn brings attention to daily addressing the extreme upper and lower registers of both bass and contrabass tubas and improving the response of these registers. Many tuba studios also have their own scale syllabi. These exercises are very beneficial to the aspiring tuba student as many of the most difficult passages they will

⁷² Brian Frederickson, *Arnold Jacobs: Song and Wind*. (Wind Song Press Limited, 1996), 118-21.

⁷³ Alan Baer. *Cross Training and Tonic/Dominant Scales for Tuba*. (Baer Tracks Music), 2006.

encounter will not be by stepwise motion. Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan have also developed a scale routine for use by tuba students and professionals as part of their Brass Gym Publication. The chapters “BRRUUMMMM!” and “BRRUUMMMM! In Sixteenth Notes” both use scales to develop a tubist’s ability to perform technical passages easily while focusing on using a smooth even airflow to easily navigate technical passages. These exercises are set up to additionally give the tubist the ability to think quicker and gain confidence over technical passages.⁷⁴

Try these scale variations to challenge your fingering finesse and stay harmonically fit!

"One 5 - Lydian" (#4)

p - f

"One 5 - Minor" (b_3) (specify which type of minor for extended patterns)

p - f

"One 5 - Diminished" (b_3, b_5) (whole step first)

p - f

"One 5 - Whole Tone" (#4, #5)

p - f

Example #7: An example from the Brass Gym designed to improve a tubists technical ability.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan. *The Brass Gym*. (Focus on Music, 2008), 34.

⁷⁵ Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan. *The Brass Gym*. (Focus on Music, 2008), 43.

More traditional sources for scale and interval routines can be found in the Jean Baptiste Arban's Complete Method for Tuba, edited by Jerry Young.⁷⁶ Below is an excerpt from the directions at the beginning of the scales section of the second edition of the Arban's Complete Method for Tuba by Jerry Young. It addresses not only topics necessary for basic skills as an instrumentalist, but areas of playing that are paramount to great quintet tuba playing.

In the nineteenth century pedagogical comments of J.B. Arban it is mentioned that the study of scales was sadly neglected by many students of the time. That situation is largely unchanged today. Scales provide the vocabulary for most of the various musical languages we present. The various keys might be considered dialects. In any case, to "*speak*" effectively, we must be fluent in all dialects in order to achieve the goal of truly expressive performance. This is the supreme reason for the in depth, routine practice of scales.

Concentrated scale practice also affects two other important developmental areas:

- Intonation. Good intonation begins with the ability to hear whole steps and half steps in tune. Many students have the ability to play the correct finger patterns, often at considerable tempi, but often those same students have not given intonation of the scale a passing thought. Scales are the primary home of intonation practice. Tubists should be prepared to use the first valve slide and/or other devices on the instrument in addition to using his/her natural equipment (the ear) to make rapid adjustments/corrections to pitches. It is recommended that students sing scales in conjunction with practicing them on the instrument and also that the student practice scales with a tuner.
- Technique. Technique is truly the "*last place priority*" in scale practice. Quite frequently in competitions and auditions, scales are played at tremendous tempi. Students preparing for competitions should bear in mind that adjudicators generally hear scales to get a sense of tone quality and intonation, not technical prowess. Nevertheless, the study of scales does establish the basic fingering/technical patterns we play. Although arpeggios are not covered in this portion of the Arban method, it is recommended that when all basic scales are mastered the student add at least a one octave (preferably two octave) arpeggio based on the tonic chord to the end of each scale played.

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Another valuable scale resource is included in the Buddy Baker "Tenor Trombone Method." This is a useful book for tubists to start by playing down an octave and gradually improve to be able to eventually move into the trombone range as they become more proficient. The legato scales chapter of this book is made of up scales and arpeggios. There are several helpful suggestions in the preface to the chapter dedicated to scales and arpeggios. These are mainly concerning proper breathing techniques, always

⁷⁶ Jean Baptiste Arban. Transcribed and edited by Jerry Young. *Arban Complete Method for Tuba*. (Encore Music Publishers, 2000), 63-91.

⁷⁷ Jean Baptiste Arban. Transcribed and edited by Jerry Young. *Arban Complete Method for Tuba*. (Encore Music Publishers, 2000), 63.

producing a great sound, performing the exercises with a musical line, and a reminder to not strain in the upper register.⁷⁸ This chapter is made up of major, harmonic minor, natural minor, melodic minor, chromatic, whole tone, and diminished scales. Because there are seven different types of scales, an excellent use of this book is to practice one kind of scale per day and at the end of the week, the student has practiced each of the different types of scales. This is also a practical approach because if performed at the suggested tempo marking, each day's amount of scales should only take approximately five minutes. This is a topic that should be addressed on a daily basis. Giving scales great attention benefits all types of performance that a student might undertake.

⁷⁸ Buddy Baker. *Tenor Trombone Method*. (Miami, FL: Warner Music Group, 1983), 24-25.

A Palette of Articulations

Because tubists in commercial brass quintets need to not only sound like a tuba, but also a double bass, bass guitar, or even synthesized bass, the aspiring tubist must study and master a large palette of articulations. Through the study of orchestral and band literature, as well as traditional quintet and solo literature, a tubist should acquire the skills and abilities to utilize many different articulations depending on the performance setting. While articulations are already an important part of a tuba curriculum, the tubist must specifically isolate and address the articulations required by commercial brass quintet playing.

The most basic and effective way for tubists to develop this large variety of articulations is to develop the concept of each type of articulation through listening. It is important to listen to all types of bass instruments and the type of articulation at the beginning of their notes. Listening to jazz combos, jazz fusion groups, rock bands, Latin ensembles, and pops orchestras can be quite informative to gain insight regarding what type of articulations are truly called for in a given musical setting.

Because of the physical differences and dissimilar means of sound production, the many different types of articulations produced by bowed, picked and plucked instruments are not the most intuitive for a tubist. However, with study of each of these sounds, the tubist can master the different styles needed for commercial brass quintet literature. Orchestral experience also can be quite beneficial for this study, as the tubist will be surrounded by the pizzicato, spiccato, arco, and other articulations used by the orchestra members around them.

Jazz articulations are very important to master as well, especially because many of the pieces that a commercial brass quintet will perform may actually be written in the jazz style of modern notation programs instead of the classical style of notation that may be more familiar to the tubist. Similar markings from classical repertoire will be employed, but will have a different meaning in this new context.

In addition to the type of articulations from other bass styled instrument, the tubist must also be able to create percussive effects as needed. This is often required because of the earlier stated situation of the tuba fulfilling the entire role of a rhythm section. While this is not necessary for all performances, the practice that a tubist undertakes to be able to perform percussive types of articulation will aid their general abilities in a chamber music setting and also provide another alternative for them to use in their “pallette” of articulations. Some instances of such percussive articulations are available in modern recordings and videos. Some of the more famous of these are “Fnugg” from the album “Tuba Carnival” by Øystein Baadsvik,⁷⁹ Sam Pilafian’s playing on the Empire Brass recording “Braggin’ in Brass”⁸⁰ and his solo jazz work on the album “Travelin’ Light,”⁸¹ and the work of sousaphonist Nat McIntosh with the Youngblood Brass Band on their albums *Unlearn*⁸² and *Center : Level : Roar*.⁸³

Moreover, a tubist may also encounter musical situations where they are attempting to recreate the effect of a sousaphone while playing the more traditional concert tuba that they are using in the quintet. There are many instances of use of a

⁷⁹ Baadsvik, Øystein. *Tuba Carnival*. [sound recording] Bis, 2003.

⁸⁰ Empire Brass. *Braggin’ in Brass*. [sound recording] Telarc, 1990.

⁸¹ Sam Pilafian. *Travelin’ Light*. [sound recording] Telarc, 1991.

⁸² Youngblood Brass Band. *Unlearn*. [sound recording] 2000.

⁸³ Youngblood Brass Band. *Center : Level : Roar*. [sound recording] Ozone Music 2003.

sousaphone in jazz and pop music in addition to the Youngblood Brass Band recordings mentioned above. Commercial brass quintets often copy these styles. Some examples of these are “Alright” from John Legend’s album “Get Lifted”⁸⁴ and The Roots “75 Bars (Black’s Reconstruction)” from their “Rising Down” album.⁸⁵

After investigating the above types of articulations, it is very beneficial for a tubist to consult both live performances and recordings of tubists performing in commercial brass quintets. It is important to conduct this study similar to the way that a student would approach the study of an orchestral piece. It is important to remember that a performance or recording is one of the many possible interpretations. With this in mind, a tubist needs to listen critically and make note of articulations used and how they affect the greater musical performance of the group. There are a plethora of recordings available for study today as well as live videos of performances. This use of modeling is a great method for any tubist to be more informed and is not to be neglected throughout the course of study anymore than an orchestral tubist would forgo the tradition of continually studying the recordings and live performances available by the great orchestras.

⁸⁴ John Legend. *Get Lifted*. [sound recording] Sony, 2004.

⁸⁵ The Roots. *Rising Down*. [sound recording] Def Jam, 2008.

Breathing Efficiency

While it is always of the utmost importance for a tubist to breathe as efficiently as possible, the musical setting of the commercial brass quintet demands an emphasis on this pertinent skill. Because of the tubists' role of serving as the bass player and often functioning as a one-person rhythm section, there is a need for constant sound from the tuba so that the piece keeps the musical ideas flowing and the energy of the performance continues unbroken. This means the tubist must be able to breathe incredibly efficiently. The ability to move as large an amount of air into the lungs as possible in the least amount of time without putting too large of a space between bass line notes presents an inevitable challenge for any tubist. While many commercial styled quintet pieces present situations where there is no correct answer concerning a breathing plan, a tubist should be prepared for these challenges.

To begin addressing the concern of breath efficiency, it is often most effective to begin by making sure that a tubist has good breathing fundamentals. To really breath well, it is important to review some of the scholarship that has been done concerning breathing. The master teacher Arnold Jacobs conducted extensive research concerning the science behind breathing and breathing concerns performing on a brass instrument. The book "Song and Wind"⁸⁶ presents this information and allows the tubist to have a greater picture concerning breathing. Another publication, "The Breathing Book" by David Vining⁸⁷ addresses many of these same topics and presents many of Jacobs' ideals as they relate to specific parts of the body. This transition from scientific theory to how to

⁸⁶ Brian Frederickson, *Arnold Jacobs: Song and Wind*. (Wind Song Press Limited, 1996), 99-108.

⁸⁷ David Vining. *The Breathing Book for Tuba*. (Mountain Peak Music, 2009).

implement this knowledge in practice is important for all tubists to master. It will greatly aid breathing in bass line situations. In addition, each section of text is immediately accompanied by corresponding breathing exercises to be done on the tuba.

To practice great breathing techniques, the “Breathing Gym” book and accompanying DVD by Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan, presents breathing ideas and exercises from the most basic to advanced levels. While the entire set of exercises is beneficial for a tubist’s air control and ability to breathe efficiently, the exercises concerning shortening the inhalation⁸⁸ are directly applicable to commercial brass quintet playing. These will train a tubist to breathe a large amount of air in quickly so that the bass line will be disrupted as little as possible. Other exercises in the Breathing Gym will aid in increasing control over the exhalation. This coupled with an efficient embouchure (fundamental to any area of tuba performance and assumed of any course of tuba study) will allow the tubist to perform longer phrases.

In addition to the exercises in the “Breathing Gym,” there is a book written by Bob Stewart, which is written solely concerning the topic of breathing while playing bass lines. Bob Stewart is an experienced performer in many different styles of music. He has performed with Charles Mingus, Gil Evans, Carla Bley, David Murray, Taj Mahal, Dizzy Gillespie, McCoy Tyner, Arthur Blythe, Freddie Hubbard, Don Cherry, Nicholas Payton, Wynton Marsalis, and Charlie Haden.⁸⁹ This publication, entitled “Breathing Bass Line”,

⁸⁸ Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan. *The Breathing Gym*. (Focus on Excellence, Inc., 2002), 14.

⁸⁹ Sergio Carolino. “Odyssey of a Jazz Tuba Master.” *ITEA Journal* (Vol. 33 (4) 2006): 48.

describes what the author calls “Pant Breathing.”⁹⁰

Pant Breathing



Example #8: This is an example of a beginning “Pant Breathing” exercise. There are no rests for the tubist to take a breath.⁹¹

His idea is that while there are no spaces to breathe between notes in a bass line comprised of quarter notes, the tubist only has time to take a “pant breath.” This breath is not a full breath, but one that is similar to the manner one breathes while out of breath and the body is “panting” in an effort to get oxygen into the lungs. After describing the pant breath, several exercises suggest various ways for the tubist to implement different breathing strategies on the bass line exercises the book presents. Stewart suggests altering the breathing plans for each repetition of a study and avoid using the same breathing patterns while employing the “pant breath” to keep the musical line moving. While many of the exercises in the book are composed of mainly constant quarter notes, this book is directly addressing the difficulties of playing bass lines in a commercial quintet. The

⁹⁰ Bob Stewart. *Breathing Bass Line for Tuba and All Instruments*. (New York: Elektrarts Music, 2003), 3.

⁹¹ Bob Stewart. *Breathing Bass Line for Tuba and All Instruments*. (New York: Elektrarts Music, 2003), 5.

author describes the book as “a book designed specifically for tuba players to help them develop breath control and rhythm section breathing techniques.”⁹²

Straight eighth notes:

14. 

Example #9: In this more advanced breathing exercise, the tubist faces more agility and articulation challenges while still having few breathing opportunities.⁹³

The study of tuba excerpts involving loud and low passages will also aid a tubist in developing great breathing practices that help train the tubist’s control over the respiratory system through performing musically. Some of the famous orchestral excerpts include the opening of the “Overture to Die Meistersinger” by Richard Wagner, Symphony No. 5 by Serge Prokofiev, the B major section of Wagner’s “Ride of the Valkyries,” and Ottorino Respighi’s Fountains of Rome. Being able to perform these pieces at the marked dynamic level will demand that the tubist has the breathing efficiency demanded in commercial brass quintet performance. Quintet performance and

⁹² Sergio Carolino. “Odyssey of a Jazz Tuba Master.” ITEA Journal (Vol. 33 (4) 2006): 50.

⁹³ Bob Stewart. *Breathing Bass Line for Tuba and All Instruments*. (New York: Elektrarts Music, 2003), 18.

orchestral training are mutually beneficial. In response to how performing with the New York Brass Quintet influenced his other playing, Toby Hanks responded, “I believe that I become a better orchestral player from my experience with the NYBQ.”⁹⁴ In both settings, the tubist is faced with virtuosic musical lines while continuing to serve as the supporting bass voice of the ensemble.

⁹⁴ John Stevens. “Toby Hanks: A Career to Remember- A Look at the Past and Advice for the Future.” *ITEA Journal* (36 (4) 2009), 36.

The Diversity to Perform in Many Commercial Styles

Because a commercial brass quintet will perform pieces in a number of different styles, it is important for a tubist to become as comfortable as possible performing in as many different commercial styles as possible. While this may seem an obvious and insurmountable task, there are a few approaches that will ensure an adequate level of success. First, it is important to gain insight into the tuba's use in popular and jazz styles of music through both a historical perspective as well as contemporary examples. It is also very beneficial to study music in other styles that was not written for the tuba since in a commercial brass quintet, the tuba part is more likely to resemble a bass or possible bass trombone part. It is also beneficial to identify solos and studies that are written in commercial styles as their practice and performance will give the tubist experience and confidence in a given style.

As with the study of any subject, it is beneficial to obtain a historical perspective. "A mature musician is one who has taken the time to study the tradition of any music idiom before he/she can truly conceptualize that music!"⁹⁵ While many tuba curricula focus on the development of the tuba as a solo instrument in the last sixty years and the development of the orchestral literature, very few include historical information concerning the jazz and popular music background of the tuba. In fact, the tuba played a major role in early jazz music. Tuba was added at the same time as the drums to Armstrong's original Hot Five to be included in Louis Armstrong's Hot Seven band.⁹⁶ These instruments along with the original banjo and piano created the first rhythm section

⁹⁵ Rufus Reid. *The Evolving Bassist*. (Teaneck, New Jersey. Myriad Limited, 2000), 66.

⁹⁶ Gunther Schuller. *Early Jazz*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 106.

in a small jazz ensemble. This would be the model for future jazz combos to come.⁹⁷

Through most of the 1920s and early 1930s, the tuba was the main bass instrument in jazz and dance bands across the country and eventually fell out of favor as tubists would play bass notes on beats one and three in each measure in order to breathe during the rest where the upright bass had no such respiratory demands.⁹⁸ By 1934, John Kirby, of the Fletcher Henderson Band fame, was one of the last bass players still using the tuba in this traditional role.⁹⁹

After its decline as the main bass instrument in the 1930s, the tuba was also featured during prominent jazz projects such as Miles Davis' "Birth of the Cool" album, featuring Bill Barber on tuba.¹⁰⁰ Barber is an important figure to study for tuba performance in commercial styles according to Harvey Phillips, renowned tubist and former Professor of Music, Indiana University. "Bill Barber, tuba, should be known and acknowledged by everyone interested in the evolution and deployment of the tuba in American Jazz: from ragtime, to Dixieland, to swing, to bebop, to wherever it is going."¹⁰¹ The tuba has gone on to be used by many jazz artists. An example is jazz trombonist J.J. Johnson's recording "The Brass Orchestra."¹⁰²

While the double bass and electric bass have continued to be the main bass voice in jazz settings since the 1930s, the tuba and sousaphone are still used in a number of jazz and commercial settings today. One of the more visible to the public is The Roots, the house band on the late night show starring Jimmy Fallon. The Roots regularly feature

⁹⁷ Gunther Schuller. *Early Jazz*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 101.

⁹⁸ Gunther Schuller. *The Swing Era*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 227.

⁹⁹ Gunther Schuller. *The Swing Era*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 295.

¹⁰⁰ Miles Davis. *Birth of the Cool*. [sound recording] Blue Note Records, 1957.

¹⁰¹ Harvey Phillips. "Bill Barber, Tuba." *ITEA Journal* (34, (3) 2007), 35.

¹⁰² J.J. Johnson. *The Brass Orchestra*. [sound recording] Verve Records, 1997.

their sousaphonist, Damon “Tuba Gooding Jr.” Bryson.¹⁰³ There are also a number of commercial rap and Rhythm and Blues recordings featuring tuba playing. Some of the more notable of these recordings are John Legend’s “Get Lifted” album,¹⁰⁴ Outkast’s “Idlewild” soundtrack/album,¹⁰⁵ and a live album by blues guitarist Taj Mahal featuring Howard Johnson and his tuba ensemble, Gravity.¹⁰⁶ Howard Johnson and Gravity continued collaborating with Taj Mahal on their recording, “Right Now!”.¹⁰⁷ In addition to the work of the Gravity tuba ensemble, the Matteson-Phillips Tubajazz Consort was one of the most significant movements of the tuba into jazz music, as evidenced by their album, “Superhorns.”¹⁰⁸ Any tuba student considering performance in a commercial brass quintet, should subsequently study this album, as well as the background of each of the performing musicians. The performances by Harvey Phillips, Daniel Perantoni, and R. Winston Morris lay the foundation for much of what would be possible for future tubists in the area of jazz. This collection provides a wide spectrum of contemporary uses of tuba in commercial music.

In addition to studying jazz from a tubist’s perspective, it is equally important to gain a bassist’s perspective as that is the musical role the tubist will be fulfilling in a brass quintet setting. There are a number of great jazz bass method books available and the more sources consulted, the more informed a tubist will be. One of the most important sources to consult is Rufus Reid’s “The Evolving Bassist.” This text is

¹⁰³ Steven Maxwell. “An Interview with Damon Bryson.” ITEA Journal (39 (2) 2012), 30.

¹⁰⁴ John Legend. *Get Lifted*. [sound recording] Sony, 2004.

¹⁰⁵ Outkast. *Idlewild*. [sound recording] LaFace, 2006.

¹⁰⁶ Taj Mahal. *The Real Thing*. [sound recording] Columbia/Legacy, 1971.

¹⁰⁷ Howard Johnson & Gravity Featuring Taj Mahal. *Right Now!* Verve Records, 1997.

¹⁰⁸ Matteson-Phillips Tubajazz Consort. *Superhorns*. Mark Records, 1982.

important to the aspiring commercial brass quintet tubist as Reid describes not only bass playing, but the role of a bass player in a jazz setting and how to fulfill that role as well as possible. “The primary role of a jazz bassist in a group is to support harmonically and rhythmically, and most importantly, to ‘swing.’”¹⁰⁹ A very comprehensive publication, this is a valuable resource for the tubist to gain a jazz bass perspective on a variety of music from Blues to Swing to Latin. As a supplement to “The Evolving Bassist,” it is also beneficial to study Reid’s own bass work by studying his transcribed bass lines. While a tubist would benefit greatly by transcribing these bass lines from recordings, there are also transcribed bass lines published for study in a variety of styles.¹¹⁰ Some examples follow:

¹⁰⁹ Rufus Reid. *The Evolving Bassist*. (Teaneck, New Jersey. Myriad Limited, 2000), 11.

¹¹⁰ Rufus Reid. Edited by Jamey Aebersold. *Bass Lines Transcribed from Vols. 1 & 3 of Jamey Aebersold’s Play-A-Long Series*. (Jamey Aebersold, 1980).

1 **F minor, E flat minor, D minor (Eight measure phrases)**
SIDE 1, TRACK 1

The image displays six staves of musical notation, each representing an eight-measure phrase in a different key. The staves are arranged vertically. The first staff is labeled 'F-' and shows a melodic line in F minor. The second staff is also labeled 'F-' and shows a different melodic line. The third staff is labeled 'Eb-' and shows a melodic line in E-flat minor. The fourth staff is also labeled 'Eb-' and shows a different melodic line. The fifth staff is labeled 'D-' and shows a melodic line in D minor. The sixth staff is also labeled 'D-' and shows a different melodic line. Each staff contains eight measures of music, with various note values and accidentals.

Example #10: Bass lines by Rufus Reid.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Rufus Reid. Edited by Jamey Aebersold. *Bass Lines Transcribed from Vols. 1 & 3 of Jamey Aebersold's Play-A-Long Series*. (Jamey Aebersold, 1980), 1.

BOSSA NOVA

Example #11: Another example of a bass line by Rufus Reid.¹¹²

In addition to practicing from double and electric bass studies, there are some excellent books written for bass trombone designed to help train musicians in many musical styles. One of the most helpful in this area is “Stereograms” by David William

¹¹² Rufus Reid. Edited by Jamey Aebersold. *Bass Lines Transcribed from Vols. 1 & 3 of Jamey Aebersold's Play-A-Long Series*. (Jamey Aebersold, 1980), 24.

Brubeck.¹¹³ Because these studies are written specifically for bass trombone, they present a challenge to play on tuba similar to the one faced when reading some commercial brass quintets. The bass trombone in jazz settings often moves back and forth between playing bass line figures as well as soli lines with the trombone section, as well as unison soli lines with the bass and baritone saxophone.¹¹⁴ The most useful aspect of this book is that each of the twenty studies is written in a different style of commercial music and dedicated to a different famous trombonist. Trombonists from both classical and commercial styles are represented as the studies present examples of funk, swing, ballad, Latin styles, and hip-hop as well as classical based etudes. In addition to the stylistic demands placed on the performer, there are many physical challenges to performing these pieces as the range is very large (it is suggested to additionally perform them all down one octave), the phrases are long, and there is a full gamut of articulations. These pieces are currently being adapted for tuba by the composer with the help of Kelly Thomas, Professor of Tuba at the University of Arizona. A preview of the first stereogram recently appeared in the ITEA Journal.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ David William Brubeck. *Stereograms for Solo Bass Trombone: Vol. I: Nos. 1-10, Three Smooth Stones*. (University of Texas at Austin; International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 1995).

¹¹⁴ David William Brubeck. "Stereogram No. 1 transcribed for solo tuba." ITEA Journal (Vol. 38 (4) 2011), 49.

¹¹⁵ David William Brubeck. "Stereogram No. 1 transcribed for solo tuba." ITEA Journal (Vol. 38 (4) 2011), 49.

Stereogram™ No. 1

Dedicated to James Pankow:

For Solo Bass Trombone

trombonist, arranger, and composer with the jazz-rock group *Chicago*. Pankow has written numerous hit songs including: *Colour My World*, *Make Me Smile*, *Just You 'N' Me*, and *Old Days*.

by David William Brubeck
(ASCAP)

Opt. 8vb Opt. 8va

Allegro $\text{♩} = 74-88$

Funk 3X (Opt. 1X only)

1 *mf* *poco a poco crescendo* *f*

5 *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

9 *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

13 *mf* *mp* *mf* *mp*

17 *mf* *mp* *mf* *f*

Example #12: An example of an etude in a Funk style.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁶ David William Brubeck. *Stereograms for Solo Bass Trombone: Vol. I: Nos. 1-10, Three Smooth Stones*. (University of Texas at Austin; International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 1995), 1.

Stereogram™ No. 17

For Solo Bass Trombone

Dedicated to Matt Finders:
bass trombonist, trombonist, and tubist. Finders is a former resident of New York city where he performed as a free lance musician and played bass trombone in the Toshiko Akioshi Jazz Orchestra. He is currently the trombonist in the NBC Orchestra where he performs for Jay Leno and The Tonight Show in Los Angeles. He has recorded a solo album entitled Tuba Czar.

by David William Brubeck
(ASCAP)

Opt 8va
Opt 8vb

1 Med. Fast Hip-Hop $\text{♩} = 62$ (approx.)

Example #13: An example of an etude in a hip-hop style.¹¹⁷

There are also many opportunities to perform in commercial styles within the tuba solo literature. Because the tuba is a relatively young instrument by classical music standards, there has been a great need for all types of solo literature over the last fifty years. The piece “Diverse Elements” for tuba, euphonium, and piano by David Gilliam¹¹⁸ includes jazz sections where the soloist is instructed to play in a swing style. The third movement of the Edward Gregson “Tuba Concerto”¹¹⁹ also includes a jazz section as melodic fragments are based off of the blues scale. This piece also includes a very blues

¹¹⁷ David William Brubeck. *Stereograms for Solo Bass Trombone: Vol. I: Nos. 1-10, Three Smooth Stones*. (University of Texas at Austin; International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 1995), 55.

¹¹⁸ David Gillingham. *Diversive Elements*. Tuba-Euphonium Press, 1999.

¹¹⁹ Edward Gregson. *Tuba Concerto*. Novello and Company Limited, 1978.

scale-based cadenza for the tubist to explore. The Gary Ziek “Concerto for Tuba”¹²⁰ also has a very commercially styled third movement entitled, “Riot!.” The drum set keeps a driving beat throughout the movement and the accompaniment plays simple jazz patterns while the tuba solo performs with this jazz band style background supporting the soloist. These pieces are great ways for a young tuba soloist to begin performing music in the commercial style. These solos are all outgrowths from classically based music. This “middle ground” can serve as an excellent starting point for study.

A tuba solo that has been becoming more prominent in this area is “Let There Be Funk,” by D. Edward Davis.¹²¹ This piece has been part of the repertoire list for such competitions as the International Leonard Falcone Solo Competition and the Tuba Artist Division at the International Tuba Euphonium Conference in 2010.¹²² This is a tuba solo with digital (CD) playback, which provides the accompaniment while the tuba soloist performs in many commercial styles “including, funk, hip-hop, salsa, R&B, and soul.”¹²³ This is an excellent piece to study for the tubist preparing for commercial brass quintet performance as the piece is “a real workout for the tubist due to the constantly driving bass lines and melodic fragments, with only a few extended rests...”¹²⁴ The piece changes style suddenly and with little preparation. Many of the parts are based on bass line figures or riffs in each of the different styles. The soloist plays constantly so there are few opportunities for deep breaths, which is similar to playing bass lines in a quintet

¹²⁰ Gary Ziek. *Concerto for Tuba*. Cimarron Music Press, 2012.

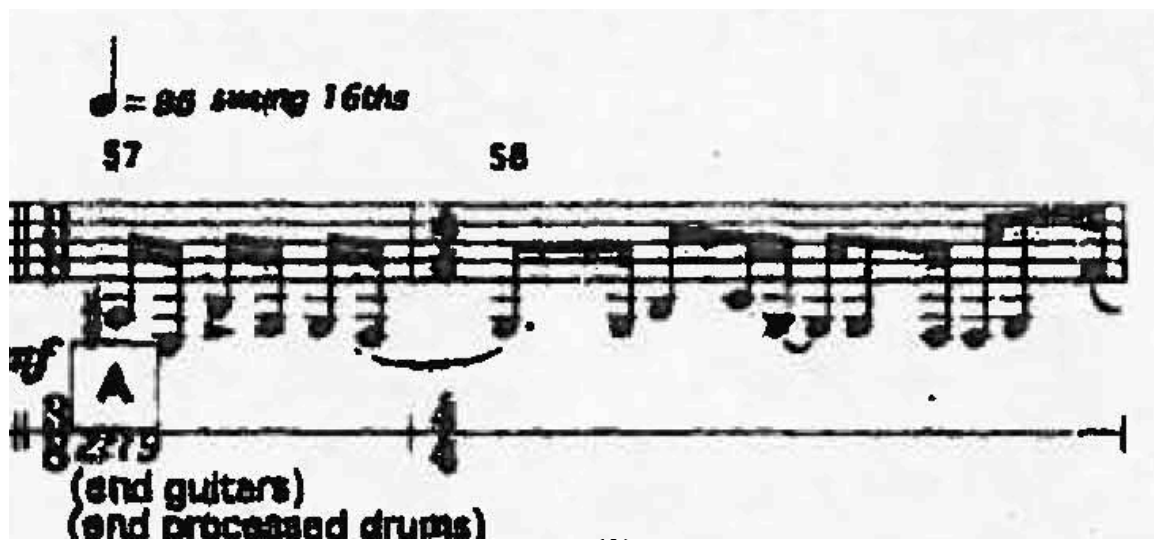
¹²¹ D. Edward Davis. *Let There Be Funk*. 2000.

¹²² *International Tuba and Euphonium Conference ITEC 2010*. 7 July 2013
<<http://www.wretch.cc/blog/hirow/10889543>>.

¹²³ Program Notes from D. Edward Davis. *Let There Be Funk*. 2000.

¹²⁴ R. Winston Morris, and Daniel Perantoni. *Guide to the Tuba Repertoire*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 251.

setting. Additionally, the tubist is forced to adjust to the pre-recorded accompaniment to match style, groove, and articulation while moving through rhythmically challenging lines that are continually metamorphosing. Many of the technically demanding passages are written in the low range of the tuba so that it is challenging for the soloist to project clearly. Additionally, this piece is approximately nine minutes long¹²⁵ and the tuba soloist plays almost the entire time. In many respects, this solo mirrors the challenges of playing in a commercial brass quintet. An example of the bass line nature of this piece follows:



Example #14: Let There Be Funk by D. Edward Davis.¹²⁶

Once a tubist has mastered these challenges concerning different commercial styles, it is wise to again reference the models of commercial brass quintet tuba playing that have preceded them. Just as it was earlier suggested to listen to performances and recordings to study the palette of articulations used, it is also informative to hear how other tubists perform in different styles. While the first trumpet in a commercial brass quintet is often responsible for setting the style for the melodies, the tubist is often left on

¹²⁵ R. Winston Morris, and Daniel Perantoni. *Guide to the Tuba Repertoire*. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 251.

¹²⁶ D. Edward Davis. *Let There Be Funk*. 2000, 2.

his or her own to function as a one person rhythm section that is providing musical support of the four higher voices. Because of this, the tubist in any given group is making important decisions about the groove and style to be presented through their accompaniment part. It is important to remember that a large part of the style is specific to the player. President's Own Marine Band Tubist and Dixieland musician Tom Holtz has stated, "The way you play jazz is all about you. Unlike your orchestral excerpts, you get plenty of choice in how you play..."¹²⁷ The individual tubists and ensembles recommended in the section concerning articulations are all valuable suggestions for study in this area as well.

¹²⁷ Tom Holtz. "Dixieland Jazz Tuba Fundamentals." (ITEA Journal 30 (4) 2003), 64.

Consistency in Performance

In his book The Secrets of Musical Confidence, author Andrew Evans states, “Reaching the standards you set for yourself is a question of maximizing your motivation and matching your ambitions to reality. Maintaining it is a matter of having confidence in your ability, so that you are put off as little as possible by the constant variations in performing situations and the ups and downs of a musical career.”¹²⁸ Because of the time, logistics, and cost of rehearsing, it is common for a commercial styled quintet to perform many of the same pieces multiple times. If a group is on a tour, it is common to not rehearse the same program over and over again when it is being regularly performed. It is also common for a commercial styled quintet to play by memory for a large portion of their performance. This creates a number of difficult obstacles for tuba performance. It is important that a tubist knows his or her parts and has mastered the physical challenges of the repertoire so thoroughly that there is no fear of making mistakes. This combined with a strong and confident mental approach to performing music will set up the tubist for success. “This strength can be found in trust. A concrete trust in yourself as well as in your preparation is necessary for confidence to take over.”¹²⁹

Because of the nature of performance and the demands of rest and preparation, the tubist needs to take care of one’s playing just as a professional musician in any other setting would. As practice time often becomes scarce, it is important to make the most of what time is available. “Come up with a daily routine that covers every kind of playing you are likely to encounter. Hold yourself to a very high standard of performance and

¹²⁸ Andrew Evans. *The Secrets of Musical Confidence*. (San Francisco: Thorsons, 1994), 65.

¹²⁹ Stuart Edward Dunkel. *The Audition Process: Anxiety Management and Coping Strategies*. (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1989), 138.

don't let yourself get by with playing your fundamental exercises and etudes the wrong way with sloppy technique.”¹³⁰ If this concept is truly practiced on a regular basis, the tubist will reap the benefits not only in his commercial brass quintet playing, but all areas of performance. Because of the unique demands mentioned earlier, the commercial brass quintet tubist should make a point to adjust his or her daily routine and exercises to be more appropriate for the workload of each performance.

When a piece of music is going to be memorized for performance, it is important for the tubist to know the part extremely well as the tuba will serve as a guide for the higher voices to listen to for reference to pitch and time. The tuba is fulfilling the bass part, which is nearly always serving an accompaniment role. First, it is important to analyze the tuba part by looking at the key and time signature, key changes, the form of the piece, and contrasting or repeated sections within each part of the form. This analysis will provide a framework; for the memorization process, and a more convincing performance. After the initial study and analysis has been performed, it is important to not only remember the notes, but also prepare the performance to the point where your memory is comprised of elements of both remembering the music and subconscious muscle memory. While muscle memory is not something to rely on when performing music, it can be a powerful ally during a demanding tour when there might only be limited rest time available. To master this practice, it is important to look to recommendations from performance coaches as well as brass mentors.

Philip Farkas was principal horn in the Chicago Symphony, horn professor at Indiana University and author of “The Art of Brass Playing” and “The Art of French

¹³⁰ Sean Greene. “Tips for Missing Fewer Notes in Performance.” (ITEA Journal 38 (3) 2011) 85.

Horn Playing.” He offers the following insight on how to practice consistency. “How often we have missed notes because we were just a little careless, did not concentrate, or did not key our minds to try just a little more conscientiously! I have a very simple method, which is used to discipline my concentration, my will to “get the notes.” It might be termed the penalty system. It is put into practice only after all the technical details of a composition are worked out. The object is to get one, or perhaps two or three, perfect renditions of the piece during a practice session. The number of perfect performances should vary with the length and difficulty of the composition. If a note is missed, the penalty is to go back and do it again, after continuing to the end!...This very closely approximates the keyed-up attitude of a player in actual performance.”¹³¹

Given the situation of repeated performances of the same music often within a short number of days, combined with short periods of rest between performances, and the possible demands of traveling, it is easy for a tubist in a commercial brass quintet to become unfocused mentally during a performance. While this situation is not completely unavoidable, there are a number of methods to combat or hopefully prevent this predicament. In addition to the earlier breathing exercises concerning quick inhalations, the “Breathing Gym” also includes a section entitled “Breathing for the Brain.” What these exercises address is the calming of the mind and increased concentration available when performing some simple exercises before performance.¹³² Some individuals prefer to meditate or practice other forms of focused breathing for relaxation; these are excellent exercises that have the added benefit of not only preparing the mind for performance, but

¹³¹ Philip Farkas. *The Art of Brass Playing*. (Bloomington, IN: Wind Music, Inc., 1962), 67-68.

¹³² Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan. *The Breathing Gym*. (Focus on Excellence, Inc., 2002), 23.

also preparing the body for the breathing challenges of an upcoming performance. Farkas makes the suggestion that one should “Take several deep breaths before starting a performance, and every now and then during the performance, whenever the occasion permits. Steady, deep breathing will allay the queasy feeling so often noticed in the stomach, and the extra oxygen gained will help alert the mind.”¹³³

In addition to the benefits of relaxed and controlled breathing, where the performer is placing their mental energy during a performance can be equally effective. It is often helpful to focus on the music itself, instead of focusing on oneself or critiquing.¹³⁴ While this is a simple idea, it reminds the performer of what they are on stage to do in the first place, thus making a very simple task out of a plausibly complex situation. Additionally, while focusing on the music, it can be very powerful to also focus on what we have to offer as musicians. “We give up control and open ourselves to the energy of our natural talents. When we are ready to receive its power, it will be revealed and the “magic” moments will be ours to experience.”¹³⁵

In addition to the aspects that can be prepared on the tuba and through musical study, it is important for tubists in a commercial brass quintet to have a strong musical philosophy behind their performances. Being informed of different philosophies and being able to communicate more than simple notes is what makes a musical performance a human event instead of a mechanical reproduction of notes in a given order. There are several publications available that are written to aid all musicians in this area. While

¹³³ Philip Farkas. *The Art of French Horn Playing*. (Secaucus, NJ: Summy-Birchard Inc., 1956), 84.

¹³⁴ Sean Greene. “Tips for Missing Fewer Notes in Performance.” (ITEA Journal 38 (3) 2011) 85.

¹³⁵ Stuart Edward Dunkel. *The Audition Process: Anxiety Management and Coping Strategies*. (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1989), 138.

often only recommended to students who are experiencing performance anxiety or a large amount of duress from their study or performance, there are many ideas covered that directly relate to tuba performance in a commercial brass quintet. Probably the most appropriate to this genre comes from Stuart Dunkel's *"The Audition Process: Anxiety Management and Coping Strategies."* "In summary, humor helps us in overwhelming situations by: giving us perspective; taking our situation less seriously; blowing off steam; showing us new possibilities on how to view an event; de-powering our perfectionistic attitudes; helping us accept our predicaments; venting anger and frustrations; giving us distance from our situation; helping us find courage inside of ourselves; and breaking tension."¹³⁶ While tapping into the lighter side of a performance, it is also important to consider the performance from a less serious perspective provided by Farkas: "...remind yourself occasionally that your works comes under the heading of entertainment. You are not about to perform an operation in which someone's life will be at stake! You are simply going to make some music and make it as beautifully as possible. Like a baseball player, you must try for a high batting average; but you must not be dismayed if you occasionally bat less than a thousand. Knowing that perfection is perhaps an impossible goal relieves the strain and effort of trying too hard, which is probably the surest way to get an attack of "nerves" and play badly as a result."¹³⁷

In general, it can be daunting to step up to the idea of producing flawless performances, but one's confidence may be greatly increased by remembering to simplify the situation. Again, Farkas provides a powerful perspective. "I believe brass playing is

¹³⁶ Stuart Edward Dunkel. *The Audition Process: Anxiety Management and Coping Strategies*. (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1989), 114.

¹³⁷ Philip Farkas. *The Art of French Horn Playing*. (Secaucus, NJ: Summy-Birchard Inc., 1956), 84.

quite natural an act- an almost instinctive one- ...This thought-that brass playing can and should be a natural, instinctive act- is very helpful when one gets “off the track” occasionally. And all brass players do! At such a time, it is wise to “coast,” look for the more obvious troubles, and nurture that instinct, that intuition, back to its rightful and important place.”¹³⁸ This idea is important for all areas of tuba study, but is a very important one to consider when preparing for a career as a commercial tubist where the tuba role is important not only as a bass voice, but is responsible for providing the harmonic and rhythmic underpinning in as musical a way as possible. Former Canadian Brass hornist, Jeff Nelsen may have said it best. “There’s no choice, no option but to give it 100%. You’ve got to go out there, smiling, and playing anyway. That’s what being a professional is: you do, and you don’t show anyone anything negative.”¹³⁹ This is particularly important in a quintet setting where there are so few performers on stage that the audience and other performers can easily become aware of any type of negative reaction. While performing in commercial styles, it is paramount that the audience experiences the concert in the truest sense of the music that is being performed.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Philip Farkas. *The Art of Brass Playing*. (Bloomington, IN: Wind Music, Inc., 1962), 65.

¹³⁹ Jeff Nelsen, quoted in Jeffrey Snedeker. “Fearless Canadian: An Interview with Jeff Nelsen.” (The Horn Call 33 (2) 2003), 50.

¹⁴⁰ Dallas Brass. “Showmanship: Stage Presence For Going Beyond the Notes.” Clinic presented at Florida Music Educators Association, Tampa, FL, Jan. 12, 2012.

Conclusion

The preparation for performance as a tubist in a commercial brass quintet is a multifaceted project that requires many different types of skills. Once a tubist has reached a suitable level of performance on the instrument, they will need to further their study to cover a number of topics that will prepare them for this specific musical role.

To begin the study of any genre of performance, a tubist must be aware of the tradition of performance unique to that genre. In the case of a commercial brass quintet tubist, this study begins with the New York Brass Quintet and is then furthered by the Canadian Brass. It has been continued and continues today through the work of the Canadian Brass, Empire Brass, Dallas Brass, and Boston Brass.

Chord consciousness is of the utmost importance for a tubist in a brass quintet. The tubist often functions as the only member of the ensemble that gives a clear sense of what chord is being played at a specific time and therefore must lead the other members of the quintet through the piece.

Due to the need to perform in a multitude of styles, the tubist must develop a wide range of articulations to suit the style of the piece they are performing. It is important for a tubist to draw upon the range of articulations they have already encountered during their course of classical study. They can further their study by listening to different commercial styles in recordings and live performance and begin implementing them in their own playing.

Breathing efficiency is a very difficult area of performance for the tubist performing in a commercial style as there are very few breathing opportunities and each one needs to be maximized. It is important for a tubist to prepare for this by both

mastering a good breath and by practicing the ability to take a good breath in a short period of time.

Additionally, the commercial styled brass quintet tubist should be prepared to play in any style of music imaginable. While this is a daunting task, it is recommended to begin by listening to as many styles of music as possible. While studying either the tuba or bass instrument's role in a number of musical settings, the tubist will develop a sense of how to perform in styles of music with which they are unfamiliar.

Finally, the tubist must work for consistency of performance. A brass quintet setting is much more transparent than the orchestral or band settings that tubists may be more acclimated to, and thus, mistakes are more apparent to the audience and other members of the ensemble. A tubist can prepare for this in many ways. Mental preparation, musical study, repetitive practice, and musical awareness are all tools that will aid a tubist in this area.

In conclusion, the area of tuba performance in a commercial style brass quintet is one that is multifaceted and is to be prepared for on multiple levels. Many of the skills have been introduced during a traditional undergraduate musical education, but the above areas require more attention to truly master performing in a commercial brass quintet.

Appendix

Suggested Materials for Tuba Performance in a Commercial Styled Brass Quintet:

Etudes/Studies

- Arban, Jean Baptiste. Transcribed and edited by Jerry Young. *Arban Complete Method for Tuba*. Encore Music Publishers, 2000.
- Baer, Alan. *Cross Training and Tonic/Dominant Scales for Tuba*. Baer Tracks Music, 2006.
- Baker, Buddy. *Tenor Trombone Method*. Miami, FL: Warner Music Group, 1983.
- Brubeck, David William. *Stereograms for Solo Bass Trombone: Vol. I: Nos. 1-10, Three Smooth Stones*. University of Texas at Austin; International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 1995. **mentioned, not cited- maybe example?
- Brubeck, David William. *Stereograms for Solo Bass Trombone: Vol. 2: Nos. 11-20, Modern Renaissance*. University of Texas at Austin: International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 1997.
- Getchell, Robert. *First Book of Practical Studies for Tuba*. Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., 1955.
- Pilafian, Sam and Patrick Sheridan. *The Brass Gym*. Focus on Music, 2008.
- Pilafian, Sam and Patrick Sheridan. *The Breathing Gym*. Focus on Excellence, Inc., 2002.
- Reid, Rufus. *The Evolving Bassist*. Millennium Edition. Teaneck, New Jersey. Myriad Limited, 2000.
- Rusch, Harold W. *Hal Leonard Advanced Band Method with Special Studies by Arnold Jacobs*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1963.
- Stewart, Bob. *Breathing Bass Line for Tuba and All Instruments*. New York: Elektrarts Music, 2003.
- Vining, David. *The Breathing Book for Tuba*. Mountain Peak Music, 2009.

Solos

Davis, D. Edward. *Let There Be Funk*. 2000.

Gillingham, David. *Diversive Elements*. Tuba-Euphonium Press, 1999.

Gregson, Edward. *Tuba Concerto*. Novello and Company Limited, 1978.

Ziek, Gary. *Concerto for Tuba*. Cimarron Music Press, 2012.

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