

A free PDF Guided Tour of Clifford Lillya's Trumpet Technic, (BQ-13)

It gives us great pleasure to introduce the Clifford Lillya's *Trumpet Technic* (BQ-13) to you. We hope you will find it to be useful for yourself and your students. For former Lillya students this book needs no introduction. For others, we thought a short tour might be helpful.

Lillya put this material together shortly after coming to the University of Michigan in 1947 as a syllabus for his students. It acts as the hub of a wheel tying together a wide variety of other practice materials. It also contains an introduction to transposition with many orchestral excerpts and a generous helping of solo and ensemble literature.

It was first published in 1952 by Carl Fischer Music, Inc. In 1995, Rob Roy McGregor (Balquhider Music) and Dennis Horton (Elan Brass Impressions), under Lillya's guidance, revised, augmented and re-published the book. This "Second Edition" (2000) is a further refinement and update of this classic manual.

The book serves a variety of functions, one of which is simply to remind the teacher and student of the different areas of playing which are required of the professional player. It is never wise to skip over an exercise or drill because it looks simple. The body has to produce the desired result in *real time*. In areas where a deficiency is discovered numerous other sources are cited for further practice.

Part I: Basic Skills

Lillya was always succinct and precise in his language and notation. The beginning section on tone production and lip slurs looks deceptively simple. The slurring exercises are designed to reveal to the student that when the tone is centered and balanced, flexibility can feel slippery and effortless.

The style of slurring (**#1 - #4**) represented is of the "positive-negative" or bouncing sort. One presses the tone into the lower note and then lets it "break" gently (without crescendo) into the upper note. It was Lillya's intention that the student would find out that "to ascend" did not have to mean "to exert". *The action of playing the lower note strongly influences you to play right into the center of the note - and all the way to the end of the note. When done with conviction the upper note pops out without strain. Your body experiences the fact that notes are right next to each other so long as you play directly through the center of the pitch from beginning to end.* Though this appears different from the James Stamp exercises, the action requested, and the result, is the same. By the same token, the James Thompson *The Buzzing Book*, (Editions BIM, TP216) delivers the same message in yet another form. In Pierre Thibaud's *Method*, (Balquhider Music, BQ-74) he devotes a section to "Positive-Negative" slurring and demonstrates that both this and the more "vocal" technique must be learned. All of these may superficially appear to ask for contrary actions but each, practiced with dedication in its own space, will point to the same principle and your body can coordinate these abstract images over time. This may not make sense to your literal mind but all of these teachers' drills are designed for your lip, not your brain.

Once the feeling is established it is carried throughout the subsequent figures. With **#5** the player should start at a moderate tempo. When the easy, slippery feeling appears the tempo can be accelerated *ad lib* to the suggested metronome mark (or beyond). **#6a** further develops this as the player emphasizes the bottom note and lets the others ripple in between. **#6b** extends this slipperiness to all the notes available in any given fingering. The figure in brackets is for players who find the initial measure problematic. Setting the top note first, the player smears down in a crescendo, hitting all the notes and maintaining constant contact with the sound. Subsequently, try to keep the same feeling in the whole figure that follows, up and down. The first and last notes (G) are the launching and landing pads.

- **Regarding the lists of recommended practice material:** to study a section completely means the student should seek out and practice the other sources cited. These are meant to broaden the overall approach while returning

every so often to the forms Lillya gives - so that together they form a wide ranging base of studies to develop the player's foundation. And, of course, growing familiarity with all these sources is the key to each player practicing what he or she needs according to prevailing conditions and workload. The *Second Edition* takes care to keep these citations as up-to-date as possible and omissions are the fault of the present editor, not Clifford Lillya.

Articulation: In either single (**p. 7**) or multiple tonguing (**p. 9 & 10**), a most important maxim is that the air-flow remains constant and unrestricted. To attain this in the most natural way, Lillya constructed his tonguing drills with musical requirements that are actually physical guidelines. Thus the single tongue figure (**pg. 7, #1**) begins forte, then drops to piano and crescendos to the end of the bar. The opening forte assures a confident start and the required crescendo will make sure that the air-stream is continuous. The tongue can simply "articulate" the flowing air, not stop it.

In **#2 (p. 7)** the object is to refine the tone production efficiency. Each note is given only a tiny bubble of air - like trying to flick a grain of rice off the tip of the tongue. If a "ghost tone" results, DO NOT re-articulate - just keep going. Only one "try" per note. Eventually the lip will become more efficient and will require less force to set it in motion. This practice is an important contribution to the attainment of a full tone with strength and flexibility.

In the two succeeding exercises (**#3, #4**) it is the coordination of the air, tongue and fingers which is sought after, throughout a moderate compass of the instrument. With **#4** in particular, attaining identically sounding articulations of the two 16th notes - by having the tongue return to the same spot but without interrupting the air flow - is the goal. A great variety of material is cited that should be practiced by the student to test and improve this technique.

The Triple and Double tongue drills are crafted, again, to insure proper air-flow simply through their musical requirements. On **pg. 9, #2** a student might sound fine on the triplets staying on the same pitch - but when they ascend and descend in bar three difficulty may arise. These are built-in feedback tests that will reveal whether or not the air supply is really free.

If a student clenches during the ascent they need to be reminded that the freer feeling experienced on the earlier triplet must be sought during the ascending and descending figure as well. It can happen - by not interrupting the air but keeping the notes long and softly enunciated (substitute *d-d-g* for *t-t-k*). Slur the moving figure at first to establish the right feeling. A new realization that this can be enjoyable rather than torturous will be the happy result.

Once the wind is continuous and unrestricted the player can play with more diction without jeopardizing the delivery. Lillya's rule, quoted from his teacher, Vander Cook: "*The wind knoweth not what the tongue doeth.*"

Dotted Eighth Notes exercise is here for the teacher to shine a light on how effectively the student is able to perform this common requirement. A fluid yet well-matched articulation is the goal and many other sources of good study material are cited here.

Diatonic Interval Skips serve as both tone, breath and range drills and also as a good introduction to the language of written notation studied further in the *Applied Music Theory* section.

Coordination (pg. 13) exercises represent the tip of another iceberg and can be a good challenge to get all of these factors working well together - and in many keys.

Trills - here again is a seemingly simple exercise but worth its weight in gold to one who will spend the time to perfect it. Improvement of air-supply can be one of many benefits of learning to play this well.

Rhythm Figures were little passages Lillya used for incoming students to sight-read so that he could get an idea of the students' experience and ability. The figures still serve well in that capacity.

Part II: Applied Music Theory: Many students come to college thinking only of playing flashy solo literature - this book points to a thorough knowledge of scales and chords as the first consideration upon which to build a foundation of truly dependable musicianship. These must be learned and memorized at the indicated metronome marking and they should all be equally facile. The benefits of this training will not be immediately apparent - and this is where the new student might complain. But these patterns constitute the building blocks of the music each player must learn. *A firm command of them is essential to being a successful player and musician.*

Part III: Orchestra and Band Routine: The section on transposition is important. Rarely did a studio class go by without Lillya making his students play something from the orchestral literature together and in various transpositions. The many examples from the literature are included to show the real need to learn these transpositions! They also happen to be some of the most awkward passages in the literature. Becoming familiar with them in this early form can prove advantageous later on and for most Lillya students this was our introduction to orchestral excerpt studies.

Playing these (and assigning them for the purpose) in studio class is an excellent way to impress upon students the need for this work and the ensemble setting provides an extra incentive to being able to do the transpositions. Intonation awareness and refinement can be worked on as well, to say nothing of inculcating the proper style of the various works. The chart on page 36 shows practically all of the transpositions trumpeters use.

Part IV: Recital and Chamber Music Literature: With the solo and chamber literature we have more in the way of musical goals to work on. These pieces should be familiar to all trumpet players.

Many different editions for the Haydn concerto are available - in this book you will find an urtext edition which has no phrasing marks, a performing edition as well as trill preparation drills. It might be noted that a similar version of the Haydn Trumpet Concerto for Bb trumpet is available from Balquhiddier Music. Additionally, a new version for Bb trumpet which casts the concerto in 'C' instead of 'Eb' is available from Elan Brass Impressions (463 E. Deerfield Rd., Mt. Pleasant MI 48858). This latter edition makes the music more accessible to the younger player.

Romance by Schumann is one of a set of three Romances. Music of this period is only minimally represented in the trumpet literature. This work was transcribed and transposed from the original (for oboe or violin) and is good exposure for the trumpet player to music of the Romantic period. The **Concertino** by **Paul Vidal** (originally for trumpet and piano) was arranged for trumpet and band by Lillya. It is a little known work that is both challenging and appealing. Lillya's excellent band arrangement, never before published, is now available from Elan Brass Impressions (see above). The **March and Procession** and the **Grand Trumpeter March** were staples of Lillya's studio class experience and they provide excellent lessons in style, ensemble playing and intonation as well as being useful for a variety of university functions.

Appendix: The **Glossary** is a sort of a "work in progress". Lillya had managed quite a good one to begin with and we have tried to expand the list at every opportunity. Experience will prove it to be one of the many invaluable resources of **Trumpet Technic**. The **Web Site** addresses are new with this edition and we hope will add yet another valuable feature.

When we were in school Cliff used to refer to this book as "The Poor Man's Arban". In many ways that is true but in some ways it goes beyond the Arban book. It is a gold-mine of practice material and a resource center *par excellence*. We hope you will take the time to work through its concentrated and penetrating contents and discover the many paths toward mastery that it helps to illuminate.

A final point might be to remind you that Lillya's **Method for Trumpet, Books 1 & 2** (BQ-47, BQ-48) are the perfect preludes to the *Trumpet Technic*. You may check the Balquhiddier Music Web Site for all the latest publications we offer. (<http://home.earthlink.net/~balqmusic>)

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