

## THE BRASS FAMILY

- 90) The brass family of instruments contribute the strength, range and excitement that provides the climactic punch as well as the full body of the orchestration of a jazz or rock chart. The brass instruments are capable of great rhythmic definition, a full range, legato "brass choir" pads plus the addition of colors provided by the use of the various mutes.
- 91) The use of brass (which requires a developed physical degree of endurance and stamina) can easily be abused. Typically, this happens when an inexperienced writer "thinks" pianistically instead of from a blowing standpoint. A standard procedure of always considering WHERE the brass will breathe is, of course, very important.
- 92) Great consideration should be given to the AMOUNT of high brass used in an arrangement. Extremely high or sustained high brass is only effective IN CONTRAST TO A LOWER LEVEL OF BRASS WRITING. An arrangement that starts high and continues, ceases to mean anything because of the lack of a comparative level.

### VARIATIONS OF OPEN BRASS

- 93) The following mutes are all in common use and their specific effects and colors should be well known.
- 94) The CUP MUTE has good blending qualities, producing a soft and mellow sound. It is the least individual of the mutes.
- 95) The STRAIGHT MUTE has a piercing, biting narrow effect. Although this mute used to be characteristic of Latin-American music, it now is commonly used in jazz orchestration, often mixed with woodwinds and contrasting mutes in the brass.
- 96) The HARMON MUTE is the most individual of the available mutes. It has an intense, filtered and distant effect but can be heard through an ensemble because of its piercing qualities. It can be used with the stem pulled out a distance of two to three inches or removed entirely.  
  
Extremely high and low ranges using mutes should be avoided. High muted trumpets require even more air and add to endurance problems. Each of these mutes can be used for a section (trumpets, trombones) or mixed between the available instruments.
- 97) The HAT broadens and rounds out the brass sound, reducing the edge and piercing qualities. It is often referred to in "quasi horn" sustained organ passages. When hats are not available, a substitute effect is the indication "IN STAND." The player points his horn into the stand in front of him, directing the sound against the stand, achieving a more muffled sound.
- 98) An even more muffled blending effect is the use of the BUCKET. Much of the low brass BASIE sound is achieved with the BUCKET. It is effective in a range restricted to the staff.
- 99) THE PLUNGER is the most obvious of these brass effects. A rubber plunger is held over the opening of the bell, and is alternated between a closed (+) position and an open (o) position.

Ex. #67



This same "open-closed" approach can be used with a hat or hand.

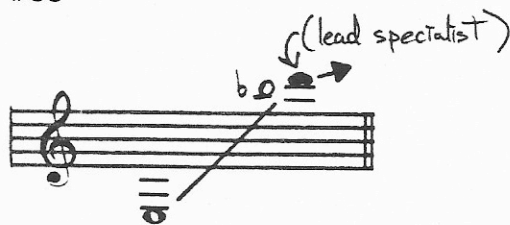
- 100) Trombones are sometimes instructed to place their hand over the bell. The indication "H.O.B." means "HAND OVER BELL," and achieves much the same effect as IN STAND or the use of the hat.
- 101) Always consider how much time you are allowing the player to install or remove the mute or bucket. This cannot always be determined by the number of measures, as two measures in a fast tempo can be one second, compared to eight seconds in a ballad tempo. Five seconds is the ideal **SHORTEST TIME TO ALLOW**.
- 102) The change from a mute or any special effect is always indicated by the instruction OPEN.
- 103) One should realize that the upper limit of the brass instruments is always dependent on the individual player. You cannot assume an unknown lead trumpet can play a high "G," simply because your melodic idea takes you there.
- 104) Various brass effects and articulations (such as the shake, gliss, fall off, etc.) are detailed in the **ARTICULATION TABLE 10** in Chapter 4.
- 105) Typical brass sections can be made up of from three trumpets and two trombones (in big bands) to five trumpets, four French horns, five trombones and tuba. Rock instrumentations can come down to much smaller brass representations.



### THE B $\flat$ TRUMPET

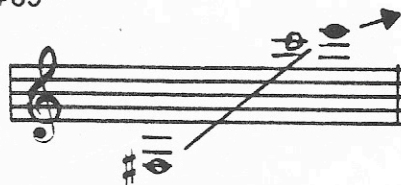
- 106) The B $\flat$  trumpet is a transposing instrument with a **CONCERT RANGE** of:

Ex. #68



and a **WRITTEN RANGE** of:

Ex. #69



- 107) It is written a whole step **ABOVE** its **CONCERT PITCH** and its key signature has the same whole step relationship.

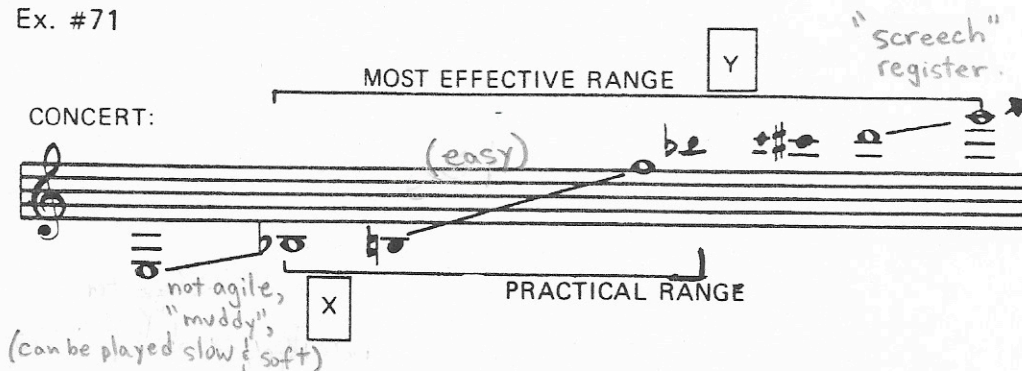
Ex. #70

WRITTEN:



108) TONE QUALITY RANGE:

Ex. #71



- 109) **CHARACTERISTICS:** The trumpet is the most agile of the brass family. It does not have the fluency of the woodwinds or of the saxes, but nevertheless is quite flexible. All forms of attack are possible on trumpet with great definition, including hard and soft staccato, legato, portamento. (See ARTICULATION TABLE 10, Chapter 4.)
- 110) The wide range of mutes, buckets, hats, etc., plus stylistic nuances, give the trumpet a variety of possibilities and effects.
- 111) **RESTRICTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS:** It is best to avoid wide leaps of over an octave. The considerations of endurance, range, etc., have already been discussed and must be kept in mind. The lowest 5th interval of the trumpet range is not practical for orchestral and sectional use. Some 4th trumpet parts will go to low concert "G" and "A," but these tones are not as effective on trumpet as they would be on flugelhorn or trombone.
- 112) The next two octaves are considered the best playing range. Reference point X in Example 71 refers to the low concert "B" natural. This is very difficult to play in tune, and consideration should be given this fact when using it in unison passages. Reference point Y in Example 71 refers to two more concert pitches that are quite difficult to play in tune, especially with younger players. The top portion of the trumpet range is, of course, dependent on the player. Realistic use of this span is essential. Above concert B<sup>b</sup> is for lead specialists only!

## THE FLUGELHORN

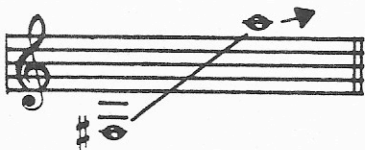
- 113) The B<sup>b</sup> flugelhorn is a transposing instrument like the trumpet. It has a CONCERT RANGE of:

Ex. #72



and a WRITTEN RANGE of:

Ex. #73

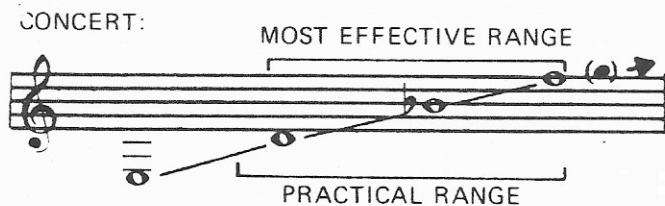


(flugelhorn, continued)

- 114) The transposition is identical to trumpet (review Paragraph 107).

- 115) TONE QUALITY RANGE:

Ex. #74



- 116) CHARACTERISTICS: The flugelhorn has become accepted as a standard trumpet double. Its SOUND has become a very important facet of the arranger's modern orchestral concept. Basically the flugelhorn has a darker, rounder and less "tinny" sound than the trumpet. Because of this tonal character, the flugelhorn is used with great success as a lead over trombones and low brass. It is a very good jazz solo sound (Miles Davis' "Porgy and Bess," "Sketches of Spain") and also blends well with woodwinds and strings.
- 117) RESTRICTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS: The flugelhorn has a much more stable quality in its lowest octave than the trumpet. At the same time it is much more difficult to play in tune. The intonation above "C" in the staff becomes a problem. It is suggested that you do NOT score the flugelhorn too much above the staff. In actual practice it is quite normal to use it for lower, quieter portions of a chart, then have the player switch to trumpet for high ensemble passages, allowing enough time to make the change.

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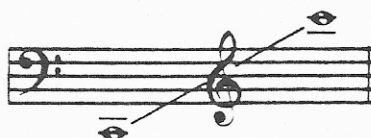
## THE FRENCH HORN

- 118) The French horn in F is a transposing instrument with a CONCERT RANGE of:

Ex. #75



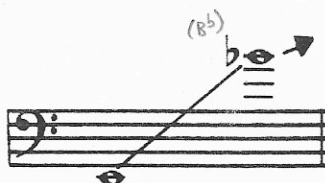
and a WRITTEN RANGE of:



## THE TENOR TROMBONE

- 126) The tenor trombone is a non-transposing instrument written in bass (and in extreme high notes, tenor clef) clef. It has a **WRITTEN RANGE** of:

Ex. #79



and a **SOUNDING RANGE** of:

Ex. #80

WRITTEN:



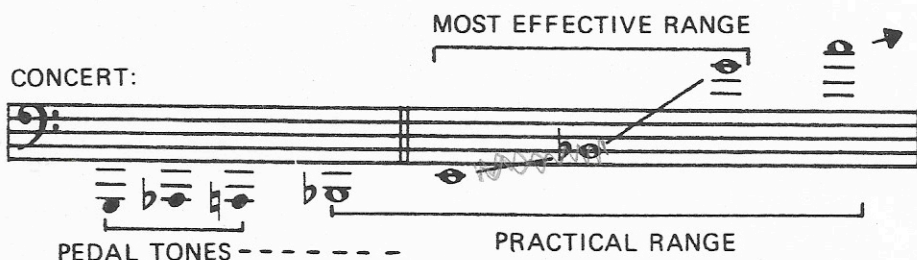
(same!)

SOUNDS:



- 127) TONE QUALITY RANGE:

Ex. #81



- 128) CHARACTERISTICS: The trombone provides the body of the brass sound. Its round, blending qualities are effective with trumpets, as a section, and used as a **SOLO** or background. It also blends well with saxes, woodwinds and French horn. Cup and straight and solo tone mutes are available for trombones, however, the H.O.B. (hand over bell) indication is used in lieu of a hat in most instances.

- 129) RESTRICTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS: The primary consideration when writing for trombone is to avoid the more awkward slide positions. This note:

Ex. #82



is played in the 7th position.

The movement of:

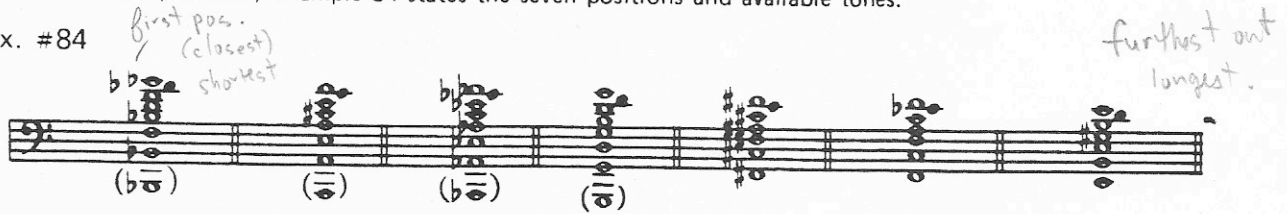
Ex. #83



therefore requires the player

to change from 1st position to 7th and is extremely awkward. To enable you to relate to the various slide positions, Example 84 states the seven positions and available tones.

Ex. #84



- 130) Glisses are possible on trombone when moving from one note to the next, if these notes are at least two positions apart and in the same harmonic position above the fundamental. The first three pedal tones shown in Example 81 are not as practical as the Bb pedal. From low "E" to Bb, the quality is quite dense and does not have the flexibility possible in the higher portions of its range. Solo situations use the extreme top of the range, the top limit determined by the individual players.

*longest natural sounding gliss = tri-tone*



### THE VALVE TROMBONE

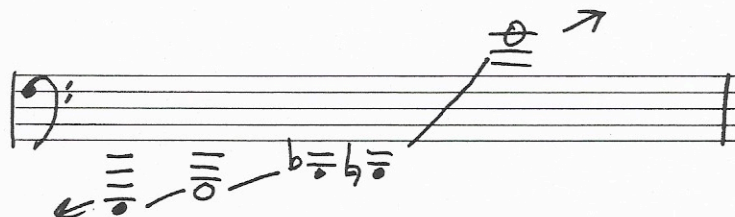
- 131) The Bb tenor valve trombone is identical to the tenor trombone in range. It also is not a transposing instrument.
- 132) **CHARACTERISTICS:** The valve trombone has the great advantage of more technical facility than the slide trombone. Soloists such as Bob Brookmeyer prefer its sound and resources. In general, the valve trombone lends itself well to the jazz idiom.
- 133) **RESTRICTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS:** The main considerations are a difference in tone quality from the slide trombone and intonation problems. When writing for a valve trombone in a section with slide trombones you will notice the different tone quality and as a result the overall blend of the section will often suffer. There are intonation difficulties which are again determined by the capabilities of the individual players.



### THE BASS TROMBONE

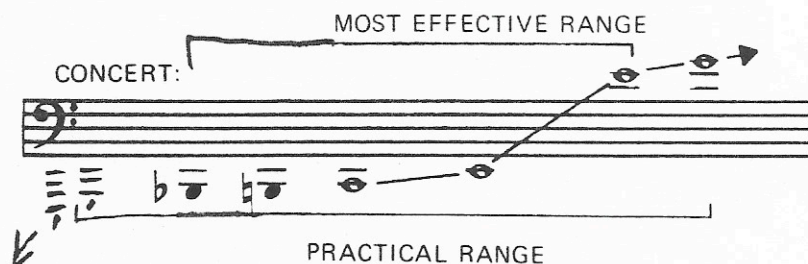
- 134) The bass trombone is a non-transposing instrument. Its WRITTEN and SOUNDING RANGES are:

Ex. #85



135) TONE QUALITY RANGE:

Ex. #86



- 136) CHARACTERISTICS: The bass trombone has a warmer quality in its bottom octave than the tenor trombone. The obvious advantage of this extended bottom range is that it enables the bass trombone to function extremely well as the bottom voice of any low brass instrumentation. The bottom octave can now be negotiated with authority and intensity. The bass trombone is also effective as a solo instrument, playing solo fills, patterns and bass lines.

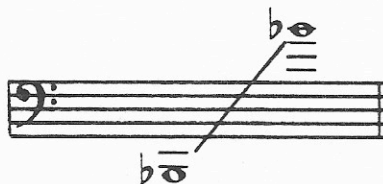
- 137) RESTRICTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS: The only consideration to keep in mind is not to write the bass trombone too high. This normally will not be a problem as the span of the bottom voice rarely would put the bass trombone into a too high register. It is in unison writing for the trombones that you should either drop the bass trombone an octave or give him a rest.

Also, below low C below the staff, agility is reduced.

Bb TUBA (EUPHONIUM)

- 138) This is a non-transposing instrument with a WRITTEN and SOUNDING RANGE of:

Ex. #87

139) TONE QUALITY RANGE:

Ex. #88

