BASSOON

Performance Notes for 2010-2011 All-State Band Auditions

by

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JUNIOR BAND:  *Practical Method for Bassoon / Weissenborn / Fischer // Page 29,*
"Allegro ma non troppo," Take second ending, stop at the fermata on line 4. Quarter Note = 92.

The first thing to decide in this etude is how you will play F#. There are two fingerings—the “pinky” fingering in which you use the right-hand pinky to press down two keys, and the “thumb” fingering in which you use the right-hand thumb to press down the F# key right below the pancake key. In this case, I would choose the “thumb F#” for the entire piece EXCEPT for the first note in the third measure of the third line. Here you *must* use the “pinky” fingering in order to get to the E-flat without a mistake.

When using the thumb F#, make sure that your thumb is in position before the F# comes—keep it nice and low (don't let it rest above the B-flat key!).

In this piece make sure you follow the crescendo/diminuendo markings exactly as they are printed. Weissenborn is very specific with his markings, and we should do our best to follow them. Good breath support throughout will help you achieve the phrase shapes he indicates.

When you get to the middle of the second line and begin the rhythm that is quarter followed by two-eighth notes, make sure the eighth notes belong to the *following* quarter note. Always think of the line moving ahead—this will help you musically as well as technically. Do the same thin in the middle of the third line where you see the *piano* dynamic marked.

CLINIC BAND:  *Practical Method for Bassoon / Weissenborn / Fischer // Page 89,*
play from beginning to the fourth measure of line 5, no repeats.
“*Andante*”: quarter note = 72. “*Allegro scherzando*”: quarter note = 144.

The “espressivo” marking in the Andante should be remembered throughout. All dynamic changes and crescendos/diminuendos should be obvious to the ear. Furthermore, the accented E-flat in the third line should be an expressive accent, performed more with the air than a heavy, rough tongue. Lastly, the sixteenth-note triplet
at the end of the second line looks much faster than it really is—you have half of a beat to perform those three notes. Try turning on the metronome to eighth=144 (rather than the specified quarter=72) to practice this figure.

The Allegro scherzando should be light and bouncy throughout. During the fermata over the bar line preceding this section, make sure you subdivide in your head an entire bar of 3/4; sometimes the first two measures of the section will sound too much like 6/8 if we don’t count first. Also, remember that accidentals carry though the bar and catch the C-sharp at the end of the fifth measure of the fourth line.

SENIOR BAND: Practical Method for Bassoon / Weissenborn / Ambrosio // Page 95, #21, first 4 lines, no turns or mordents. Quarter Note = 76.

Even though this is a slow, lyrical piece, your rhythm should still be exact. The double-dotted quarter in the second measure is just a quarter tied to a dotted-eighth—don’t rush through it. In fact, resist the temptation to rush through any of the faster notes either—the goal in a lyrical etude is to make the fast notes sound as slow as possible while still maintaining a good tempo. Otherwise the piece will feel rushed and out of control.

Be aware of the implied consonance and dissonance in the melodic line; for instance, the downbeat G# in the fourth measure is a dissonance, and the A that follows is its resolution to a consonance. To our ears a consonance sounds much sweeter when the dissonance is given extra weight—try crescendoing to the G# and adding some vibrato on it.

At the beginning of the fourth line, take your time with the grace note—try not to make it sound rushed. Also, if you have a hard time slurring from low C to the B-flat you can tongue the B-flat lightly: the effect of a slur is more important that actually slurring those two notes.

Finally, make sure you are using the correct trill fingering for the B-flat to C trills—DO NOT use full fingerings! To accomplish this trill, begin on B-flat and simply wiggle the ring finger on your left hand—you should get a C. This trill figures prominently in the first movement of the Mozart Bassoon Concerto, so we should learn it correctly now and save ourselves time later when we tackle that masterpiece!