

Reprints from the

International Trumpet Guild® Journal

to promote communications among trumpet players around the world and to improve the artistic level of performance, teaching, and literature associated with the trumpet

THE USE OF UNACCOMPANIED WORKS FOR TRUMPET IN RECITAL PROGRAMMING AND THE TEACHING STUDIO

BY MICHAEL HUFF

October 2007 • Page 46

The International Trumpet Guild® (ITG) is the copyright owner of all data contained in this file. **ITG gives the individual end-user the right to:**

- Download and retain an electronic copy of this file on a single workstation that you own
- Transmit an unaltered copy of this file to any single individual end-user, so long as no fee, whether direct or indirect is charged
- Print a single copy of pages of this file
- Quote fair use passages of this file in not-for-profit research papers as long as the ITGJ, date, and page number are cited as the source.

The International Trumpet Guild® prohibits the following without prior written permission:

- Duplication or distribution of this file, the data contained herein, or printed copies made from this file for profit or for a charge, whether direct or indirect
- Transmission of this file or the data contained herein to more than one individual end-user
- Distribution of this file or the data contained herein in any form to more than one end user (as in the form of a chain letter)
- Printing or distribution of more than a single copy of the pages of this file
- Alteration of this file or the data contained herein
- Placement of this file on any web site, server, or any other database or device that allows for the accessing or copying of this file or the data contained herein by any third party, including such a device intended to be used wholly within an institution.

<http://www.trumpetguild.org>

Please retain this cover sheet with printed document.

THE USE OF UNACCOMPANIED WORKS FOR TRUMPET IN RECITAL PROGRAMMING AND THE TEACHING STUDIO

BY MICHAEL HUFF

The trumpet has been in existence for thousands of years. There is evidence of this instrument, or at least “trumpet-like” instruments in virtually all primitive cultures. It was not until the mid-19th century, though, that instrument manufacturers began experimenting with creating a trumpet that was capable of playing a chromatic scale, or at least an instrument that was capable of filling in, to some degree, the skips that occur in the natural overtone sequence. The instrument that we use today did not exist until early in the 20th century. This is one of the reasons why the trumpet does not enjoy the same vast repertoire as, say, the violin or the piano; and when we take into consideration the fact that the trumpet is a monophonic instrument fundamentally capable of producing only one note at a time, we find that the repertoire for the unaccompanied trumpet becomes even slimmer.

This does not mean, however, that the unaccompanied repertoire for trumpet is insignificant. Unaccompanied works have played an important role in the history of the trumpet beginning with its origins. The trumpet was initially used in its valveless form as a signaling instrument, performing unaccompanied calls and fanfares for a variety of functions and purposes. The *Abblasen Fanfare* composed by Gottfried Reiche is a good example of an unaccompanied fanfare from the Baroque era. Ludwig van Beethoven chose to utilize a solo trumpet fanfare in the middle of his *Leonore* Overtures Nos. 2 and 3, and Gustav Mahler chose a solitary trumpet to begin his solemn *Symphony No. 5*. Currently, the solo trumpet is enjoying popularity in many contemporary film scores. In these cases, the trumpet seems to be able to convey the musical equivalent of an actor presenting a soliloquy.

Every musical instrument in existence is difficult to perform in one way or another, but trumpet is generally agreed by most to be one of the more athletically challenging instruments, partly because of the resistance or backpressure experienced in performance but also because of the strength needed to form the embouchure used to produce a tone.

So, one of the primary technical issues found in the performance of unaccompanied works for trumpet is that of endurance. The composer must create a work where the use of wide leaps, long tones, and high tessitura are employed with care, and the performer must, through careful practice, learn how to pace his or her playing in a way that will lead to a successful, enjoyable performance.

An inherent problem in unaccompanied works for all instruments is the potential for timbral monotony: the listener’s attention may drift if exposed to the same quality of tone for an extended period of time. To deal with this, some composers of unaccompanied works for trumpet call for the use of mutes

to vary the tone, and some performers may also choose to use instruments such as the cornet, flugelhorn, or rotary trumpet for variety. We also often find unaccompanied works to be somewhat shorter than more significant

sonatas or concerti because of this timbral uniformity.

Another challenge faced in unaccompanied works for trumpet is the range of dynamics. Part of the reason why a symphony orchestra is capable of such great ranges of emotion is because it is able to produce extraordinarily soft sounds, from one violin playing at *piano* to terrifyingly loud sounds when the entire ensemble is playing at *forte*. It then goes without saying that when we perform a work with only one instrument, the range of dynamics is reduced. In particular, when we perform one of these solos on trumpet, an instrument that inherently plays loud, we must pay particularly close attention to developing and successfully conveying soft dynamics. The performer must also be comfortable with silence. In many unaccompanied works, silence is used to balance sound either with the use of fermatas placed over rests or by notating specific time periods (usually in seconds).

The range of tempi is another technical issue faced in the performance of all unaccompanied works. The performer must be able to perform music at a fast tempo with enough speed so that it effectively contrasts with slower music. Music with slower tempi must be performed slow enough to convey the emotional content and in doing so it frequently “sets up” or creates an effective contrast to faster music.

There are advantages to programming unaccompanied repertoire. One of the primary advantages is the performer’s ability to express himself or herself freely in performance. Since no accompaniment is involved, there is no need to maintain strict consistency from one performance to the next. If the performer wishes to take liberties with tempo

or change a passage with rubato in reaction to how he feels at the moment, or perhaps in reaction to a particular audience, he is free to do so without the necessity of lining up with any sort of accompaniment.

Unaccompanied solos offer enough change in timbre to moderately diversify the sound of an entire recital. While a recital featuring works for trumpet and piano can certainly be

“...we must pay particularly close attention to developing and successfully conveying soft dynamics.”

“Unaccompanied solos offer enough change in timbre to moderately diversify the sound of an entire recital.”

fulfilling to both the performer and audience, a program that varies the sound can often be more entertaining to all involved. In other words, programming works with piano accompaniment along with works with organ or chamber music involving a brass quintet or a mixed instrumental ensemble or vocal works can sometimes result in a more interesting recital for both audience and performer. An unaccompanied solo can, to a certain extent, contribute to this variety.

Unaccompanied repertoire can be performed anywhere. This can offer performers more flexibility in terms of where they perform recitals and can also offer an interesting change for the audience, such as hearing an unaccompanied solo from a balcony or backstage area rather than on the stage. Logistically, unaccompanied repertoire can be learned and performed very easily since it does not involve any other musicians. All rehearsing is at the convenience of the sole performer.

Some unaccompanied solos can often make great encore pieces that can find use at a moment's notice. This is an important consideration when performing a solo perhaps with an ensemble made up of paid musicians, who may be on a particular schedule, or when time is simply at a minimum.

There are advantages and disadvantages to using the unaccompanied repertoire in the teaching studio. The main disadvantage is that the student is not able to exercise the ability to create music with another person, which is a skill that is vital to the development of a musician. However, there are advantages that may counter this drawback.

One major advantage is that the teacher can accurately monitor the student's abilities to maintain pulse, execute contrasting tempi and dynamics, perform with good relative pitch, and express musical thought independently. This is an advantage that may be particularly valuable to trumpet students. Since most trumpet players learn how to play in school environments, most are exposed primarily to ensemble performing situations. As a result, many students learn to play by following

others or following a conductor. While this can be interpreted in many ways as an advantage to learning music, one of the drawbacks is that some students have a difficult time expressing musical thought outside of a group or without the direction of a conductor. Chamber music and solo experiences are integral in countering this drawback and developing a well-rounded musician. Unaccompanied repertoire that exposes the student's performing weaknesses can be particularly effective in teaching this concept.

Another advantage to performing an unaccompanied work is that the performing experience is very different onstage than performing with other musicians. Once a certain degree of comfort with the notion of performing alone on stage is experienced, some find that making the connection between audience and performer can actually be stronger and easier and performing becomes more enjoyable.

Below is a brief list of unaccompanied solos that might prove helpful in building your repertoire in this specific area of trumpet performance.

About the author: Michael Huff serves as assistant professor of trumpet at Mississippi State University, principal trumpet of the Starkville Symphony, and first trumpet with the Golden Triangle Brass. Prior to his appointment at Mississippi State, he held a position performing as a member of the United States Air Force Band in Washington, D.C. Huff has earned degrees from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst (BM), the Eastman School of Music (MM), and the Catholic University of America (DMA). He has studied trumpet with Charles Daval, Langston Fitzgerald, Barbara Butler, Charles Geyer, and Walter Chesnut. He has performed with the Sinfonia Gulf Coast (FL), the Meridian (MS) Symphony, the Washington Opera, the Annapolis Symphony, the Maryland Symphony, the Virginia Symphony, and the Rochester Philharmonic.



A REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF UNACCOMPANIED WORKS FOR TRUMPET

Adler, Samuel	<i>Canto I</i>	Kupferman, Meyer	<i>Five Predictions</i>
Arnold, Malcolm	<i>Fantasy, Op. 100</i>	Larsen, Libby	<i>Fanfare for the Women</i>
Benterfa, Maurice	<i>Tonalities</i>	Lewis, Robert Hall	<i>Monophony VII</i>
Borishansky, Elliot	<i>Intensity III</i>	Morrill, Dexter	<i>Nine Pieces for Solo Trumpet</i>
Bozza, Eugene	<i>Graphismes</i>	Persichetti, Vincent	<i>Parable XIV</i>
Burrell, Howard	<i>Five Concert Studies</i>	Plog, Anthony	<i>Postcards</i>
Cheetham, John	<i>Concoctions</i>		<i>Miniatures</i>
Coleman, Dan	<i>Liquid Prelude</i>	Ponzo, Mark	<i>Realizations for Solo Trumpet</i>
Dlugoszewski, Lucia	<i>Space is a Diamond</i>	Presser, William	<i>Suite for Solo Trumpet</i>
Erickson, Robert	<i>Kryl</i>	Renwick, Wilke	<i>Encore Piece</i>
Frackenpohl, Arthur	<i>Statements</i>	Sampson, David	<i>Litany of Breath</i>
Friedman, Stan	<i>Poem for a Fallen Hero</i>		<i>Notes from Faraway Places</i>
	<i>Solus</i>		<i>Solo</i>
Gallagher, Jack	<i>Sonata for Unaccompanied Trumpet</i>	Schuman, William	<i>25 Opera Snatches</i>
	<i>Variations</i>	Takemitsu, Toru	<i>Paths</i>
Hailstork, Adolphus	<i>Variation Movements</i>	Thomas, Augusta Read	<i>Sonata for Solo Trumpet</i>
Henderson, Robert	<i>Sonatina for Solo Trumpet</i>	Tull, Fisher	<i>Eight Profiles for Solo Trumpet</i>
Henze, Hans Werner	<i>Tromba Solo</i>	Vizzutti, Allen	<i>Cascades</i>
Hvoslef, Ketil	<i>Intrada</i>	Whittenberg, Charles	<i>Polyphony</i>
Ketting, Otto	<i>The Living Daylights</i>	Wilson, Dana	<i>I Remember.....</i>
Korf, Anthony		Wolpe, Stefan	<i>Solo Piece for Trumpet</i>