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THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN TUBA PERFORMANCE

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Music

Allen Parrish

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

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THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN TUBA PERFORMANCE

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THESIS FOR GRADUATE STUDY IN TUBA PERFORMANCE

An Abstract of the Thesis by
Allen Parrish

A document in support of the graduate tuba recital given on April 1, 2017. A description of composer biographies for each work performed as well as performance considerations and how those specific performance considerations were addressed in preparation for the recital. Submitted as part of the requirements for the Master of Music in Tuba Performance.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. Anthony Plog, “Three Miniatures”	1
Composer Biography	1
Performance Considerations	2
Methods	6
II. Neal Corwell, “New England Reveries”	8
Composer Biography	8
Performance Considerations	9
Methods	10
III. Alexej Lebedev, “Concert Allegro”	12
Composer Biography	12
Performance Considerations	13
Methods	14
IV. Allen Parrish, “Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba”	16
Composer Autobiography	16
Performance Considerations	17
Methods	19
V. Barbara York, “Four Paintings by Grant Wood”	22
Composer Biography	22
Performance Considerations	23
Methods	27
VI. Roger Kellaway, “The Morning Song”	29
Composer Biography	29
Performance Considerations	30
Methods	31

CHAPTER	PAGE
VII. Conclusion	33
Bibliography	34

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
1. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 1, measures 1 through 9.....	2
2. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 1, measures 28 through 34.....	4
3. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 1, measures 59 through 63.....	5
4. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 3, measures 1 through 22	6
5. Neal Corwell's "New England Reveries," measures 89 through 106	10
6. Alexej Lebedev's "Concerto Allegro," measures 13 and 14	14
7. Allen Parrish's "Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba," Movement 1, Rehearsal Bar "A"	18
8. Allen Parrish's "Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba," Movement 2, Rehearsal Bar "C"	19
9. Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood," Movement 1, opening	24
10. Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood," Movement 3, opening	26
11. Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood," Movement 4, lyrical section....	27
12. Roger Kellaway's "The Morning Song," Rehearsal Bar H through J	31

Chapter I

Anthony Plog, "Three Miniatures"

Composer Biography:

Anthony Plog was born in Glendale, California and began music study at the age of ten. By age nineteen he was playing extra trumpet with the Los Angeles philharmonic. Plog's first orchestral position was principal trumpet with the San Antonio Symphony from 1970 to 1973.¹ In 1990, he moved to Europe to play solo trumpet with the Malmo Symphony in Sweden. Three years after moving to Europe he became a professor at the Staatliche Hochschule Fur Musika in Frediburg, Germany; a position that he held from 1993 until; 2013.² Anthony Plog retired from the concert stage in 2001 in order to pursue a full-time career in composition. Currently, he has a 60% position with the Norwegian Music Academy in Oslo, Norway.³ Editions-BIM describes Plog's works as being "characterized by their originality and their rare expressive dimension."⁴

¹ "Biography," Anthony Plog, accessed October 10, 2017, <http://anthonyplog.com/about-me/biography/>

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Anthony Plog," Editions-BIM, accessed October 10, 2017, <https://www.editions-bim.com/composers/Anthony-plog>

Performance Considerations:

Plog's "Three Miniatures" presents both a high number and a variety of challenges for the tuba soloist. Movement one, "Allegro Vivace," contains repetitive technical passages, wide leaps, complex meters, and many other technical considerations. Movement two, "Freely," is lyrical and presents musical challenges and unusual intervals. Movement three, "Allegro Vivace," is challenging due to the quick, technical passages in the middle and upper register as well as the syncopated rhythms.

The opening section of the first movement (measures 1 through 20; see figure 1 below) is an exciting introduction to the piece with quick, extensive intervals. In the first part of this section, the initial notes of the sixteenth-note triplets are emphasized (C3 and Eb3, respectively). The largest interval is between two of the triplets from Db4 down to C3. It is important to note that the final note of this section is a Gb which is a tri-tone below the emphasized tonic (C). This is significant because the end of this phrase is unresolved until the beginning note of the second phrase (F2).



Figure 1. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 1, measures 1 through 9

The second part of this section begins on an F after a measure of rest, which serves to resolve the Gb. This phrase is nearly identical to the first, however, the differences are that the pitches are transposed down a fifth and the end of the phrase is more conclusive due to the resolved half step (Ab to A). The third phrase begins with a descending passage leading to a near-repetition of the first phrase. This time the pitches are the same until the end of the phrase, which is extended after a resolved half-step from Eb to E down the C major scale (E Phrygian) to the E an octave below.

Performance considerations of the first middle section (measures 20 through 38) include overall musicality and direction on the longer notes, breathing and phrasing, awkward fingering combinations, and a section with a quasi-repetition of the opening phrase (transposed down a seventh) which was discussed previously. A specific section that exemplified difficulties in breathing and phrasing was measures 28 through 33 (see figure 2). There is not a good place for a breath in this phrase so the challenge is to take a full breath in measure 28 that will sustain the soloist until the downbeat of measure 34; the marking in measure 28 shows the importance that I placed on the breath at that moment. A quicker tempo helps with this issue, but amplifies other technical difficulties such as quick articulations and fingering patterns that require greater hand-eye coordination.



Figure 2. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 1, measures 28 through 34

The second middle section (measures 46 through 62) has different considerations than the previous sections. This section is, dynamically, the softest which would create difficulties in sound projection. Also, the rhythms are different than any other in this movement and a feeling of being in single meter (rather than in mixed meter or six) is created. There is great opportunity to be musical with this section in the rising and falling of the melodic line.

The final section (the beat leading into measure 63 through the end of the movement) could be considered a loose recapitulation of the opening theme. The soloist needs to take full breaths and be efficient with air because there are not many good places to breathe. The sixteenth notes leading into the repeat of the opening theme should crescendo and lead into the phrase (see figure 3). In the figure below, this crescendo is notated in measure 63. The final phrase of this section is a large decrescendo and the soloist would need to pace the decrescendo so that it did not get too soft.

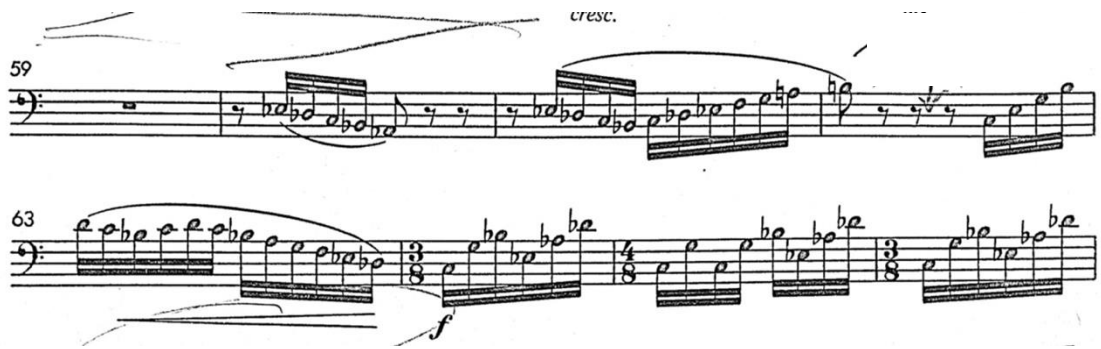


Figure 3. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 1, measures 59 through 66

As mentioned previously, the second movement presents a number of musical performance considerations. The entire movement is at a relative soft dynamic level and a soloist should be aware of air flow so that, although soft, the sound is projecting. An additional consideration is that the rhythms are not as complex as in the previous movement and these rhythms present many opportunities for the soloist to be musical. Another opportunity for musicality from the soloist is the large number of cadenzas. Overall, this movement does not have as many performance considerations as the first; the greatest consideration, however, is making this movement speak to the audience musically.

The third movement presents technical considerations that are obvious to both the performer and the listener. The quick rhythms at a brisk tempo challenges the mind-muscle connection, especially when in the upper register (C4 to Eb4; see figure 4). It is imperative to make sure the fingers are working with the tongue and air – I will discuss my methods for dealing with this in the following section. Another challenge in this movement is the contrasting section in measures 12 to 20 (see figure 4). The phrasing lines over measures 12 through 20 in this section and the lack of such phrasing marks in the beginning of this section show such contrast. The former should be legato while the

latter should be played staccato. Another contrasted section is from measures 23 through 39 and the performer must consider the syncopated rhythms as well as the variety of wide intervals. The final section of this work is at an even brisker tempo, although it is slurred rather than articulated. It is important for the musician to build momentum until the very end.



Figure 4. Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures," Movement 3, measures 1 through 22

Methods:

In this section I will discuss some of the methods that I used to address some performance considerations of Anthony Plog's "Three Miniatures." While preparing this piece I utilized a few techniques for different sections throughout. One such technique involved playing a passage at half of the projected "goal tempo" (which was the ideal performance tempo that I wanted to work the section up to). After three errorless – or nearly errorless – repetitions at this tempo, I increased the tempo by five or ten beats

per minute. Occasionally, I would slur the second repetition in this process. When using this technique, I would usually only increase the tempo by no more than 20 beats per minute each day. Another technique that I used when working on wide leaps was singing them slowly while playing the leaps at a piano. After singing the leaps, I would buzz/slur them on the mouthpiece.

I utilized both of these rehearsal techniques extensively while preparing the first and third movements. Both of these movements presented technical challenges which I explained previously. The goal tempo of the first movement was sixteenth note equals 320 beats per minute (or eighth note equals 160 beats per minute). When I first began working on the opening section – after playing through it to get the notes “under my fingers” – I set the metronome on 160 beats per minute (for the sixteenth note) and played the passage multiple times while increasing the tempo. In the third movement, my goal tempo was 120 beats per minute and I began working with the metronome on 60 beats per minute. Another method I used to work on the first movement was planning and taking efficient breaths so that I wouldn’t run out of air in the middle of a phrase.

In order to prepare movement two, I used much singing and buzzing to work on the obscure/ wide intervals. I would generally sing, buzz, and then play a phrase. In addition, I played through phrases blowing through the horn (with no buzz). These techniques helped to “internalize the pitches” and, in turn, play the intervals accurately. Another aspect that I addressed was marking high and low points in phrases and areas in which I could insert fluidity in the tempo in order to be more musical.

Chapter II

Neal Corwell, “New England Reveries”

Composer Biography:

Neal Corwell began his career as a professional musician in 1981 when he won a euphonium position with “Pershing’s Own.” He performed with the group until 1989 and then again from 2001 to 2016.⁵ During the time in between performing with The United States Army Band “Pershing’s Own” (1989-2001), Dr. Corwell taught at Sheperd and Frostburg State University, earned a Doctoral degree in Euphonium performance at the University of Maryland under the tutelage of Dr. Brian Bowman, and served on the executive committee of the International Tuba and Euphonium Association (ITEA) and on the board of the Women’s Brass Conference.⁶ During the mid 1990’s, he was chosen to be a founding member of “Symphonia,” a tuba-euphonium ensemble chosen from the nation’s finest low brass performers, directed by R. Winston Morris.⁷

⁵ “Career Summary,” Dr. Neal Corwell, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://nealcorwell.com/page7/page7.html>

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

In 2007, Dr. Corwell was tasked with writing two chapters in the “Guide to the Euphonium Repertoire.”⁸ One of which covered all of the current literature for unaccompanied euphonium and the other on the current literature for euphonium with electronic media. As a composer, Dr. Neal Corwell has authored over seventy musical compositions and arrangements.⁹ As part of his efforts to gain recognition for the euphonium as a solo instrument, he has given over 1,100 solo euphonium recitals. Corwell has recorded several CD’s featuring his arrangements and original works.¹⁰

Performance Considerations:

The greatest performance consideration when performing Neal Corwell’s “New England Reveries,” is the performance medium. The instrumentalist must be sensitive to the medium of tuba and prerecorded accompaniment. Some specific aspects that the performer must address when considering the medium include: balance, timing, intonation, an awareness of the musical queues, as well as an awareness of whether or not the prerecorded accompaniment has melodic or accompanying material. All of these considerations are related to the fact that the accompaniment is prerecorded and the playback device is not able to collaborate with the soloist, but the performer must make music with (not in spite of) the recorded accompaniment. Another general

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ “Career Summary,” Dr. Neal Corwell, accessed October 12, 2017, <http://nealcorwell.com/page7/page7.html>

consideration was the choice of bass or contrabass tuba for performing this piece – both tubas would be appropriate for the performance of the piece.

A specific area to consider when preparing this piece is the quick and more technical section (measures 89-105; see figure 5). For the f tuba – bass tuba – this section is in the lower register of the horn and the fingerings are a bit awkward with the frequent use of the ring and pinky fingers. Also, there are not a lot of opportunities for breathing in this section so it is important to consider phrasing when planning breaths. Another consideration is the recapitulation of the opening section (measures 151-175). This section repeats much of the material of the beginning and the rhythms are relatively more complex. It is imperative to be in sync with the recorded accompaniment in this section, as well as throughout the whole work.



Figure 5. Neal Corwell's "New England Reveries," measures 89 through 106

Methods:

When working through these performance considerations, I spent much time practicing with the prerecorded accompaniment. This was an advantage compared to

performing a piece with traditional piano accompaniment. Frequent practice with the prerecorded accompaniment (using headphones) helped attend to all of the performance considerations that I mentioned previously.

In regards to overall balance, it was important to have an additional person listen to excerpts from the piece prior to my performance to set volume levels of the sound system. The prerecorded accompaniment was not able to match my dynamics; it was recorded at volumes determined by the composer. Therefore, I had to be sensitive to the written dynamics and not crescendo exceedingly beyond or decrescendo below to accompaniment.

To rehearse timing, I also had to be exact in tempo, tempo changes, as well as rhythms. In order to practice this, I worked with the metronome set to the notated tempos of the various sections and played with the accompaniment frequently. Another technique that I utilized was setting the metronome to just the downbeats and making sure that they lined up; this helped immensely with keeping the timing exact and transferred to performance with the recorded accompaniment well.

Chapter III

Alexej Lebedev, “Concert Allegro”

Composer Biography:

Alexej Lebedev was a Russian tuba player who lived from 1924 to 1993.¹¹ He was born in the town of Dankov in the Lipetsk region. His father was an honorary surgeon and he supervised the town hospital. Lebedev’s mother taught math in a secondary school.¹² Alexej Lebedev finished school in 1942 and joined the army. He was wounded in 1943 and had to undergo surgery.¹³ After hospitalization, Lebedev continued his service in a military band in Moscow. While in Moscow, he began study of tuba – as well as music theory – at the Ippolitov-Ivanov Musical college.¹⁴

Following his service in the army, in 1945, Lebedev studied tuba in the orchestra department of the Moscow State Conservatory (which was named after Tchaikovsky).¹⁵ He graduated a year early in 1949 with honors. From 1950 to 1953 he also studied composition at the conservatory and from then until his death in 1993, he taught tuba

¹¹ “Alexey Lebedev,” Windsong Press, accessed October 13, 2017, <http://www.windsongpress.com/brass%20players/tuba/Lebedev.pdf>

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

and brass chamber music in the conservatory's department of wind instruments.¹⁶

When Alexej Lebedev began his work at the Moscow State Conservatory there were very few original compositions for tuba. He composed his Concerto No. 1 (1947) and his Concert Allegro (1949) both as a student at the conservatory.¹⁷

Performance Considerations:

Lebedev's Concert Allegro had a form that most closely resembled Sonata form (much more so than the other pieces on this recital). This form makes some of the performance considerations more manageable because the music is relatively repetitive. For example, the short technical passage in measure 12 is repeated in measure 93 which means that the performer would need to practice the passage once rather than twice if it were two different sections. Although it makes certain aspects simpler, the form presents a performance consideration: the repetition of the opening phrase has to sound similar so that an audience recognizes it, but it should be slightly different in order to be musically stimulating. It would also be important to present a contrast between the opening/ closing sections and the middle "Andante" section.

The piece is not very technical, although it presents a few technical challenges. The most obvious being the large quantity of wide leaps. The largest leap is in measure 13, which is from a D2 to a Bb3 (see figure 6). Most of the other wide leaps are an

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

octave, which can be found in measures 9, 11, 19, and 33 among others. Another technical challenge are the sixteenth note rhythms such as those in measures 9, 12, and 25.



Figure 6. Alexej Lebedev's "Concerto Allegro," measures 13 and 14

Methods:

In order to address the considerations regarding the form of the piece, I spent a fair amount of time looking through the piece and marking the overarching sections. While looking at these sections I paid close attention to musical material from the opening that returned in later sections. Another strategy I utilized to work on creating music from the form was isolating the different sections. When I first began practicing this movement, I treated the quicker sections as individual "movements" as I did to the "Andante" section. After I was able to capture the musicality of the individual parts, I put them together to create a complete work with three different musical characters. This allowed for me to present an interesting contrast to the audience.

To work through the large intervals, I spent a good amount of time with a piano. To create clarity in these intervals, I would listen to them played several times on a piano. After listening, I would sing them with the piano as accurately as possible (working to be more accurate each time). Whenever I was consistently singing the intervals with minimal assistance from the piano, I would then buzz them on the mouthpiece and then play them on the horn. This rehearsal technique helped immensely to facilitate accuracy when playing the large leaps.

I utilized the metronome technique that I described extensively in the “Methods” section of Anthony Plog’s “Three Miniatures” to work on the more technical sixteenth note rhythms. The most challenging rhythmic passage was measure 12 because the other sixteenth note passages were primarily scalar, whereas this section consisted of an arpeggiation of D minor. The goal tempo for this quicker section was quarter note equals 116 beats per minute. In order to work through this challenging passage, I began practicing it at quarter note equals 80 beats per minute and increased the tempo five beats per minute after three correct (and sometimes varied) repetitions. The varied repetitions were slurred repetitions on the second of three repetitions – slurring the passage helped greatly with consistency in air flow.

Chapter IV

Allen Parrish, “Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba”

Composer Autobiography:

Allen Parrish was born in Panama City, Florida in 1994. He was not very interested in music until after joining band at the age of 11. In high school, he was heavily involved with marching band and concert band. For undergraduate study, Parrish attended Troy University in Troy, Alabama from 2012 until to study music education. While in high school, he initially became interested in arranging and composing for my marching sousaphone section. When studying at Troy, those interests shifted towards arranging and composing for tuba chamber ensembles.

After graduating from Troy University, Allen Parrish moved to Pittsburg, Kansas to study Music Performance at Pittsburg State University. At Pittsburg State, he met Barbara York (a prolific composer that I will discuss in following sections) who helped with connections to a publishing company after hearing this piece for tuba trio entitled “Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba.” Parrish wrote this piece while getting an oil change at a local auto shop. He was waiting while working on my laptop and thought of a catchy rhythmic

ostinato. This ostinato was the basis of the third movement of the piece “Vorax Tupenthes.”

Performance Considerations:

This is an original work that Allen Parrish composed so in preparation, I had an awareness of the different parts as well as a specific idea for how I wanted to piece to sound. This was both an advantage and a challenge. For example, I might have envisioned how I wanted a certain section to sound in composition, but in practice it could have sounded very different. Having the idea in my head was an advantage, but it was challenging to determine whether the way the passage sounded worked well or whether I should work to change it.

Specific considerations of the first movement included knowing when a part was important (and communicating this to the musicians in the ensemble), balance between the melody and accompaniment, and communicating the music. For example, at rehearsal bar A (see figure 7) the euphonium and tuba 1 voices had melodies that echoed each other and were equally important while the bass line – which is marked “fortissimo” should be played out. This movement is entitled “Muscipula” which is scientific for the venus flytrap and the movement is meant to depict the strange beauty and predator status of the plant.

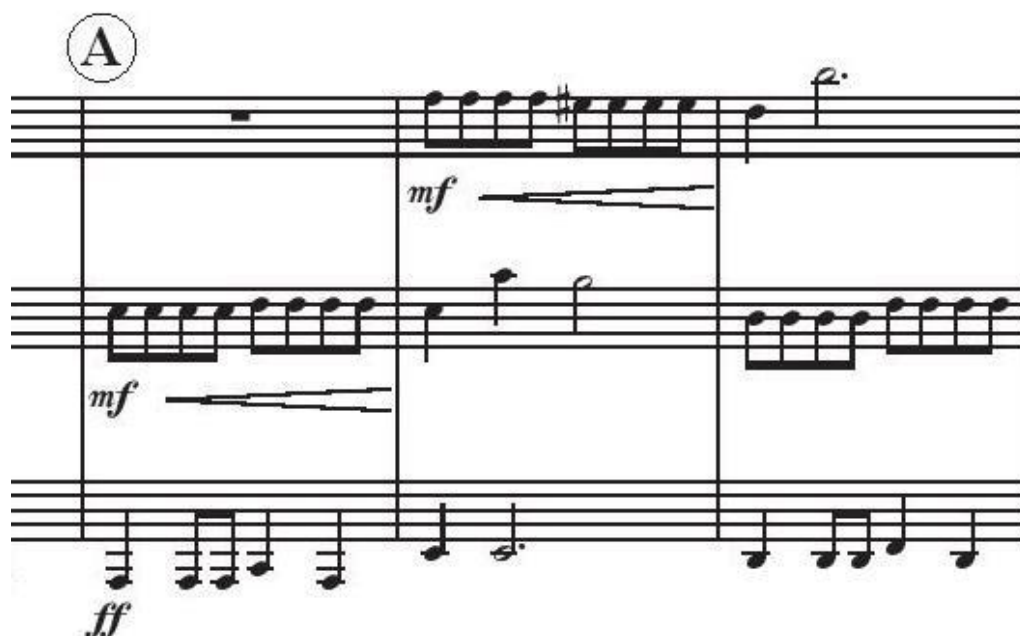


Figure 7. Allen Parrish's "Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba," Movement 1, Rehearsal Bar "A"

The title of the second movement, "Carrion," is derived from the scientific name for a flower that smells like a rotting corpse. This movement presents a different set of challenges from the first movement. An obvious challenge would be the greater number of accidentals. Other challenges include: the duple feel in a triple meter, the wide leaps, and the longer, relatively non-melodic phrases – an example of which being at rehearsal bar "C" (see figure 8). The melody in the euphonium part – the top line – is a five measure phrase that is extended to the end of the movement.



Figure 8. Allen Parrish's "Fatal Floral Trio for Tuba," Movement 2, Rehearsal Bar "C"

"Vorax Tupenthes" – the third movement – is based off of a rhythmic ostinato which is heard immediately at measure 1 in lower tuba part. The title is derived from "Vorax Nupenthes," which is the scientific name for the pitcher plant. Nupenthes was changed to "Tupenthes" so that the title would roughly translate to "The Devouring Tuba Plant." This ostinato is passed around several times and even broken up between the voices five measures after rehearsal "B." This was probably the biggest challenge in the whole work – practicing the emphasis of the individual voice's piece of the rhythmic ostinato.

Methods:

This piece was the only work for chamber ensemble on my program, which meant that it was the only piece that could be rehearsed for an amount of time

contingent on the availability of the musicians. Every time that we rehearsed together it was imperative to make efficient use of our time and address the performance considerations that were previously mentioned. The most important general method that I used in preparing this piece was communicating what I envisioned musically so that we could communicate that to the audience through performance.

In movement one, the euphonium one and tuba one parts have several passages in which they switch from melody to accompaniment in the span of a measure of two. To work through this consideration, I (who played the tuba one part) coordinated which parts should be played out and which should not with the musician who played euphonium one. Also, there was an issue with the second tuba part not being loud enough throughout, so I encouraged him to play his part out.

The challenge that I mentioned in the previous section was the vast number of accidentals. In order to allow for the accuracy of these notes, we played through this movement several times at a slightly slower tempo. Another strategy for rehearsing this movement was communicating when we would take breathes to facilitate appropriate ends of phrases and continuations of phrases that should be longer than expected. An example of the end of a phrase that we communicated a breath would be between measures 4 and 5. The fifth measure going into the sixth measure of rehearsal “B” was a section in which it was tempting to breath, however we made a group decision to continue the phrase.

This third movement was all about the repeated ostinato figure. It was important to emphasis any repetition of that ostinato rhythm. It took a great deal of time to

rehearse the fifth bar of rehearsal “B” to rehearsal “C.” We played through the section at a much slower tempo with heavy emphasis on the pieces of the rhythmic ostinato. When the repetition was acceptable, we increased the tempo and retained the emphasis of the pieces of the ostinato. This was very challenging to put together, but the work that we put into this section really paid off.

Chapter V

Barbara York, “Four Paintings by Grant Wood”

Composer Biography:

Barbara York was born in Winnipeg, Canada in 1949 and has been working in the U.S. and Canada for over 45 years as a concert accompanist, choral and theatrical music director, and composer.¹⁸ Her score and lyrics for the Canadian musical “Colette” won a Dora Mavor Moore Award (Canada’s version on a Tony) in 1981 and her fifty-minute scripted children’s piece, “A Butterfly in Time,” was nominated for a Canadian “Juno Award” for recordings in 2006.¹⁹ She has received commissions from two Canadian symphony orchestras, the Boise State Symphonic Winds and Symphony Orchestra, and numerous private groups and soloists in U.S. and Canada.²⁰

Mrs. York is well sought-after as a chamber music and solo composer with frequent commissions. She presented compositions at three world saxophone congresses as well as the 2003 International Double Reed Symposium.²¹ In 2006,

¹⁸ Tiffany Ng & Sophia Ahmad, “2008 Composer Biographies,” Eastman School of Music, accessed October 18, 2017, <https://www.esm.rochester.edu/wmf/2008-composer-biographies/>

¹⁹ “A Caged Bird (2014) – Barbara York,” International Women’s Brass Conference, accessed October 18, 2017, <http://myiwbc.org/iwbc-resources/commissioned-compositions/caged-bird-barbara-york/>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

Barbara York won the Harvey Phillips Award for Euphonium in Chamber Music at the International Tuba and Euphonium Association (ITEA) conference.²² Her Concerto for Tuba and Orchestra was recorded by Tim Buzbee with the Iceland Symphony Orchestra as part of his solo CD.²³

Currently, Barbara York lives in Pittsburg, KS where she works as a part-time staff accompanist at Pittsburg State University. Additionally, she spends much time composing for a variety of performance mediums.²⁴

Performance Considerations:

Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood" consists of four movements and each movement presented a number and a variety of performance considerations. Additionally, each movement representing a painting by the American Painter: Grant Wood. The first movement was written based on "Stone City, Iowa" and specifically the person riding a horse through the painting. Movement two is entitled and was composed based on the little boy in Wood's painting: "Young Corn." The third movement, "American Gothic," is based on one of Wood's most popular paintings which has the same title. Movement four was composed in order to reflect Grant Wood's "Parson Weem's Fable." It was important to spend time observing each painting that

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ "Details," Cimarron Music Press, accessed October 18, 2017, <https://www.cimarronmusic.com/catalog/product/view/id/12550/s/a-caged-bird/>

inspired each movement and it helped greatly to speak with the composer to get some insight about the piece.

Movement one, “Stone City, Iowa” presented primarily technical considerations, although the middle section was much more lyrical and had a higher tessitura. The greatest challenge when preparing this movement was the frequent, unusual intervals. An example being found in measure 7, which is an E3 to a Db4 (see the second measure of figure 9). It was helpful that much of these leaps were repeated throughout the piece without much variation. Other than the wide leaps, the higher tessitura was a challenge through the movement. The first movement had a range from D2 (below the staff) to F4 (above the staff). Another consideration in this movement was the contrast between the opening section (measures 1 through 40) and the middle lyrical section (measures 41 through 58). It was important to practice a change in mood between the different sections.



Figure 9. Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood," Movement 1, opening

The second movement “Young Corn,” was much more lyrical than the first and the phrasing was much more of a consideration. It was imperative to decide where phrases began and ended as well as the high points of phrases and of larger sections. The high tessitura was a challenge in movement 1, however in the second movement the tessitura is both high and wide. The range of the movement is G#1 (below the staff) to F#4 (above the staff) and the movement also consists of many wide leaps.

“American Gothic,” the third movement, is another more technical movement. Some of the challenges involved with this movement include: offset rhythms that occur often, technical passages, and the cadenza at the end of the movement. A rhythm that occurs throughout the piece (and in the opening phrase) must be technically precise and the temptation to rush the off-beats must be avoided. This rhythm is considered “offset” because the first rhythmic figure that falls on beats one and two is repeated beginning on the “and of beat two” (see figure 10). The performer would have to make sure that the repetition of the first figure is in strict time. Another challenge that I mentioned is the vast number of technical passages. An example being the phrase in measures 12 through 15. The articulation of this passage is staccato and the musician would require an awareness of good tone even though the notes are marked to be played “with separation.” In order to capture the idea of this movement, I wanted to get an idea for what mood Barbara York may have been trying to portray in this specific section.



Figure 10. Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood," Movement 3, opening

The fourth movement "Parson Weem's Fable" was to be performed without pause following the previous movement. This movement was more similar to the first in the challenges that it presented. The range was the foremost challenge (A1 to G4). Additionally, the first note was an A1, which was a difficult note to play in tune on f tuba. Another performance consideration was the broad range of contrast between sections. The opening was very robust and regal. The piano introduction included a quote of "Hail to the Chief" which was written for George Washington (who is pictured in Grant Wood's painting "Parson Weem's Fable" as a toddler-aged child) and is now played for all presidents. The slower, lyrical section that begins with measure 27 (see figure 11) exemplifies the broad contrast between the sections. Barbara York explained in a rehearsal that this slower section was meant to portray "little George Washington's" mother defending his actions that are pictured in Grant Wood's paintings with the same title as the movement.



Figure 11. Barbara York's "Four Paintings by Grant Wood," Movement 4, lyrical section

Methods:

The most important resources that I utilized in preparing this work were speaking with the composer and reflecting on the paintings that inspired the movements. Rehearsal techniques that I implemented to work challenging sections were similar to those that I mentioned and explained in detail in previous "methods" sections. One technique was practicing technical passages at much slower tempos and gradually increasing the tempo after correct repetitions. Another technique for lyrical sections was singing, buzzing, and playing.

Performing this piece with Barbara York playing the piano accompaniment was a great advantage. Usually when performing a work, capturing the essence of what a composer envisioned when composing a piece is a priority. It was helpful to communicate with Barbara York and ask questions that arose when rehearsing the piece. For example, when preparing the first movement and comparing how it sounded to the corresponding painting, I had an idea that the movement was meant to depict

the horse running through the scene. The ability to run this “theory” by Mrs. York and listen to her commentary (and confirmation) helped to inspire artistic decisions throughout the movement.

Chapter VI

Roger Kellaway, "The Morning Song"

Composer Biography:

Roger Kellaway is a pianist and an exceedingly prolific composer. Kellaway has recorded over two-hundred and fifty albums.²⁵ He fell in love with piano and began studying at the age of seven. By the age of twelve, Kellaway was listening to jazz and classical music and decided that he wanted to spend his life with music as a career.²⁶ He studied piano, double bass, and composition at the New England Conservatory in Boston, Massachusetts for two years until he left to go on the road as a bass player.²⁷ By the age of 22, Roger Kellaway was one of the busiest and most highly respected pianists in New York. In the mid-1960s, he moved to Los Angeles to continue doing studio recording.²⁸

Kellaway achieved much success as a composer. He won a Grammy at the 31st Annual Grammy Awards in 1988.²⁹ Additionally, he was nominated for an Academy

²⁵ "Biography", Roger Kellaway, accessed October 22, 2017, <http://rogerkellaway.com/biography/>

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ "Roger Kellaway," Grammy Awards, accessed October 22, 2017, <https://www.grammy.com/grammys/artists/roger-kellaway>

Award for his score in “A Star is Born” in 1976.³⁰ Kellaway’s most prized television credit is “Remembering You,” the closing theme for the groundbreaking show: “All in the Family.”³¹

Performance Considerations:

This was the most commercial-sounding piece on my program. It was written for Roger Bobo in 1980 and was heavily influenced by jazz. Although it sounded to be more of a commercial piece rather than a “repertoire” piece, it presented a similar degree of performance challenges. It was helpful that the piece was a bit repetitive and the sections were not very different. This made preparing this work easier because I could practice a repetitive section once for multiple repetitions of the section.

The most obvious performance consideration when I first looked at this piece was the high tessitura; especially the fact that the piece had the highest note on my recital program (a B-flat 4 and the second B-flat above the bass clef staff). This was more challenging because this piece was programed at the end of my recital and the section that contained the B-flat 4 was repeated. Additionally, the same section (measures 71-88; see figure 12) consisted of both scalar intervals and wide intervals in the upper register of the tuba. The partial series is close in the upper register; therefore, it was imperative to hear the intervals for accuracy in this section.

³⁰ “Roger Kellaway Biography,” IMDb, accessed October 22, 2017, http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0445524/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm

³¹ “Biography”, Roger Kellaway, accessed October 22, 2017 <http://rogerkellaway.com/biography/>

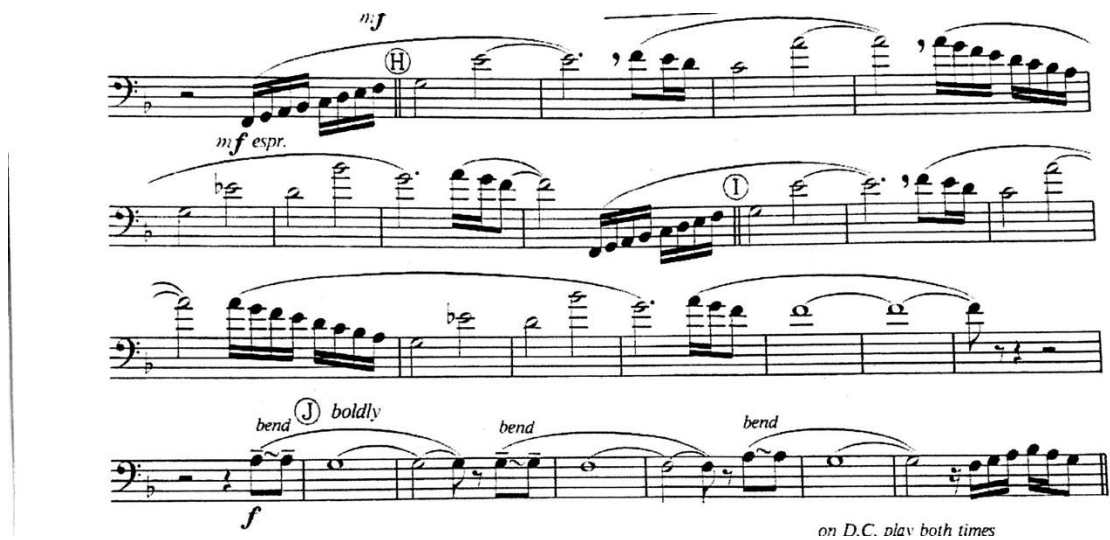


Figure 12. Roger Kellaway's "The Morning Song," Rehearsal Bar H through J

Another performance consideration was the style of the piece. As mentioned earlier, the piece was influenced by jazz so it was important to consider this when preparing the piece. For example, in the opening phrase (which was repeated several times), the rhythm should be played with a very slight swung feel. The pitch bends were another opportunity to communicate the style of the piece. These pitch bends should be performed aggressively, but with good tone.

Methods:

In order to prepare this piece, initially, I worked through the notes and rhythms by playing each section slowly. After I had a basic understanding of the piece, I practiced buzzing each section and then the piece as a whole. There were a large number of intervals that were somewhat challenging to play accurately; especially in the section

with the high tessitura. Isolating and buzzing these intervals at the piano helped note accuracy.

Once I was comfortable with the notes and rhythms, my focus was capturing the style of the piece. In order to work on a “groove” (as my studio teacher put it), I downloaded an app on my phone that would play eight-bar drum loops in a variety of styles. When practicing this piece, I chose different style drum loops in 2/4 or 4/4 time meters and set the tempo at quarter note equals 112. Practicing with the drum loops helped immensely with both “groove” and style.

Chapter VII

Conclusion

The works on this recital presented many musical opportunities for my growth as a musician and a tubist. There were several underlying themes in the preparation of these pieces. For technical passages, I mentioned several times that I used the metronome at slower tempos, progressively increasing after correct repetitions. This is not a groundbreaking technique, in fact, it was very laborious task that took much hard work and patience to work through for desirable results. For the lyrical passages, I spent much time at a piano singing and buzzing sections to work through accuracy in pitches. Looking back at my approach to most of the pieces, I was really focused on the technical aspect of playing – more so than the musical one. I have realized that technique has been a weakness and musicality comes easier to me; therefore, it makes sense that I spent more time on the technical side of things. Additionally, if I were to go back and prepare this material again, I would consider spending more time on general musicality and phrasing in the works.

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