

A SURVEY OF SELECTED EARLY TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY  
AMERICAN SONATAS FOR TENOR TROMBONE AND PIANO

by

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written by William Steven Combs  
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The final copy of this thesis has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above-mentioned discipline.

Combs, William Steven (D.M.A., Music)

A Survey of Selected Early Twenty-First Century American Sonatas  
for Tenor Trombone and Piano

Thesis directed by Associate Professor William Stanley

Abstract:

This dissertation analyzes ten selected American sonatas from the early twenty-first century for tenor trombone and piano. The ten works analyzed were selected from twenty pieces collected through an extensive search process of published and unpublished pieces. Selected for the study were sonatas by Kimberly Archer, Gary D. Belshaw, John Cheetham, Richard A. Crosby, Dan Forrest, Armand Russell, Steven Christopher Sacco, Bernard Wayne Sanders, James Stephenson, and John Stevens. Each work has an information sheet stating foundational information (composition date, meter, range, difficulty, etc.) about the piece and was analyzed in terms of compositional content (form, harmony, melody, rhythm, and texture) as well as pedagogical concerns. Conclusions drawn from this paper include analyzing the compositional trends and pedagogical requirements of the genre during this time-period.

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## INTRODUCTION

The term “sonata” has been used to describe instrumental music since the seventeenth-century. It is noted that the sonata’s “definition must be refined for each historical period and must allow for exceptions.”<sup>1</sup>

In the earliest usage of the term was based on the Italian verb, *suonare*, which means to sound, as opposed to *cantata*, which refers to something that is sung.<sup>2</sup> In the early usage, the word sonata was used to label large volumes of instrumental works. Over time, the term sonata was used as the identification for a genre that had many different forms and expectations associated with it. Early sonatas that featured the trombone included Gabrieli’s *Canzone e Sonate* and trio sonatas by Heinrich Ignaz Franz von Biber, Antonio Bertali, Dario Castello, and Giovanni Gabrieli. These works featured the trombone as a solo or chamber ensemble instrument and required technical virtuosity from the performer.

During the later baroque era, the solo instruments most commonly used in the sonata were violin, cornetto, transverse flute, viola de gamba, cello and bassoon while the trombone was more commonly found performing in the basso continuo group.<sup>3</sup> Trombonists most often interact currently with the sonatas of this period through transcriptions like the *Six Sonatas for Bassoon or Violoncello* by Johann Ernst Galliard. Sonatas by Benedetto Marcello, Arcangelo Corelli, and Antonio Vivaldi are also currently used in that way. These sonatas show how the period began to resemble what we expect from the modern sonata in terms of instrumentation,

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<sup>1</sup> Don Michael Randel, *The Harvard Concise Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (Cambridge: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), 620.

<sup>2</sup> Sandra Mangsen, John Irving, John Rink, and Paul Griffiths, "Sonata," *Grove Music Online*, (20 January 2001), <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000026191> (accessed December 14, 2018).

<sup>3</sup> William S. Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1983), 53.

consisting of a solo instrument with an accompaniment group. At that time, the accompaniment group was a basso continuo reading from figured bass notation.

The genre of the sonata continued to metamorphose in the Classical era. In 1775, J.A.P Schutz defined the sonata as:

An instrumental piece [comprising] two, three or four successive movements in contrasting characters ... in no form of instrumental music is there a better opportunity than in the sonata to depict feelings without words ... [except for symphonies, concertos and dances] there remains only the form of the sonata, which assumes all characters and all expressions .... For instrumentalists, sonatas are the most usual and useful exercises, besides which, there are many examples, both easy and difficult for all kinds of instruments .... Since they require only one performer to a part, they can be played in even the smallest musical gatherings.<sup>4</sup>

This period definition shows how the formal structures of this genre began to solidify into the formal structure we now expect as well as showing the importance it held as an instrumental genre. The idea of the sonata utilizing one performer per part led these pieces to be common as chamber or parlor music. In the conclusion of his study on the late seventeenth-century trombone sonata, McGrannahan notes that “the trombone lost much of its prominence in the eighteenth century” and that “It is not until the twentieth century that composers again begin to use the trombone extensively in instrumental chamber ensembles.”<sup>5</sup> The trombone was not common in this time period. This is due to the instrument not being used as a solo instrument and the use of the *basso continuo* fading in this period.

Brass instruments began to appear in solo sonatas with Beethoven’s *Sonata for Pianoforte and Horn in F major, op. 17* (1800). This is a fifteen-minute work of three movements and is a substantial composition for the instrument. With this piece, along with his

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<sup>4</sup> Mangsen, Irving, Rink, and Griffiths, "Sonata," (accessed December 14, 2018).

<sup>5</sup> A. Graydon McGrannahan III, “The Trombone In German And Austrian Ensemble Sonatas of the Late Seventeenth Century: A Lecture Recital, Together with Three Recitals of Selected Works of Presser, Bozza, George, Beethoven, Stevens, Wilder, White, Spillman, Tuthill and Others” (DMA diss., University of North Texas, 1981), 35.

sonatas for violin or cello and piano, the idea of the solo instrument and piano sonata became more common. In this piece and other duo sonatas of the era, the idea of the piano and the solo instrument being equal roles in terms of importance began to become a defining characteristic of the genre.

Since 1941 with the writing of Hindemith's *Trombone Sonata*, there have been many sonatas written for trombone and piano. The article, "Recital Repertoire of the Trombone as Shown by Programs Published by the International Trombone Association", by David Guion (ca. 1997), lays out some of the more commonly performed sonatas, including, Hindemith (1941), Sanders (1948), McKay (1951), Bassett (1954), Serocki (1954), Casterede (1957), Davison (1958), McCarty (1962), Wilder (1964), H. Stevens (1965), White (1966), Monaco (1969/87), Jones (1970), Hartley (1970), and Sulek (1973).<sup>6</sup> These have become staples of the performance and scholarly literature, though this is primarily limited to scholarship produced by trombonists. As we continue into the twenty-first century, the sonata repertoire for the trombone continues to grow.

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<sup>6</sup> David Guion, "Recital Repertoire of the Trombone as Shown by Programs Published by the International Trombone Association," *Online Trombone Journal*, <http://trombone.org/articles/library/recitalrep.asp> (accessed December 10, 2018).

# **CHAPTER I**

## **THESIS**

This document is a study of early twenty-first century sonatas for tenor trombone and piano by American composers. The study of solo literature has been an important part of trombone scholarship in order to observe trends in the usage of the instrument and the musical and technical demands required for performers to engage with specific repertoires. The goal is to present each piece by analyzing compositional and technical elements in this repertoire for the purpose of defining the required skills needed by performers to perform this repertoire.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this dissertation is: (1) to study a selection of the solo trombone literature that has little previous scholarship, (2) to observe and present compositional and technical elements of this repertoire in order to identify skills needed by performers, (3) to discuss the usage of the trombone as a solo instrument in works of this genre, and (4) to make a consolidated list of early twenty-first century American sonatas for tenor trombone and piano.

## **JUSTIFICATION**

One of the early dissertations written on sonatas for trombone was “The Twentieth Century Trombone Sonata”, by Dean Alan Farnham in 1968. At the time of Farnham’s study, he obtained thirty-four sonatas with the majority being written by American composers. In his study, he addressed the formal structure, harmonic idiom, rhythmic treatment, melodic-thematic material, and technical treatment of the trombone. One appendix in his work was a table that gave pertinent information about each piece, cataloging them with information about “timing,

range, mute, and unusual effects.”<sup>7</sup> Farnham felt that his document “aided trombonists in discovering the number and quality of solo sonatas at their disposal.”<sup>8</sup>

The study of the trombone sonata was continued in part by Dr. John Drew in his dissertation, “Classic Elements in Selected Sonatas for Trombone and Piano by Twentieth-Century American Composers”, completed in 1978. His work focused on the sonatas of Stevens (1965), Monaco (1969), Roy (1954), Davison (1963), Hindemith (1941), McKay (1951), Jones (1958), Watson (1960), and Cowell (Hymn and Fuguing Tune No. 13, 1960). This study featured works composed between 1941 – 1969 with a focus on the classical elements of form, contrapuntal techniques and tonal relationships. Drew concluded that the classical element of form was commonly found in all of the works studied and that the classical element of tonality worked with these forms, even though it was a contemporary version of tonality (bitonality, atonality, etc.)<sup>9</sup>

Original works and transcriptions have both been the focus of analytical work on the trombone sonata. In 1993, Chang-Yi Lai’s dissertation, “An Analytical Study of Nine Selected Sonatas for Trombone and Piano,” analyzed sonatas by Bach, Basset (1954), Brown (1977), Corelli, Fasch, Hartley (1969), Hindemith (1941), Monaco (1969/87), and White (1966). In a similar manner to this dissertation, Lai focused on analyzing the range, form, harmony, rhythm, melody, meters, dynamics and articulation of each sonata as well as any potential problems in performance.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Dean Alan Franham, “The Twentieth Century Trombone Sonata” (DMA diss., Boston University, 1968), 117.

<sup>8</sup> Franham, “The Twentieth Century Trombone Sonata”, 116.

<sup>9</sup> John Robert Drew, “Classical Elements in Selected Sonatas for Trombone and Piano by Twentieth-Century American Composers” (DMA diss., The University of Kentucky, 1978), 83.

<sup>10</sup> Chang-Yi Lai, “An Analytical Study of Nine Selected Sonatas for Trombone and Piano,” (MME Thesis, Lamar University – Beaumont, 1993), 3.

In that same year, Joseph Cox's dissertation, "The Solo Trombone Works of Kazimierz Serocki, A Lecture Recital," focused on the *Sonatina* (1955) and *Concerto* (1953) of Kazimierz Serocki. Cox wrote a complete analysis of each piece to show the compositional technique of the composer and presented the technical demands required of the performer. Both of these works were contained in the composer's neo-classical period and Cox's analysis is quite extensive. The technical demands of the *Sonatina* are a more brief section of the analysis and focuses on slide technique, range and technical difficulty.

Another analysis of a specific composer's sonata was completed by Wallace Tucker in 1987. Tucker's dissertation, "The Solo Tenor Trombone Works of Gordon Jacob: A Lecture Recital," focused on Jacob's *Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra* (1956), *Concertino for Trombone and Wind Orchestra* (1977), and the *Trombone Sonata* (1979). Tucker's analysis of these three pieces was split into focus points, tonal, motivic, and formal analysis. This paper's focus favors more towards the concertos but still gives examples for how to address analyzing music from the end of the twentieth century.

Another dissertation based around a specific composer was completed by John Seidel in 1988, titled, "The Trombone Sonatas of Richard A. Monaco, A Lecture Recital." This dissertation brought a lesser known composer forward, where the dissertations on Jacob and Serocki were on more well known composers. Seidel completes a thorough analysis of each of Monaco's two sonatas and draws conclusions about their differences based on how they intersect with Monaco's biography.

While this genre has been studied extensively with a focus on the twentieth century, no scholarship on the twenty-first century sonata has been found.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Collection:**

The search process for the pieces used in this study was primarily done with online tools. Initial searches were done on First Search and WorldCat. From there, the websites of major publishers of new brass music were searched, including: Cherry Classics, Editions BIM, Kagarice Brass Editions, Warwick Music, and Cimarron Music Press as well as the sheet music vendor, Hickey's Music Center. These resources aided in finding materials already published, but was not a complete listing in a time where self publishing is becoming more prevalent.

The International Trombone Association Journal contained the bulk of the self published or unpublished works. Sections used were the publications of recital programs, literature announcements/reviews, and audio announcements/reviews. These sources provided publisher and composer websites that could then be searched for any other works in those catalogues that were not found in the initial searches.

### **Selection:**

In order to provide a more in depth analysis of each piece, this document will focus on ten sonatas from the total found in the collection process. This selection will be made based on adherence to the definition of the sonata as well as variety in order to show the broadest selections of works.

Newman, in his comprehensive work on the sonata, attempted to define the genre as “a solo or chamber instrumental cycle of aesthetic or diversional purpose, consisting of several contrasting movements that are based on relatively extended designs in ‘absolute’ music.”<sup>11</sup>

Schmidt-Beste distilled that definition down into this set of points to follow in order to define a sonata:

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<sup>11</sup> Newman, *The Sonata in the Baroque Era*, 7.

1. The sonata is purely instrumental, without the (prescribed or optional) participation of voices.
2. The number of players is limited, and every player plays his/her own part.
3. The sonata is not written to serve a specific function: it is art for art's sake or art for entertainment.
4. The sonata consists of several contrasting movements or sections.
5. The underlying musical structure is relatively extended and complex.
6. The sonata is 'absolute' music, i.e. not based on a programme or other extramusical (sic) content or model.<sup>12</sup>

This definition excludes some of the works found in this study on the basis of points five and six, either for not having an extended and complex musical structure or being programmatic. Some pieces found were not written in a way that expands or develops the genre of the sonata or the usage of the trombone in this genre. For this reason, they are not as applicable to this study. Programmatic elements make those pieces more of a different genre by this definition.

From the pieces remaining, this project will attempt to select the broadest variety to present. This will be found musically in difficulty level, harmonic idiom, rhythmic idiom, and adherence to formal expectations. A wide selection will also be presented in composer background, including: gender, notoriety, and age. The state of publication or publishing company will have no consideration in the selection process.

### **Organization:**

Chapter 2 of this document will present each work independently. Each work will be introduced with the basic foundational data collected. This data will include: composer, title of the piece, composition date, any dedications or commissioning entities, first or early performances, publisher, recordings found, program notes by the composer, number of movements, duration, range, clefs used, special performance techniques, and difficulty. Special performance techniques include non-standard notations, free or unmetered passages, *glissandi*,

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<sup>12</sup> Thomas Schmidt-Beste, *The Sonata*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 2.

half valve techniques, any odd meters, multiphonics, advanced tonguing techniques, mutes, ornaments, and tunings.<sup>13</sup>

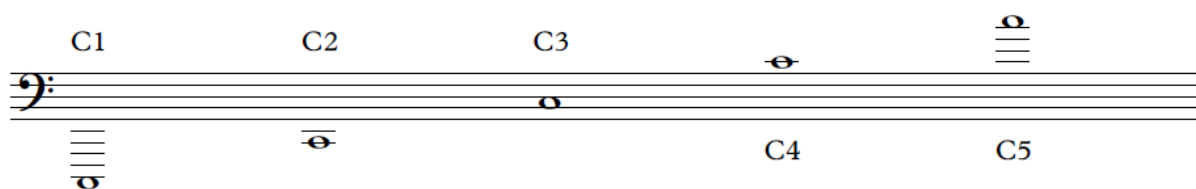
This foundational data will be followed by an analysis of the piece that will include six sections:

- Formal content - formal structures used in each movement and how the piece maintains or contradicts traditional sonata expectations
- Harmonic content - harmonic structures used throughout the piece and how they work as a harmonic progression
- Melodic content - intervallic structure, style, shape, and range of each melody
- Rhythmic content - complex meters, uncommon polyrhythm and other rhythmic dissonances<sup>14</sup>
- Sound - the texture of the piece between the solo and accompaniment parts, solo pitch range as it affects the timbre of the piece, and any extended techniques that create new sonic textures
- Additional comments - how these elements affect the performer's preparation and for what students the piece might be appropriate

### Pitch Notation:

This document will use scientific pitch notation as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1.



### Difficulty Ratings:

Solos will be given a Roman numeral difficulty rating that corresponds to the year of college that the average player should have the skills to comfortably and confidently approach the piece.

<sup>13</sup> J. Mark Thompson ed., *Solos for the Student Trombonist: An Annotate Bibliography*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Vuarmarens: The Brass Press – Edition BIM, 2001), 6.

<sup>14</sup> In this document, a rhythmic dissonance is a rhythm that obscures the meter or metric organization of a measure in the work

- I. Undergraduate – Freshmen/Sophomore
- II. Undergraduate – Junior/Senior
- III. Graduate
- IV. Professional

This difficulty rating system should help to show which solos are appropriate for major exams and recitals as a student is completing their musical training. A grade III solo should be appropriate as a foundational piece for a graduate recital, whereas a grade I solo should be appropriate for a sophomore proficiency/barrier or as a supplemental piece to a senior or graduate recital.

The difficulty ratings of the piano parts were completed by Dr. Margaret McDonald, Associate Professor of Collaborative Piano at the University of Colorado Boulder and Cecilia Lo-chien Kao, graduate teaching assistant at the University of Colorado Boulder. These ratings were determined by the difficulty level of the piano part alone. The rating is meant to show the proficiency level at which the pianist could approach the piece comfortably. These ratings do not take into account the collaborative difficulty of the sonata as a whole for either performer.

**Limitations:**

Multiple limitations were placed on this study in order to focus the scope of the repertoire studied to the point where the most works could be examined at the level of detail achieved. The time period of early twenty-first century works was chosen because of the amount, or lack of, scholarship written about these works. All of the works for this study are specifically titled “Sonata” in order to focus on works where there could be an expectation of traditional sonata elements and compositional experimentation. This study focuses on works for tenor trombone by American composers because those two elements made up the majority of pieces found and made for a large variety of pieces.

The number of composers who self publish has made the collection process more difficult. Some sonatas were located but the contact information was incomplete or out of date. Since those pieces were never published by a major company, they were unable to be obtained. Self-publishing also makes these sonatas less likely to be found on many searchable library databases; therefore it is probable that some pieces that would be applicable to this study were not found.

## Chapter II

**Composer:** Archer, Kimberly K. (b. 1973)

**Title:** Trombone Sonata

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2003
- Dedication: for Brock and Kyle
- Commission: Brock Feller
- First or Early Performances:
  - Doctoral Composition Recital (Apr. 2003): The University of Texas at Austin - Brock Feller, trombone and Kyle Kindred, piano

**Publisher:** C. Alan Publications

**Recordings:** Publisher's Website (MIDI)

### Composer Notes:

A composition teacher once claimed that the trombone is not a melodic instrument, so I decided to prove him wrong by writing a large-scale sonata for the instrument. ***Trombone Sonata*** is dedicated to Brock Feller (trombone), who was one of my students when I was a high school band director, and to Kyle Kindred (piano), who helped me understand how to better write idiomatically for the piano during the composition process. Brock and Kyle premiered the work at my doctoral composition recital in 2003.

- Kimberly K. Archer<sup>15</sup>

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Forceful ♩ = 102, Slightly slower ♩ = 92
  - II. Obnoxious ♩ = c. 96
  - III. Freely ♩ = c. 82
  - IV. Driving ♩ = c. 92 - 96
- Duration: 16 minutes
- Range: C2 – C5
- Clefs: Bass and Tenor

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<sup>15</sup> Kimberly Archer, "Trombone Sonata – C. Alan Publications," C. Alan Publications, <http://c-alanpublications.com/trombone-sonata/> (accessed December 16, 2018).

- Special Performance Techniques: Quasi Cadenza, Glissando, Valve Range, Complex Meters (5/4, 7/8), Multiple Tonguing, Multiphonics, Polyrhythm (2:3, 4:3)
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: II
  - Piano: III

## Analysis

### Form

As a complete work, this piece follows the formal expectations of the sonata cycle. The movements are respectively fast (sonata), scherzo (ternary), slow (ternary), and rondo (ABACABA). All of these are forms and styles that conform to normal expectations.

In the first movement, Archer maintains many of the standard expectations of sonata form. The exposition spans from the beginning to measure 77 with two contrasting themes. The primary theme is from the beginning to measure 26 and set in the key of B-flat. Measure 27 begins the transition to the secondary theme and uses material from the primary theme. The transition ends on a secondary dominant chord to set up the move to the dominant key area. The secondary theme (measure 48) contrasts in style by being much more lyrical and set in a lower tessitura. While the section starts in the key of F major, the actual secondary theme also uses D minor. A closing section is used from measure 62 to 77 and ends in G minor. Both themes are explored during the development section (mm. 78-120) and the primary theme is present in the recapitulation, in the home key of B-flat at measure 121. The second theme is not presented as clearly in the recapitulation.

The second movement is a scherzo with two contrasting sections, a heavier section (A) marked “obnoxious” and a lighter contrasting section (B) set in an ternary ABA’ form. The first A and B sections are in B-flat major while A’ is set in F major.

The third movement is the slow movement in the sonata cycle. This fits the tradition for sonatas with the slow movement using a vocal character like an aria. This movement is also in

ternary ABA' with the middle section contrasting in a more instrumental idiom as compared to the more vocal nature of the opening and closing A sections. This movement is set in the dominant of the work (F major), working like an extended cadenza between the second and fourth movements.

The fourth movement is in a clear rondo form (ABA'CABA). The A material is technical in nature and is set from the beginning to measure 44. The first B section begins at measure 44 and contrasts by being more lyrical and not as rhythmically complex. The A section returns at measure eighty and is similar to the first A but ends in a quasi-cadenza that is a ritardando that transitions into the C section. The C section starts at measure 117 and has a change of tempo as well as style. The C section slows down considerably and contains longer rhythmic values than the other sections. At measure 150, the C section begins an accelerando that transitions back into the returning A material at measure 156. The returning material is moved up a third and is followed by a return of the B material at measure 180. Measure 214 holds the last return of the A material, back in the original key of the movement (F major).

### **Harmony**

Archer's *Trombone Sonata* uses a tonal, triadic harmonic pallet that adds modal mixture often. While the first melody is clearly in B-flat major, the first chord in the accompaniment is a G-flat major seventh chord, which works as the major flat sixth chord borrowed from the minor mode. Occasionally, there are some chord structures built from fourths and fifths that could also be analyzed as an extended tertian harmony like a ninth chord. Traditional tonic/dominant relationships are used. Before the second theme area at measure forty-eight, Archer sets up the move to the dominant area with a multi-phonics in the trombone that works as a secondary

dominant of the new key area. The trombonist is playing E3 and singing C4 with G2 in the accompaniment.

**Example 1.** Archer, *Trombone Sonata I*. mm. 43 - 47



The trombonist begins the secondary theme area on an F, maintaining the traditional tonic/dominant relationship, even though Archer allows the second theme to work in the related key of D minor as much as F major.

The second movement continues to use triadic harmonic structures and is mostly based in B-flat major as well. This movement has accent chords that often contain sharp eleventh embellishments that clash against the fifth of the chord. The tonality of the movement is slightly obscured by parallel harmonies where Archer takes a major chord structure and uses parallel voice leading (planing) instead of traditional voice leading. This movement ends in F major to lead into the third movement.

**Example 2.** Archer, *Trombone Sonata II*. mm. 13 - 14

The third movement starts in F major, maintaining the tonal center of the entire piece, B-flat. This movement works like many cadenzas of pieces by working predominantly in the dominant key area as well as being metrically less structured. The key areas are less clear and more open to interpretation in the unaccompanied texture but can be found, especially in the sequences throughout the movement. In the sequenced areas of the piece, it would be reasonable to analyze some other key areas as D minor and E major. After exploring other key areas, the movement ends on an F again to imply F major.

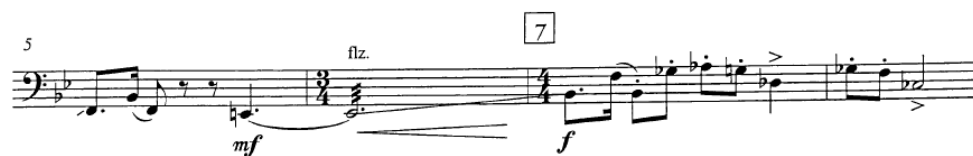
The fourth movement is tonal in nature and starts in the F major tonality for the A section of the rondo. The B section of the rondo at measure forty-four is roughly based in E minor and uses the melodic minor scale consistently before modulating to the distant key of B-flat minor. The C section at measure 117 continues to contrast against the F major primary sections by being set in C minor with significant use of the flat second scale degree.

### **Melody**

The opening theme starts in B-flat major with the second half of the theme borrowing the flat third, sixth and seventh from the minor mode. This theme is a bright and quick allegro melody that is stepwise and idiomatic for the trombone. The bright sound is achieved by utilizing the upper tessitura of the trombone. The second theme in the first movement is in the lower tessitura of the instrument and is lyrical in nature. This theme also stays mostly stepwise but includes intervals of fifths and sixths as it develops.

The second movement has two themes. The first section (mm. 1-22) features many *glissandi* and flutter tongue techniques in the low range of the horn that precedes the melody. The melody is in the key of B-flat with some modal mixtures, and is quite disjunct with dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythms emphasizing that disjunct nature.

**Example 3.** Archer, *Trombone Sonata II*. mm. 5 - 8



The contrasting melody is marked “lighter” and found at measure twenty-eight. This melody is much more stepwise in motion and does not have as much of a jarring nature, and uses less modal mixture.

The first section of the third movement is a lyrical solo that works well when performed in a dramatic fashion and is interpreted as a recitative. This melody has a mix of large intervals and thirds. Starting in measure 20, the movement starts to sound more similar to an instrumental cadenza. This section is mostly sixteenth notes, in contrast to the previous section. The scale patterns through the passage work and sequences are similar to what might be found in a baroque sonata. The primary melody returns a third higher at measure 33. This movement stays in a comfortable range for the trombonist for the whole movement, creating a relaxed and pleasant sound.

The Rondo has the most articulate melodies throughout the sonata. The primary rondo material (mm. 18-27) is written as staccato and has a narrow tessitura with step wise intervallic motion. This melody is in F major with Archer’s now expected modal mixture throughout.

**Example 4.** Archer, *Trombone Sonata III*. mm. 18 - 21



The B material (mm. 50-70) has a larger tessitura and more intervallic motion than the primary material in a more sustained manner. The C material is the slowest of the three melodies and

uses longer note values (whole notes, half notes). This melody is made up of all step wise motion and is set in C minor with frequent use of the flat second scale degree.

### Rhythm

The first movement is set in 12/8 and Archer uses many rhythmic devices to obscure that meter. The first theme area uses sets of three quarter notes, duple eighth notes and duple sixteenth notes to move the music forward through the rhythmic dissonance they create. In the example below, the most unique rhythmic dissonance can be seen. The duple sixteenths create a 4:3 polyrhythm.

**Example 5.** Archer, *Trombone Sonata* I. m. 30



This effect is found in the bridge section (m. 30) and it used along with the modulation to move the music forward to the next section. Archer builds excitement at the end of the piece by emphasizing quarter note pulse instead of a dotted quarter note pulse for the last nine measures. The meters in these last nine bars start with a 6/4 and use 5/4 and 4/4 meters as well. This change is not jarring because 6/4 has the same number of eighth notes as the 12/8 measures and Archer alluded to this quarter note pulse in measure 12 of the piece.

The scherzo is mostly set in 4/4 time with an occasional 3/4 measure. The subdivision is mostly sixteenth notes with occasional triplet eighths. The dotted-eighth sixteenth rhythm is particularly important to create the style of the movement.

The third movement is unaccompanied and in a free tempo. This gives the performer some rhythmic flexibility. The movement is written completely in quarter note pulse with the middle section using many sixteenth notes.

The fourth movement has the most variety of all of the movements in regards to meter changes. The movement is felt in the half note pulse with the tempo set at ninety-two beats per minute. In the recurring A section of the rondo found at measure eighteen, there are a multitude of metric changes that are less common for performers. This section moves between 2/2, 6/8, 7/8, and 5/4 freely with each meter lasting no more than two or three measures. Archer makes these meter changes more intuitive by building the melody to have almost constant eighth notes throughout.

### Texture and Sound Pallet

The texture of the first movement is polyphonic, set as melody and accompaniment with the piano filling in the texture around the long note values in the trombone part. The full range of the trombone is utilized throughout this movement, adding to the open texture of the work. The valve range (C2 – E-flat2) of the trombone is often incorporated with D2 and C2 being common. This movement uses many extended techniques to add to the sound pallet, including, *glissandi*, flutter tonguing and multiphonics. Archer combines flutter tonguing and *glissandi* on D4 and E-flat4 (mm 32-33).

**Example 6.** Archer, *Trombone Sonata I*. mm. 31-33



The first theme area ends with the only multiphonic in the piece, with the performer playing E3 and singing C4.

“Scherzo”, the second movement, uses all of the standard techniques that are often used to achieve the expected mood of this movement when writing for trombone. There are many *glissandi* and some flutter tonguing throughout this movement to create the “obnoxious” sound that is asked for by the composer. The interaction of the trombone and piano is conversational with each part answering the other back and forth. The middle of the movement contrasts with a lighter texture before returning to the more boisterous beginning material.

The third movement, aptly titled “Soliloquy”, is for unaccompanied trombone. Monophony is a rare texture for a sonata that is not seen in any other piece in this study for an entire movement.

A more traditional polyphonic accompaniment comes back in the fourth movement for most of the movement but still has unaccompanied sections used for clarity or transitions. The A theme of the rondo is played unaccompanied, creating a contrasting texture from the rest of the movement. In measure 109, this texture is used for a quasi-cadenza transitional section.

### **Additional Comments**

Archer’s *Trombone Sonata* could be used to introduce many extended techniques, including, *glissandi*, flutter tonguing, and multiphonics to the performer in an approachable format. All of these techniques are idiomatically applied throughout the piece and obtainable to a performer who is inexperienced in any of these techniques. The *glissandi* are all physically possible on the instrument without having to negotiate a partial break. The flutter tongue technique is isolated to one instance where it is in a range that is obtainable to perform the technique. It is also used infrequently enough that the piece would not suffer from a performer

who was unable to flutter tongue. This is also true of the one multi-phonetic in the piece. It is an achievable multi-phonetic for performers new to the technique and the piece would still be performable without it. While they are sparsely used throughout, these elements are used in a musically effective way and not in a gimmicky fashion.

Archer's tonal language and traditional use of formal expectations makes this an approachable work that has enough uniqueness and variety to be interesting to performers and audience members both. The modal mixture provides variety without creating a melodic or harmonic language that is foreign to the performer. All of the forms throughout the piece follow traditional expectations that should allow for quicker interpretation by the performer.

The length of this piece and its substantive compositional and musical depth makes it a strong feature piece for a senior recital. There is little need throughout the work to use multiple tonguing if the performer has an average or slightly above average single tongue. Archer's use of polyrhythm as dissonance is isolated and only once might cause difficulty in ensemble rehearsals. The only concern might be the endurance demands of the unaccompanied movement in the middle, especially if the piece is performed with the movements played *attacca*.

**Composer:** Belshaw, Gary D.

**Title:** Sonata for Trombone and Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2002
- Dedication: Don Lucas, Professor of Trombone, Texas Tech University (frm.)
- Commission: Don Lucas
- First or Early Performances:
  - Premier: Texas Tech University: January 27, 2003 – Don Lucas, trombone and Gary Belshaw, piano

**Publisher:** Warwick Music

### Recordings:

### Composer Notes:

The passionate and dramatic **Sonata for Trombone and Piano** was begun in 1998 on a commission from Don Lucas, Professor of Trombone at Texas Tech University, and was completed in 2002. Mr. Lucas premiered the sonata at Texas Tech University on January 27, 2003. The composer was at the piano. The three movements of the sonata adhere to traditional forms while at the same time utilizing contemporary harmonic theory. The central harmonic motive of the entire sonata is the exploitation of the relationship between major and minor thirds and between perfect and diminished fifths. Much of the sonata is built on the octatonic scale.

Organized in classical sonata form, the music of the first movement is marked ***Allegro appassionata***. The exposition of two themes follows a very brief introduction, and is modified in its repetition. Both themes are both recapitulated after considerable development. A cadenza and coda conclude the movement. The principal theme of the second movement, a rondo which is marked ***Andante***, focuses intently on the conflict implicit in the major/minor third relationship, and forms the first part of the rondo. A reflective passage for solo piano provides the music of the second part of the form. In the music of the Finale, marked ***Allegro con fuoco***, the conflict between major and minor thirds and perfect and augmented fifths is resolved by the inclusion of quarter tones in the second theme. The principal theme of the Finale exploits major and minor thirds in successions of figures which in turn are sequenced in movement by major and minor thirds. A powerful coda concludes the sonata with great force.

*Plainview, Texas 2004*

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### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Allegro appassionato ♩ = 132

<sup>16</sup> Gary D. Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* (Seckington: Warwick Music Limited, 2004).

- II. Andante ♩ = 72
- III. Allegro con fuoco ♩ = 96
- Duration:
- Range: A1 – C5
- Clefs: Bass, Tenor
- Special Performance Techniques: Valve range, Cadenza, *Glissandi*, Multiple Tonguing, Quarter Tones, Grace Notes
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: III.
  - Piano: III/IV

## Analysis

### Form

Belshaw's *Sonata* closely follows the classical elements of sonata form. The first movement is set in sonata-allegro form. Belshaw writes about how there are two themes that are exposed and recapitulated with alteration after a development section. The introduction lasts from the beginning to measure ten. Measure ten to measure 37 is the primary theme area and measure 38 to measure 56 is the secondary theme area. There is a lengthy development from measure 56 to measure 206, where the recapitulation begins. In the recapitulation, there are changes to the themes as there would be in most sonata forms. In this recapitulation, Belshaw uses rhythmic changes because of the lack of tonality. After the recapitulation of the first two themes, there is a cadenza and closing material to finish the movement.

Rondo is a common form found in sonatas but is more common in last movements than in the middle movements. The main material for this rondo focuses on the move from major to minor third, an intervallic focus of the sonata, as Belshaw speaks to in his program notes. Belshaw maintains the traditional rondo set up of ABA'CAB'A', with the repeated sections having rhythmic variations or being transposed to different pitch levels.

Belshaw says that his third movement has a primary and a secondary theme, but does not specify a form for that movement. The movement is set in ABACABAC. This has elements of a rondo with the return of A and has elements of a binary in the repeat of the formal structure, ABAC.

### Harmony

The first movement uses a number of different harmonic structures throughout. The sonata is atonal in general, but uses some familiar tonal structures. The first theme area (mm. 1 – 38) is mostly contrapuntal with few vertical harmonies. When there is a vertical harmony, it is built in a quartal nature. Throughout the second theme area (mm. 38 – 56), Belshaw uses tertian extended harmonic structures in a non-functional fashion. These structures are often voiced up to the ninth and use many different qualities. Occasionally, chord members are voiced down an octave to create clusters in the voicing. In the example below the chord on the second beat is a D minor ninth with the ninth doubled an octave down.

**Example 7.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* I. m. 38

The image shows a musical score for measures 38-41 of the first movement of the Sonata for Trombone and Piano. The score is in 2/4 time, marked 'Un poco meno' with a tempo of 120. The piano part features a D minor ninth chord on the second beat, with the ninth doubled an octave down. The score is written for piano and trombone, with the piano part in the foreground and the trombone part in the background.

The second movement uses a similar texture to the first movement of mostly counterpoint with occasional vertical harmonies. Of particular note is the harmonic texture used in the

piano interlude at measure 127. Each chord of the melody is individually voiced with a different triadic harmony. This texture and pitch content creates the sounds of a jazz soli.

**Example 8.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* II. mm. 129-132



The third movement maintains the use of counterpoint over the use of vertical harmonies. Within the counter point, Belshaw integrates the conflict between the major third and minor third by using split third chords. As the counterpoint moves, both the major third and the minor third are introduced.

**Example 9.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 1-2

1 *Allegro con fuoco* ♩ = 96

The image shows a musical score for measures 1-2 of the third movement, titled 'Allegro con fuoco' with a tempo of 96 beats per minute. The score is in 2/4 time and features a piano interlude. It includes staves for Trombone and Piano. The piano part has a left hand with a steady bass line and a right hand with a more complex melody. The Trombone part has a single melodic line. The score includes dynamic markings such as 'f' (forte), 'dim.' (diminuendo), and 'p' (piano). There are also slurs and ties throughout the piece.

In this example, we see how the left hand of the piano maintains D minor while the right hand alternates between major and minor. Vertical harmonies are used in the contrasting sections (rehearsal 82 and 145) and these are the similarly voiced triadic harmonies from before.

## Melody

In the first movement, there are two melodic textures. The first is found from the beginning to measure 37. The first theme has a fanfare nature with many dotted eighth-sixteenth

rhythms. Throughout this melody, Belshaw uses three symmetrical intervallic patterns, chromatic, octatonic, and whole tone. These scalar patterns are alternated with motives based on a fourth, adding to the fanfare sound. The second melodic area is in two parts and is found at measure 38. The first half is a slower, more lyrical, and slightly more winding. This winding sound is built from more use of half step and chromatic passages.

**Example 10.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I*. mm. 38-41



The second half at measure 50 returns to the primary tempo and pushes forward to the end of the exposition by using chromatic passages and the rhythmic motive of one eighth note and two sixteenth notes. These two themes are developed in a cadenza at the end of the movement that uses the full range of the instrument, including the valve and pedal range (B-flat1 – E-flat2). This cadenza is a large portion of the movement and is highly technical.

The second movement is slow with a lyrical texture. This movement focuses on the use of the third, with constant alternation between major and minor thirds. This also results in a chromatic sound throughout the movement on the larger melodic view as the foundational notes move from the major or minor third.

The second theme of the third movement is contrastingly lyrical and introduces a new melodic interval to the sonata, quarter-tones. Belshaw uses quarter steps as neighbor tones or appoggiaturas throughout the theme.

**Example 11.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 154-166

The image shows a musical score for a trombone and piano. The top staff, starting at measure 154, contains a melodic line with quarter tones indicated by up arrows on the stems of accidentals. Dynamics include *p*, *mf*, and *cresc.*. The bottom staff, starting at measure 160, contains a bass line with dynamics *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. Slurs and phrasing marks are used to group notes and indicate musical structure.

The quarter tones are marked with up arrows on the stem of the accidental. These quarter tones and the *glissandi* throughout the section take advantage of the microtonal capabilities of the trombone.

### Rhythm

This piece uses a standard rhythmic pallet for the trombonist with no complex meters. The only polyrhythm used is quarter note triplets. This was slightly unexpected, given the nature of the tonality of the piece. The smallest subdivision throughout is sixteenth notes in common time or eighth note triplets in cut time. There is one pair of thirty-second notes in the slow movement that are used as an ornament.

In the piano part, the polyrhythmic pallet is denser. Throughout the piece, there are textures where the two hands of the piano have different subdivisions. This is the most complex during the piano interludes where the trombone is not performing, except for the third movement where the trombonist is alternating between playing the duple subdivision of the left hand and the triplet subdivision of the right hand.

**Example 12.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 133-134

### Texture and Sound Pallet

This sonata uses multiple textures including antiphony, polyphony and homophony. Belshaw moves freely between these textures and the different textures often mark structural points between sections. The antiphonal textures are used when the two parts are written as distinctly melodic voices, as opposed to melodic and accompaniment voices. In these sections, conversational, “call and response” textures are found. The polyphonic sections throughout the piece either work as melody and accompaniment or as highly imitative sections. In the first movement, there is a section at measure 113 that is the exposition for a four voice fugue with the voices entering in imitative counterpoint two beats later at tri-tone intervals.

**Example 13.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* I. mm. 113-116

The homophony is the most unique texture in the piece where the piano and trombone are playing in rhythmic unison.

**Example 14.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I*. mm. 6-10

This texture is often used to end large sections. The example above is the end of the introduction and is a complete unison. Other sections are the same rhythm, with different melodic content, as seen at measure 96. This is a homophonic texture that has different pitch content and unison rhythm between the two voices.

**Example 15.** Belshaw, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I*. mm. 96-97

### Additional Comments

The notation of this sonata is unique in order to remove any ambiguity from the tonal language of the piece. Throughout the piece, Belshaw marks every note with an accidental so there is no question about what pitch is expected. This is beneficial with the ever changing

tonalities of the piece and occasional moments when the two parts are playing a dissonance that performers may attempt to correct. The consistent accidental notation also helps with the constant oscillation between major and minor thirds. This notation makes the piece a little more difficult to read the first time because the visual layout of the piece is much more visually noisier or cluttered than usual.

The other unique challenge of this piece is the quarter tones. Students will find that the common melodic resolution of the quarter-tones to be especially helpful when integrating this technique into their performance experience. All dense or dissonant tonalities require good intonation for them to make aural sense. Extended time with a tuner to develop aural and hand slide sensitivity will be required for good intonation throughout these passages. Good intonation is similar to how focus works in photography. When the picture is in focus, it becomes easier to observe and comprehend what shape is in the picture. In music, when the performer plays with accurate intonation, the melodic or harmonic content becomes easier to follow.

The cadenza is extended and virtuosic. A strong valve range with good intonation will be required to perform this piece well. There are many half step passages that will be greatly obscured if the performer's intonation is not accurate. Because of the uniqueness and difficulty of this piece, it would be a good choice for the focal piece of a graduate recital or a graduate lecture recital.

**Composer:** Cheetham, John (b. 1939)

**Title:** Sonata for Trombone and Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2007
- Dedication:
- Commission: Paul Compton, Professor of Trombone – Oklahoma State University
- First or Early Performances:
  - Eastern Trombone Workshop 2008: Paul Compton, trombone and Chad Bowles, piano

**Publisher:** BoonesLick Press

### Recordings:

### Composer Notes:

The **Sonata for Trombone and Piano** was commissioned by Paul Compton, Assistant Professor of Trombone at Oklahoma State University, in 2007. In three movements, the work is rooted in traditional musical forms and relies in part on mild jazz harmonies and melodic idioms.

Movement I makes use of sonata form with two main melodic ideas: a heroic first theme which is followed by a second lyrical idea. The second movement is based on a ternary design and has a lullaby-like character. A five-part rondo with a recurring double-tongue theme brings the final movement to a spirited conclusion.

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### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Allegro eroico ♩ = 126
  - II. Andante grazioso ♩ = 52
  - III. Furioso ♩ = 144
- Duration: 13 minutes
- Range: E2 - F5
- Clefs: Bass, Tenor and Treble
- Special Performance Techniques: Cadenzas, *Glissandi* (partial rips), Complex Meters (5/8), Multiple Tonguing, Mutes (Straight),
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: IV
  - Piano: II

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<sup>17</sup> John Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* (Columbia: BoonesLick Press, 2007).

## **Analysis**

### **Form**

Cheetham states in his program notes that he wrote this piece using traditional forms. The first movement is in clear sonata-allegro form with a traditional exposition. The primary theme is in G minor (beginning) with a secondary theme in the dominant of D major (mm. 32). After the exposition, Cheetham begins the development section (mm. 51) that is highly technical, tonally unstable and ends in a cadenza. Cheetham breaks with tradition in the recapitulation by beginning with the second theme in F major (mm. 99) and then the primary theme in the home key of G minor (mm. 118).

The second movement is in ternary ABA form with the B section beginning at measure 25 and the recapitulation of A at measure 65. The B section contrasts the lullaby of the A sections with a technically virtuosic texture.

The third movement is a 5 part rondo, as Cheetham states in his program notes. This is laid out ABA'B'A''. The A section is a technical display with multiple tonguing and complex meters. The B section (mm. 27) is a flowing lyrical melody. The return of the B material (mm. 107) uses the same rhythmic motive as the previous B section. The last A section is extended with a cadenza and a variation on the primary material that is more virtuosic as it propels the piece to the ending.

### **Harmony**

The entire sonata is based around G minor and is mostly tonal with jazz influences. In the first movement, those jazz influences on the harmony can be seen from the beginning. In the opening harmony, Cheetham uses a G minor chord, but the third has been substituted by the ninth.

**Example 16.** Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* I. m. 1

The musical score shows the beginning of the first movement. The Trombone part is in the upper staff with a whole rest. The Piano part is in the lower staves. The right hand plays a descending eighth-note scale starting on G4. The left hand plays a sustained G minor chord (G-Bb-F) with a fermata. The tempo is marked 'Allegro eroico' with a metronome marking of 126. The dynamic is marked 'f' (forte).

Later in the opening, Cheetham also embellishes a G minor chord by adding the sixth. The secondary theme (mm. 32) moves to D major, the expected dominant of G major. Throughout the development, mostly triadic harmonies are used. In the recapitulation, the harmonic structures are the same as the beginning, but set an octave lower. When the second theme is recapitulated, it is in the key of F major. This has some jazz implications as the flat VII of G. The movement ends in a surprising and quiet way on a G major chord in the piano.

The second movement is in the relative key of B-flat major. The opening jazz influenced chord progression is a B-flat major seventh chord alternating with an E-flat major seventh chord. From measure twenty to twenty-five, Cheetham uses G-flat major as the chromatic mediant of B-flat major to modulate to the key of A major. After this section in A major, Cheetham moves another chromatic mediant to the key of F major to begin the last sequence of the middle section before the recapitulation. This sequence (mm. 43 – 48) has many more jazz harmonic elements.

**Example 17.** Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* II. mm. 43-49

The first chord at measure 43 is F major with some sharp eleventh embellishments. In measure 44, the harmony moves down a half-step to E minor. Measure 45 moves down another half-step to an E-flat major ninth chord and then moves to A major in the second half of the bar, a tritone substitution. That A major harmony is used as a dominant to move to D major in 46 and is followed by an Ab dominant seventh chord, another tritone substitution. The same pattern is used again with the Ab harmony being used as the dominant to move us to D-flat major in measure 47. The G dominant seventh chord at the end of measure 47 is the tritone substitute of D-flat again and then Cheetham ends the sequence by resolving down a third to E minor. The primary theme is brought back at the end of the movement in B-flat major to end the movement.

The third movement begins in G minor with the trombone melody in D melodic minor. There are shifts from the minor third (B-flat) to the major third (B natural) often. The piano shows contrapuntal lines throughout this movement with more of the harmonies happening as

interjections. All of the harmonies maintain traditional triadic structures with some of the same jazz idiom major seventh chords used throughout. There are more openly voiced chords throughout this movement than are found in the other movements.

### Melody

The melody throughout this piece is technically demanding for the trombonist and not idiomatic for the instrument. The first movement has three melodic areas. The primary melody is in G minor and completely diatonic. The melodic intervals are quite wide with two tenths and one sixth interval in the melody. These wide leaps maintain as the theme is being developed. The wide intervals are paired with dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythms that add to the disjunct feel of the line. The transition material (mm 18 – 26) shifts tonally often, but each motive is diatonic. This section, by contrast uses many fourths. The second theme (mm. 32) is the most challenging tonally and intervallicly of these three.

**Example 18.** Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I.* mm. 31-34



This line is difficult because the melody constantly shifts octaves between each step wise interval. It also adds more chromatic embellishments than used in the other melodies throughout the movement. The short cadenza in this movement is also based on this theme (mm. 98) and has the same contour but is placed in the upper range of the trombone.

**Example 19.** Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I.* mm. 98



The end of the movement features some *glissandi* in the upper range of the instrument as well melodic material built of sevenths and octaves. These *glissandi* sit in the range of D4 – F5.

The second movement has a main melodic theme that is developed during the middle of the movement that stays in the upper range of the tenor clef for the trombonist. The opening melody is a mostly diatonic lullaby in the key of B-flat that is generally step-wise and has some flat sixth and seventh scale degrees near the end. A second half of the primary melody is found at measure 25 in the key of A major that returns to the wide intervals found in the first movement. This melody is rhythmically developed at measure 34. The development section comes to a climax with the large sequence section discussed in the harmony section of this document. The trombone has rapid arpeggios that cover the range of the instrument throughout this section. The primary melody is then explored in A-flat (mm. 53) and D-flat (mm. 57) before returning to B-flat (mm. 65).

The primary melody of the third movement is a technical display for the trombonist that is mostly diatonic to D melodic minor and uses step-wise motion. The rhythm is mostly sixteenth notes, but the pitch pacing is mostly eighth notes, creating a doubled note texture. This melody is probably the most idiomatic for the instrument because it is one of the more conjunct melodies in the piece. The contrasting theme area is lyrical and mostly based in eighth notes with much larger intervals throughout this melody, mirroring some of the other previous melodies. The cadenza begins with a scalar section that is similar to the primary melody of this movement before employing a large number of arpeggios with complex altered chord qualities over the higher range of the instrument.

**Example 20.** Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. m. 90



The end of the cadenza includes some acrobatic octave jumps in the upper range of the instrument as well, ranging from A3 – D5. The piece ends on a doubled-note texture multiple tonguing scales beginning at D3 and ending on D5.

### Rhythm

Cheetham uses a traditional rhythmic pallet throughout. In the first movement, the two themes are contrasted by their rhythmic content. The entire first movement is in 4/4. The first theme uses many dotted-eighth sixteenth rhythms to create a fanfare sound. The transitional material (mm. 18) uses eighth and two sixteenth rhythms to propel the music forward. In contrast, the second theme is mostly eighths and long note values that create a more flowing texture. In the recapitulation, dotted-sixteenth eighth rhythms are used, adding a new snappy texture.

The second movement is in 6/8 and uses the traditional dotted-eighth sixteenth eighth rhythm found in so many baroque sonatas and suites. In the more technical sections of the movement, subdivisions move smaller to the thirty-second level with some dotted rhythms.

The third movement is in 2/4 with some occasional 5/8 meters. In the A sections of the rondo, the rhythms are almost constant sixteenth notes. In general, the pitches move at the eighth note rhythmic pace, creating the “double-note” texture commonly seen in brass music.

**Example 21.** Cheetham, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 191-195



The B sections are predominantly eighth notes with some quarter note triplets. The cadenza uses some sextuplets. Nothing rhythmically throughout this piece is of note or is particularly challenging.

### **Texture and Sound Pallet**

The huge majority of this piece is composed as standard melody and accompaniment polyphony. The piano melodies usually occur during the piano interludes. Cadenzas are used to break up the texture of trombone and piano. During the third movement, the texture is a little thinner because the piano part has more rests and more single chord entrances.

### **Additional Comments**

This work is well balanced because the musical challenges are approachable while the technical challenges are quite high. The harmonic, rhythmic and melodic languages are all traditional. Most of the sections throughout the piece have similarities to standard performance techniques that can be applied to the performance of this work. Technically, this sonata is a much larger challenge. The intervallic content of the piece is wide throughout most of the sections, especially the lyrical sections. The range demands are high and sustained throughout the piece. The performer has to have consistent control and execution of notes from Bb4 and F5.

This balance of difficulty levels makes this a challenge to label for an appropriate level, but the range pushes it to the high level graduate student or professional. It is a fantastic show piece of range and technical ability for a recital, but would have to be programmed carefully to insure the quality of the performance.

**Composer:** Crosby, Richard A. (b. 1957)

**Title:** Sonata for Trombone and Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2003
- Dedication: for Ken Haddix
- Commission: Commissioned by the Kentucky Music Teachers Association
- First or Early Performances:
  - KMTA Convention (Oct. 2003): University of Kentucky – Ken Haddix, trombone and Richard Crosby, piano

**Publisher:** International Trombone Association Manuscript Press

### Recordings:

- “Sculpting the Air” Navona NV5852
  - Ken Haddix, trombone and Richard Crosby, piano

### Composer Notes:

Sonata for Trombone and Piano Op. 1 was commissioned by the Kentucky Music Teachers Association for their October 2003 convention in Lexington and was the composer's first large-scale composition. The work was inspired by the artistry of his colleague, trombonist Ken Haddix, to whom it is dedicated and who gave the world premiere. The first movement is meant to have a heroic, expansive quality and is highly motivic, exploring many uses of the perfect 4th both harmonically and melodically. By contrast, the second movement is deeply emotional, dark and lyrical. It gains intensity at measure 42, but after rising to an outcry at measure 50 it subsides into bittersweet resignation once again. The last movement consists of several contrasting, exuberant sections. The opening gives way to a guitar-like Spanish dance, followed by a dance-like rhythmic section reminiscent of other 20th century composers. The opening returns and the tempo picks up leading to an Allegro con brio conclusion.<sup>18</sup>

- Richard Crosby

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Moderato ♩ = 108
  - II. Andate lamentoso ♩ = 76

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<sup>18</sup> Richard Crosby, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* (San Antonio: International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 2003).

- III. Allegro ♩ = 132
- Duration: 10 minutes
- Range: B-flat<sup>2</sup> – B-flat<sup>4</sup>
- Clefs: Bass
- Special Performance Techniques: Cadenza, Glissando, Multiple Tonguing (Double)
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: I
  - Piano: II

## Description/Analysis

### Form

The first movement is in a sonata form that has an exposition with two themes, a development, and a recapitulation that focuses on the primary theme. The primary theme is found at measure three in B-flat major. The second theme appears at measure 37. This allows the listener to hear the expected move to the dominant even though Crosby is using less traditional chord structures (fourths) in the right hand of the accompaniment. The development ends with a cadenza to transition back into the recapitulation of the first theme. This movement is a shorter, more condensed sonata form.

The second movement is a slow movement that uses its primary material (A) twice. The first presentation (mm. 1 – 23) is set in B-flat major. The second presentation (mm. 23 – 41) has the same introduction material in the piano that leads into the same melodic material for the trombone, but is harmonized with G minor instead. The movement ends with an impressionistic sounding development (B).

The third movement is also a shorter, less standard formal structure. The A material, a syncopated melody with an active, sixteenth note accompaniment begins and ends the movement. Measure 24 begins a contrasting section that uses “Spanish dance rhythms”.<sup>19</sup> The

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Crosby, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* (San Antonio: International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 2003).

movement ends with some development of the A material, moving through D major before ending in G-flat major.

### Harmony

Harmonically, Crosby's Sonata is strongly tonal but with many alterations in the dominant key area. The two measure introduction by the piano is the first example of this. This movement is set in B-flat major. Crosby places a sustained F in the bass while the upper notes in the introduction are playing in a form closer to F Phrygian or Locrian. This introduction functions as the dominant that resolves to B-flat major for the beginning of the primary material.

**Example 22.** Crosby, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* I. mm. 1-2



While this is not the traditional melodic tension found in dominant passages, the use of these modes creates additional leading tones that move the music to the tonic area in a more contemporary sounding way. Many of the dominant chord areas throughout the piece use this technique. Throughout the movement, the left hand of the piano uses quartal structures that match the melodic content of the movement. These structures are often planed. Crosby uses a bass drone in the left hand to show the secondary key area of the first movement moving to F, as would be expected, while the right hand plays more of the quartal based harmonies.

The second movement is compelling and approachable because Crosby uses the same melody with different harmonization throughout the movement. The piano introduction is in G

minor, but moves to B-flat major for the theme at measure 15 in such a way that it is not obvious to the listener that Bb is where the piece is going. The first theme is lyrical and diatonic in nature and followed by a piano interlude that returns to G minor. These two keys are easy for Crosby to maneuver because they are closely related keys that work as substitutes for each other easily. After the interlude, Crosby uses the same music that led into the theme the first time, but the theme is played the second time with the G minor accompaniment.

The third movement uses a similar introduction of an altered dominant key area as the first movement before beginning in the key of B-flat. The end of the third movement picks up in tempo and moves to D major briefly, which is the most distant key area of the piece before concluding in B-flat major.

### Melody

Crosby uses quartal melodic writing that is reminiscent of the twentieth century sonatas, including, Paul Hindemith and Halsey Stevens. While the accompaniment is rather thick with highly altered harmonies in the first movement, the melody maintains the B-flat tonality of the first movement more closely. The first theme of this sonata is quartal in nature and has fanfare qualities.

**Example 23.** Crosby, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I*. mm. 1-5



The second theme of this movement (m. 37) contrasts by being softer and using longer note values that give it a more lyrical nature than the first theme. Crosby is consistent with his use of quartal structure and this melody is constructed in that same way.

The second movement contains a melody that is vocal in nature. This melody contrasts the writing in the rest of the sonata by being more influenced by thirds and stepwise motion than fourths or larger intervals. This melody is easy to hear in the key of B-flat, but Crosby accompanies it with both B-flat major and G minor throughout the movement.

The third movement has two melodies. The first melody is mostly scalar and diatonic with some mode mixture. It is an allegro, but never has groups of sixteenths larger than two. This melody could be performed with single or multiple tonguing. The second melodic area is at measure 24. In the composer notes, Crosby notes that this section has some Spanish dance influences. This can be seen in the triplet sixteenth ornaments throughout.

**Example 24.** Crosby, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 24-29



### Rhythm

This sonata uses a traditional rhythmic vocabulary. There are not many meter changes and there is no unusual polyrhythm. The smallest subdivision used in this sonata is sixteenth notes. The most complex rhythm is the use of sextuplets. This is partly because of the harmonic clarity of this piece. Since this piece is harmonically more tonal, the need for rhythmic dissonance is less.

### Texture and Sound Pallet

The texture of the entire sonata is highly polyphonic with the piano music staying rhythmically active for most of the piece. Often, when the trombone has long note values, the accompaniment continues rhythmic playing throughout. The third movement is a clear example

of how the piano texture works with the trombone. The accompaniment is highly active with long runs of sixteenth notes while the trombone part has another marcato, fanfare-esque melody.

**Example 25.** Crosby, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 5-7

The only extended techniques to add to the change of sounds coming from the ensemble are some glissandi at the end of the third movement.

### Additional Comments

This is a highly appropriate piece for sophomore proficiencies/barriers or possibly junior recitals. The trombone part is approachable because it is always either diatonic or quartal in nature and uses melodic patterns that are idiomatic to the instrument. Many of the sounds and textures that make this piece sound difficult are in the piano part and may only require additional ensemble rehearsal time to become comfortable with the altered harmonies and dense texture.

The range of this piece makes it ideal for a student's first recital because it only occasionally goes above F4 and stays in the more comfortable range of the horn for most of the piece. With the piece staying above B-flat2, there are not a lot of large shifts in range either. This should allow the performer to find the efficiency to play it with ease.

The second movement is a good balance to the outer two movements because Crosby creates variety in the movement by simply altering the accompaniment. With the trombone melody staying the same, that gives a little less musical material for the trombonist to learn, but

does give an opportunity for students to learn how to play the same music with different intentions.

The third movement will challenge the performer the most both harmonically and technically. The multiple tonguing passages are similar in difficulty to the third movement of the Larsson *Concertino* due to tempo and articulation. The *glissandi* in measure thirty-seven have the potential to be tricky because they change from acting as pick-ups to the beat to being *appoggiaturas* on the beat.

**Composer:** Forrest, Dan (b. 1978)

**Title:** Sonata for Trombone [or Euphonium] & Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2003
- Dedication:
- Commission:
- First or Early Performances:
  - Doctoral Composition Recital: University of Kansas – Paul Overly, trombone and Dan Forrest, piano: Spring, 2003

**Publisher:** C. All Publications 2009

**Recordings:** <http://danforrest.com/solo-extended-works/>

### Composer Notes:

*Sonata for Trombone and Piano* was written in the spring of 2005, as a result of a trombonist friend's suggestion. The first movement contrasts an angular, aggressive theme with a more lyrical theme. After an intense, rhythmic development, the themes are recapped in reverse order, before a coda recalls the previous rhythmic section. The second movement, in ABA form, presents a long-breathed lyrical melody that unfolds farther and farther with each repetition. The third movement is a lively, humorous rondo with three themes that are more closely related than they might first appear. After a cadenza for the trombone, the themes return, first rudely interrupting each other, then all jumbling together in an exuberant coda.

- Dan Forrest<sup>20</sup>

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Andante Maestoso ♩ = 92, Vivace ♩ = 144-152
  - II. Lento, molto espressivo ♩ = 54
  - III. Allegro vivace ♩ = 120-132
- Duration: 20 minutes
- Range: E2 – D5 (ossia B4)
- Clefs: Bass
- Special Performance Techniques: Cadenza, Glissando, Multiple Tonguing (double), Grace Notes, Trills
- Difficulty

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<sup>20</sup> Dan Forrest, *Sonata for Trombone [or Euphonium] & Piano* (Greensboro: C. Alan Publications, 2009).

- Trombone: II
- Piano: III

## **Description/Analysis**

### **Form**

The first movement has a formal structure of ABCBAC. The movement has a primary and secondary theme. The primary theme (A) is based in the key area of D-flat in the exposition and the recapitulation. The second theme (B) is contrasting in nature by being more legato. In the exposition section (m. 39) the theme is in E major and modulates to A major in the recapitulation (m. 119). The recapitulation fits most of the expectations of sonata form except the themes are presented in reverse order. Both presentations of the themes are followed by a contrasting closing material (C).

The second movement follows conventions as a slow movement in ternary ABA form. The outer A sections show unexpected contrasts in dynamic, key and, texture. The first presentation is in G-sharp minor, and is soft and has a covered tone quality. The trombone is playing in the stand and the piano is playing single voice accompaniment. The recapitulation (m. 101) is set in F-sharp minor, much louder, and presented in a fuller texture in both voices. The trombone is no longer performing in the stand that the piano voicing is in full triads.

The third movement is also an expected form, being in a three part rondo. This rondo is set ABAC(A')BA. This is close to a traditional rondo form, except there is no A after the C section. The piano hints at a return to the A section after the C section, but is quickly interrupted by the trombone with the B material.

### **Harmony**

Throughout the piece, Forrest uses tonal key areas that are often built with non-traditional tonal structures. The first theme of the first movement is in the D-flat key area. The harmonic

structure under it is a quartal/quintal chord - D-flat, G-flat, and A-flat. This is a quartal/quintal harmony. With the G-flat being a half step away from the third of the chord, F, the G-flat could also be seen as a substitution for the third. This quintal harmonic structure is prevalent throughout the first movement with triadic chords appearing occasionally.

The second movement uses mostly traditional triadic harmony. There are sections where harmonies are used to create an even denser texture. In measure 78, Forrest uses a four note cluster of F-sharp, G, A, and B.

**Example 26.** Forrest, *Sonata for Trombone & Piano* II. mm. 76-81

The musical score for Example 26 shows measures 76 through 81. Measure 76 is marked 'rit.' and contains a single note in the bass staff. Measures 77 through 81 are marked 'a tempo' and feature a complex texture with multiple four-note clusters in the piano part, while the trombone part has a melodic line. The piano part clusters are marked 'mp'.

All of the chords are four notes, and the cluster technique is set as a diatonic step down from the principal member of the chord. In this cluster, the primary chord members are G and B with the F-sharp and A acting as embellishments. This is a similar sound to the clash of the fourth and fifths in the first movement, but slightly denser in nature.

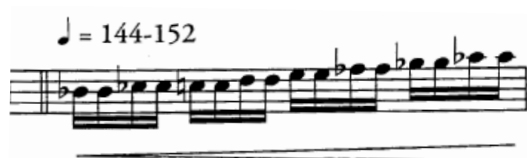
The third movement continues to use similar structures with a mix of quintal or triadic structures with the step-wise embellishment. Second inversion chords and open octaves are also found throughout the movement, adding to the open sound of the piece.

### Melody

Forrest makes use of the versatility of the trombone in his melodic writing. The first movement uses three contrasting melodic textures. The first theme has a stately, fanfare quality.

This is made up from broad quarter notes, dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythms, and quartal/quintal interval structures. The second theme area at measure thirty-nine contrasts by being lyrical in nature. This theme is built on long lines of slurred eighth notes and features more thirds and steps. The third theme is more virtuosic in nature and features the multiple tonguing technique of the trombonist. This theme is idiomatic for the instrument because it is step-wise and has an eighth note movement of pitch even though the rhythm is in sixteenths.

**Example 27.** Forrest, *Sonata for Trombone & Piano* I. m. 65



This is the “doubled note” texture that is often seen in quicker technical passages in trombone literature. All of the melodies in the first movement tend to cover a wide range of the instrument, mostly spanning an octave at the minimum.

The second movement is lyrical and tonal. It holds rhythmic and intervallic elements that are common to melodies that imitate vocal melodies. Forrest takes advantage of the directionality of the trombone by having the trombonist play into the stand to create a distant and muffled sound. Occasionally, the melodies are embellished by grace note figures that are upper neighbor pairs of sixteenth notes. The full dynamic range of the trombone is used in this movement, with the directional techniques of playing into the stand emphasizing the dynamic shifts.

The third movement uses three different melodic textures throughout the rondo. The first section is a similar texture to the third melodic section of the first movement. It features multiple tonguing as well, but the velocity of the pitch changes matches the rhythmic tempo. Tonal scalar passages are found in sets of sixteenths ranging from two to six note groups.

**Example 28.** Forrest, *Sonata for Trombone & Piano* III. mm. 11-13



The B section (mm. 27-112) is lighter in nature and rhythmically slower. Idiomatic *glissandi* add to the lighter nature of the section. The C section (mm. 132-191), contrasts the staccato texture of the previous section with full note values. This section also has contrastingly large intervals from the rest of the movement with intervals including a descending octave and a tritone and an ascending octave and a minor seventh. This movement also has a cadenza that combines elements of all of the contrasting sections.

### **Rhythm**

This piece uses a traditional set of rhythmic tools and dissonance. There are no complex meters or polyrhythm throughout. Forrest does create active textures through his use of rhythm. He uses long lines of sixteenth notes in both parts to create energy. This texture is also often created out of the composite rhythm of the two hands of the piano. This level of technique in Forrest's piano writing is to be expected because of his background as a pianist. The first movement contains many dotted-eighth sixteenth rhythms and the composer asks for that rhythm to be stylized towards a double dotted rhythm.

### **Texture and Sound Pallet:**

The first movement is standard polyphony. Forrest often uses one instrument to contrast the other in texture. When the trombone is playing an actively rhythmic part, the piano is often filling in rests with long notes. In the more lyrical passages where the trombone has longer note values, the piano has a much more active texture. As a pianist himself, Forrest understands how

to create active textures in the piano. At measure 48, the piano has running sixteenths that are split between the two hands.

**Example 29.** Forrest, *Sonata for Trombone & Piano I*. mm. 46-49

The musical score for measures 46-49 of Forrest's *Sonata for Trombone & Piano I* is shown. The score is in 2/4 time. Measure 46 shows the trombone (top staff) with a half note and the piano (bottom staves) with a half note. Measure 47 shows the trombone with a half note and the piano with a half note. Measure 48 shows the trombone with a half note and the piano with a half note. Measure 49 shows the trombone with a half note and the piano with a half note. The piano part in measure 48 features running sixteenth notes in both hands, with a 'simile' marking and a note about no accent on beats 2 or 4.

Forrest includes a written instruction to the pianist to not accent the beat where the hands trade off. This is included to make a texture that sounds flowing and active because it is emphasizing larger metric patterns.

The second movement has a more transparent texture by using fewer notes in the voicing of the piano chords. As the movement progresses, the piano texture becomes thicker in the harmonic voicing. This is enhanced by the “in stand” technique used by the trombonist.

The cadenza of the third movements creates the most unique sound of the piece. Throughout the cadenza, several extended techniques for the trombone are employed. This includes glissando, multiple tonguing, and trills. Forrest marks one note in this cadenza as “tremolo”, which could be interpreted as a flutter tongue sound. A less standard technique used in this section is labeled as “let ring in piano”. This technique adds a unique sound to the work that would add variety to the sounds on a recital.

### **Additional Comments**

The Forrest is quite an approachable piece musically and technically. This is a substantial piece with duration and performance demands that allow little rest for the trombonist. It would be best used as a half for a recital. While the piece includes D5, this note is infrequent and has other options for the performer. The tessitura of the piece stays much closer to A4 or B4. The first movement is fast enough to require multiple tonguing, but it is approachable because it employs the “doubled-note” texture. The multiple tonguing in the first movement is brief and could be learned by a student new to the technique. The third movement is right on the edge of single tonguing or multiple tonguing for many students. If multiple tonguing is used instead of single tonguing, all of the melodic structures are scalar and approachable as well.

Forrest marks slide positions for all of his *glissandi* throughout the piece, though some are slightly confusing. His understanding of the instrument is strong enough that he marks when *glissandi* should be done on the open horn and when they should be done on the F-attachment. When pitches are to be performed the F-attachment side, he uses the identification F:V (for G-sharp<sup>3</sup>).

If this piece is programmed well, it would be a strong piece for a senior recital. It is technically and musically substantial enough for a degree recital and is idiomatic enough for the instrument to build strong technique in the performer. If you have a strong student who has yet to learn tenor clef, this piece would suit them well. It would be a small segment of students that has the ability to play this piece but have yet to encounter tenor clef. Single movements maybe appropriate for younger players for juries or possibly even high school performances.

**Composer:** Russell, Armand (b. 1932)

**Title:** Sonata for Trombone and Piano<sup>21</sup>

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2009
- Dedication: for Jeannie Little
- Commission:
- First or Early Performances:
  - Faculty Recital (2010): Louisiana State University – Jeannie Little, trombone and Dianne Frazer, piano

**Publisher:** Cherry Classics Music

### Recordings:

### Composer Notes:

The first movement, “*Prologue*”, consists of an Exposition (Bars 1-42) with a main theme followed by four development sections and ending with a return to the main theme, before a short Coda.

The second movement, “*Variants*” is a set of seven variations on the theme presented in the opening with descriptive terms pointing out the contrasts between the variations.

The final movement is titled an “*Epilogue*” follows the general structure of ABCDCEBA which is a modified arch form. The movement has an abundant use of dance-like syncopated rhythms, but with a lyric and less active middle section D for contrast. This work of about 17 minutes in length is suitable for advanced performers.

-Publisher<sup>22</sup>

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Prologue: Flowing and pensively ♩ = 114
  - II. Variants: Moderately fast and expressive ♩ = 96

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<sup>21</sup> Originally titled “Fantasia for Trombone and Piano” by the composer, but published as “Sonata for Trombone and Piano”. This piece maintains movement structure, formal structure, and part independence of a sonata.

<sup>22</sup> “Russell – Sonata for Trombone and Piano – Cherry Classics Music,” Cherry Classics Music, <https://cherryclassics.com/products/2726> (accessed March 26, 2019).

- III. Epilogue: Moderately fast  $\text{♩} = 96$
- Duration: 16 minutes
- Range: A-flat<sup>2</sup> - C<sup>5</sup>
- Clefs: Bass and Tenor
- Special Performance Techniques: Complex Meters (5/8, 7/8), Mutes (Straight and Cup)
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: II.
  - Piano: III/IV

## Analysis

### Form

The program notes that are presented by the publisher focus on the formal structure of the piece. The first movement is in modified monothematic sonata form. The exposition (mm. 1-42) has a flowing, lyric character to begin. The development section (m. 43) speeds up six beats per minute from the exposition and becomes more articulate than the previous section. The return (m. 104) has the same pitch content but is rhythmically different and contains more of the articulate character from the development.

The second movement is a theme and variation. This form choice is traditional for middle or ending movements. Every variation has a different musical mood attached to it. This set of variations takes on a more modern flavor that will be discussed in the other sections more in depth.

One of the traditional forms for a third movement would be a rondo. The arch form used by Russell for the third movement of his sonata has some similar traits to a rondo because of the return of sections. The formal structure used by Russell is ABCDCEBA. The B and C sections work in a similar way to how it is expected of them in a rondo, with the D section acting as the median point. The difference is the lack of return of the A throughout the movement and the extra, errant E section. The arch form is a little difficult to hear, but each section is sometimes

differentiated by a mute change, subtle rhythmic changes and a different style direction. This is similar to how the variants are differentiated in the previous movement.

### Harmony

This sonata uses harmonies built from melodic material. Key areas are loosely defined and most of the piece is written with horizontal goals over vertical goals. In the first movement, the harmonic structure for the opening is built out of the four notes of the melody. These pitches are E, F-sharp, A-sharp, and B [0267], which create a sound similar to E Lydian. These notes create a vertical cluster consisting of a whole step and a half step that is a fourth apart.

**Example 30.** Russell, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* I. mm. 1-5

**Flowing and pensively ♩ = 114**

This structure is used throughout the rest of the movement as a running bass line and as transposed and re-voiced harmonies. Quintal and quartal structures are also used.

The opening of the second movement has a wedge motion between the two hands of the piano that expands and contracts from the interval of a half-step to a minor third. The theme of the movement is in two voice counterpoint between the piano and the trombone. The first variation ends with a quintal harmony that leads into the second variation. The second variation is the first variation that uses traditional vertical harmonies in the piano. This variation is quintal, with perfect and diminished intervals used throughout. The third variation uses a more tonal pallet, set around the key area of E-flat. Every triad used in this variation is a major chord. Halfway through the variation, the triadic nature dissolves to focus on half-step and whole-step

movement. The fourth variation uses few harmonies and focuses on quintile structure with the second fifth voiced into the chord to create a whole step. Variations five and six are contrapuntal in nature and do not feature vertical harmonic structures. They do not have a clear tonal center. Variation seven features a new harmony that is a diminished triad with the perfect fifth voiced under the triad.

**Example 31.** Russell, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano II*. mm. 129-130



The coda uses a similar harmonic structure to the theme, but spreads the tessitura of the wedge shape and places one wedge in each hand of the piano.

The third movement is atonal and mostly contrapuntal between the two parts. When there is a vertical harmony, Russell uses triadic and quintal structures. Often, the contrapuntal lines are quintal based as well. In the quintal harmonies, Russell continues the pattern of using both diminished and perfect intervals. The tertian harmonies are usually only triads, but occasionally extend through the eleventh.

### Melody

The exposition of the first movement uses two melodies that have different intervallic content. The first melody (mm. 1 – 22) is a lyrical melody that has a Lydian sound because of the set used. The second half of this exposition (m. 23) is more rhythmic, articulate, and uses a chromatic pitch set. The rhythmic idea presented by this theme is reused melodically throughout the sonata. The development section of this movement is highly technical and uses predominately large intervals throughout. The pitch set from the primary theme is mixed with the rhythm from the second area to start the development (mm. 50). From there the set is



The first movement uses mostly duple subdivisions with occasional triplet subdivisions without any complex polyrhythm. The two parts are often written in order to make a composite rhythm that creates continuous rhythmic movement. One example is measure 95, where the two parts create constant sixteenth motion.

**Example 33.** Russell, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* I. m. 95



There is use of mixed meters throughout the movement, including 5/8 and 7/8. The groupings of these measures are usually clear from the beaming. There is one 5/4 measure (m. 92) that is grouped differently and should be performed as a 2+3+2+3 10/8 measure.

Each variation in the second movement has a slightly different rhythmic feel. The melody is rhythmically simple. The first variation uses rhythmic augmentation and diminution. The second variation moves the melody into odd meters of 5/8 and 7/8 with interlocking rhythms between the two voices. Every rest in the trombone part is filled in by the piano with an interjection. Variation three moves back to simple meters and is a simpler rhythmic pallet. Variation four mixes duple and triple subdivision to create the capricious sound the composer asks for. The last variations use similar rhythmic pallets to the previous variations.

The third movement uses syncopation at the eighth and sixteenth level subdivision to create a dance like rhythmic feel. One of the rhythms that is used often throughout the piece is found in the C material of the arch form.

**Example 34.** Russell, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. m. 35



This movement stays in 4/4 for most of the movement and uses no complex meters.

### **Texture and Sound Pallet**

This sonata is much more about horizontal music as opposed to vertical music.

Throughout the first movement, the texture stays quite transparent as the two voices play single voice melodic lines with little thick overlap. There are times where the piano and the trombone create a homophonic texture.

The second movement continues this transparency. In many of the variations, the two voices are filling in during the other voice's long notes or rests. As the variations progress, the piano part becomes more rhythmically active, making the texture a little denser.

The third movement becomes more polyphonic that the previous two, but this is still built out of individual melodic lines. The two hands of the piano and the trombone make three melodic lines for most of the movement.

### **Additional Comments**

The range, technical demands and the general apperance of the sonata on the page make it look approachable by a sophomore. The difficulties are less obvious. Much of the intervallic content is not especially idiomatic for the instrument, and students may not have experienced the

compositional idiom. This piece provides an opportunity for teachers to introduce set-theory and to present a practical approach to the benefits of performance analysis. The intervallic content has many half steps and large intervals. Most students will need to be advised to be methodical in their approach to this solo in order to make sure they are learning it accurately. The length, range, and technical demands make it appropriate for a senior level solo recital. A student who is strong in theory would enjoy preparing this piece.

**Composer:** Sacco, Steven Christopher

**Title:** Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2007
- Dedication: In memoriam Pat Powell, Annamae Sacco
- Commission: Michael Powell
- First or Early Performances:
  - Premier (Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>, 2008): Mannes School, New York – Michael Powell, trombone and Steven Sacco, piano

**Publisher:** American Composers Alliance and Editions

### Recordings:

- “Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano”
  - Michael Powell, trombone and Steven Sacco, piano

### Composer Notes:

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - Elegy I. Adagio  $\text{♩} = 72$
  - Elegy II. Pensive  $\text{♩} = 132$
  - Fantasy in Perpetual Motion Agitato  $\text{♩.} = 132$
- Duration: 14 minutes
- Range: G1 – Eb5
- Clefs: Bass and Tenor
- Special Performance Techniques: Complex Meters (7/8), Polyrythm (2:3, 4:3, 5:3, 7:3), Flutter Tonguing, Grace Notes
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: III
  - Piano: II

### Analysis

#### Form

This sonata steps away from the formal traditions of the sonata by having two slow, lyrical movements to start with a fast fantasia to conclude. The first movement has primary

melodic material that is stated three times, each with three different responses. This results in a formal structure of ABA'CA''. Every time the primary material returns, the melodic pitch content changes slightly as if the primary material is changing and reacting to the contrary responses.

The second movement is set in a ternary ABA' form. The opening two bar motive shows the formal division as it returns in measure 25. The piano music is very similar to the first A section, but the trombone melody has become much more rhythmically and tonally clear.

The third movement is a *moto perpetuo* fantasy. This movement alternates between sections of long lyrical lines and contrasting dance-like textures. The form for a fantasy tends to vary greatly from through-composed to a more structured form. While this movement does not fit a standard structure, the opening material returns often enough to give it some formalized structure.

### **Harmony**

Sacco uses a harmonic pallet that sounds neo-Romantic. Throughout the first movement, the harmonies are mostly triadic harmonies that extend to the seventh or ninth scale degrees. This movement begins in E minor for the first statement of the primary material. This is answered by a tonally unstable section and then the primary material returns in E minor, but with more use of the major sixth scale degree (C-sharp). This is answered with another tonally unstable section and then the primary material returns for the last time in E-flat major. This large scale pattern of moving down a half step in key area is a pattern throughout. The tonally less stable sections include half-diminished chords and major seventh chords. Both of these chords are less common in traditional tonal settings. Most often, the half-diminished chords are diatonic to E or E-flat minor.

In the second movement, one of the harmonic motives involve chord structures that start as thirds and are built into full voiced chords as the melody progresses. This movement has a key signature of three sharps and ends in A major, but that key area is not clear until the last four measures. Other parts of the movement explore B-flat key areas, which follows Sacco's pattern of keys that are a half-step higher than the home key.

The third movement starts in G minor. The section at rehearsal O is labeled "Jazzy!" and uses B major seventh and ninth chords to support that style. Some of the isolated third voicings from the second movement continue in this movement. Triadic harmonies continue as the movement moves from G minor to end in E-flat major.

### Melody

Most of the melodies throughout this piece take on a lyrical nature. The first movement is made up of lines that are mostly step wise and diatonic, though they shift key area frequently. The recurring melody in this section happens at the beginning, rehearsal C, and rehearsal F.

**Example 35.** Sacco, *Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano* I. mm. 1-8



This melody changes pitch content after every contrasting section. The first presentation of the primary melody is firmly in E natural minor. The second presentation is the same melody, but all of the C-naturals are raised a half step to C-sharp with the same harmonization of E minor. The third presentation is the same pitches as the opening, but with the E's, B's and A's all moved down a half-step to have the melody sound in E-flat major.

The melodic content of the second movement is also lyrical in nature. Sacco uses different subdivisions for each beat, switching freely between subdivisions of two, three, and five

to create a free or improvisatory sound. This movement maintains the isolated tonality of the first movement with each gesture being in a key, but keys changing frequently. At rehearsal J, Sacco writes a light double time swing into the melody. This movement also takes more advantage of the wide range of the trombone (E2-D5).

The third movement continues the lyrical trend from the previous movements, but also adds a contrasting technical section. The entire movement is rhythmically complex from being in 7/8 and featuring many subdivision changes and polyrhythm within that meter. The more technical sections of this movement feature wider interval leaps than the previous sections with few steps and intervals as wide as a seventh.

### **Rhythm**

The first movement is rather tame in its rhythmic content. There is no polyrhythm between the two voices and there are no complex subdivisions. In both parts, the rhythm of dotted eighth and two thirty-second notes is used. It should be clear between both performers if it is being interpreted as a strict rhythm or an ornament for consistency.

The second movement becomes more complex by using more unique subdivisions against the main beat. In example 36 the piano maintains a triplet subdivision while duplet, quadruplet, and quintuplet subdivisions are played above. The notation complicates the reading of this rhythm slightly. In beat three of measure three and beat one of measure four, it could be argued that the number identifying the subdivision of the beat and the dotted rhythmic values are redundant. This polyrhythm works less to create a jarring rhythmic dissonance and more to add an improvisatory or free rhythmic feel to the melody.

**Example 36.** Sacco, *Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano II*. mm. 3-4

The third movement adds rhythmic complexity by introducing polyrhythm within a complex meter. The entire movement is in 7/8. Usually, this meter is grouped 3+2+2, but there are occasional variations on that grouping. One example of the complex meter and polyrhythm interacting is measure 64 and 65.

**Example 37.** Sacco, *Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano III*. mm. 63-65

In these measures, measure sixty-four is grouped 3+2+2 and measure sixty-five is grouped 2+2+3 in the trombone part while the piano part maintains the 3+2+2 grouping. Over the duple beats in these two bars, a quarter note triplet rhythmic figure is used that requires the performer to switch to triplet subdivisions on the duple beats. Measure 83 holds a much more complex polyrhythm that few performers will have encountered before.

**Example 38.** Sacco, *Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 82-83



This rhythm is a 3:7 polyrhythm. When the math is done,  $7/3=2.33$ . This means that every note in the measure-long triplet is 2 eighth notes and a triplet sixteenth note long or 7 triplet sixteenths long. This is correctly reflected in the length of the double dotted quarter notes, making the triplet bracket redundant. At the tempo of this movement, that level of accuracy might be difficult to perform.

### **Texture and Sound Pallet**

The texture of the first movement is mostly polyphonic. There are many points where one hand of the piano becomes homophonic with the trombone. Often, the piano is mirroring either the exact rhythm of the trombone or a larger foundational rhythm of the trombone part.

In the second movement, the piano has a more static texture against the melody in the trombone part. The piano has a repeating rhythmic figure for both of the A sections and becomes more melodic during the B section. The A sections utilize more melody and accompaniment. The polyrhythm in this movement also creates some thicker sounding textures than the first movement.

For the third movement's moto perpetuo, the piano shoulders most of the burden of keeping the eighth note pulse constant as the trombone performs longer, lyric lines over the top of the piano texture. When the trombone takes over the constant eighth note line at rehearsal T, the top of the right hand of the piano plays the melodic line for a moment.

## Additional Comments

Sacco's work has a highly expressive, neo-Romantic sound. Everything about the piece is tonal and rich with harmonic movements that keep it sounding new. The rhythmic vocabulary of the piece is the most challenging aspect by far. In the second movement, the polyrhythm is used to make the melody sound more free and improvisatory. Complete accuracy of the rhythm may not be necessary, but as the performer is more accurate with the notated rhythm, the subtleties between the duple, triple and quintuple subdivisions will become clearer to the audience. The polyrhythm in the third movement is more complex. A good skill for the trombonist to be comfortable with is to be able to subdivide the two eighth note groupings in the 7/8 into triplets. Playing this example without the ties will allow the performer to get comfortable with changing subdivisions within different length beats. Adding the ties will allow them to start performing the quarter note triplet rhythms in the piece. This exercise can be seen in figure 2.

**Figure 2.**



The tessitura of this piece is not as large as the range makes it seem. Most of the piece sits from F2 – Bb4. The two instances that the piece goes into the altissimo range (D5 or Eb5), are brief but exposed. It would work well on a graduate recital with proper planning for the rest of the program.

**Composer:** Sanders, Bernard Wayne (b. 1957)

**Title:** Sonata in d for Trombone and Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2002
- Dedication: for Dr. Bruce Tychinski and Elaine Moss
- Commission:
- First or Early Performances:
  - Faculty Recital (ca. 2002-2004): St. Norbert College - De Pere, WI.- Bruce Tychinski, trombone and Elaine Moss, piano

**Publisher:** Edition Dohr

### Recordings:

### Composer Notes:

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Moderato ♩ = 84
  - II. Andante ♩ = 104
  - III. Allegro molto ♩ = 132
- Duration: 12 minutes
- Range: Bb1 – Bb4 (optional D5)
- Clefs: Bass, Tenor
- Special Performance Techniques: Complex meters (4/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8, 10/8)
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: I
  - Piano: III

### Analysis

#### Form

The first movement of this sonata is in a sonatina form. The primary material is in D minor and is found at the beginning of the movement. At measure 24, there is a contrasting theme in Bb major. Both themes are developed in measures 38-58. At measure 59, the primary theme is used as a recapitulation with no return of the secondary material.

The second movement is a free-form, lyrical movement. After an introduction by the piano, the trombone plays the majority of the melodic material for the movement. The movement is monothematic and ends with a repeat of the introduction material with the trombone added to the texture.

The third movement is made up of a primary theme, two contrasting sections, and a return of the primary theme in a different key – ABCA'. The primary theme does not return often enough to label this movement as a rondo. The two contrasting sections differ in meter, style, and melodic content. They are different enough to not be a form of a variation.

### **Harmony**

The first movement uses triadic harmonic structures that are used in a stationary way that adds to an open texture. Sanders keeps the same pitch in the bass over multiple bars while pivoting between two or three chords in the right hand of the piano. For the first four measures, a D is held in the bass while he uses D min7 and B-flat Maj7 in the right hand of the piano. Between these two chords, only one pitch has to change, the C to the B-flat, creating a harmonic texture that sounds like the harmonic tempo is slow. These harmonies are also voiced to emphasize the quartal and quintal intervals within the harmonies. The secondary theme area (mm. 24) is in B-flat major but is contrapuntal and has few vertical harmonies. The recapitulation of this movement has a mixture of the counterpoint texture as well as the voiced chords.

The second movement is in B-flat minor and has a similar version of the pivoting from the first movement. The intro pivots between a B-flat minor chord in second inversion and an E minor in first inversion. The rest of the movement has an oscillating gesture in the piano that moves from a minor seventh (scale degrees 2 and 1) to a third (scale degree 3 and 5). This

gesture can be seen in the keys of D minor and F major. The piece ends in the key of F major, relative major of the key of the entire work.

The third movement has a less defined tonality than the other two movements. The movement is mostly contrapuntal lines with few vertical harmonies. The vertical harmonies throughout this movement are used as accents and are often built as extended tertian harmonies. These harmonies often have altered ninths, elevenths, and thirteenths. These upper chord tones are often voiced down into the chord to create a thicker texture.

### **Melody**

The first movement contains two themes that have similar melodic contents. They are both diatonic and mostly stepwise throughout. The first theme (mm 1- 21) is more technical in nature, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes. It is diatonic in D minor except for some minimal alterations. The melody has long slur markings that give it a cantabile feel. These slur markings do not necessarily mean a consistent legato throughout because there are tenuto markings as well. These tenuto notes give weight to help show the metric organization of the melody. The second theme contrasts by using much longer note values that allow it to contrast by sounding more sustained. This theme is diatonic in B-flat major. The primary material is present in the development section in A major, the dominant of D major.

The second movement is monothematic, lyrical in nature, and set F major. This melody exploits a larger tessitura than any theme in the first movement. The high range (F4 – B-flat 4) is used consistently throughout the movement. This melody is based on large intervals, using minor sixths as the interval of the main motive of the melody. These intervals are all slurred, requiring good coordination.

The third movement features three melodic textures. The first melody is the most articulate found throughout the piece (mm 1 – 40). It uses constant eighth notes throughout many complex meters (7/8, 5/8). Tonality becomes more obscured in this melody with many accidentals. This melody mixes large intervals with step wise motion. These intervals with the frequent direction changes in pitch make the melody sound disjunct. The second melody at measure 56 is lighter in nature with more slurs and staccato markings. This theme focuses more on step-wise motion and chromatic movement, making it contrast the disjunct nature of the previous theme. The third melody (mm 69 – 110) mirrors the texture of the first melody of the first movement by being diatonic. This melody is marked cantabile, in contrast to the rest of the movement.

### **Rhythm**

Throughout this piece, the defining rhythmic characteristic is meter. This piece makes frequent use of odd meters. The first movement makes use of 4/8, 5/8, 6/8, 7/8, 8/8, 9/8, and 10/8. The 4/8, 6/8, and 10/8 meters are the three that maintain duple subdivisions. The 9/8 is always presented in the traditional grouping of 3+3+3. The 5/8, 7/8, and 8/8 all use asymmetrical groupings. This is of note because the 8/8 is not grouped evenly like the other even meters. The beaming of the measures shows the groupings well.

The second movement continues asymmetrical meters, but they are all at the quarter note subdivision, as opposed to the eighth note subdivision. The meters used in this movement include 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, and 6/4. The grouping of beats within the metric organization is clearly showed in the phrase markings.

The third movement uses the same metric fluctuations as the first movement. In both movements, there is no complex polyrhythm to obscure the beat. In addition, the third

movement has few notes tied over to obscure the beat. The rhythmic interest of this movement is built into the fluctuating beat created by the meters and grouping of eighth notes.

### **Texture and Sound Pallet**

The first movement has homophonic and polyphonic textures. In the primary melodic sections, the two parts line up rhythmically often. The polyphony is mainly built from one part filling in the structural rhythm with a smaller subdivision. Often, one line from the piano part will be playing a homophonic texture with the trombone. The secondary melodic area is highly contrapuntal, with the piano playing a melody in canon between the two hands against the long note values in the trombone part.

The second movement is primarily built as a vocal melody with an accompaniment made out of constant, oscillating eighth notes. This texture is bookended by an introduction and closing section that is made up of closely voiced chords played in the two hands of the piano that create a dense composite rhythm and thick texture.

The third movement is built of constant eighth notes for most of the movement except for the contrasting cantabile section. Sanders creates this texture through interlocking rhythmic parts between the trombone and the piano.

### **Additional Comments**

Sanders' *Sonata* is idiomatic for the instrument and approachable for many ability levels of player. The range is approachable and the melodies are predominately diatonic. The greatest challenge to this piece is the metric changes and the rhythms that result. The performers will benefit from deciding on the groupings of the asymmetric measures early in the preparation. While reconsidering a grouping decision might be necessary, performance consistency will help to build confidence in the metric organization. All of the tempos are moderate enough that this

piece could be practiced with a metronome that is set to the eighth note tempo, but a metronome with the ability to program the metric changes would be ideal. Ensemble rehearsal time will need to be spent focusing on alignment of the parts and a clear understanding of how each measure is grouped. Occasionally, the two performers might decide on differing groupings based on how their part is notated and a consensus will need to be reached. There is also a fair amount of contrapuntal material to rehearse. This piece paces well and would be good on recitals, though the amount of rehearsal time may out balance the amount of performance time it takes if the performers are not well prepared.

**Composer:** Stephenson III, James M.

**Title:** Trombone Sonata

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2004
- Dedication: for Mark Hetzler
- Commission:
- First or Early Performances:

**Publisher:** Stephenson Music – composerjim.com

### Recordings:

- “American Voices, Vol II; Sonatas” Summit Records DCD 531
  - Mark Hetzler, trombone and Martha Fischer, piano

### Composer Notes:

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Lento espressivo – Vivo, Tarantella  $\text{♩} = 96$ , if possible
  - II. Gavotte  $\text{♩} = 92$
  - III. With abandon, Wild  $\text{♩} = 160$
- Duration: 14 minutes
- Range: D2 – D5
- Clefs: Bass and Tenor
- Mutes: None
- Special Performance Techniques: Multiple Tonguing (Double/Triple), Trills (Lip/Valve), Polyrhythm (4:3), *Glissandi*
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: IV
  - Piano: IV

### Analysis

#### Form

The first movement is built on two melodies and a motive, set in ternary ABA form. This movement has some sonata elements, the return of the main melodic material, but does not have a developmental section after the second theme. The piano introduction sets up the falling minor

seventh that will be a motive throughout the entire piece. The first melody is found at rehearsal A and returns at the end of the movement around rehearsal N. From the 3/4 (mm. 28), Stephenson has a short transition section that would be expected in a sonata form to modulate to the key of the next theme (G Major). The return of the first theme is similar to the original presentation with the transitional material being reworked into the home key instead of modulating, as would be expected in a sonata.

The Intermezzo fulfills the role of the scherzo movement commonly found in large scale sonata forms. There is a short contrasting section in this movement from rehearsal C to D, but is mainly monothematic.

The third movement is in rondo form, maintaining the traditional ABACABA. This is hard to see in some places because the B and C sections are similar textures, but are clearly different melodies and tempos. Stephenson also occasionally overlaps sections. This can be seen at rehearsal E where the piano is playing both the opening motif and the melody of the B section at the same time.

### **Harmony**

Throughout the piece, Stephenson uses a harmonic pallet that holds similarities to the extended tertian harmonies found in jazz since the Bepop period. In the key of G major, we see Stephenson's nod to jazz in the harmony that opens the second theme area in the first movement (mm. 35). The first chord in the piano at the 12/8 is a  $G\text{Maj}^{13(\#9,\#11)}$  that would be quite common in the jazz idiom.

**Example 39.** Stephenson, *Trombone Sonata I*. mm. 33-35

Stephenson ends the first movement on another harmony from the jazz idiom,  $DMaj^{9(maj7)}/C$ , which uses extended harmonies similar to earlier in the movement as well as unique non-chord tones in the bass.

The second movement continues to be in traditional triadic harmonies, but in open voicing. This matches the wide melodic intervals in the trombone part. In example 40, the open voicing of the harmonies is shown.

**Example 40.** Stephenson, *Trombone Sonata II*. mm. 9-12

The third movement is more contrapuntal in nature and has fewer traditional, vertical harmonies. When these harmonies are used, they are usually in closed voicing to help them to be heard through the thicker texture. Chords in this movement often have the extended tertian harmonies brought down into the tight voicing of the chord. This can be seen in measure 98

where the sharp eleven scale degree is voiced inside of the chord against the third and the fifth instead of voiced above as in traditional tertian structures.

**Example 41.** Stephenson, *Trombone Sonata* III. mm. 97-99

### Melody

The first melody is lyrical in nature and centers around the key of D major, but has many chromatic alterations that sound similar to embellishments found in the jazz idiom. The flat seven scale degree is used within the first motive of the theme and is commonly approached by a *glissando* - “scoop” in the jazz idiom.

**Example 42.** Stephenson, *Trombone Sonata* I. mm. 1-6

The opening melody contains a falling minor 7<sup>th</sup> (mm. 18-19) that recurs throughout the piece as a thematic element. The second theme in the first movement contrasts and is a significantly faster and more technical theme in 12/8 that requires highly developed multiple tonguing ability. The structure of this melody is mostly based on repeated notes with short sections of scalar passages. This theme ends abruptly between M and N with the return of the falling sevenths in whole notes that diffuse the tempo, allowing the piece to return to the first thematic material.

This falling seventh motive starts with D5 to E4 and repeats down an octave three times, ending on D3 to E2.

Throughout the second movement, the falling seventh gesture reappears (mm 9 and 18). That motive requires the performer to be accurate at navigating large melodic intervals. Melodically, this movement is probably the most expressive throughout the sonata, requiring a strong commitment to the snarky character of the movement. Dotted-rhythms, half step oscillations, and wide leaps help to reinforce the comic, sarcastic nature of this movement.

The third movement can be considered a virtuosic display by the trombonist as well as the pianist. After opening with a constant eighth note line that is percussive in octaves to start the movement, the trombone enters with a nimble and quick interjection of triplet eighth notes that moves through the range of the horn. The primary melody for the third movement works rhythmically in 12/8 and is mostly scalar in character with a narrow tessitura that stays above the bass clef staff. Throughout this melody, interjections of arpeggiated extended tertian harmonies ( $D_{min}^{9(maj7)}$  and  $F_{min}^{13(9, \#11)}$ ) continue the use of jazz harmonic idioms. These gestures require the performer to navigate through less common arpeggios with ease. The flexibility requirements are also tested by short bursts of sixteenth notes that alternate between adjacent partials. At rehearsal D, Stephenson begins a long, lyrical theme over the active piano accompaniment in G minor. This second theme has interjections of the more active music throughout in the trombone part that requires great control while quickly switching between subdivisions of two, three, and four. Stephenson's harmonic language reappears in these interjections of the lyrical theme with an arpeggio in the trombone on an  $Eb^{7(9, \#11)}$  chord. The end of the piece mixes the two themes as well as giving the opening piano ostinato to the trombone.

## Rhythm

The first movement is rhythmically straight forward. In the slow introduction, rhythms do move into the sixteenth and thirty-second subdivisions for moments, but are easy to anchor to the eighth note pulse. The introduction also moves between triple and duple subdivision often. Stephenson labels the second theme area of the first movement as a Tarantella and it rhythmically fulfills all of the expectations of that title with the constant eighth notes.

With the goal of paying homage to Prokofiev, the second movement is full of snappy dotted rhythms that are often used as appoggiaturas on the beat. The performer must be accurate in the timing and weight of these rhythms to make sure they do not sound like a pick-up gesture. The entire movement is felt at the eighth note pulse, leaving the performer to interpret rhythms that are commonly at the sixteenth or thirty-second subdivisions.

To emphasize the contrasting sections of the rondo, the third movement has sections in many contrasting subdivisions. There are sections of compound subdivisions, duple subdivisions with rapid sixteenth movement, and sections that slip into a cut-time macro meter. In addition to the acrobatic challenges of the third movement, there is also a difficult polyrhythm for the trombonist. This is found in measure 122 of and is a 4:3 polyrhythm written in quarter notes. The piano is performing constant eighth notes against this polyrhythm.

**Example 43.** Stephenson, *Trombone Sonata* III. mm. 121-123

## Texture and Sound Pallet

Stephenson's Sonata is highly polyphonic in texture throughout and creates dense textures with polyrhythm and extended harmonies. In the tradition of the genre, both instruments are equally soloistic. The first movement shows how Stephenson can have a highly polyphonic texture without letting the piece sound cluttered. The melodic lines played between the two instruments work together to make a cohesive rhythmic statement. When the trombone part becomes more rhythmically active during the Tarantella, the piano part becomes less active by playing single chords that accent the trombone melody.

Extended techniques are used to create the sound pallet as well. Measure 42 of the second movement holds a trill on E3 that could be problematic.

**Example 44.** Stephenson, *Trombone Sonata II*. mm. 42-43



The performer has the option to use the valve, which would have the correct amount of sound activity for movement, but would not move to a different pitch because of the partial. The trill would have a sound similar to a false fingering technique on a woodwind instrument. The other option would be to play the E3 in seventh position, which would create a trill of a major third. The resulting G# works harmonically with the accompaniment, which is playing an Amaj<sup>7</sup> chord and would add more energy to the section. The downside is that it requires more technique from the performer than the valve trill. In a recording by Mark Hetzler, to whom the piece is dedicated, the valve trill option is used. The end of the movement includes many octaves in the melody and *glissandi* on the eighth and ninth partials before a long diminuendo

that ends the piece on a D2, which requires the performer to be playing on a trombone with an F-attachment.

In contrast to the first movement, the third movement is a much denser texture. Throughout this movement, there are more competing rhythmic layers between the two parts. This leads to some complex polyrhythm and a denser sound. There are also times where the trombone part is functioning in more of a macro meter to the piano part, which maintains the quicker metric feel.

### **Additional Comments**

Given the challenges of this piece, I believe it is appropriate for professional recitals as well as possibly the main foundational piece for doctoral recitals. The performer must have a wide range that is strong all the way through, especially at the upper ends. D5 is a pitch that is not avoided because of its use in the falling seventh motive. A well-developed double and triple tonguing technique, in both scalar and arpeggiated passages, is also necessary

Musically, this piece leans on a jazz idiom, which is becoming increasingly more common in literature for the trombone. In the trombone part, this is mainly focused in the ballad opening of the first movement with the melodic choices of the flat seventh scale member and the embellishments. This makes it more important for trombonists to broaden their listening choices beyond the standard, classical repertoire for inspiration. The jazz idiom also creates extended harmonies that are not as often seen in trombone repertoire. An understanding of how these harmonies work as well as incorporating them into the performer's fundamentals would help the performer be more comfortable with them in the piece. This includes working with chords that extend up through the thirteenth as well as exploring all possible alterations.

This piece is also quite challenging for the performer technically and rhythmically. Because of the way Stephenson maintains close-voiced tertian harmonies, all of the technique is more achievable because there are fewer large melodic intervals. Most of the technique in this sonata is either arpeggios in thirds or scalar passages. Rhythmically, this piece moves quite fluently between many subdivisions and the performer must be comfortable with those changes and have a good foundational strength based in steady pulse. The smallest subdivision in the piece is sixteenth notes being felt in a half note pulse. The 4:3 polyrhythm found in the third movement will also take many performers some practice time.

**Composer:** Stevens, John (b. 1951)

**Title:** Sonata for Trombone (or Euphonium) and Piano

### Genesis

- Composition Date: 2002
- Dedication: in memory of Joe Stierli
- Commission: Mark Fisher and the University of Wisconsin-Madison
- First or Early Performances:
  - Guest Recital: University of Wisconsin-Madison – Mark Fisher, trombone: March, 2003

**Publisher:** Editions BIM – [www.editions-bim.com](http://www.editions-bim.com)

### Recordings:

- “American Voices, Vol II; Sonatas” Summit Records DCD 531
  - Mark Hetzler, trombone and Martha Fischer, piano

### Composer Notes:

### Performance Elements

- Movements:
  - I. Maestoso – declamatory ♩ = 80, Allegro molto ♩ = 160
  - II. Very slow & freely ♩ = 69
  - III. Allegro enegico ♩ = 156
- Duration: 17 minutes
- Range: F2 – C5
- Clefs: Bass and Tenor
- Mutes: None
- Special Performance Techniques: Cadenzas, Complex Meters (5/8 7/8), Polyrhythms (3:2, 4:5, 5:2, 5:3, 5:4), Multiple Tonguing (Double),
- Difficulty
  - Trombone: III
  - Piano: III

### Description/Analysis

#### Form

The sonata is set in a traditional way of fast, slow, fast cycle for the three movements respectfully. It also fulfills some of the traditional sonata expectations by having the first

movement in modified sonata-allegro form and the third movement having similarities to a rondo.

The first movement is a modified sonata form with only one theme in the recapitulation. The slow introduction functions as the exposition with two themes, the first at the beginning and the second at rehearsal A. The Allegro is the development section which begins with a version of the secondary theme, sharing intervallic content. The primary theme is developed at rehearsal G. The *Maestoso* at the end of the movement (rehearsal K) functions as the recapitulation and is based on the lyrical melody in the introduction, followed by the first melody from the introduction. This section is a short recap of the exposition before returning to the texture of the Allegro of this movement, ending with a soft quote of the development theme.

The second movement is in ABA form. The A section of this movement is similar to the introduction of the first movement with the trombone and the piano using a call and response texture and is conversational in nature. At rehearsal C, Stevens presents a contrasting section (B) that is rhythmically more stable. Rehearsal D features a restatement of the opening motive that leads into a cadenza. After the cadenza, there is a return to the texture and motive from the opening of the movement.

The third movement fulfills Stevens' goal of showing the technical abilities of the trombone as well as the scherzo or dance expectations of a third movement of a sonata. This movement has elements of a rondo form with the material in the piano at the beginning working as the return material throughout the movement.

### **Harmony**

In the first movement, the piano harmonies mirror the melodic structure of the introduction by being quartal in nature. Planing is used often throughout the movement,

disrupting traditional tonal relationships. He uses counterpoint as a technique to create many of the harmonies.

The opening of the second movement is a piano introduction that is an *arpeggiation* of fifths with a diminished octave interval at the top and a diminished fifth at the bottom. There are no block harmonies used throughout the movement. Every harmony is in an *arpeggiation* that is sustained to create a harmony. At rehearsal C, the harmonies use fourths instead of fifths.

The third movement continues the harmonic patterns of the first movement. Quartal harmonic structures are used with planing to move from harmony to harmony. In the first movement, the quartal structures were based on perfect intervals. In this movement, they are often an augmented fourth on the bottom with a perfect fourth on the top.

### **Melody**

The exposition to the first movement immediately exhibits the power component found in Steven's program notes with the trombone entering alone with a *marcato* melody built on fourths. This creates tonal ambiguity, though it is not strictly serial. The opening melody then returns to propel the piece into the "Allegro molto" section of the first movement. The primary theme of the allegro is found at rehearsal C. This melody outlines the same three pitches as the introduction melody (F, Bb, Eb) and is a long phrased, legato melody made up of many different rhythmic elements. The main melody from the exposition is developed at rehearsal G. This version of the exposition melody is combined with the half-steps and cantabile line from the previous melody.

The second movement features Stevens' focus on the lyrical nature of the trombone. The trombone melody uses a motive of F, Gb, Db that grows into a full melody throughout the opening. The trombone melody plays mostly unaccompanied with the piano playing interludes

to fill in the long notes in the trombone part. After this section, the trombone plays the opening fragment again, this time leading into a long cadenza. The cadenza is more of a melodic exploration of the main motive than a virtuosic display of technique. The end of is similar to the introduction, bookending the movement.

The main material for the rondo of the third movement is made up of two portions. The first half is a mixed meter melody that works as a dance. This melody uses a more diatonic pitch set than other melodies throughout the sonata, working roughly in A minor. The second half is a section of scalar material that uses the “double-note” texture found in many of the sonatas with every note being doubled up with a multiple tonguing technique.

**Example 45.** Stevens, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano* III. mm. 94-98



At rehearsal E, there is one contrasting melodic material that is a long lyrical melody. This one is made up of many chromatic intervals that make it sound more winding than the primary dance theme. The final cadenza in the piece marks the return of the opening theme from the introduction of the first movement. Stevens uses that material combined with the multiple tongue passage texture from the third movement. The cadenza leads into a recap of the third movement, ending in a series of major seventh leaps to the highest pitches in the piece, C5.

### Rhythm

This sonata is quite rhythmically complex and employs quite a bit of rhythmic dissonance complimenting the atonality of the piece. As tonality becomes more obscured, rhythmic dissonance can help to inform the listener as to how the music is moving forward. In the piano

response to the first movement introduction, we see the first polyrhythm of the piece, a 5:2 rhythm. Polyrhythm like this one is common to Stevens' compositional style and will be found often throughout the piece.

The first movement allegro melody ends with a long sequence of dotted quarter notes over a 4/4 meter, creating another polyrhythm. As the theme develops, it moves through a complex 7/8 meter and then uses the more unique polyrhythm of 5:4.

**Example 46.** Stevens, *Sonata for Trombone and Piano I*. mm. 56-57



The ending of this melody recurs throughout the movement, created from an active section of running eighth notes in a sequence of half-step intervals followed by a long, cantabile quarter-note triplet line. In the development section, there is another instance of Stevens' rhythmic vocabulary, with a set of quintuplets that makes the transition into the next section. The second theme in this movement is found at rehearsal E and is an expected contrasting lyrical melody. This melody features more polyrhythm, this time half-note triplets. The tempo is fast enough that feeling this section in two should allow the performer to accurately perform this rhythm.

The second movement has two freer sections bookmarking a middle, more metronomic section. The metronomic section at rehearsal C uses a motor rhythm in the piano of quintuplet

eighth notes against quarter note triplets in the trombone melody, creating a 5:3 polyrhythm.

This is a texture that is unique to the sonatas in this study.

The bulk of the third movement is in a fast 5/8 with a contrasting 4/4 section that features rapid doubling tonguing. The grouping of the 5/8 measures is always well marked by the beaming used by the composer, but is not consistently 3+2 or 2+3. The main melodic material does rely heavily on 3+2 as the primary grouping. Rehearsal E mirrors the texture of the second movement's quintuplets, but this time uses constant sixteenth notes in the piano part, creating a 4:3 polyrhythm against the quarter note triplets in the trombone part. This is a more common polyrhythm to perform. The piano interlude (mm. 38-45) uses another unique polyrhythm, placing quadruplet over a 5/8 measure.

### **Texture and Sound Pallet**

Steven's states in his program notes that his "three-movement sonata is intended to showcase the various outstanding characteristics of the trombone in a solo setting, most especially the power, lyricism and technical capabilities of the instrument."<sup>23</sup> These traits are found in each movement, respectively. The introduction of the first movement is built on a call and response texture between the trombone and piano. After two *marcato* statements by the trombone, the ensemble plays together for the first time on a lyrical melody that is contrapuntal between the two parts. In the Allegro molto of the first movement, the piece relies on more of a traditional melody and accompaniment texture. The two parts fill in for each other to create a dense texture with any polyrhythm causing adding to the density.

The second movement follows the texture of the first movement with the introduction being conversational between the trombone and the piano while the main part of the movement is highly polyphonic. After this introduction, the piece becomes a more traditional melody and

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<sup>23</sup> John Stevens, *Sonata* (Vuarmarens: Editions BIM, 2004).

accompaniment texture, but with Stevens' rhythmic vocabulary. This movement increases the rhythmic density of the piece with a 3:5 polyrhythm forming from the use of constant quintuplets in the piano. Stevens contrasts this dense texture with a cadenza for the trombone.

One new texture is used in the third movement. The main theme of the rondo at rehearsal B is set in a homophonic texture with piano. Throughout the rest of the movement, Stevens uses similar conversational and densely polyphonic textures seen earlier in the piece.

### **Additional Comments**

Rhythm is one of the more unique elements to Stevens' writing that shows up often in the *Sonata*. A high functioning metronome similar to the ones available as applications for smart phones would be useful in learning this piece. The rhythmic skills required by performers are to be able to accurately divide any steady beat into any number of even subdivisions. Most students develop this skill well with subdivisions of two, three and four with six usually working as a subdivision of two or three. This piece requires the student to get comfortable with even subdivisions of five and seven, which is not a skill that can be built out of any of the subdivisions already learned. Once these new subdivisions are learned, performing the piece tests the performer's ability to maintain those subdivisions against other subdivisions where the alignment points of the two rhythms may not be obvious.

The atonality of the piece makes phrasing and musicality more difficult because it is more ambiguous. The rhythm of the melodies and tension intervals like fourths, fifths and half steps can help the performer to decide where to phrase each melody. In addition, continuity in phrasing throughout the piece can be achieved by recognizing when melodies are reused, possibly in different styles and settings. By phrasing the return of melodies in similar ways throughout the pieces, the listener can more easily recognize their return in the atonal texture.

Expectations of listeners can also be denied by phrasing them differently, but is only effective if the listener recognizes the material that the performer is manipulating.

Stevens' *Sonata* is a piece that would be appropriate for a senior performance major to program on a senior recital as a challenge of technique and musicality. At the length of the piece and demand, it would be a featured portion of a half.

## **Chapter III - Conclusion**

### **Musical Elements**

#### **Form**

The formal structures found throughout the study mostly conform to sonata principals with few exceptions. All of the sonatas except for one are set in three movements. Archer's Sonata is set in four movements and follows the traditional formal structures found in four movement symphonic sonata cycle. Of the three movement sonatas, the Sacco moves away from tradition the most by having two slow movements and a fast movement. The Stevens and the Sacco are the two sonatas that do not employ structures inspired by sonata-allegro form for the first movement. Sonata, ternary, and rondo are the most common traditional forms used. Theme and variation is used once. Overall, knowledge of how traditional formal structures work is still applicable to this genre.

#### **Harmony**

There were three atonal sonatas and seven tonal sonatas studied in this selection. In the atonal sonatas, they all used non-functional tonal structures. Quartal, extended tertian harmonies and set-theory based clusters were common structures used in the atonal works. The tertian harmonies often had less common or synthetic chord qualities, including major sevenths, augmented triads, and triads with both a perfect fifth and a diminished fifth. In the tonal works, modal mixture was a common alteration to the tonality with the flat VII chord being common. Two sonatas (Cheetham, Stephenson) used a harmonic idiom influenced by jazz. This was seen in extended tertian harmonies with alterations and tritone substitutions. Tonal writing is still the common expectation for this genre, but the harmonic vocabulary is individualized to each composer.

## **Melody**

Melody throughout the surveyed works varied greatly. Seven of the sonatas analyzed had melodic content that could be understood tonally. The Cheetham and Stephenson sonatas were the most virtuosic of the pieces with wide ranging melodies containing large intervallic content. Both of them featured rapid technique as well. The melodic content of the tonal sonatas embodied more of the traditional American sound expectations by using quartal/quintal melodic writing and modal mixture. There were three atonal sonatas that used different techniques. The Belshaw sonata used synthetic scales including, octatonic, chromatic, and whole tone scales. The Russell sonata used a modal set (Lydian) that was manipulated through set theory practices. The Stevens sonata had more of the American sound with a heavy use of quartal structures that were also manipulated with set theory practices. Overall, a comfort with modal scale patterns would be of great benefit to performers because of the frequency of melodies built on modes or use of modal mixture.

## **Rhythm**

The two rhythmic elements that were the most common were complex meters and polyrhythm. Six of the sonatas analyzed used complex meters and five used polyrhythm. 5/8 and 7/8 meters were the most common complex meters with only one solo using a complex meter other than one of these two. Polyrhythm was a less common, but is the more difficult rhythmic technique of the two. 2:3 polyrhythm was common throughout the solos that used polyrhythm. The Sacco and the Stevens sonatas used the most complex polyrhythm. The polyrhythm found in those pieces would be unlikely to be seen by a student before attempting to perform those works. Only two sonatas did not hold one of these two rhythmic elements. Comfort with complex meters or polyrhythm is required to perform works from this genre.

## **Texture and Sound Pallet**

Texture was widely explored by the composers in these works. In the works analyzed, there were three textures found: monophony, homophony, and polyphony. Monophony was found once as an extended texture in the unaccompanied movement of the Archer. Homophony was the most surprising texture found. The Belshaw, Sacco, and Sanders all used homophony. This texture was used to mark section breaks, create new sounds with the instrumentation combination, and to reinforce the melodic material. Polyphony was expected, but used in more contrasting ways. Antiphony was used in two sonatas, Belshaw and Stevens, to create conversational textures. A contrapuntal texture was used in the Russell. These three sonatas that used more melodic orientations of polyphony were all also the least tonal sonatas in the study. Often, the piano was used to create activity in the piece with rhythmic activity during long note values in the trombone. This is expected because of the nature of the trombone. The variety of textures used throughout this genre means that each of these pieces needs to be approached individually in terms of ensemble and balance. This genre will require trombonists to study the piano parts to great detail in order to understand the nuance of the entire piece. Sound elements including range and extended techniques will be discussed in the pedagogical elements section below.

## **Pedagogical Elements**

### **Difficulty**

The solos split evenly across the difficulty ratings. There were two rated underclass undergraduate, three rated upper-class undergraduate, three rated graduate, and two rated professional. It was exciting to see works that were viable for use in the undergraduate literature. The Crosby and Sanders would be good additions to playing examination repertoire. The Archer

and Forrest make strong recital pieces. The Russell was hard to place because it did not have any outstanding technique challenges but used a compositional idiom that would make it much less familiar and accessible to students. The three works placed in the graduate level all had a level of technique and a compositional idiom that required a more experienced player. The line between graduate and professional is faint and hard to determine as well. The Cheetham and Stephenson were placed in the professional category because they were written specifically to feature the strengths of the trombonist who commissioned the works and required highly advanced technical control.

### **Multiple Tonguing**

Seven of the pieces studied required multiple tonguing. The Belshaw sonata was the only one that required multiple-tonguing coordination on longer scalar passages while the Crosby had shorter sections of multiple-tonguing that might be able to be performed with single-tonguing. The Archer sonata required mostly multiple tonguing on repeated notes. Four sonatas featured the double note texture discussed throughout this document, including, Cheetham, Forrest, Stephenson, and Stevens. This seems to be the most common usage of multiple-tonguing for the trombonist and is a technique that is easily practiced on scales or from the Arban's *Method for Trombone*.

### **Range Usage**

One of the points of interest for this study was how the use of range for the tenor trombone has developed. The tenor trombone solidified as an instrument that has a F-attachment valve throughout the twentieth century. The use of a straight horn, a trombone without an F-attachment, is rare in classical art music and almost exclusively seen in commercial music. The valve range for a tenor trombone is C2 – Eb2. The pedal range is Bb1 and lower. In this

selection of sonatas, there were five sonatas that used no valve range and did not extend down to the pedal tone range: Cheetham, Crosby, Forrest, Russell, Stevens. There were two sonatas that included pedal tones, but no valve range: Sacco, and Sanders. The Sacco used the lowest range with G1. Three sonatas used the valve range: Archer, Belshaw, and Stephenson. From those three, the Belshaw was the only one that used pedal tones. From this sample size, use of the valve has not greatly increased as a tool for composers. Considering that most of these solos were commissioned where the composer could work with the intended performer, that situation may factor into what range was used in the composition. The Cheetham has the most extreme use of high range (F5) and does not go lower than a straight horn would normally play. That piece was written for a specific performer who is known for his ability as a jazz and classical crossover artist, so the choice of range makes sense.

### **Extended Techniques**

Throughout the surveyed literature, there were few extended techniques used. With the idea that multiple tonguing and *glissandi* are standard techniques for the trombonist, there were only three works that used any extended techniques. The extended techniques found were multiphonics (Archer), flutter tonguing (Archer, Sacco), and quarter tones (Belshaw). The multiphonic was only on one pitch and not sustained for any substantial length of time. In both the Archer and Sacco, the flutter tonguing was a brief and could probably be replaced with a growl, fast tonguing (in the case of the Sacco), or be omitted if it was approached by a student who was not physically able to perform the technique. The quarter tone passage in the Belshaw was the most integral extended technique in all of the pieces. In general, extended techniques do not seem to be a necessary skill to approach and perform works of this genre.

## **Trends**

Between the two centuries, multiple tonguing is required much more in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Only 6 sonatas in the twentieth century require multiple tonguing, and 13 sonatas in the 21<sup>st</sup> century do. The use of sonata principals also went up between the two centuries. This was observed through the use of sonata form in the first movement of the sonata. 7 sonatas in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 12 sonatas in the 21<sup>st</sup> century used more sonata principals. This suggests a move to more neo-classical or neo-romantic focused pieces. Throughout the study, quartal structures were common to both centuries used in varying amounts of tonality. The quality of atonality changed during the move into the twenty-first century. Strict serialism was found less in the twenty-first century. Compared to standard canon atonal sonatas from the twentieth century (White, Roy, Monaco), the atonality used in the twenty-first century is a more consonant form of atonality that uses structure that are more easily identified as tonal structures. This trend allows the music to be more accessible to performers and audience members.

## **Further Studies**

This study focused on a small group of solos in this genre that have been written for the instrument during the twenty-first century. There are many other works that could be added to this study in this format including works for bass trombone and additional tenor trombone works. The format of this study could also be expanded to other genres. The concerto is a popular genre in the twenty-first century with many works that would benefit from this level of analysis for performers. In addition, all of the solos analyzed in this study would benefit from a focused analysis on an individual basis.

## APPENDIX A

### Consolidated List of Works Found in Study

- Archer, Kimberly. *Trombone Sonata*. Greensboro: International C. Alan Publications, 2005.
- Ardizzoia, Andrew. *Sonata Conciso for Trombone and Piano, op 41*. New York: Broadcast Music, Inc, 2014.
- Belshaw, Gary D. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. Seckington: Warwick Music, 2004.
- Canfield, David DeBoor. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. Ham Lake: Jeanne Inc., 2013.
- Cheetham, John. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. Columbia: BoonesLick Press, 2007.
- Crosby, Richard. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. San Antonio: International Trombone Association Manuscript Press, 2003.
- Durrant, Matthew R. *Sonata for Trombone & Piano*. Vancouver: Cherry Classics Music, 2008.
- Ehle, Robert C. *Sonata, op. 82b*. Wehr's Music House, 2012.
- Forrest, Dan. *Sonata for Trombone [or Euphonium] & Piano*. Greensboro: C. Alan Publications, 2009.
- Gottschalk, Arthur. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. 2006.
- Mills, Amy Riebs. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. Amy Mills Music, LLC, 2013.
- Russell, Armand. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. Vancouver: Cherry Classics Music, 2011.
- Sacco, Steven Christopher. *Sonata for Tenor Trombone and Piano*. New York: American Composers Alliance and Editions, 2007.
- Sanders, Bernard Wayne. *Sonata in d for Trombone and Piano*. Köln: Editions Dohr, 2002.
- Stephenson, James M. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. Lake Forest: Stephenson Music, 2004.
- Stevens, John. *Sonata*. Vuarmarens: Editions BIM, 2004.
- Trapanese, Joseph. *Sonata for Trombone and Piano*. 2005.
- Wehage, Paul. *Sonata Eroica for Trombone and Piano*. Editions de la Fabrique Musique, 2005.
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- Forrest, Dan. *Sonata for Trombone [or Euphonium] & Piano*. Greensboro: C. Alan Publications, 2009.
- Farnham, Dean Alan. "The Twentieth Century Trombone Sonata." DMA diss., Boston University, 1968.
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