

2016-2017 TMEA All-State Tryout Music for Trumpet

Hello, my name is Will Strieder, Professor of Trumpet at Texas Tech University. This year's selections are from Arban's *14 Characteristic Studies*. These studies give you material in which you can improve your technical facility while improving your musicality. The following guidelines can be applied to all three pieces.

One of the most difficult challenges in these etudes is to not allow the vertical melodic jumps to effect the horizontal musical line. Care must be taken to not clip the last note of the slurred phrases. For example, in etude number one, first measure, beats one and three, the third 16th note should be tenuto to maintain the horizontal line of the music. When counting the music make sure beat four always leads to beat one and, likewise, that the third and fourth 16th notes always lead to the next first 16th. For instance, in etude number one, in the first measure, make sure that the fourth 16th note of beat two leads to the first 16th note of beat three. Be careful not to play the staccato notes too short. Arban placed staccatos on practically every articulated note written; however, he did not intend that every note should be spaced and detached. Cornets that were in use in Arban's time were extremely difficult to articulate cleanly, therefore almost every note was marked staccato. If you will concentrate on articulating cleanly on the staccato notes, these etudes will be played the way Mr. Arban intended, and you will avoid physical problems with tension and air. To help avoid tension you should first do air patterns. This is a Vincent Chicowitz technique to avoid locking the body while playing. The technique involves blowing and articulating the air away from the horn, while following the rhythm and articulations. I like to use a piece of paper or even a pin wheel held in front of the student to insure proper support and follow through. Secondly, you should buzz the mouthpiece. The key here, again, is to keep the air moving and to try and match pitch as closely as possible - the horn is only an amplifier of what comes out of the mouthpiece. An incorrectly buzzed pitch comes out with either poor intonation and stuffy sound, or completely missed pitched. Be sure to hold the mouthpiece lightly with a couple of fingers on the end to avoid excess mouthpiece pressure. Lastly, you should play the etude with a metronome at a slow tempo, concentrating on playing these etudes as a flow study. I would use the 1 - 2 - 1 - 3 - 1 - 4 rule. For example, on etude number one set the tempo to 40, then 50, then back to 40, then 60, back to 40, then 70, back to 40, then 80, back to 40, and then finally 90. As you progress you can skip some of the slower tempos but always go back to the half speed. For example, the week of tryouts you might just use the following speeds: 45 then 80, 45 then 90. As the technical proficiency increases, begin alternating this flow study with a speed study. A speed study will push the technical limits of your playing with speed. By alternating between the flow study speed, and the speed study setting, you should increase the lyrical aspects of your playing while avoiding tension. As always you should check and recheck the key signatures and accidentals for performance accuracy. I would like to encourage you to also subscribe to the SmartMusic program, I have already made SmartMusic assessment files of these etudes and would be happy to email these to you. The SmartMusic program is a great way to practice and improve, because it gives instant feedback as to whether

you are practicing the etudes correctly with both pitch and rhythmic accuracy. The program also allows you to record yourself and listen to the playback. Of course, it won't necessarily make you more musical or judge your sound, but it will definitely make you play more accurately. This will make your private lessons more productive, as your band director or private lessons teacher won't have to correct these basic elements and can focus on you being more musical and playing with a beautiful sound.

On selection number 1, page 5, number 1, you should be careful to count through the trills in measures 5 and 6. In measure 13 these are triplet 16ths, 2 triplet 16ths to the quarter note beat. A more lyrical style should be used with the pickups to measure 17. You should be sure to hold all quarter notes at the end of phrases to the rests; for example, in measure 12. The dynamics should have good contrast; for example in measure 16, beat 3 should be at least forte with a true piano on beat 4. The turns in measure 27 should be played G-A-G-F#-G-A and then B-C-B-A-B-C. Be sure to check the section in the Arban's *Complete Conservatory Method* for more details on these turns.

Selection number 2, found on page 6, is number 2 in the key of E major. This selection is a study in flexibility. If you haven't been practicing your fundamentals you can really get yourself in to trouble. I would flutter tongue the opening to work on air and center of pitch. I wouldn't flutter the whole opening, but maybe the first measure of each line. The key is to be able to flutter on and off at will. If you're asking yourself "why flutter?" the reason is simple- the flutter tongue opens your throat, and it keeps your tongue from arching too much. It makes you use a lot more air. Notice how much harder the high notes are. It also makes you center your pitches better. Be careful not to press your mouthpiece too much when you flutter. Be sure to do lots of lip buzzing to fix this. If you can't flutter, then growl. It really does the same as flutter tongue. You should play this piece concentrating on shaping the phrase with a light articulation rather than sheer blazing technique. Technique is important, but have fun with your musical imagination. Be careful that you don't clip the last note of the slurred groupings. Keep the air moving horizontally while changing pitches. Also be careful about the last note of your phrase. Again be sure to play these notes legato and full value. Practicing your scales will help your technique in this piece. Also concentrate on keeping your air moving through the slurs. I got lucky today and was able to play the opening in one breath. However, I had to be careful not to suck in a lung at the double bar. I would recommend if you have problems making the opening, to go ahead and breathe at the key change. Just put in a little ritard, and I think it will sound fine. The key to the phrasing of this number is speed and not overblowing. I like to go slower at the dolce section at 112. I think as long as you don't slow down too much it makes for a nice contrast. Watch out for the key changes and those accidentals. They do go all the way through the measure.

Selection number 3, page 15, number 11. The challenge of this etude is to make the music flow and sound easy. You should articulate lightly throughout this etude. One of the challenges of this etude is to keep up with the accidentals. Remember to have the accidental

carry all the way through the bar. Be careful about the last note of any slur grouping so you do not clip that last note. Keep the air moving horizontally while changing pitches. Also be very careful about the last note of the phrase. Again, be sure to play these notes legato and full value. Play the grace notes before the beat. Work for lots of dynamic contrast and watch for the rest. In measure 23, the turn should be Bb, C, Bb, A, Bb. The turn in 39 should be F, Gb, F, E, F. Again refer to the section in Arban's *Complete Conservatory Method* for reference on these turns. Be careful not to lock the airstream with tension and mouthpiece pressure.

Best of luck. Please contact me at will.strieder@ttu.edu if you have any questions.