THE MODERN BASS TROMBONE REPERTOIRE: AN ANNOTATED LIST AND PEDAGOGICAL GUIDE

by

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To Tatiana; I could have never done this without you.
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The Modern Bass Trombone Repertoire: An Annotated List and Pedagogical Guide

Since the last edition of Thomas Everett’s book, *An Annotated Guide to the Bass Trombone*, the bass trombone literature has gone largely undocumented in one source for professionals, teachers, and students as a reference for the expanding repertoire. While this document does not fully update the repertoire list, it does provide a representative sampling of the works written for the instrument since 1985. In addition to the annotated list, this document will provide students and teachers with five pedagogical guides to begin their study of the works.
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Introduction

As the bass trombone continues its transition from mainly an orchestral instrument, to a prominent solo instrument capable of technical and musical excellence, the repertoire for the instrument has grown considerably over the last several decades. Since the creation and application of the modern bass trombone with two valves by Allen Ostrander, Edward Kleinhammer, and Kauko Kahila of the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, and Boston Symphony; the instrument has experienced a modern-day renaissance that has led it to be considered a viable solo instrument which demands a quality repertoire. Due to the pedagogical and technical advancements made to the bass trombone and brass instruments in general in the mid to late 20th century, the capabilities of both the bass trombone and the players have influenced composers to push the limits of style and technique to create a new identity for the instrument. It is estimated by prominent scholar and trombonist Douglas Yeo, that over the last 30 years, the amassed literature that has been written runs to roughly 10,000 works with new compositions being added to the literature monthly.¹ Because of this growth of repertoire for bass trombone, the academic community has had a difficult time documenting and annotating works that are now considered mainstream and part of the essential canon of the bass trombone literature. This project aims to provide a basis for not only documenting and annotating these works as several have done in the past, but to also serve as a resource for teaching a specific range of new works for the bass trombone.

One of the main proponents of documenting and furthering the dissemination of original works for the bass trombone was Thomas Everett, former professor of music at Harvard University and one of the founders of the International Trombone Association. Everett’s life and

¹ Douglas Yeo, e-mail message to author, September 29, 2016.
contributions to the trombone world have been documented wonderfully in the terminal project of Christopher J. Gassler. Gassler states that between the years 1969-1989, Everett was responsible for the commission or composition of close to 60 works for the bass trombone\(^2\). Everett also documented these works in his book, *An Annotated Guide to the Bass Trombone Repertoire*, first published in 1973 and revised in 1981 and 1985\(^3\) to add new repertoire to the guides. Since this publication, however, an annotated list and guide for the bass trombone repertoire has largely been absent from the scholarly materials. Through the efforts of Everett, and the technical and musical advancement of the instrument from such players as Edward Kleinhammer, David Taylor and Douglas Yeo among many others, the repertoire for the instrument has increased tenfold in both quality and quantity over the last 35 years.

The original intention of this project was to “update” Thomas Everett’s guide, and fully document and annotate the published bass trombone repertoire from 1985 to the present day. In consultation with my advisors, and talking with prominent artists and scholars about the repertoire since that time, it became clear that finding and documenting the whole repertoire would pose some serious challenges, some of which would potentially cause this project to be a lifelong endeavor. It was decided that the scope of the project would have to shift from finding and annotating the entire repertoire since 1985, to choosing prominent pieces in the repertoire since that time and providing teachers and students information and tangible information on how to study these works. My goal for this project was to create a document that serves teachers and students by providing historical and pedagogical basis for the study of these works. This document could also serve as a useful reference for those who are looking for program or liner notes.


**Description of Project**

This project is aimed at helping students and teachers become more acquainted with the current bass trombone repertoire. As it stands, a clear majority of college professors teaching in the United States are primarily tenor trombonists. Academic institutions often have tenor trombonists on faculty because most colleges will require their trombone instructor to play in the faculty brass quintet. While a shift has been made in recent years to emphasis doubling on both tenor and bass trombone, a gap in the knowledge of many of the current pieces of repertoire for the bass trombone exists for most tenor trombone faculty. As a result of my own extensive study of the bass trombone repertoire and my interactions with trombonists in academia, it has become clear that scholarship is needed that will aid in explaining and teaching the bass trombone repertoire. Students of the bass trombone repertoire will similarly benefit from this guide as it will help to outline several pitfalls and trouble spots to focus on while practicing for performance.

This project consists of two main sections. The first section consists of annotations of 30 works for the bass trombone that provide historical background and catalogue information on the composer, duration, range, publisher, and difficulty level. The analyses also include information regarding recordings of said work. Each annotation provides information regarding certain trouble spots in each work and methods to practice and best perform these spots.

The second section of the document will accompany a lecture recital and serve as pedagogical guides for each of the five works included in the recital. This outlines more in-depth practice techniques and models for improved performance and a greater understanding of how to achieve technical and musical improvement on the bass trombone, providing a clear path to improving the performance of the repertoire.
Sample Annotation

Each annotation has the following form:

Work Title  Composer

Year of Publication:
Range:
Level of Difficulty:
Approx Length:
Accompaniment(s):

Publisher information

Important performers or commissioner information

Information on work and composer.
Choice of Repertoire and Research Methods

As the repertoire continues its astronomic rise in numbers, it was a challenge to determine how works would be chosen to be included in this study. Throughout the entire process of this project, one set of criteria has not changed; the works must not be in Thomas Everett’s guide, and must be published after 1985. Other than that, qualifying works as “the most played”, or the “most recorded” works written since 1985 seemed to be a bit of a misnomer and slightly misleading if the project were based on this criterion. “Most played” in the United States? Canada? The Netherlands? Collecting the information necessary to determine this would rely on information that would take years to collect, and currently may not exist.

The idea of creating a questionnaire with 100 or so works and distributing it to college professors and soloists to choose the 30 they perform and teach the most also seemed like a roadblock in collecting data. Basing the collected materials for this project on a survey which creates more work for busy colleagues and professionals in the field seemed to be just as arbitrary, not to mention that this type of data collection is based off the research of others, not my own.

These choices led the project in the direction of contemplating the instrument itself, its history and pedagogy, and how composers are now writing for it. This resulted in choosing pieces which correspond to several different aspects of bass trombone playing and history that are deemed necessary for mastery of both the technical and the musical sides of playing. Included in this study will be pieces that showcase, but are not limited to the following:

- Solos that demonstrate the ability of the bass trombone to play a wide range (high and low register).
- Music that comes from French bass trombone tradition inspired by Paul Bernard and the French Conservatory.
- Music that demonstrates the lyrical capabilities of the bass trombone.
• Solos that demonstrate technical playing on the bass trombone.

• Solos that include non-traditional accompaniment (music with tape or electronic media).

• Solos that display a wide variety of styles and world music (Jazz, afro-Cuban, etc.).

• Solos commissioned and composed by prominent trombonists and composers.

After determining this set of criteria, a thorough search through publisher websites (Editions BIM, Warwick Music, International Trombone Association Press, Alphonse Leduc, etc.), International Trombone Association journals and recordings to find solos that fit into these categories. After determining a pool of over 100 candidates for the repertoire list, the list was whittled down to include a representative list of 30 works that will give a good basis for study.
Review of Related Material

A review of related material also guided my process while preparing this document. Many writers before me have felt the need to update the vast repertoire of the bass trombone since the last edition of Thomas Everett’s guide, but it was also clear through their efforts that many of them pivoted into more specific directions. While these doctoral documents have added to the scholarship and visibility of certain works, only a few of have provided tangible material for study, which is one of the aims of this project. Erik Shinn, in his capstone project *An Annotated Bibliography of Works for Solo Bass Trombone and Wind Band* lists and annotates all the works written for solo bass trombone and wind band. While this document does a fine job listing instrumentation, publisher information, and other tangibles such as duration and range, it only offers brief annotations and little to no information on how to approach the work in terms of pedagogical practice and teaching techniques. As mentioned above, Christopher Gassler has a fine dissertation on the life and contributions of Thomas Everett to the bass trombone community and lists the works that were both written and influenced by Everett. However, Gassler’s work differs from this project in that most of these works were written prior to 1985; and there is no annotated section in which the works are described in depth. Beyond dissertations, there are several published documents that relate to the topic of this project. Clayton W. Lehman has published several guides for the trombone literature that include both tenor and bass trombone solos as well as pieces for larger low brass ensembles. In his *A Practical Guide to Selected Solos for Tenor and Bass Trombone*, Lehman outlines and gives a few short sentences about 75 different works for the bass and tenor trombone. This previous research, although covering a vast

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5 Gassler, 2002.
amount of material, does not provide a serious student or teacher with a comprehensive view of the challenges and pitfalls of each work. Possibly the most similar document to this project would be the newly published book by former Philadelphia Orchestra librarian, Clinton F. Nieweg in collaboration with Douglas Yeo entitled, *Music for Bass Trombone: Compositions for Solo Bass Trombone with Orchestra or Band*. This work, as described by the publisher is: “A first of its kind reference book cataloging more than 600 compositions from 400 composers comprising works for solo bass trombone with orchestra, string orchestra, concert band, brass band, and chamber ensemble. Its 200+ pages include detailed publisher sources, instrumentation, recording information, timings, links to performances online, composer dates, and reference sources.”

Nieweg’s work aims at updating the annotated literature guide, but currently only has two volumes for bass trombone solos with orchestra and bass trombone solos with band. It also lacks the pedagogical knowledge and perspective of an experienced bass trombonist to navigate through what has become very challenging repertoire. As the bass trombone continues its rise as a solo instrument, I hope to help mitigate the unfortunate lack of material relating to performing, teaching, and studying this material.

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Definitions

Year of Publication
Defined as the year in which the work was published by either the composer or publishing company and made available for public purchase.

Range

Musical Example 1. Range System.

Difficulty Level

- Most Advanced: Professionals and advanced university graduate students
- Advanced: University graduate students and advanced undergraduate students.
- Intermediate Advanced: University undergraduate students and advanced high school students
- Intermediate: High school students

Approx Length

Approximate performance time

Accompaniment(s)

Versions of this work with different accompaniment
Repertoire Catalogue

2) Biedenbender, David - *Liquid Architecture* (2011)
4) Bourgeois, Derek - *Concerto for Bass Trombone and Wind Band* (2006)
8) Candiillari, Daniela - *Extremely Close* (2016)
17) Frank, Steven - *Variations on Barnacle Bill, the Sailor* (1995)
20) Koetsier, Jan - *Allegro Maestro* (1992)
27) Uber, David - *Skylines* (1992)
28) Verhelst, Steven - *Capriccio* (2009)
An entirely self-taught composer, trombonist Wim Bex has provided a masterwork for the bass trombone in *Vademecum* that has consistently been programmed on recitals and competitions since its publication in 2008. Bex, a freelance trombonist who completed his studies in Belgium, performs with various ensembles around Europe and has contributed several pieces to the trombone repertoire. Bex writes mostly in the brass band idiom and along with *Vademecum*, has contributed a tenor trombone concerto entitled *Wandering Spirit*. *Vademecum* was commissioned by Geert De Vos, principal bass trombonist of the national opera in Belgium and the Metropole Brass Band. Set in three movements, *Vademecum* explores three specific aspects of the bass trombone sound and technical capabilities in each of the movements. The first movement, entitled “School Life”, explores the dark sonorities and sometimes harsh nature that the bass trombone is capable of. Beginning with a long, brooding piano introduction which is marked “8AM”, Bex is asking the performer to contemplate a typical day for a music student, which generally starts with a warm-up. The bass trombone enters at rehearsal C with a five-note motif that is heard consistently throughout the movement, in different ranges and dynamics. Within the first two measures, the performer is challenged with extreme low register playing at a loud dynamic. To tackle this competently, the performer should focus on improving facility in the
low range with the use of loud relaxed long-tones, consistent repeated pedal tones, and low etude playing. It is suggested that the performer seek out Phil Teele’s book *Advanced Embouchure Studies* as well as Phil Snedecor’s *Low Etudes for Tuba*. Over the course of “School Life”, the tempo continues to increase, and the character of the bass trombone continues to gain aggressiveness, culminating in the most aggressive playing at letter N. The second movement, “Love Life” displays the lyrical and technical capabilities of the bass trombone. “Love Life” begins with a beautiful theme to measure 20, in which the performer should strive to play as expressively as possible to contrast with the aggressiveness of the first movement. It should be noted that if performing the piano reduction of this work, a very capable collaborator is needed due to the difficult interludes and the particularly technical reduction that Bex has provided, especially between letters B and E. As “Love Life” continues, and technique becomes more prevalent, the performer should be concerned with approaching the technical aspects of the work within the lyrical framework of the overall movement, working for ease and connection. The third movement, entitled “Cafe Life” focuses on technical agility and employs some fireworks, including a large section between rehearsal letters E and J. In this section, the performer should practice the more technical aspects slowly, and gradually increase the tempo to meet the requirements of the movement. Working on tongue and slide coordination separately will also aid in achieving a more consistent approach to playing this movement. *Vademecum* has become a favorite recital and contest piece and is rightfully earning a place among the standards of the repertoire.
Liquid Architecture  
David Biedenbender

Year of Publication: 1999  
Range: Eb1 - Ab4  
Level of Difficulty: Most Advanced  
Approx Length: 12:00”  
Accompaniment(s): Piano

Commissioned by Randall Hawes and Kathryn Goodson  
Published by Bent Space Music

Liquid Architecture was written for bass trombonist Randall Hawes and pianist Kathryn Goodson by professor of composition at Michigan State University, David Biedenbender. Biedenbender’s compositions range a wide gamut of solo and ensemble combinations. Biedenbender’s oeuvre includes two other pieces that involve the trombone, one for San Francisco Symphony principal trombonist, Timothy Higgins; and another written for the University of Michigan trombone choir. Liquid Architecture is said by the composer to be inspired by the architect Frank Gehry, whose buildings are among the most contemporary and visually stunning in the world. The two movements, which describe the different surfaces in which the architect works, are vastly different in their compositional approach. The first movement, “hard”, has an ABA like structure. The bass trombone starts the A section with long crescendos that are contrasted in the piano by accented eighth notes in which the composer has notated to be “sharp”. This section gives way to a series of alternating eighth and sixteenth notes between the piano and bass trombone which create a pointillistic texture and continues to drive the motion forward. Pervasive in both A sections are wide interval leaps and dynamic contrasts, whose extreme contrasts make this movement particularly difficult for the bass trombone. The performer should work to make these leaps smooth, trying to keep the lower intervals from popping out of the texture. Equally important for the performer is making the extreme dynamic contrasts consistent and even. The B section of “hard” requires the performer to play with a Harmon mute with the stem pulled slightly out, which creates a metallic sound. Long phrases in
the bass trombone are contrasted by the almost constant sixteenth note motion of the piano.

Glissandi are used extensively throughout this middle section, which creates forward motion to the return of the A section, this time in the key of G minor. In the second movement, “smooth”, Biedenbender creates an ethereal ambiance with delicate and expressive chords in the piano which he notates to be played with “an unbroken wash of sound”. Presented in an ABA type format, the movement progresses with the bass trombone taking up the melodic line, again making use of glissandi and triplet figures which slightly mask the rhythmic stability felt by the performers. The B section, starting at rehearsal letter G, continues to spiral the rhythmic and melodic motion which switches the key signature to three flats and brings back the large interval leaps from “hard”, eventually resulting in a boiling over of the unbroken wash of sound into the climax at letter K on a pedal A. The last surge of melodic material at letter P gives way to the last dying pedal notes of the piece, creating a nice end to the movement. *Liquid Architecture* is a virtuosic work which, as noted here, causes several problems for the performers. Range and interval leaps, dynamic contrast, internal rhythmic stability and general stylistic character of the work are the most difficult to manage. *Liquid Architecture* provides a fun avenue to work on these basic tenets of trombone playing.
Former Boston Symphony trombonist, Norman Bolter, was commissioned to write two pieces for the Zellmer-Minnesota Orchestra competition in 2002. Written to be performed during the final round of the competition, which centers around the performance of orchestral excerpts, both *Sagittarius2* (for bass trombone) and *Morning Walk* (for tenor trombone) were composed in memory of Steven Zellmer, former principal trombonist of the Minnesota Orchestra. Norman Bolter, who was a student of Zellmer explains that *Sagittarius2* was inspired by Zellmer’s interest in astrology and in mathematics. Bolter, who is now retired from the Boston Symphony, has composed over 100 works for various ensembles, and continues to teach at New England Conservatory. *Sagittarius2*, which takes its character from astrological signs, starts with a piano introduction that as Bolter says, “represents the full bodied, orange coloured gas giant and largest planet in our solar system, Jupiter.” Throughout the first section, a Jupiterian spirit prevails, and a large opening statement on the bass trombone continues with ferocity throughout the opening statement, owing much of its energy to the technical virtuosity employed in the piano part. Throughout the first section to rehearsal E, special attention should be paid to the difficult rhythmic relationships between the bass trombone and the piano. Each performer must practice independently with metronomes and when collaborating, to achieve maximum ensemble. At G, the astrological background of the piece changes from Jupiter to what Bolter calls the Archer Centaur who has a fiery and agile nature. Throughout the piece, the performer is challenged to

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connect with the characteristics of each symbol being represented in each section, some research into astrological symbols and mythological figures would surely aid in a more convincing and cohesive performance. Technically challenging throughout the entire piece, Archer Centaur section from G to I is particularly difficult. With triplet and sixteenth note rhythms that ascend and descend through the gamut of the bass trombone range, the performer would be best served to practice the technical aspects of this section subdivided and slowly to gain facility and rhythmic independence throughout the sections. Sagittarius2 generally exploits the tenor trombone range of the bass trombone, only occasionally entering the pedal range. The performer should focus their attention on getting a strong core to their upper register sound, acting like a third trombone rather than a bass trombone, which is especially true of a characteristic orchestral bass trombone sound in the modern era. After the Archer Centaur section comes to a rest, a transition to a restatement of the original Jupiterian theme comes back in an augmented form, a softer dynamic level, and in a lower register than before, creating a sense of rest and finality. Sagittarius2 is a technical and cosmic addition to the repertoire as only Norman Bolter could contribute, and one that pushes both the bass trombonist and the pianist to their technical limits. This piece forces the performer to achieve rhythmic fluency, upper range stability, and an understanding of the stylistic differences it takes to play different characters and to make that accessible to the audience.
The late English composer Derek Bourgeois has gained quite a following for his music by writing music that is technical and tuneful for the performer and inherently enjoyable for the audience. Composing for most major genres in the 20th century, Bourgeois’ music for brass and especially his instrumental concertos with brass band accompaniment stand out as his most accomplished works. Bourgeois’ works for the trombone are numerous, of note is his *Concerto for Trombone* which is has one of the most difficult and musically interesting last movements in the trombone solo repertoire. Bourgeois has also contributed several significant pieces to the trombone choir repertoire including *Scherzo Funebre* and the impressively difficult *Osteoblast*, both of which have been featured pieces for competitions all over the world. Written in 2006 for Dutch virtuoso bass trombonist Jos Jansen, the *Concerto for Bass Trombone and Band* provides a large scale, comprehensive concerto for the more advanced performer. Set in a standard three movement structure, the piece starts with several heroic statements in the bass trombone combining fast scales with larger diatonic leaps that span a wide range. A sense of rhythmic freedom can be achieved from the beginning to rehearsal two by using some rubato at the end of each statement of the bass trombone. From rehearsal three to four, specifically in measures 25 to 27, the technical difficulties that Bourgeois is known for emerge as three straight measures of solid sixteenth-notes. The performer should work to try and play all of the sixteenth-note runs in this work as legato as possible, striving for a more horizontal line and avoiding a more staccato approach. These three measures however, are just the start of the pyrotechnics that await the bass trombonist throughout the rest of the movement. Essentially non-stop playing from rehearsal
seven to eleven includes a run with 64th notes and several meter changes. Working on this large section in chunks with a slow approach will ultimately help the performer achieve fluidity in performance. The most challenging section of the first movement however, is the cadenza as it extends the range to a high C, followed immediately by a pedal F. The equally demanding second movement features the bass trombone’s beautiful sonorous low register at a slow tempo. The performer should strive to make the connections between notes in the pedal register as smooth as possible and work to make the phrases last as long as possible before taking a breath. Long-tones in the extreme pedal register in the warm-up will help to solidify this. Set in a compound meter, the allegro molto vivace third movement creates a moto perpetuo feel and forces the bass trombonist to choose between triple-tonguing and an extremely fast single tongue. Preference should be given to the triple-tonguing to keep from dragging the phrase and tiring out the tongue. Bourgeois’ *Concerto for Bass Trombone and Band* is one of the most difficult additions to the repertoire, requiring the performer to have exceptional technique, mastery over the high and low range, and a keen sense of musicianship. A suitable choice for a potential concerto competition piece, a good performance of this work would stand up against any instrument.
The son of famed jazz musician Dave Brubeck, Chris Brubeck has done quite well for himself over the last few decades as both a performer and a composer. His prowess as a multi-instrumentalist on piano, guitar, bass, and the bass trombone has led him to be a soloist and featured artist in many different genres of music. Being from a musical family, Brubeck has been heavily involved in both performing and composing for the last five decades. Along with his brother Dan, they form the Brubeck Brothers Quintet, a jazz combo which regularly tours Europe and residencies across the United States. They’ve performed at many venues such as the Schermerhorn Symphony Center in Nashville, the Caz Jazz Festival in New York, and countless others over the years. As a composer, Brubeck’s music frequently gets programmed by high school, college, and professional orchestras across the world. Brubeck is naturally suited to composing for the trombone and as such, has two frequently performed trombone concertos in his oeuvre. In 2013, the Brubeck brothers co-composed the work *Ansel Adams: America* for full orchestra accompanied by over 100 images of Adams work. This piece has been programmed on many professional orchestra programs and was a 2013 finalist for a Grammy for best instrumental composition. Chris Brubeck’s *Concerto for Bass Trombone and Orchestra* was commissioned by the Greater Bridgeport Youth Orchestra in 1991 to write a work that utilized their high school students. Brubeck obliged and composed a concerto for the bass trombone and orchestra that in his words was a “challenging work that would keep all sections of the orchestra on their toes,
expose them to odd time signatures, polytonality and above all, remind them that music was supposed to be joyous, energetic, beautiful, adventurous, powerful, and even humorous!”

Brubeck did just that and recorded the work with the London Symphony on the album “Bach to Brubeck”. In 1999 the piece was performed by Douglas Yeo and the Boston Pops at the International Trombone Festival. This work is set in three movements, all heavily influenced by jazz and as Brubeck mentions in his program notes to accompany this work, a large portion of the bass trombone part is meant to be improvised. The first movement, “Paradise Utopia” calls for a nimble approach from the soloist which insists on consistent interval placement and a well-defined pitch center. Throughout the first movement, the performer should focus on rhythmic clarity and tempo, not allowing the feeling of the solo line to be bogged down by the tongue or stylistic approach. Etudes useful for practicing in this style and establishing a feeling of being “in the pocket” are Tommy Pederson’s Advanced Etudes for Bass Trombone. The player will find it is not always necessary in this style to play every note with the same consistent, classical sound.

The other pervasive issue throughout the movement and throughout the entire concerto is the high tessitura of the bass trombone part. The player is encouraged to incorporate a daily routine of long-tones that span the entire range of the solo to create and maintaining strength and stamina for this type of playing. The player must remember that this type of progress is gradual, and to not “over-do” with practicing in the high register. The second movement, “Sorrow Floats” is a heartfelt ballade that must be performed with expressivity. The soloist should experiment with rhythms and should not feel constrained to what is written on the page. The last movement, “James Brown in the Twilight Zone” starts with a long cadenza in the bass trombone and blends together an eclectic mix of a James Brown tune, theme music from the television show the Twilight Zone, and traditional Middle Eastern harmonies. Brubeck advises the soloist that they are free to improvise from G to two bars before K. Those looking for an introduction to

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improvisation should attempt to write their own lines based on Brubeck’s written out composition. The *Concerto for Bass Trombone and Orchestra* is a tour de force for a well-developed player that poses challenges that many classically trained musicians usually don't face. This work is well suited to concerto competitions, graduate recitals, and professional engagements and provides opportunities to work on jazz improvisation and style.
Published by International Trombone Association Press

David W. Brubeck is a celebrated Bass Trombonist and composer in the Miami area where he serves on faculty at the Miami Dade College, teaching trombone as well as courses in jazz and music theory. A versatile musician, Brubeck is largely known for his commercial performance careers, having played with musical giants such as Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder as well as being heavily involved in the Miami musical scene in general. His compositions entitled Stereograms have started to gain notoriety for their varied musical approach and nontraditional styles. Stereograms were originally written for solo bass trombone, although they have been adapted for both the baritone saxophone and the tuba. Conceived as solo pieces for the bass trombone in a wide variety of styles, Brubeck dedicates each Stereogram to either a player or composer that has been influential to both his playing and composing. Published in two sets (1-20, 21-30) by the International Trombone Association Press, these solo pieces evoke a spirit of melody and accompaniment that force the performer to fuse the two together for a complete performance. Of the thirty works, several have been recorded and performed more frequently than others. These include Stereograms 6, 7, 11, 12, and 19. I will focus on stereograms 6, 7, and 19 in this document. Since these works were dedicated to a famous musician who has influenced musical style for the trombone in some way, the performer should listen intently to each of the dedicatees to absorb the musical style of each Stereogram. Stereogram no. 6, dedicated to Maurice White and Louis Satterfield of the popular 1970’s funk band, Earth Wind and Fire, challenges the performer to establish a funk style in both rhythm and melody while in an awkward 7/8 meter. As Louis Satterfield was both a bassist and a trombonist, Brubeck gives the performer both the bass line and the melody notes, an effect that becomes especially prominent at
rehearsal A. The performer should consider practicing this stereogram with a drum machine or with an application like iReal Pro to reinforce the unusual 7/8 rhythm and the improvised solo at rehearsal C. Stereogram no. 7 is dedicated to Bob Mintzer and David Taylor, who have both been influential contributors to the bass trombone big band repertoire themselves. This Stereogram demands a type of sound that a classically trained bass trombonist may be unfamiliar with. A more compact and nimble approach will be necessary, especially from measures 21-30, since this section functions like a soli section from a typical big band chart. Stereogram no. 19 is dedicated to a legendary trombonist of the Duke Ellington band, Lawrence Brown. Lawrence Brown was one of the most lyrical and beautiful soloists of his generation, prompting Brubeck to compose a ballad style solo. As such, this work takes a completely different approach than the previous two Stereograms. The performer should concentrate on a vocal style with a beautiful sound throughout with the emphasis being on producing long, lyrical phrases. These three Stereograms are a small sample of a fantastic contribution to the unaccompanied bass trombone repertoire that allows the performer to experiment with different styles they might not be familiar with.
Published by Brixton Publications  
Sponsored by the United States Army Band

The founder and editor of Brixton Publications, composer Howard Buss, has compiled over 160 works for a wide variety of instrumentations and genres, with the majority of his work being for the brass instruments. Buss’s works have been recorded on over ten different recording labels and many of his instrumental concertos have been performed and premiered by musicians in the top orchestras around the world such as the Berlin Philharmonic, The New York Philharmonic, and the Boston Symphony among others. Buss’s compositions are well represented in the bass trombone community. His *Illuminations for Bass Trombone and Piano*, written for Charles Vernon of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was premiered at the 2001 International Trombone Festival. Buss has composed several works with unusual accompaniments that are nice additions to the bass trombone solo repertoire. His *American Phoenix for bass trombone and percussion ensemble* pairs the bass trombonist with four percussionists and was written in memory of 9/11. His *ZOOM for bass trombone and harp* is a great piece with unusual instrumentation as well. The winner of the 2015 solo composition contest at the American Trombone Workshop, *Alien Loop De Loops* is a new work that utilizes electronic media as an accompaniment for the bass trombone. The work is one movement, with the bass trombonist playing ostinato like “funk” bass lines throughout. As Buss comments in the preface to the work, “The composer envisioned a trombonist performing outside in an open area during an air show by an alien craft.”

The performer begins the work solo, without the recording for the first 24 bars. Technically, this work challenges the performer to keep a consistent rhythm.

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and groove throughout the opening in order to establish a good pulse before the recording comes in. The performer is encouraged to practice this opening section with a drum machine to simulate the dynamism of a rhythm section playing behind the soloist. The accompanying recording, as Buss states, “contains sounds generated by traditional instruments as well as an “alien” voice, the spacecraft, and various electronic effects.” Lining up the recording with the performer in measure 24 is challenging. It is suggested that the performer has a copy of the score for the audio engineer or stagehand handling the sound, so the entrances can be more likely to line up correctly.

Throughout this work, technique by the performer is exploited and challenged. Use of multiple tonguing and syncopation over a wide range makes this work especially tiring and difficult to perform. The passage from measures 78 through 105 present the performer with a myriad of challenges. The most prevalent of these being awkward interval leaps throughout the 7:00’ work and the syncopated rhythms that must be played with strict time in order to remain in sync with the recorded backing track. Although the intended style is much different, the performer is encouraged to seek out the Marcel Bitsch Rhythmical Studies for Trombone for its interval leaps, difficult rhythms, and challenging range. Transferring the technical aspects gained from working through Bitsch’s etudes will help solidify the difficult sections in this work. When performing with electronics, it is paramount that the performer check the balance of the instrument to the speakers. It is suggested that the performer position themselves in front of the speakers. If the balance is dominated by either the recording or the performer, the performance of this work could be compromised. Alien Loop de Loops is a fun, non-traditional work that shows off style and technique and can be an extremely impressive and engaging work for the audience if performed well.

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Daniela Candillari’s *Extremely Close* has made an immediate impact on the trombone community since its premiere in March of 2016. Candillari is an active pianist, conductor and composer who traverses the globe as an in-demand artist. Candillari is an experienced collaborator who has worked with many trombonists as the staff pianist of the Third Coast Trombone Retreat, offering them guidance and excellent accompaniment. As a conductor, Candillari has led top groups around the world, including the Chicago Lyric Opera, the Minnesota Opera, and Opera Philadelphia. Her compositions for trombone display her intellect and musicianship as well as her Slovenian background. Her duet for bass trombone and tenor trombone entitled *Balkanika* is a beautiful Slavic setting for two trombones that is becoming a favorite concert duet on recitals across the country. Her solo composition for bass trombone and piano, *Extremely Close* is a set of five songs based off lines from the novel *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Shafran Foer. This work is said to have been inspired by the long-distance marriage she shares with her husband, Nick Schwartz as well as their shared love of the novel. Candillari states in the program notes that she “envisioned this piece as a conversation between two instruments and found it more natural to base this conversation on smaller, individual movements.”13 This is seen throughout the first movement, “We Will Not Stop Looking” as the dialogue and interplay between the two instruments is intricately woven. The performer is suggested to play with a contemplative and expressive style, elongating the phrases

and keeping a legato approach throughout the musical line. “Walking Over Bridges Also Makes Me Panicky” is set in an aggressive 5/8 with two main themes repeating; a constant eighth note pattern that is clearly articulated and a dotted quarter and quarter note line that should be played in a much different dynamic and style than the eighth note pattern. The challenge here is consistently switching between each style. “Why I’m Not Where You Are 5/21/63” makes use of the cup mute for the bass trombone and is set at a soft dynamic throughout. Particularly challenging in this movement is the use of unusual compound meters and rhythms throughout. The accompaniment is set rhythmically with the soloist for most of the movement, so close collaboration with the pianist will help solidify the ensemble feel for this work. “The Sixth Borough” is a slow, dream-like waltz in the key of E-flat minor that contains several places where the music builds in intensity. The key and pacing of this movement are the most difficult aspects of this movement. It is suggested that the performer practice this movement consistently with a drone to center all the pitches and record themselves frequently with their collaborator to listen to the dynamic pacing between the two instruments. The last song, “The Falling Man” depicts a grueling scene from the 9/11/01 attacks in which a man is seen falling from the building. The use of unusual meters as well as a consistent accelerando to the end of the work make this song the most challenging of the bunch. Candillari uses fantastic tone-painting to establish the scenes throughout this work. A piece that is on the rise, this work is suitable for undergraduate students as far as technique and facility is concerned, but it will require some study and intellectual thought to deliver a compelling performance.
Blackhawk

Year of Publication: 1995
Range: G1 - F4
Level of Difficulty: Intermediate Advanced
Approx length: 8:00”
Accompaniment(s): Electronic Media/CD

Published by Hip-Bone Music

Michael Davis has been a force in the trombone world for many years, providing the trombone community with top quality performances, compositions, and a wide variety of other publications and educational materials. Equally at home in multiple styles, Davis is widely known for his jazz and commercial work, having served as trombonist with the Rolling Stones, Frank Sinatra, and Michael Jackson among others. As a composer, Davis has provided the trombone world with a number of high compositions and warm-up studies. His 10, 15, and 20 warm-ups provide trombonists with comprehensive daily routines that incorporate an electronic accompaniment to break up the monotony of the standard warm-up process. Electronic accompaniment is a big aspect of Davis’s solo and ensemble compositions as well. Davis’s tenor trombone work with electronic accompaniment, Mission Red is a favorite on student and professional recitals. He expanded upon his approach in Mission Red in his bass trombone work with electronic accompaniment, Blackhawk. Davis explains that Blackhawk is the big brother of Mission Red. Blackhawk is a bold composition that challenges the performer in a variety of ways. Set in one movement with a repeat and a coda at the end, the work starts with a fast, rhythmic accompaniment in the electronics that feeds into the bass trombone entrance in measure 17. The performer should work towards playing the opening material in a commercial, almost swung style without much separation between the notes. Legato and connected playing is a challenge for the performer throughout this work, especially with respect to the low register. To gain fluidity in linking the valve register to the pedal register, the performer should seek out Charles Vernon’s book, A Singing Approach to the Trombone. Davis makes use of frequently changing meters in this work, which makes the feel somewhat difficult for the performer. This is especially evident
from measures 67-85, where Davis makes frequent use of syncopation. The performer should be careful in this section to listen to the accompaniment to fit their playing into the rhythmic structure. It is advised that the performer sing their part with the accompaniment in this section to achieve an effortless feel. Throughout the middle section from measures 91-174, the legato style is consistent, even as the melodic lines get more difficult and start to incorporate a wider range. The performer should seek to find alternate positions to keep the slide moving in one direction as much as possible. A return to the beginning material after a Da capo, Davis sends the performer to a coda in which the material presented is the most technically challenging in the piece. The performer should work to either naturally slur, or lightly tongue the sections of eighth notes between measures 251 and 269 to keep the legato style. Davis clearly marks the articulations in the coda, challenging the performer to stay within the style present throughout the work. Without a traditional acoustic accompaniment, this work can be performed in many different situations and could be considered when the performer cannot find an adequate accompanist. **Blackhawk** is a solid addition to a slowly developing repertoire that presents an acoustic instrument with non-acoustic accompaniment, this work shows insight into where the repertoire could go into the 21st century. This work would be appropriate for students who are younger in their technical development but are looking for a fun piece that incorporates non-traditional styles and techniques.
David Del Tredici is an award winning, multifaceted, and extremely well-regarded composer, whose work has been well received and touted by the likes of Aaron Copland and Leonard Slatkin among others. His work, *Final Alice*, has become a masterwork of the neo-romantic era and his *In Memory of A Summer Day* won him a Pulitzer prize in music. Del Tredici was the New York Philharmonic’s composer in residence from 1988-1990 and is on faculty at the City College of New York. Del Tredici decided to write his *Felix Variations* in 2010 after hearing his nephew Felix Del Tredici, a virtuoso bass trombonist, play at a family gathering. The work is based on Paganini’s famous 24th caprice and is set as a theme and variations for solo, unaccompanied bass trombone. This famous melody, which can be heard unvaried in the theme, challenges the performer from the start with its fast, slurred sixteenth-note runs, sometimes slurring down into the pedal register. Into the first variation, Del Tredici increases the tempo, expands the range downward, and the theme is treated with half-step relationships to which the performer should pay particular attention to make sure that the half-steps avoid becoming too wide. The third variation repeats the fast, technical playing, requiring the performer to double-tongue consistently throughout the variation. To solidify this technique, Jean-Baptiste Arban’s *Famous Method for Trombone* has progressive double-tonguing exercises starting that the performer should perfect. This piece is full of extended techniques that Felix Del Tredici is known for having mastered. This is clear in variation four, where extensive use of the glissandi is employed. The performer should work to make the difficult range transitions smooth and the length of glissandi as consistent as possible. In variations five, six, eight, nine, ten, and the finale,
the performer is required to use three different mutes; straight, Harmon without stem, and plunger. Variation six is particularly difficult to play with a mute because of the fast tempo marking as well as the low writing for the bass trombone. The performer should practice this variation consistently with, and without the mute to feel the difference in resistance before performing. The difficulty in variation eight lies in the interval leaps of sometimes more than an octave. Practicing these jumps both slurred and tongued will provide stability, especially for those that reach into the high register. Variation ten indicates that the performer plays with a plunger and “growl”, another extended technique that can be used judiciously throughout the variation. To understand what Del Tredici means by “growl”, the performer should seek to find Stuart Dempster’s book *The Modern Trombone: A Definition of Its Idioms* which includes audio recordings of Dempster performing several extended techniques. The finale, which is by far the longest variation in the work, synthesizes the work’s use of techniques and technical agility. This work is especially challenging because of its unaccompanied nature. After 37 measures of consistent driving eighth-notes with alternating marcatos, a fast, cantabile section transitions back into the main theme at measure 375. The length, tempo changes, and stylistic differences in the finale make this variation more substantial, allowing it to stand on its own as a single piece of music if the performer chooses. The performer is charged with creating drama, emotion, and musicality without the aid of a collaborator. The Felix Variations pushes the performer’s limits of creativity, sound creation, and technical capacity and can be an interesting addition to any recital program if the performer is up to tackling this impressively difficult work.
Dutch composer Johan de Meij is well known for his work in many different genres from concertos to movie scoring. Originally trained as a trombonist and conductor at the Royal Conservatory of the Hague, de Meij had a busy freelance career as a trombonist before he turned to full-time composing and conducting. De Meij’s style is largely neo-romantic and his sonic concept places his work among the more popular works in the late 20th, and early 21st century. His first symphony, entitled *Lord of The Rings* and based on the novel by J.R.R. Tolkien was awarded the prestigious Sudler composition prize. De Meij’s *T-Bone Concerto* with its three movements entitled “Rare”, “Medium”, and “Well-Done” has become a favorite for tenor trombonists to put on recitals and competitions. His bass trombone concerto, *Canticles for Bass Trombone and Wind Orchestra* was written in 2007 for bass trombonist of the Rotterdam Philharmonic, Ben Van Dijk in celebration of their 35 years of friendship. De Meij set out to create a work that highlights the vocal qualities of the bass trombone and put forth a largely lyrical work with many technical sections interspersed. The work, originally for bass trombone and wind orchestra but with a piano reduction, starts with an extended ensemble introduction that culminates in the first statement of the bass trombone on a low C2. The theme is introduced in the bass trombone at measure 111 and is continued in this first section to measure 156 in which the performer must play with bold and regal sensitivity as well as impeccable intonation throughout. The performer should strive to play this section with long, lyrical phrases which will challenge the breath support but will provide the player with a more cohesive musical statement.
A restatement of the theme at measure 175 gives way to a B section at measure 188 that expands the intensity and technical capacities of the performer until the peak of the phrase at measure 216 on a Bb4. This section is especially difficult for the performer in terms of stamina and endurance. To help with this, the performer should practice ascending scales at an increasing dynamic to work on the sound quality and consistency of articulation while ascending into the extreme upper register of the bass trombone. The lyrical start to this one movement work gives way to an allegro con spirito section at measure 216, where the bass trombone is challenged to faster, more elongated scalar phrases that spans the instrument’s range. The performer should approach the section from measure 216 to 283 with a more articulated and placed style. The more difficult aspects of this section involve the ascending scales and then the immediate leaps of more than an octave as seen in measure 254 and measure 258. The performer should practice these sections slowly and slurred and systematically increase the tempo. It is also suggested that the performer harden the articulation to gain connectivity throughout the entire phrase. There are two more sections of this work that will cause problems for the performer, from measure 382-388 and from the coda to the end. In both sections, the bass trombone is charged with either playing ascending or descending technical notes into extremes of the register. The performer should work to crescendo through the phrase and not shy away from the more extreme registers. To competently achieve a quality sound and fluidity throughout the ranges, one might require an embouchure shift, which can be researched more in Donald Reinhardt A Comprehensive Guide to the Pivot System, in which the embouchure shifts the air in different directions for different ranges.

Canticles for Bass Trombone and Wind Orchestra is a lyrical, and relatively technical addition to the bass trombone repertoire. While this work would be well suited for an advanced performer, it would also be a good choice for a musically advanced undergraduate looking to work on range and endurance.
Tom Dossett has produced many pieces for the trombone over the last 30 years of his compositional career. A graduate of Illinois Wesleyan University, where he studied trombone with Thomas Streeter, Dossett went on to earn a Master of Composition degree at Illinois State University. Dossett’s music has been performed on recitals and competitions all over the world by many of the leading bass trombonists, including Steve Norrell, Matt Guilford, and Randy Campora among others. Commissioned by Dr. Thomas Streeter in 1988, Trilogy for Bass Trombone has quickly become a favorite for bass trombonists across the globe. Set in three movements, “Caprice”, “Chanson”, and “Galliarde”, this work has many different challenges which the performer must overcome in order for a quality performance. In “Caprice”, Dossett makes consistent use of triplet figures, using both eighth-note triplets and quarter-note triplets which challenges the performer to keep the rhythm even. The performer should consider practicing the section between measures 10-16 by adding notes in the rests to keep the rhythm as even and consistent as possible. When the rhythm feels secure, gradually remove the added notes. When Dossett employs quarter-note triplets, practicing by subdividing the quarter-note triplets into eighth-notes can be helpful. This will help keep evenness and consistency in the performance. In the “Chanson”, Dossett gives the bass trombone a lyrical opening statement that is immediately followed by a brief piano interlude. The opening material is exactly restated at measure 8, but now with a light piano accompaniment. This opening theme is restated several times throughout the movement, often in an augmented state as in measures 13, 39, and 44. The
performer should approach all the instances of this theme with a lyrical, vocal approach, trying to connect the notes through the slurs that Dossett has provided. The second theme that is worthy of mentioning, comes in at measure 22 in the bass trombone. The performer should pay particular attention to intonation concerns that come from this theme, as it is comprised of alternating fourths and fifths. It can be painfully obvious if this theme is out of tune, the performer should isolate each instance of this theme and work to fit it into a drone pitch. The last movement, “Gaillarde”, is influenced by an old Renaissance dance. Dossett sets this movement in 3/4, but the performer should definitely feel this as one beat per bar. This movement isn't necessarily challenging technically, but the difficulty lies in the rhythmic relationship between the piano and the bass trombone. These rhythmic relationships are prevalent between measures 15-18 and again from measures 35-41. The cadenza in this movement extends the performer’s range, both into the high register as well as the low register. Within seven measures, the performer must play a high A-flat and descend all the way to a pedal F. The form for this movement must be considered as well, as it contains a Da capo and accompanying coda. Among all the other challenges implicit in Dossett’s Trilogy for Bass Trombone, the performer must consider the varied styles contained within the work. This piece would be a great work for a more advanced player who wants to work on rhythm and improving their stylistic oeuvre.
Published by International Trombone Association Press

Brad Edwards, professor of trombone at Arizona State University and pedagogical stalwart in the trombone community has produced several trombone solos and pedagogical works that have come into the mainstream of the repertoire in recent years. His book, *Lip Slurs* has become a must-have for any aspiring trombonist looking to improve their fluidity of technique and tone production. His more recent pedagogical works, *Trombone Craft* and *Bass Trombone Craft* provide a comprehensive method for cultivating all the required skills of a professional trombonist. His solo compositions for both tenor and bass trombone are published from the International Trombone Association Press, which are readily available from Warwick Music. A devoted advocate of new and engaging, idiomatic music for the trombone, Edwards composed *Blue Wolf* for unaccompanied trombone which takes its inspiration from two very different sources; Joni Mitchell’s song “The Wolf That Live in Lindsey” and the popular Nickelodeon children's television show, *Blues Clues*. His bass trombone work is written in a similar fashion, taking inspiration from a wide variety of styles and genres. *Four Impromptus for Low Bone Alone* is set in four movements, each with an accompanying poem written by Edwards, and meant to be spoken before the movement to set the mood for each piece. “Hazy Meandering” beseeches the performer to create the ambience of a hot, late summer afternoon stroll in which the performer is tempted to stop by a blues club and a parade but ultimately returns home. The very first slur of “Hazy Meandering” is problematic for even the most talented trombonist. Negotiating a slur of more than octave several times in a 5/8 meter, while keeping the musical line fluid is indeed very challenging. The emphasis in the first 29 bars should be on musical line and shape, keeping the
bottom notes from sticking out. This same thematic material is revisited several times throughout the movement, and the same approach should be applied. As the performer passes by the blues club in measure 30, an immediate style change occurs and executing dynamic and articulation contrast is a must. As the trombone is the only instrument involved, it is imperative that the rhythm be extremely steady, as if the performer were playing all the instruments in a jazz combo. In measure 66, another sudden character change from meandering to a march style is necessary. “Deadlines Pressing (September Morning, Category 3)”, requires an amplified metronome to accompany the trombonist almost throughout. Between measures 15-29 however, the performer is faced with negotiating rhythms that are offset from the metronome, forcing the performer to rely on their internal pulse and subdivision. “Wistful Dancing (Winter’s Night)”? should paint a picture of melancholy and as Edwards writes, “a bad breakup”. The dream-like introduction gives way to a more aggressive flare-up in measure 12. The performer should strive for a large dynamic contrast to highlight the mood swings evident in the poem. The last movement, “Senseless Rejoicing”, is challenging because of the constant meter shifts and interval leaps. The performer must keep a steady eighth note pulse throughout and would be advised to pulse the beginning of each measure to make sure the meter changes are heard throughout. Starting at measure 37, Edwards composes a large dynamic build that metrically modulates until measure 70. The performer should attempt to accent the lower notes within the context of the dynamic, keeping the crescendo continuous until measure 70. For his acclaim as a pedagogical text writer, Brad Edwards has produced an extremely diverse and special piece for unaccompanied bass trombone; one which should become a mainstay for students and professionals.

A more in-depth analysis on the fourth movement of this work will included in the pedagogical guide to accompany the lecture recital (see below).
**Concerto for Bass Trombone and Orchestra**

Eric Ewazen

Year of Publication: 1996

Range: E1 - F4 (opt. Ab4)

Level of Difficulty: Intermediate Advanced

Approx Length: 20:00"

Accompaniment(s): Orchestra

Wind Ensemble

Piano

Published by Southern Music Company

Requested by the Warren Deck for Juilliard low brass competition.

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Eric Ewazen has been one of the most prolific composers for brass music over the last two decades. His music has been a repertoire staple of collegiate studios and has been recorded many times on no less than ten different recording labels. Along with the *Concerto for Bass Trombone*, Ewazen has several different pieces for the bass trombone which include the *Ballade for Bass Trombone*, the *Rhapsody for Bass Trombone*, the *Concertino for Bass Trombone and Trombone Choir*, and many chamber works written for both bass and tenor trombones. The *Concerto for Bass Trombone* was originally conceived as a sonata and premiered by John Rojak at the International Trombone Festival in 1997. At the request of Warren Deck, it was further orchestrated into a concerto and was used as a competition piece for the low brass at The Juilliard School with Stefan Sanders emerging as the winner. The concerto was premiered by Sanders and the Juilliard Orchestra in 1998. The three-movement work opens with a grand introduction which centers itself around a D. The performer should work to connect the sound between the phrases and strive for ease and beauty in the production of tone. Similarly, playing the introduction with a drone on a D will help to solidify the intonation. Following this introduction, an allegro vivace section moves forward with driving rhythmic motion in the piano while the bass trombone compliments the rhythmic tension with a melodic material that is very idiomatic to the instrument. The performance concern between measures 34-151 is keeping the energy in the music without losing control of the pace, or on the opposite side of the spectrum, dragging behind the motion created by the piano. This same concern is present from measure 180 to the end.

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second movement has a slow, lyrical quality which allows the bass trombone to trade melodic material with the piano. The performer should allow themselves to be free and expressive with the ascending eighth note and quarter-note triplet figures as in measures 48-60 and again from measures 67-83. This allows the performer to show their musicianship and challenges the performer to think outside of the boundaries that the written rhythms imply. The consistent meter changes in the third movement challenges the performer to be rhythmically independent and agile with their technique. The movement starts in 5/8 time and throughout the first 128 bars, the subdivision fluctuates between triple and duple meters. Similar to the first movement, agility and technique is needed to effectively communicate the rhythms written by Ewazen. The cadenza from measures 234-271 extends the range of the bass trombone and can be very effective if the performer’s low facility is adequately developed. Practicing long tones in this register along with repeated accented notes in the extreme low registers can quickly develop the breath support and embouchure strength needed for consistency. Ewazen’s *Concerto for Bass Trombone* is one of the most commonly played and taught pieces in the repertoire, one that can challenge and excite a developing player.

More about techniques younger students can use for developing facility and musicality in the first movement will be added in the pedagogical guide that accompanies this document.
Trombonist and composer David Fetter has had a varied and long ranging career as a performer, composer and teacher. As a trombonist, Fetter was employed in both the Cleveland and Baltimore symphonies, including 10 years as principal trombonist of the Baltimore Symphony. As a composer, Fetter’s works have become staples in the trombone and brass repertoire. Many of his works are for unaccompanied trombone such as his Variations on Palestrina’s *Dona Nobis Pacem*, and his *Bass Lines* for unaccompanied bass trombone. In *Bass Lines*, Fetter puts forth four etude-like solo pieces that challenge the performer to play in a variety of styles and with a variety of different technical challenges. The second piece, from Fetter’s *Bass Lines*, “Spain”, has become a favorite among bass trombonists to play on recitals and for competitions. Fetter starts “Spain” with a strong statement where the bass trombone plays dotted quarter notes with Fetter instructing the meter to feel “in one”. This strong opening in 3/8 gives way to a more playful sixteenth-note rhythm where the bass trombonist is challenged to play fluidly and quickly at a soft dynamic level. This section is particularly difficult because of the need for solid facility with the valves and flexibility in the low register. The performer should work slowly through this section (measures 20-50) to make sure the sixteenth-note passages are as slurred and continuous as possible. If the performer has an independent valve bass trombone, thought should be given to using the second valve independently of the first for C’s and F’s. This can help the performer keep the slide motion going in the same direction, allowing for easier and cleaner runs. Another concern for the performer is the pervasive octave jumps throughout the first 90 bars. To work on this, playing the interval study down an octave from Jean-Baptiste Arban’s *Famous Method for Trombone* is an effective way to create consistency and facility in
the extreme pedal register. As the fiery nature of the first section ends with the fermata in measure 87, Fetter starts section two with a slower more lyrical nature that is a nice contrast to the style of the first section. The performer must change styles from more aggressive to more lyrical in a way that grabs the attention of the audience and creates a sense of brand new material being presented. The performer should approach this lyrical section from measures 87-115 with a sense of rhythmic freedom. Throughout this section and the piece in general, the performer should strive to push and pull the tempo slightly and create places in the music that draw the audience’s ear to melodic and rhythmic tension. It is difficult when playing an unaccompanied work but doing so can help push a performance of this work over the top. Fetter closes the work from measure 116 with an allegro section that changes the meter from 3/8 to 4/4 and creates an urgency by employing accelerando and ritardando markings judiciously. Again, Fetter creates difficulty in the last section by forcing the performer to play in the extreme low register with great facility, as is evidenced in measures 121-127 and again from measure 146 to the end. This work is particularly challenging due to the variety of styles that it employs, and the facility needed in the extreme low range. Given the challenges and idiomatic nature of this work, it is no surprise that this has become commonplace in the repertoire.
Seemingly one of the Czech Republic's most important contemporary classical composers, Slovak composer and teacher Juraj Filas has contributed over 100 works since graduating from the Prague Conservatory in 1981. Filas had original intentions of pursuing a career in Opera performance, having won several competitions for voice but soon turned to composition and found himself back at his alma mater as an assistant professor of composition. Filas has won several awards for his compositions which have been described to “reflect his sense of melody and strong emotional expression. His works stem from the European tradition in music, which is the basis of his composition, his philosophy and aesthetic.” Filas has contributed several works to the standard trombone repertoire. His Sonata for Trombone “At the end of the century” is dedicated to and recorded by Joseph Alessi and has become one of the most performed pieces of the tenor trombone repertoire in the 21st century. Filas seems to feel quite comfortable composing for brass, as he has subsequently composed concertos for the euphonium, tuba, and horn as well as a concerto grosso for brass quintet and wind ensemble. Written in 1998, Romance Concertante for bass trombone and orchestra can also be found with reductions for both the piano or organ, allowing the performer a wide range of accompaniment colors while programing this work. Romance Concertante is one movement that is largely through composed with a variety of potential for instrumental color, allowing for the soloist to create interesting and dynamic performances. Filas starts the work with the bass trombone in an expressive and lamenting lyrical melody in mute. The performer should be aware of balance when muted,

especially if playing with a large ensemble. Emphasis should be placed on long, flowing musical
lines, paying close attention to the clear crescendo and decrescendo marks that Filas has supplied.
Into measure 34, the mute is removed and as the pace quickens, the range extends downward with
force. From the piu mosso section at measure 35, the performer should focus on creating
downward motion with the musical line and must be careful not to allow the double valve register
to explode out of control, as the line ascends back to the upper register immediately. Throughout
the piu mosso section, the performer must continuously subdivide as the rhythm is quite disjunct
at times. When practicing these sections, the performer should take away ties and fill in rests to
start with a constant pulse. Once the performer becomes more comfortable with the rhythms they
can replace the ties and remove the extra notes. As the work moves into another section of molto
tranquillo from rehearsal 5 to 6, the performer should understand that this material is
accompanimental by nature. Throughout this work the performer needs to understand when the
style is “molto espressivo”, or “molto furioso”\(^\text{15}\) and would be advised to label each section as
such since the character and tempo of the work change on a dime. This is evidenced by the
change between the doppio movimento section at measure 113, marked forte and ferocious at
quarter note equals 192 to the immediate change in measure 140 where the music is marked
piano, appassionato, and eighth note equals 69. These dramatic changes in dynamic, tempo, and
character allow the performer to exploit variety and draw the audience into an emotional and
expressive performance. This is a work that allows the performer to experiment with expressivity
in a way that other compositions have yet to tap into. This work is suitable for those looking to
wear their emotions on their sleeve.

\(^\text{15}\) These terms are not in Filas’s score, they are my estimation of character of the work.
**Variations on Barnacle Bill the Sailor**  
Steven Frank

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Published by Kagarice Brass Editions

A tour de force for the bass trombone, the theme and variations that Steven Frank has put forth in *Variations on Barnacle Bill, the Sailor* has become a flashy showpiece that pushes the limits of bass trombone technical capacity. Steven Frank, a retired high school band director from New York has also served as a lecturer in the music education department of Syracuse University. Frank’s expertise lies in the area of instrumental music education and brass pedagogy and as such has works and methods for beginning concert bands and jazz ensembles as well as his composition for the trombone. As a trombonist, Frank completed doctoral work at the Eastman School and has performed as a freelance artist around New York state, frequently subbing with the former Syracuse Symphony. His composition for the bass trombone, *Variations on Barnacle Bill, the Sailor* is a theme and variations in the style of Arthur Pryor for the bass trombone and has been performed and recorded by top artists in the field, including Charlie Vernon of the Chicago Symphony and Denson Paul Pollard of the Metropolitan Opera and Indiana University. This work sets a popular and humorous sea shanty theme through a series of difficult and virtuosic variations, thoroughly putting the trombonist through their paces both technically and musically. Right from the very start of the work, prior to the theme, the bass trombonist is asked to show off some technical fireworks, starting forcefully on a low C with subsequent sixteenth notes ascending to a G4. The performer should treat this opening phrase as a cadenza as it is unmetered, and not rush through this phrase. At rehearsal B the theme enters. As mentioned before, this work is meant to be a humorous depiction of a drunken sailor, so it is advised that the performer use portamento and glissandi to portray an ad lib style. Sections of increasingly
difficult technique begin with variations I. When working through variations I, III, and IV, it is imperative that the performer approach these sections in very small chunks with many repetitions. As the player becomes more comfortable with each bar, start connecting bars to create fluidity among the phrases. Multiple tonguing is a considerable challenge throughout the work. As such, referring to the Arban's *Famous Method for Trombone* and the sections dedicated to both double tonguing and triple tonguing will aid in cleanly producing several of the more difficult lines. Working through Variation II, the performer should also seek out the Arban’s *Famous Method for Trombone* and the sections on interval studies to negotiate the two octave jumps into the pedal register. It is suggested that the performer work on the interval studies both in the written octave and down an octave striving for consistent, centered pitches and minimal movement from the embouchure. When performing this work, the performer should become something of an actor on the stage when transitioning between each variation to convincingly translate the stylistic changes to the audience. It has even been played while the performer is in a pirate costume. *Variations on Barnacle Bill, the Sailor* is one of the few theme and variations works in the bass trombone catalogue, and in the same vein as the Arthur Pryor works, is worthy of being a showpiece for a player with developed technical skills.
Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano

David Gillingham

Year of Publication: 1989
Range: F#1 - Ab4
Level of Difficulty: Most Advanced
Approx Length: 12:00"
Accompaniment(s): Piano

Originally published by International Trombone Association Press, now published by C. Alan Publication.

Commissioned by Curtis Olson, Professor of Trombone, Michigan State University.

Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano is a musical and technical tour de force for the bass trombone. The piece has three movements and is in sonata form. David Gillingham, professor of composition at Central Michigan University wrote this piece at the request of Curtis Olson, bass trombonist and professor of trombone at Michigan State University. Gillingham is mostly known for his large ensemble music that is often played by wind ensembles and professional bands across the country. He has also written several other solo works, including one recently for George Curran of the New York Philharmonic, entitled Vital Signs of Planet Earth for Bass Trombone and Wind Ensemble. Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano was published by the International Trombone Association Press in 1989 and has become a staple in the repertoire for advanced bass trombonists. Gillingham opens the first movement with a fortissimo rhythmic statement from the piano which gives way to fast chromatic playing in the solo bass trombone part. Tempo changes abound in the first movement; thus, the player must have a solid sense of internal rhythm and must have a good collaborator. Range is also a consideration in the first movement, the piece encompasses the range from a pedal F# to a high Ab. The second movement is a theme and variations that sets the theme in the bass trombone against a steady rhythmic pattern in the piano. This theme is based on the octatonic scale and does well to show off the performer’s expressive and lyrical capabilities. As the variations progress, the cantabile playing gives way to a compound meter, calling back to the first movement’s virtuosity. Depending on the edition of this piece, pay attention to the errata that Gillingham himself has
released as this piece was originally published with several note errors. The third movement is a fugue which is stated first in the piano and copied immediately by the bass trombone. A second, legato theme is introduced as a way to contrast the rigid structure of the first fugue theme and turns into, as David Gillingham himself wrote in his program notes, a “rondo-like structure … at the simple alternation of these themes with the first theme (fugue) being developed each time, taking on the appearance of an episode.”16 Reserved for the more advanced player, this piece is as rewarding as it is challenging. The performer must possess solid slide and tongue technique as well as an established high and low register. This piece has proven to be a favorite among many trombonists, having been recorded several times by prominent professional players and seems to be commonplace on recitals for good reason.

A more detailed look at trouble spots and subsequent practice techniques the first movement of the Gillingham Sonata will be presented in the accompanying pedagogical guide (see below).

A true “up and comer” in both the composition and performing worlds, Frank Gulino has been active since 2008. A graduate of the Peabody Conservatory, Gulino leads an active performing career in the Washington D.C. area. Because of Gulino’s close association with the bass trombone, he is very well suited to write idiomatically for the instrument and intimately knows its lyrical and technical capabilities. A fantastic writer of melodies, Gulino pens solo lines that force the performer to think about musical line and phrasing while incorporating technical flare. Gulino’s 2010 work, Capriccio features all of these aspects and has been a staple on recitals as well as featured as several major trombone festivals. Gulino’s more recent works include several for the unaccompanied bass trombone and contrabass trombone entitled, First Things First and Low Blow, respectively. Worlds Apart, written in 2010 features all of the melodic and lyrical aspects Gulino has portrayed in his other compositions and does so as he explores the extreme low register of the instrument. After a heroic introduction in the piano, Gulino sets the melody well within the valve register for the bass trombonist. To practice fluidity of musical line throughout the work, the performer is advised to practice two to three octave scales, paying close attention to the valve and pedal register. The performer should also attempt to vary the articulation from slurred legato to marcato, being advised that into the pedal register, there is a shift of embouchure. Negotiating this shift smoothly will aid in keeping a consistent sound throughout the ranges which is problematic between rehearsal letters A and D. At rehearsal E, Gulino varies the tempo and the time signature which forces the style to be abruptly changed. The performer is kept on their toes as the meter shifts between rehearsal G and H are frequent. Throughout this section at both rehearsal E and again at G, the performer should work
towards consistency of articulation, erring on the side of longer notes with presence and breadth.

Into rehearsal H, Gulino introduces a new melody that implores the performer to continue the long phrases that have been asked for previously in the composition while also expanding the range upwards. The performer should try for a bold, regal style that mimics the early melody.

The dichotomy between sixteenth notes and quarter note triplets throughout this section can cause the performer to compress and rush the rhythm. Make sure when practicing rehearsal H, that the rhythmic relationships are even and consistent throughout and each note is placed carefully. This can be exploited by the octave leaps and difficult intervals throughout the melody, but the performer is urged to keep the sound as consistent as possible, not allowing the bottom register to pop out of the context. This same melody gets repeated at letter J to the end in a slightly augmented manner. Gulino gets slightly more technical, adding several sixteenth note runs to augment the original melody, and as he does this, Gulino varies the dynamic, eventually ending the piece at a pianissimo. The performer should make sure they pay careful attention to all the dynamic markings and incorporate their musical interpretation and phrasing in an exaggerated manner. Frank Gulino has provided a work that is rare in the trombone community: a work that is enjoyable and playable by a developing student, something that can be programmed by an advanced high school student with a developed low register or an early undergrad looking to work on musical phrasing.

More information will be provided on this work in the pedagogical guide accompanying this document (see below).
### Allegro Maestoso

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Published by Editions Marc Reift

One of many composers included on this list of Dutch descent, Jan Koetsier has long been a champion of brass music through his conducting, composing and teaching. After a productive career conducting orchestras such as the Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam and the Bavarian Radio Orchestra, Koetsier made his biggest mark by becoming professor of conducting at the Hochschule fur Musik in Munich from 1966 until his retirement upon which he focused mainly on composition. In 1992, Koetsier founded the Jan Koetsier Foundation, which supports new compositions for brass instruments as well as students who wish to study brass chamber music in Germany. Koetsier’s library of works spans a wide variety of different instrumentations from organ pieces to fully staged works. His works have been commissioned by such ensembles as the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Philip Jones Brass Ensemble. Although the *Allegro Maestoso* was composed in 1972, according to Jan Koetsier’s website, the first performance of the work was not until 1989\(^{17}\). Considering how frequently it is performed and that it is not included in Thomas Everett’s original annotated guide, the piece is a prime candidate for inclusion in this document. The work was published in 1992 by Editions Marc Reift and has since become a standard work in the repertoire, being featured on no less than four albums of prominent bass trombone soloists. The work starts with a bold introduction by the bass trombone that shifts the meter from 6/4 to cut time. The challenge for the performer until measure 21 is to play aggressively, but not overly heavy as to drag the tempo. After a short piano interlude, the mood of the music changes from aggressive to nimble and more technical, forcing the performer

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\(^{17}\) Jan Koetsier’s website states that the work was written in 1972 but published in 1992, thus making it a candidate for this study.
to show their technique across the ranges of the instrument. The performer should practice the figures at measure 23 in six note figures, perfecting each grouping before linking them together. The performer can also experiment with different valve combinations, specifically using the second valve, to try and keep the slide moving in a similar direction as much as possible. Moving away from the technical aspects of *Allegro Maestoso*, Koetsier calls for the bass trombone to play with a lyrical, sensitive style in the next section. The performer should approach the tranquillo sections with a lyrical, legato approach and not allow the tempo to suffer because of this change of style. Koetsier repeats both the technical and lyrical figures later in the piece but switches the key to the dominant before moving along to a coda that exploits the lower ends of the bass trombone. As the range extends downward, especially from measures 86-90, the performer should take care to try and lengthen the lower notes as they will likely sound shorter the lower they get. Into the coda, Koetsier asks for the performer to use a glissando. The performer should place the emphasis on the latter part of the glissando as the intensity builds. The final phrase of the piece asks the performer to combine the top and the bottom part of the range in one line, ascending to an Ab4 and then descending to a pedal F1. A work roughly 5 minutes in duration, *Allegro Maestoso* is an extremely effective piece to use as an opener or closer on a recital. This piece is approachable for undergraduate or talented high school players and can be an exciting piece for players to improve their skills.
Following the footsteps of many of the French composers writing for trombone in the early to mid-20th century, Jerome Naulais offers an enjoyable and tuneful addition to the repertoire in *Etoile Des Profondeurs*. Naulais was first a trombonist of the National Orchestra of Île-de-France before moving into composing full-time. He has written and arranged for prominent musicians of a variety of genres including Harry Belafonte and Ensemble Intercontemporain and has added several pieces to the trombone repertoire. *Etoile Des Profondeurs*, which translates to “Star of the deep” is a three movement work full of tuneful melodies as well as virtuosic technique. The first movement *Etoile Des Profondeurs* has a basic A-B-A’ structure. The movement starts with a 16-measure introduction that puts the performer through technical paces with a series of eighth-note triplet runs that sets up a light, bouncy melody that then recurs throughout the movement. Performers should pay special attention to the unusual placement of articulation and slurs that give momentum to ascending and descending lines throughout the solo part. Moving from the jaunty melody of the first section to a cadenza and dance section that expands the performers range downward, this section provides for a show of stylistic command and dynamic sensitivity before moving back to a restatement of the A section with a few more difficult triplet passages and ending the movement on a pedal Eb. The second movement continues the tunefulness of the first movement by introducing a beautiful flowing melody marked “Ballade” first in the piano and followed by the bass trombone and again expanding the range downward, this time to a pedal G. Following this statement of the melody and following the form of the first movement, Naulais begins to develop the theme of the second
movement into a more technical dance which challenges the performer’s rhythmic independence and interval accuracy. The middle section of the second movement, which is a completely different character than the rest of the movement, is especially challenging because of its quick tempo, triple meter, and ensemble concerns with the piano particularly in measures 72-92. Closing the second movement with the originally stated theme, the performer is challenged to execute the restatement with a different type of warmth and introspection than when the theme was first presented. The third movement is reminiscent of an Italian tarantella; a fast, fiery dance. This movement is particularly challenging for its constant eighth-note scale patterns in the bass trombone and the frequent interval jumps in the melodic line. The performer should pay particular attention to the cadenza starting at measure 71 on a pedal D. This cadenza is particularly technical and if practiced slowly and methodically, can be extremely gratifying to the performer and impressive the audience. A restatement of the A theme from the beginning continues after the cadenza and continues to its tarantella to the end. For the advanced player and for the player who wants to improve all facets of their playing, Jerome Naulais’s *Etoile Des Profondeurs* is an extremely fun and impressive new piece in the repertoire, one that is likely to expand the performer's technical capacity, range and interval accuracy.

More detailed information on potential problem spots in the second movement with accompanying practice techniques will be provided in the pedagogical guide section of this document (see below).
Composer and conductor Anthony Plog was originally trained as an orchestral trumpet player. He has provided the brass world with myriad number of comprehensive works for all the brass instruments, mostly in a solo or chamber setting. In addition to his work for brass, Plog is an avid educator whose comprehensive, seven book method for trumpet, *The Plog Program*, has gained a reputation as a valuable resource for trumpet players everywhere. Plog has provided the trombone repertoire with several pieces, including a piece for trombone in his set of three miniatures for every instrument as well as his *Postcards III* for tenor trombone and *Postcards IV* for bass trombone. Written in 2010 for Randall Hawes, bass trombonist of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and world class soloist, *Postcards IV* is the fourth piece in a series of work for unaccompanied brass instruments. This 7:00’ work is set in four movements and challenges the performer with non-traditional, non-classical styles in three of the four movements. The relatively quick first movement indicates to the performer to be played with a “jazz feel” and starts with a soft, eight measure groove that employs syncopation and creates a basis for rhythmic stability throughout the movement. The challenge in the first movement is to create a feeling of ease within the groove and a consistency of pulse in the swung eighth notes to help drive the rhythmic energy forward. The performer should be careful not to turn the swung rhythms into disjunct dotted eighth, sixteenth notes. This is especially difficult if the performer is not familiar with playing within a jazz idiom. To work on achieving this style, it is suggested that the performer seek out Jamey Aebersold and David Baker’s work and listen to jazz instrumentalists who have mastered the art of swing, such as trombonists of the bebop era, J.J. Johnson and Kai
Winding. The second movement continues with the jazz style and makes florid use of syncopation. This is a challenge throughout the movement as the unaccompanied bass trombone must create a solid pulse from which to draw the syncopation out of. The performer should practice these two movements with a metronome at different levels of subdivision (i.e. whole bar subdivision, half-note subdivision, quarter-note subdivision). Practicing these swung lines at different divisions of the beat allows the performer to check the syncopation against a larger duration of time. The third movement charges the performer to show their lyrical and cantabile playing while keeping the dynamic at a soft level. From measure 8 to 19, consistent triplet figures create a sense of rhythmic freedom that should be considered by the performer. The emphasis between measure 8 and 19 should be to play these measures with a push and pull feel, keeping the triplets from feeling completely metronomic. The third movement provides the performer with an opportunity to contrast the rigid pulse of the other three movements with flowing phrases that need not be completely in time but must have consistent durational relationships between them. The last movement of the work returns the piece to the jazz idiom. Between measures 29-42, Plog creates the feeling of a “shout” chorus by employing the use of syncopated glissandi and marcato accents. The performer should pay careful attention to these glissandi, especially the note that they end on, as some of them lay awkwardly on the instrument. Anthony Plog has created a fun, non-traditional work for the unaccompanied bass trombone in which the performer gets to explore styles that might be foreign to them. This work is not terribly difficult, especially to the performer that is more familiar with a variety of styles and would be a welcomed addition to a recital program devoid of different styles.
As the bass trombone and its solo music moves into a golden age for the instrument, several composers have been on the forefront of changing the image of the bass trombone as a purely orchestral instrument into a solo force. Daniel Schnyder and his collaborations with David Taylor and other prominent trombonists have pushed the envelope with their spirited performances in both solo settings and with their duo album and book, *Art of the Duo*. Schnyder’s music for the bass trombone has been so frequently performed and recorded in the last decade that both his *subZERO: Concerto for Bass Trombone* and now his *Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano* must be included in this study. *The Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano* was composed in 1996, as a part of a series of pieces called *Music for Brass Instruments* which received first place in the International Trumpet Guild composition contest. The sonata is dedicated to David Taylor and will challenge even the most advanced player. Composed in three movements and pushing the limits of technical and rhythmic ability, the first movement entitled “Blues” begins much in the same way that his concerto does, with a flurry of notes concentrated in the valve register. The performer should approach the first page of the sonata with a very slow, subdivided, measure by measure technique. By breaking down the rhythms between rehearsal A and B into a sixteenth note subdivision and slowly speeding up the metronome, the performer will solidify the difficult interval shifts and the shifting rhythms that are prevalent throughout the introduction. As the performer becomes more comfortable at the smallest subdivision, switching to an eighth note subdivision and practicing in larger sections will help fluidity and transitions. This type of methodical approach will solidify both the rhythmic and technical aspects of this difficult beginning. One of the more challenging aspects in the first movement is the usage of
mutes in both the cadenza (plunger, even though Schnyder asks for this to be done “vocally”) and in the triplet section from measures 178-190. Schnyder does not indicate in the triplet section which mute to use but based on his other compositions that use mute and the players who have recorded this work, the suggestion would be to use a bucket mute (a mute is also asked for in the second movement). The second movement, entitled “An American Ballad” should be approached much of the same way that the beginning of the first movement is approached. Playing the rhythms slowly and subdividing them into the smallest possible duration will help keep the rhythm consistent throughout the movement. It is suggested that the performer become acquainted with and play along with James Markey’s recording of this movement from his album *On Base*, it will help with the difficult interplay between trombone and piano and will help prepare the player to collaborate with a pianist. The closing movement, “Below the Surface”, implores the player to play with a spirited and fiery style, while still incorporating a light and nimble touch to the consistent eighth notes. The mordents indicated by Schnyder present an interesting challenge to the performer, as well as the transition from dotted quarter subdivision of measure 15 to the quarter note subdivision in measure 16. Overall, this is one of the most impressive contributions to the solo repertoire that will challenge the performer and excite the audience.
One of the more prolific composers for the bass trombone in the late 20th and early 21st century, Daniel Schnyder collaborations with bass trombonists have been fruitful for the soloist over the last 20 years. Schnyder, a Swiss-American composer living in New York has produced a wide catalogue of repertoire for the Bass Trombone during his work with both Stefan Schulz (Berlin Philharmonic) and David Taylor (New York Freelancer). Both his Sonata and subZERO: Concerto for Bass Trombone are constants on recitals by professionals and students and provide the performer an opportunity to be challenged both musically and technically. subZERO: Concerto for Bass Trombone is set in three movements entitled “subZERO”, “Sama’i Thaquil”, and “Zoom Out” and was commissioned by David Taylor and the Absolute Ensemble. The work was recorded by the same ensemble and received a Grammy nomination for “Best Classical Small Ensemble Recording” in 2002. This concerto is available in several different iterations: for solo bass trombone and piano, solo bass trombone, two percussion and piano, or solo bass trombone and small orchestra. Technically, this concerto is a lot to handle right from the very start with wide interval leaps extending into the extreme low register at a fast tempo. The performer needs to have a solid grasp of their pedal register as the first movement frequently exploits this register with an unrelenting rhythmic drive. A keen sense of rhythm and a mastery of style is necessary for the frequent meter shifts and syncopation that is particularly prevalent in the work of Schnyder, especially in the extended first movement cadenza from measures 154-
194. The second movement, “Sama’i Thaqil”, is an Arab instrumental form based on a pattern of ten beats. It requires the performer to play with several different mutes including a bucket and a Harmon without a stem. This movement contains beautiful expressive content of a contemplative nature that contrasts with the outer movements. The third movement; “Zoom Out”, is a fast and energetic finale which makes use of the performer’s ability to multiple tongue and again tests the rhythmic stability of the ensemble through syncopation and meter changes. Slow and methodical practice of the sixteenth-note runs, along with a subdivided metronome will help solidify the first forty measures of “Zoom Out”. Continued practice this way will help build speed and accuracy. The performer should take care to have an extremely talented collaborator and should schedule a fair amount of rehearsal time as the piano reduction is complicated and at times not easy to sync with the bass trombone. Schnyder’s fusion of classical, jazz, and non-western musical styles along with his ability to write music that pushes the limits of the performer’s technical and musical ability has made subZERO: Concerto for Bass Trombone one of the most played and well received pieces since 1985.
After a career as an orchestral trumpeter with the Naples Philharmonic, James Stephenson decided to venture full-time into the world of composition in 2007. Stephenson’s compositional catalogue contains a sonata or concerto for almost every single symphonic instrument. Stephenson’s other trombone work, his tenor trombone concerto, *Concerto Braziliano*, was written for Nitzan Haroz and performed at the St. Barth’s festival in 2007. *The “Arch” Sonata*, his work for bass trombone and piano, was written at the bequest of St. Louis Symphony bass trombonist Gerry Pagano. Pagano wanted a work that represented where he lived and worked, thus *The “Arch” Sonata* was born. Stephenson, who has explained that he enjoys using symbolism in many of his works, does so in this work. Almost every single phrase in *The “Arch” Sonata* is itself a miniature arch. The symbolism doesn't stop there. The piece itself is 630 measures long, which is the outer width of the arch, and the pervasive use the notes E and A is inspired by the designer of the arch, Eero Saarinen. Several of these instances of symbolism can be seen in the first six notes, in which the phrase itself looks like an arch, and the notes that Stephenson uses are only E and A. The extreme pedal register is employed at the opening and throughout the entire piece at various dynamic levels, making for an extremely demanding aspect for the performer to overcome. A particularly difficult cadenza from rehearsal A to B pushes the limits of range for the performer. To help with the fluidity throughout the ranges, the performer is encouraged to practice descending, two octave major scales starting at p and building to fortissimo. This will help with tackling the technical aspects that abound in this work, but
especially at rehearsal letters M, Q, and AA. This work (16 minutes) is one movement, through-composed, in sonata form. This adds to its already extremely difficult nature. The performer of this piece should practice for endurance and longevity. Practicing Joannes Rochut’s version of Marco Bordogni’s *Melodious Etudes* in several different clefs will help with creating and maintaining the sort of strength needed to perform the work. From AA to KK, Stephenson challenges the performer with a barrage of technical acrobatics, especially at DD and FF. The performer should consider practicing these sections by isolating each measure and slowing it down to a comfortable tempo in which perfection can be achieved, and gradually speeding it up for a performance ready tempo. Of concern at FF, is the choice of key that Stephenson decides on: B major. Although not an unfamiliar key for trombonists (Wagner writes in B-Major frequently), B major does not necessarily lie well on the instrument. The performer should make sure they acquaint themselves with this key by playing scales and scales in thirds before practicing the section at FF. To put this piece together, the performer must have a good collaborator who has a keen sense of rhythm and good following abilities. This piece also requires a large amount of rehearsal time. *The “Arch” Sonata* is one of the more difficult works that has been written in the last several years due to its length, technical demands and fluidity of range. This is an enjoyable work that should be performed by the most advanced graduate students or professionals who have fully developed the necessary skills.
**The Kleinhammer Sonata**  
John Stevens  

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Published by Potenza Music  
Commissioned by a consortium headed by Alan Carr

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A distinguished tubist and composer, John Stevens has concentrated on writing music for brass instruments even while teaching tuba full time at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A Yale educated tubist and composer who has a penchant for tunefulness and creativity, Stevens’ work has been featured all over the globe and by the most accomplished musicians the 20th century has to offer. Stevens writes for all instruments; however it is clear his knowledge of idiomatic brass writing makes his solo work for brass instruments his most successful pieces. His Tuba concerto, *Journey*, was premiered by Gene Pokorny and the Chicago Symphony in June of 2000 and since then, a variety of Stevens’ compositions can be heard on no less than 50 recordings. This sonata was composed at the request of a consortium of trombonists who wanted to engage Stevens in a project. This request coincided with the passing of trombone legend, Edward Kleinhammer. It seemed appropriate to honor Kleinhammer because of his contributions to the instrument and his incredible talent with a piece dedicated to him. Stevens fully admits in the score that the *Kleinhammer Sonata* is a true piece of chamber music for bass trombone and piano. This piece of information is key in conveying to the performer to choose a very strong collaborator. One of Stevens’ self-stated goals was for his music to, “...portray the capabilities of power, beauty, agility and musicality in dialogue with a piano part that is interesting and meaningful to the mood of the work beyond just an accompanying role.”[18] Another stated goal of this work for Stevens was to exploit the lower registers of the bass trombone in a lyrical,

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singing fashion that would have been typical of a Kleinhammer performance. This is evident in much of the traditional fast first movement, as most of the melodic material is lying either within the staff or well below the staff. It is suggested that the performer work on breath support to lengthen phrases and to keep a relaxed, melodic sound for maximum warmth and color. Consulting Sam Pilafian and Patrick Sheridan’s *Breathing Gym*, or David Vining’s *The Breathing Book* could aid in increased comfort with longer, lower melodies. Of considerable trouble in the first movement are the time changes and syncopated rhythms that should be worked out by subdividing slowly. Stevens adapts Kleinhammer’s favorite orchestral work; the “Urlicht” from Mahler’s *Resurrection Symphony* in the slow movement, the performer can really work on long phrases and a hauntingly beautiful expressive mindset. The performer should become very familiar with the vocal lines and words of the “Urlicht”, as well Mahler’s original phrasing to give a curated representation of this movement. Stevens suggests that the performer familiarize themselves with the piano part, most notably from measures 29-46, before rehearsing this movement as to promote an organic dialogue quickly. Score study from rehearsal E to the end will similarly aid the performer with intonation. The third movement allows the performer to unleash the technique slightly more so than in the succeeding movements. Stevens marking of half note equals 80 seems to be malleable based on the desired degree of difficulty, keeping in mind that the running eighth notes at rehearsal A, B, and C should be performed with ease. For a fast, smooth performance of these passages, practice them double-tongued at half speed and gradually speed up. The performer should practice at a slow tempo and results will be expedited. The piece ends with a large bass trombone cadenza over a four-measure repeated figure in the piano before racing to the finish. The performer should be as declamatory and operatic as possible throughout the end of this movement, showing the full capabilities of the bass trombone. This is a work that is worthy of being an anchor piece on a recital and one that will test the musical sensitivity and phrasing lengths of the best performers.
A prolific composer and a celebrated trombonist, David Uber had a musical career that spanned just short of six decades. A graduate of the Curtis Institute of Music and Columbia University (NY), Uber’s performing credits include the New York City Ballet, the New York City Opera and as solo trombone of the NBC Television Orchestra. As a composer, his more than 400 works have been commissioned by leading artists, universities, and corporations around the world and have won several awards such as the 1990 T.U.B.A. composition contest for his 22 Etudes for Euphonium and the prestigious ASCAP composers award a staggering 49 times. His work for low brass instruments has largely dominated his oeuvre, as Uber has been commissioned by such low brass and musical greats as Harvey Phillips, Don Butterfield, Frank Meredith, John Swallow, and Gerard Schwarz. Skylines was written for the bass trombonist of the Boston Symphony, Douglas Yeo, in 1992 and depicts the three cosmopolitan skylines of Manhattan (New York), Chicago (Illinois), and Boston (Massachusetts). In Douglas Yeo’s program notes to his album Proclamation in which Yeo plays Skylines with brass band, he says this about Skylines:

It came, then, as a complete surprise when, in 1991, David called me and said he was writing a piece for me for bass trombone and brass ensemble. It was to be, he said, a musical representation of three cities that figured prominently in my professional development: Manhattan (New York City), where I moved after completing my undergraduate degree and began my freelance career; Chicago, the city where I studied with Edward Kleinhammer while a student at Wheaton College; and Boston, where I play today. David asked me if I would accept the dedication of the piece and if I would perform it with his Trenton State College brass ensemble at the New York Brass Conference. Through a remarkable series of events, it turned out that the Conference was being held during a week that the Boston Symphony was on tour in New York (January 1992), so the premiere was a happy event.19

The first movement, “Manhattan”, is as fast-paced and frantic as its namesake. Marked at allegro assai, Uber challenges the trombonist with a flurry of notes in the upper register for the bass trombone. The performer should focus on clarity of articulation and a light tongue to best tackle these measures. Throughout the movement, the trombonist should consider a smaller sound to tackle the fast pace of the allegro assai movement. From rehearsal F to G, the trombonist needs to display good double tonguing and excellent slide coordination. The second movement, “Chicago”, features more lyrical and song-like qualities of the bass trombone. This movement is a reminder of the song and wind approach of the famous Chicago Symphony low brass section. The performer should approach this movement much as one would approach one of Joannes Rochut’s version of Marco Bordogni’s *Melodious Etudes*. Practicing the first eight etudes in the *Melodious Etudes* book and focusing on connections will aid in a consistent full sound. Throughout this movement, the trombonist must pay careful attention to matching the sounds of the natural slur and the legato tongue. Several resources will aid in a player’s development of this, including Reginald Fink’s *Studies in Legato* and David Vining’s *Daily Routines for Tenor Trombone*. The last movement, “Boston”, makes constant use of meter changes from 6/8 to 5/8, keeping the player constantly subdividing without falling behind the beat. The player is recommended to listen to Douglas Yeo’s recording from the album *Proclamation* to gain an understanding of sound concept and style. The challenge in this movement, and throughout the work is to keep the sound from becoming uncharacteristically brash and heavy. *Skylines* is a work that incorporates non-traditional accompaniment including piano, drum-set, and timpani, as well as a version with brass band accompaniment. Less difficult than many works included in this list, Uber has provided a piece that seems suitable for a wide range from advanced high school players through graduate students.
Premiered at the 2007 Eastern Trombone Workshop in Ft. Myer, Virginia, Henry Wolking’s *Bass Trombone Music* is a work that is worthy of becoming a staple in the bass trombone repertoire. Recently retired after a 39-year career as the head of the jazz department at the University of Utah to further concentrate on his composing and arranging, Henry Wolking has had provided several pieces for the trombone that fuses the classical and jazz genres. Among Wolking’s many pieces for brass, his trombone works stand out. Wolking’s *Trombone Tales*, a 30-minute concerto for trombone and orchestra, was premiered by Larry Zalkind and the Utah Symphony Orchestra in 1995 and taken on tour to wide acclaim. Through his compositions for the trombone, Wolking demonstrates his knowledge and skill on the trombone and his considerable ability to compose for the instrument idiomatically. In his *Bass Trombone Music*, which was dedicated to professor of trombone at University of Utah, Donn Schaeffer, Wolking sets a brilliant work in four different movements inspired by influential figures in Wolking’s life.

In the first movement, inspired by and based on a song by 1960’s pop artist Roger Miller, Wolking presents a considerable challenge for the performer in both style and technique. The performer should approach the first movement with a light and nimble approach, especially when the range descends. It’s important to work against the tendency that most bass trombonists have to “muscle out” the low register. Articulation should be scrutinized and played with the utmost care, as the composer himself comments that the “articulations are quite important”.

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second movement is inspired by Lou Harrison, a composer who exploited the limits of rhythm and melody in something he calls "melodicles", short motifs which are exploited to create a musical mode for the rest of the work. In Wolking’s version, he chooses intervals to expand, moving from a minor third at the beginning of the movement to octaves at the end. The performer should work through this movement slowly and concentrate on centering each pitch as the intervals expand. Practicing from Jean-Baptiste Arban’s *Famous Method for Trombone* interval studies in multiple octaves will help solidify this technique. The third movement, entitled “Simon”, calls for the performer to showcase their expressive sensibilities. This movement should be practiced and performed with a delicate, beautiful legato that constantly connects the melodic line, especially as the line gets more disjunct from measures 30 through 34. The last movement of the set, dedicated to Thelonious Monk, asks the performer to expand their rhythmic and technical facility within a jazz style. Performing this movement successfully would cause the soloist to mimic a fluent improvised jazz style while keeping the rhythmic integrity of the written music. Measures 30 to 48 are potentially the most challenging of this work. The performer should work on a stylistic double tongue and should consider “ghosting” certain notes. Listening to, and becoming familiar with Thelonious Monk, Roger Miller, and Lou Harrison’s music will go a long way to stylizing the music the intended way. Overall, Henry Wolking’s *Bass Trombone Music* is a work that deserves to be recognized for its idiomatic and interesting writing for both the bass trombone and the piano. *Bass Trombone Music* can be played by an advanced undergraduate player who is looking to increase their understanding of a wide variety of musical styles as well as challenge their technical capabilities.
Capriccio
Steven Verhelst

Year of Publication: 2006
Range: D1 - Bb4
Level of Difficulty: Most Advanced
Approx Length: 8:00"
Accompaniment(s): Trombone Sextet
                   Piano Reduction
                   Brass Band
                   Wind Ensemble

Published by BVD Music
Written for Ben Van Dijk

Steven Verhelst is a Belgian composer whose music is gaining quite a following on both social media as well as in more traditional musical circles. A bass trombonist himself, Verhelst has studied with and subsequently written music for several of the most prominent trombonists, including Ben Van Dijk, Jorgen Van Rijen, and Ben Haemhouts. A featured artist at the Slide Factory 2017 in the Netherlands and the composer in residence at Sliderasia, Hong Kong in 2015, Verhelst has made his mark on the 21st century brass community with a large repertoire of works for trombone and brass. Verhelst became a YouTube sensation with his work, A Song for Japan which featured trombonists from all over the world performing the quartet for charity after the horrible earthquake and tsunami hit Japan in 2011. To date, this video has over 440,000 views and has inspired many trombonists to perform this work. Verhelst’s World Concerto written for and premiered by Ben Van Dijk in 2014 displays Verhelst’s melodic and tonally-driven compositional style. Many of Verhelst’s works could have easily been included in this document, including World Concerto, Hymn for Planet Earth commissioned by George Curran and the Columbus State (GA) Trombone Choir, and the recently commissioned On Your Own Now for solo bass trombone. The work that is included in this list is Verhelst’s Capriccio for Bass Trombone and multiple accompanying (i.e., piano, brass band, trombone sextet, wind ensemble). A virtuosic addition to the repertoire, Capriccio starts with a fanfare like introduction in the accompaniment which is immediately echoed by a heroic statement from the bass trombone. Within the first ten bars of Capriccio, the performer should focus on making an immediate statement with a full sound and clear articulation focusing on centering each pitch to get full
resonance. Two measures after rehearsal A, the melody is stated in the bass trombone, which will be restated twice more throughout the piece in different keys. The performer should approach this melody with a declamatory style focusing on full note lengths and steady and consistent tone throughout. At rehearsal B, the bass trombone takes on the role of accompaniment with a figure that dances around the melody. The performer should focus on executing a light and crisp articulation style, paying close attention to the printed articulation as well as the dynamic markings. From rehearsal F to G, the technical prowess of the performer can be exploited. In this section, the performer could explore alternate positions and make use of both valves of the bass trombone to keep the slide from moving too much, or to keep it moving in opposite directions too frequently. Either a strong single tongue or a consistent triple tongue will be needed to effectively conquer the G chromatic scale. To work on this, consult Jean-Baptiste Arban’s Famous Method for Trombone for the section on multiple tonguing. Into the B section, the lyrical nature of the andante theme must be connected and stand in stark contrast to the style of the previous section. Paramount to the success of this section, is a clear sense of musical line and phrase. It is suggested that the performer analyze and sing through this section to get a clear understanding of the musical phrase structure. Approaching the music with clear phrasing intentions will lead to a much more emotive and captivating performance. From rehearsal N to the end of the work, the performer must be intimately acquainted with ascending and descending arpeggios. To better achieve clarity through these, the performer is suggested to refer to exercise 27, 29 and 34 of Max Schlossberg’s Daily Drills and Technical Studies to establish clear pitch center and develop clarity. Glissandi from F to D, down into the pedal range end the work with finality. Capriccio is a fun and engaging work for the bass trombone and a variety of different ensembles that is suited to an advanced player looking to improve and show off technique.
One of two Pulitzer prize winning composers included in this document (the other being David Del Tredici), Ellen Taaffe Zwilich has paved quite a path to success as she was the first woman composer to win the award as well as being the first woman to receive a doctorate from the Juilliard School. An extremely decorated composer, she has been awarded the prestigious Guggenheim fellowship, four Grammy nominations, and an Academy Award among others. Zwilich has been called "one of America’s most frequently played and genuinely popular living composers."\(^{21}\) Zwilich has close to 100 works ranging from instrumental concertos to vocal ensemble pieces in a variety of styles from post-modern to post-romantic. In 1986, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra approached Zwilich with the idea of composing two trombone concertos, one for tenor trombone and orchestra and the other for bass trombone and orchestra. These works were to be specifically for Jay Friedman, principal trombonist, and Charles Vernon, bass trombonist of the orchestra, both of whom are virtuosos. Zwilich mentions that it took her a while to decide to write two concertos, she explains that:

Although I had long wanted to write a large-scale work for trombone and orchestra and jumped at the chance to do so for the Chicago Symphony, I gave a great deal of thought to the subject before I said "yes" to two! After a long discussion in New York with Jay Friedman and Charles Vernon, which ended with each of them playing for me on the stage of Carnegie Hall, I became excited about the challenge of writing two dramatically different pieces.\(^{22}\)

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The Concerto for Bass Trombone, Strings, Timpani and Cymbals was completed in 1989 and premiered in 1991 by Charles Vernon and the Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Daniel Barenboim. Written specifically for Vernon, this concerto poses a great deal of challenge to anyone who attempts it. The range of the concerto spans more than 4 octaves from Db 1 to F#5 and uses both the high and low tessitura for extended durations throughout each movement.

In the first movement, Zwilich makes consistent use of intervals of fourths and fifths as well as chromatic lines to establish the solo part. Although not overly technical throughout the first 67 bars, the player must exhibit extreme facility and a well-established range. Measure 68 begins an extended cadenza in the bass trombone that extends the range from a high E at the top of the treble clef staff to a pedal F at the bottom of the bass clef. The performer who is looking to successfully perform this should build into their daily routine, Joseph Alessi’s arpeggio exercise from his warm-up and maintenance sessions which were compiled at the 2007 Alessi Seminar.

The second movement is a testament to Vernon’s flexibility in the lowest register of the instrument. Marked legato and molto legato, the performer should approach this movement with the intention of providing a sustained and warm sound. To work on this movement, it is suggested that the performer practice Joannes Rochut’s version of Marco Bordogni’s Melodious Etudes down an octave and in tenor clef down an octave and down two octaves to work on musical phrasing and breath control in the lowest tessitura. The third movement draws from what was written in the previous movements as far as range and sustained playing is concerned and adds an added component of technical virtuosity to the mix, including the highest note in the piece, an F#, in the last four bars. This work should be approached as a long-term project for those looking to master their skills and perform at the highest level. The Concerto for Bass Trombone, Strings, Timpani and Cymbals is one of the most difficult works in the repertoire and should be a capstone project for those whose skills are at the absolute highest level.
Pedagogical Guides

The purpose of the accompanying pedagogical guides is to identify particular trouble spots and present additional practice solutions in five of the works included in the repertoire catalogue. Often, when musicians are presented with a difficult passage of repertoire, either technical or musical, the performer is sometimes at a loss for how to approach said passage to effectively improve and eventually master the trouble spot. The practice tips presented here will be a combination of tried and true methods as well as things that I have encountered in studies or method books that have helped me improve both musically and technically. These guides will accompany a lecture-recital demonstrating these techniques as well as performing selections of the work or movement.

General comments pertaining to collaborating on solo works

Often as instrumental performers, we are forced to spend long hours practicing these compositions in a room by ourselves, only allowing for time with a collaborator on occasions when the performer is preparing for a performance. Because of this, instrumentalists spend a lot of time studying their own parts, but rarely the part of the collaborator. It is suggested that the performer practice frequently from the full score to fully understand how the parts line up. To go even further than this, the performer should write into their part important lines that dominate the musical structure. This is a great way to open the eyes and the ears of each person involved in the creation of each musical performance.
Works to be examined

David Gillingham - *Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano, (Mvmt. 1)*

Jérôme Naulais - *Etoile Des Profondeurs, (Mvmt. 2)*

Brad Edwards - *Four Impromptus for Low Bone Alone (Mvmt. 4)*

Frank Gulino - *Worlds Apart*

Eric Ewazen - *Concerto for Bass Trombone (Mvmt. 1)*
David Gillingham - *Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano, Movement 1*

Easily one of the most frequently played works in the post-1985 era of bass trombone repertoire, the Gillingham Sonata is a *tour de force* for the instrument and presents several challenges to the performer.

**Measures 6 through 31**

Gillingham provides a very difficult intervallic passage in the bass trombone right from the start with dotted quarter notes and two sixteenth notes to each bar in 2/4 time. For the first eight bars the range is set in the middle of the staff and subsequently jumps into the higher tessitura before descending back down. After a three-measure rest, Gillingham continues this same theme but augments the rhythm and calls for a completely different style. On the surface, this appears to be a simple line that lies well on the instrument, however to adequately perform and master this section the following problems need to be dealt with:

The performer should pay close attention to the follow issues throughout this section:

- Short changing note lengths and compressing the sixteenth notes is common. The musical line should be fluid rather than disjunct.
- Awkward interval leaps throughout the passage can cause the performer to miss the downbeat or attack notes in a way that leads to an inconsistent center of pitch.
- The first section calls for a very legato approach, the second section at 24 calls for a secco approach.
It is suggested that the performer begin to practice this section at a tempo well below the suggested quarter note equals 144, and progressively speed up to a tempo that feels exciting but not frantic and out of control. To approach the dotted quarter and two sixteenth note introduction, it is suggested that the player start at the slow tempo and use glissandi to connect the sixteenth notes. Practicing musical example 2 will help with fluidity and a consistent musical line that is legato as Gillingham wishes. This will also help with the awkward interval leaps if the sound is kept consistent via the glissandi. Musical example 2 also forces the player to use consistent air throughout the line, keeping the musical direction going forward.

\[ \text{Bass Trombone} \]
\[ \text{Musical Example 2. Gillingham, Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano 1.} \]

The next step is to subdivide the dotted quarter note even further and practice a slow, legato double tongue as in musical example 3. If the player can work out a slow, legato double tongue and eventually speed it up, the passage will sound all that much better at a faster speed. This will also work with the passage at rehearsal 24 if the player works towards a slow, secco double tongue as in musical example 4. As the player becomes more comfortable with the slow double tongue, it is recommended to speed up the tempo incrementally while attempting to keep a consistent articulation.

Measures 83 through 108

After a cadenza that begins in measure 69, the piano rejoins the bass trombone with an iteration of the opening theme which transitions into a metric shift that begins in measure 91 and completes the transformation to 6/8 in measure 108.

The performer should pay close attention to the following issues throughout this section:

- A light and bouncy approach is required throughout this section while maintaining the accents in measure 91.
● Changing style into measure 99 and keeping a legato and consistent tongue throughout the mostly chromatic movement.

● Properly feeling the correct pulse throughout the section and placing emphasis in the right places.

In measure 83, a similar approach to that of the beginning of the movement will aid in achieving pitch and interval accuracy. The performer must remember that in measure 91, a pointed and spirited accent on each downbeat is necessary. Doing so, in measures 96-98 will aid in keeping the momentum before slowing with an unwritten ritardando in measure 98 into 99. Adding this ritardando and elongating the quarter note triplets will allow the player to transition nicely from one style to the next, as demonstrated in musical example 5.


Feeling the correct pulse is a challenge to contend with throughout the entire piece. This is particularly the case in measure 99. The performer is urged to feel the 6/8 bar similarly in 2/4 with the eighth note getting the pulse. The performer is also urged to make use of the second valve throughout the section at 105, with special emphasis given to measure 106. One of the harder sections of this movement to align correctly with the pianist occurs right after measure 108 and continues into measure 111. The performer should notice that each beat lands on C and that
the pianist uses the pedal in each bar. The performer might want to skip right to this spot when first collaborating with their pianist. Many of the meters throughout the work are unusual and not frequently seen, so rethinking the meters that present confusion is something that the performer should consider. A re-written version of the bass trombone part with suggested slide positions and valve combinations is included in musical example 6.


Measure 163 through End

The last section of note in the first movement of the Gillingham is the coda starting at measure 163. This is possibly the most virtuosic section of the work and spans almost three octaves in range.

The performer should pay close attention to the following issues throughout this section:

- Technical challenges present from measures 180-185.
- Fluidity and consistency of sound from G4 to Ab1.
It is suggested that the performer approach the line by “peeling away the layers” when working on these overly technical passages. Starting in measure 180, the performer is advised to play the first note of each beat only, from G4 to Ab1 as in musical example 7.


After these pitches have been stabilized through repetition, musical example 8 advises the performer to add the second note of each triplet.


Finally, the performer can add the third note, and each time they repeat the passage the emphasis should be placed with the accent on the beat.

David Gillingham’s *Sonata for Bass Trombone and Piano* is a work that is frequently performed and often taught. The opportunities for effective practice techniques can provide a wealth of knowledge for those that choose to study it. This guide provides suggestions that the author has seen to be effective to helping best prepare this movement. Many of these suggestions have been passed down from generations of expert teachers and pedagogues.
Following the French conservatory tradition, Jerome Naulais wrote this work for Premiere Prix winner Yves Bauer. This tonal and melodic work will be a welcomed addition to any recital or recording but does offer several challenges to the performer in terms of technique, style, and range.

**Measure 8 through 27**

Naulais offers up a beautiful and haunting melody that allows the bass trombonist to make use of their extensive lyrical abilities. Negotiating this passage with ease of tone and consistent intonation is a must, but if the performer pays attention to musical line and tension and release, the opening to this movement can be extremely special.

The performer should pay close attention to the following throughout this section:

- Musical phrasing through the first 21 bars.
- Beauty and consistency of sound in the low register while doing a decrescendo.

It is suggested that the slurs be rewritten as in musical example 9 so that they adhere to a more lyrical and overall sense of phrase structure. Doing so will allow the performer to rethink the phrases in a way that elongates the line. Musical example 9 contains the suggested rewrite.
Similarly, in the last four bars of this section, the performer must negotiate a dive into the low register while maintaining a beauty and core to the sound. Working on crescendi and decrescendi in the pedal register will aid in accomplishing this.

Marked plus allant, meaning “a little more spirited”, Naulais varies the theme at the beginning with a much more playful and dance-like section. This allows the performer to show off a more technical side to their playing, but also adds several challenges to the overall performance of this movement. Differing articulation, complex rhythms, an expanded range, and wide interval leaps dominate this section.
The performer should pay close attention to the following issues throughout this section:

- A heightened level of technique, leading to difficult slide and tongue coordination.
- Increasingly complex rhythms throughout, forcing the player to subdivide for greater internal pulse.
- An expanded range that offers wide interval leaps causing accuracy problems.

Right from the beginning of the plus allant, Naulais increases the technical challenges from the opening lyrical statement. These increased technical challenges can wreak havoc on the coordination between the slide and the tongue. To help improve this, it is suggested that the performer make use of “alternate” positions to keep the slide from frequently having to move in opposing directions. These are suggested in musical example 11 are my suggested positions for the phrase from measure 31-53. Making use of the second valve independently of the first will help keep consistent motion of the slide and can avoid jerky movements that breakup the phrase.

Naulais begins to vary the rhythmic language of the piece quite a bit in the plus allant section. The performer must constantly shift the subdivision in their mind from big beats to sixteenth note sextuplets depending on the phrase. Measures 35, 43-45, and 47 are the most challenging to play with consistent accuracy. To work on this, it is suggested that the player practice away from the horn first, subdividing each measure with the corresponding beat audible from a metronome. Working away from the horn on rhythmic problems can help break the monotony of long practice sessions. Once this has been mastered, add the instrument back, but play the rhythms on one note with the metronome. Ultimately, the player will add all the notes and solidify the rhythmic patterns.

Lastly, the wide interval leaps throughout this section pose a considerable challenge to both rhythmic and pitch accuracy. To work on these intervals, the player should seek out two different method books. Practicing musical example 12, from Jean-Baptiste Arban’s *Famous Method for Trombone* in all octaves and articulations will help wide intervals, and consistent practice from Brad Edwards *Lip Slurs* will aid in establishing a comfort level with intervals that can be naturally slurred as well as building strength and facility throughout the ranges.

Similar issues arise throughout the rest of the movement as they pertain to rhythm, accuracy, wide intervals, and range. Working through sections like measures 95-108 while applying all the techniques mentioned above will help the performer achieve success throughout the movement.
4 Impromptus for Low Bone Alone has become a great recital piece for both students and professionals. This clever and enjoyable work has a wealth of musical content within and contains many spots throughout that require solid technique. In addition to the technical and musical challenges present, all of the movements start with a poem that is to be spoken clearly and energetically before playing. The performer is encouraged to practice their speaking voice in the dress rehearsal in the hall to determine the appropriate diction. This guide will focus on the fourth and last movement, “Senseless Rejoicing”. This short movement is only 2:30” long but contains several issues throughout the two pages of material.

Measure 1 through 26

The performer should pay close attention to the following issues throughout this section:

- Negotiating the consistently alternating meters cleanly.
- Establishing a metric hierarchy throughout the work.
- Understanding compound melodies and cross melodic connections.
- Wide interval leaps.

Edwards switches meters frequently throughout the movement. Alternating 5/8 and 6/8 passages are interspersed with occasional 7/8 measures. This occurs between measures 1-26 and again from measures 71-87. To consistently feel the rhythms, the performer is encouraged to practice these sections by playing the first note of each note grouping so as to make sure that the pulse of each measure has the right feel to it. Special attention must be paid in musical example 13 to the 6/8 bars that have a rest on beat four to avoid making these measures into 5/8 bars.

Measure 37 through 70

The second major issue throughout this movement is the establishment of a beat hierarchy so that the leggiero section from measure 37-70 contains some musical line rather than having each eighth-note receive the same emphasis. To implement this, the performer must adhere to the following hierarchy of beats listed here, strongest to weakest:

- Strongest: Beat 1, Beat 3, Beat 4, Beat 2
- Weakest: Upbeats

Figure 1. Edwards, *4 Impromptus for Low Bone Alone*, “Senseless Rejoicing” Beat Hierarchy.
Understanding that each eighth note is not created equal in this scenario is important for the developing musician. The effort must be placed on making a musical line instead of giving equal emphasis to each note.

A more advanced concept involved in “Senseless Rejoicing” is the presence of compound melodies between measures 45-63. The performer must present a clear bass line ostinato on beat 4 that accompanies a more leggiero melodic line on beats 1 and 2. As the bass line ascends by half steps, the melodic line shifts to meet the new pitch center. To practice this relationship, it is suggested that the performer separate the lines and practice them as is recommended in musical examples 14 (bass) and 15 (melody).

Bass line:

Keeping the bass line figure from sticking out of the texture is an important aspect of creating a convincing compound melody. The performer is reminded that the bass line notes should be more tenuto than accented.

As is true with many of the works contained in the pedagogical guides, wide interval leaps present a challenge for most performers. The performer is urged to contemplate the use of vowel sounds as the range ascends and descends. The use of different vowels such as “AHH” or “OH” can dramatically affect the sound if applied in an incorrect fashion. It is suggested that in any work with difficult interval leaps, the performer sing through each passage with corresponding vowel sounds.

A daily routine of lip-slurs, long-tones, scales, and arpeggios in different octaves and with different articulations along with a healthy diet of an assortment of method books will help in raising the level of facility throughout the ranges. It is suggested that the developing bass trombonist practice their fundamentals and basics religiously and transfer these successes over to the solo works contained in this study.
As mentioned in the annotation about this work above, Gulino’s penchant for writing beautiful flowing lines and establishing lush harmonies underneath is present in his work *Worlds Apart* for Bass Trombone and Piano. Including this work in the pedagogical guides can help students to develop practice techniques and processes that might be helpful for them in preparing this work and in establishing consistent and thoughtful approaches to any music that is set in front of them. *Worlds Apart* contains issues pertaining to phrasing structure, rhythmic consistency, meter shifts and ensemble collaboration.

The performer should pay close attention to the following issues throughout *Worlds Apart*:

- The subdivision of a wide variety of note values and rhythms. In particular the 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes and quarter note triplets.
- Meter shifts between unusual compound meters.
- Intonation issues in the extreme low register when collaborating with pianist.

Gulino uses a wide variety of note lengths throughout the work that need to be precise and differentiated from other, similar note values. Gulino uses 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes pervasively throughout the work and these should be considerably different than the sixteenth notes offered previously. The performer is urged to play from the piano score to determine how to fit these 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes into the piano part. In the first and second measures of A, the dichotomy between the piano and the bass trombone parts needs to be exploited and cleanly executed as the bass trombone has 32\textsuperscript{nd} notes juxtaposed with the piano often having sixteenth notes. Treating the 32\textsuperscript{nd} note pickups as a legato extension of the bar after it will help with the concept of musical phrase.
Exacerbating the rhythmic problems evident within *Worlds Apart*, Gulino offers the quarter note triplet frequently. This particular rhythm is problematic for many students, as the triplets are often played incorrectly. To work on this rhythm, musical example 16 suggests that the performer subdivide the pattern into even eighth notes and work towards combining each set of two eighth notes into equal quarter notes over two beats. It is suggested that the player subdivide the entire phrase to the smallest subdivision of each beat. The performer must strive to syncopate their triplets evenly over the steady quarter note rhythm put forth by the collaborator.


Gulino varies the metric motion throughout the middle of *Worlds Apart* by employing a large section of alternating 5/8 and 6/8 time signatures from rehearsal letter E to H. To keep the pulse secure, the performer is urged to practice the 5/8 section at E by rebarring the groupings to correspond to the groupings in the piano part as is demonstrated in musical example 17.
After rebarring these measures, the performer should practice musical example 18, working towards keeping the pulse steady by playing only the first note of each grouping with a steady eighth note pulse, giving emphasis to each downbeat. When the pulse is steady, the performer should add all of the beats, still placing emphasis on the downbeat.

The last issue that permeates this work is that of tuning in the extreme low register. *Worlds Apart* exploits the valve and pedal register of the bass trombone and as such, many performers have issues tuning notes in such a low tessitura. The material from rehearsal A to B, six bars to two bars before D, and the last four bars of the piece are particularly challenging. The performer is urged to practice these sections with their pianist often and diligently. Asking the pianist to take out any extended chords and move extreme register chords into the middle part of
the piano range will help the performer hear the intonation. If the performer is unable to practice frequently with a pianist, they are urged to practice these parts with the sustain pedal of the piano down, allowing for the strings of the piano to resonate the pitch if in tune. Practicing this way will allow the performer to learn their intonation tendencies and will help develop their ear for minute pitch differences. Frank Gulino has provided the bass trombone with a great intermediate work with challenges that will develop several different skills of the burgeoning musician.
Eric Ewazen - *Concerto for Bass Trombone, Movement 1*

Eric Ewazen has been one of the most prolific composers for brass music in general, and the trombone in particular, across the last 30 years. Ewazen’s music is accessible, engaging, and can be used by teachers and students to develop many technical and musical skills. The first movement from Ewazen’s *Concerto for Bass Trombone* is a fantastic work that can be used for auditions, recitals, and competitions. It has several spots that challenge the player to come up with functional solutions to technical and musical problems.

Throughout the movement, the player should focus their attention on the following issues:

**Measure 1 through 33**

- Breaths interrupting the phrase shape.
- The focus on long phrases that are shaped musically.
- Quality sound and accurate intonation.

The Andante con moto section of this movement gives the bass trombone a flowing, cantabile melody that allows the player to showcase their sound and phrase length. The issue that presents itself is that of the breath. Musical example 19 gives an example of potential breaths that will help the phrase structure and elongate the musical line.
Along with planning the breathing accordingly, it will be necessary to practice both quick breaths and tapering the note before the breath (in this case the dotted quarter note) to prepare the phrase so that the breath does not come abruptly and interrupt the flow of the music.

Throughout the Andante con moto, the player has an opportunity to showcase a big, beautiful sound and consistent intonation. A well-developed concept of tone should be established and applied to the beginning D major chords. The player should work on sound by first conceptualizing an ideal tone quality and imagining the tone of their favorite player. Then the player should record the beginning seven measures and compare the tone to determine the qualities that differentiate between the two. To practice intonation, the player should establish a routine of practicing scales and arpeggios with the corresponding major and minor tonality drones (mostly centered around a D) and working extensively with a tuner. Holding the sustain pedal on the piano while practicing this section will help solidify each pitch center and will ultimately help open the tone quality as well.
Measure 34 through 151

From the Andante con moto section, Ewazen leads the player into a lively Allegro Vivace section that can exploit the agility and accuracy of the performer. Throughout this section there are eighth note runs that dip into the valve register, most of which are set on the upbeats and must be rhythmically accurate.

Throughout this section, the performer should pay attention to the following issues:

- Keeping length through the eighth note runs, avoiding a secco, compressed style.
- Maintaining symmetrical rhythmic spacing between notes throughout.
- Switching styles quickly between eighth note and quarter note phrases.

The first issue that the player must contend with is the tendency to play the eighth note runs starting at measure 38 with a short, segmented style as demonstrated in musical example 20. These lines must be played with an arching phrase that elongates the notes and drives the musical line towards the next measure. The player should be aware that the eighth notes need to have a little space between them. Musical example 20 is what the player should strive to avoid.

It will be easier for the performer to demonstrate consistent rhythmical symmetry if they perform these lines with length and phrase direction. Often, when playing consecutive eighth notes, the tendency of many is to wait longer through the rests and then compress the eighth notes to catch up to the musical line. This makes the rhythm feel completely disjunct and totally uneven which is demonstrated in a written out version of this in musical example 21. The player must contend with similar issues when playing sixteenth notes at the end of the measure, as in measures 46-47, 71-72, 103-106, etc.


The last issue the player must contend with in this section of the movement is that of style differences between the eighth notes and quarter notes which changes between consistent, driving eighth notes to flowing and legato quarter notes. Attention to this change of style must be paid from measures 50-55, while the player has eighth notes to measures 59-69 in which the style and length of notes is completely different. Paying close attention to these minute differences in style and note length will help the player to learn how to be discerning in their musical choices and will ultimately take each performance of this movement as well as their musical development to the next level.
Conclusion

As the quantity and the quality of the repertoire for the bass trombone has increased over the last 30 years, the instrument itself has made impressive strides in becoming a viable solo instrument. This incredible rise in the repertoire has only been made possible because of the contributions of players and teachers such as Thomas Everett, David Taylor, Douglas Yeo, Ben van Dijk and others who have advanced the instrument both technically and musically and have challenged composers to write material that is suitable to their talents. These players have seen the need for an expanded repertoire and have acted on it. This document is in no means meant to be a comprehensive list of all of the repertoire that has been written over the last 30 years, but it does provide the trombone community a guide for a sampling of the pieces that are available to them and provides resources for studying of each work.

Through the study of the available repertoire and the trends in composition over the last 30 years, there have been several realizations I have made that could make the repertoire even more accessible for a larger population of trombone players. The first is that a large majority of the new repertoire is extremely demanding and is primarily meant for very advanced players. Many of the pieces commissioned by professionals are for professionals, not offering much in the way for the developing or intermediate player. Developing a repertoire that offers quality and engaging music for the developing student would be a welcomed addition to the teaching repertoire and would help in keeping students interested in developing their skills. Secondly, while the catalogue tries to be inclusive of musical styles and accompaniments, there is an absence of composers representing ethnic or gender diversity. There are two women composers on this list, and little to no composers representative of racial and ethnic diversity. Sadly, this problem mimics the greater classical music community and needs to be addressed. Future projects will include commissioning works from a wide range of persons from all genders and backgrounds that incorporate their perspective and musical cultures. Hopefully this document
will serve as a starting point for teachers and students to begin teaching and documenting the expanding repertoire and will aid those looking for a quick reference to studying any of the works included.
Appendix: Suggested Materials for Additional Study

Suggested study materials for practice included in the repertoire catalogue. Full citations included in bibliography.

Wim Bex - Vademecum:

Phil Teele - Advanced Embouchure Studies
Phil Snedecor - Low Etudes for Bass Tuba

Chris Brubeck - Concerto for Bass Trombone:

Tommy Pederson - Advanced Etudes for Bass Trombone

David W Brubeck - Stereograms

iRealPro (computer application)
Drum Machine - Drum Beats + (computer application)

Howard Buss - Alien Loop De Loops

Marcel Bitsch - Quinze Etudes de Rythme for Trombone

Michael Davis - Blackhawk

Charles Vernon - A Singing Approach to the Trombone

David Del Tredici - Felix Variations

Jean-Baptiste Arban - Famous Method for Trombone
Stuart Dempster - The Modern Trombone: A Definition of Its Idioms

Johann deMeij - Canticles for Bass Trombone and Wind Orchestra

Donald Reinhardt - The Pivot System: A Complete Manuel with Studies

Brad Edwards - Four Impromptus for Low Bone Alone

Brad Edwards - Bass Trombone Craft
Brad Edwards - Lip Slurs
David Fetter - *Bass Lines “Spain”*

Jean-Baptiste Arban - *Famous Method for Trombone*

Steven Frank - *Variations on Barnacle Bill, the Sailor*

Jean-Baptiste Arban - *Famous Method for the Trombone*

Anthony Plog - *Postcards IV*

David Baker - *Contemporary Techniques for The Trombone*

Jamey Aebersold - *Volume 1: How to Play Jazz and Improvise*

J.J. Johnson - *Blue Trombone* (recording)

Kai Winding - *Jay & Kai + Six* (recording)

Daniel Schnyder - *Sonata*

Daniel Schnyder - *Art of the Duo*

James Markey - *On Base* (recording)

Jim Stephenson - *The “Arch” Sonata*

Joannes Rochut/Marco Bordogni - *Melodious Etudes for the Trombone*

John Stevens - *The Kleinhammer Sonata*

Patrick Sheridan and Sam Pilafian - *The Breathing Gym*

David Vining - *The Breathing Book*

David Uber - *Skylines*

David Vining - *Daily Routines for Trombone*

Reginald Fink - *Legato Studies for Trombone*

Henry Wolking - *Bass Trombone Music*

Jean-Baptiste Arban - *Famous Method for Trombone*

Thelonious Monk - *Epistrophy* (recording)

Roger Miller - *A Tender Look at Love* (recording)

Lou Harrison - *Music of Lou Harrison* (recording)

Steven Verhelst - *Capriccio*

Jean-Baptiste Arban - *Famous Method for Trombone*
Max Schlossberg - *Daily Drills and Technical Studies*

Ellen Taaffe Zwillich - *Concerto for Bass Trombone, Strings, Timpani and Cymbals*

Joseph Alessi - Warm-up from 2007 Alessi Seminar
Joannes Rochut/Marco Bordogni - *Melodious Etudes for Trombone*
Bibliography


Yeo, Douglas. E-mail message to author. September 29, 2016.