INSIGHT ON SELECTED STANDARD AUDITION REPETOIRE
FOR THE TROMBONE

by

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A DOCUMENT

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ABSTRACT

Because there are virtually no resources that discuss the salient aspects of solo trombone repertoire, this document offers a thorough study of *Morceau Symphonique* by Alexandre Guilmant and *Cavatine* by Camille Saint-Saëns. For many trombonists, these pieces represent the beginning of the standard repertoire; therefore, they are a logical place to begin the process of providing such resources for the instrument. For both pieces, the historical components provide information about the climate surrounding the composer at the time the piece was written; an analysis of structural and theoretical constructs with each piece offers a phrase-by-phrase presentation. The interpretation of each piece, the primary focus of this document, was highly influenced by the research. It is my hope that my work will inspire more such studies of the trombone repertoire. Ultimately, students preparing for collegiate auditions will use this document to form their own opinions about these two wonderful pieces.
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INTRODUCTION

With the amount of scholarship available about music, there is a severe lack of information about solo trombone repertoire. Because the greatest of composers such as Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven did not solo repertoire for the instrument, it has not been given much attention by traditional scholars. Over time, the trombone has found its place as a solo instrument. So much so that in 1992, Christopher Rouse won the Pulitzer Prize in music for his trombone concerto written for Joseph Alessi, principal trombonist for the New York Philharmonic. Before a trombonist can attempt a piece as difficult as the Rouse concerto, there are pieces that must be studied in order to develop the technical and musical skills needed. Two of the most critical pieces for early development are Morceau Symphonique by Alexandre Guilmant and Cavatine by Camille Saint-Saëns.

These two pieces were chosen because both are considered by many college professors to be appropriate audition material for prospective music majors since they allow the evaluation of a student’s overall skill level. Although both pieces are fairly brief, neither more than five minutes in length, each contains the technical and musical
components required for successful trombone playing at the highest level. There are many documents that discuss, in detail, the great works written for piano, violin, cello, and other well-established solo instruments along with the techniques involved in playing those pieces. As a result, musicians who play those instruments have an easier time familiarizing themselves with the standard repertoire. A good example of such a document is the book titled *The Art of Violin Playing* by Carl Flesch¹. In it, he discusses important pieces in the violin repertoire such as Mendelssohn’s concerto and Brahms’s sonatas. There has been no significant research on the repertoire that represents the beginning of the standard literature for the trombone.

This document discusses many of the historical and theoretical components of *Morceau Symphonique* and *Cavatine* while providing musical instructions soundly rooted within those components. Additionally, pedagogical instructions, such as slide position choices and breath marks, have been offered for mastering the most challenging technical aspects. Although these pieces are well known to the trombone community, it is my hope that teachers and students alike will benefit from such comprehensive research and study of these pieces.
Along with Charles-Marie Widor, Alexandre Guilmant is regarded as one of the two most gifted organists of the 19th century. He was born in Boulogne-sur-Mer, a village in northwest France on March 12, 1837. His father, Jean-Baptiste Guilmant, was church organist and his son’s first teacher. In 1860, after hearing the organist Nicholai Lemmens in concert, Guilmant left France to study organ with him at the Brussels Conservatory. Lemmens was a celebrated organist in his own right, having won the Prix de Rome in 1847, and had studied extensively the organ works of Johann Sebastian Bach. He was most noted for his virtuoso pedaling, accuracy, clarity, and melodic sense. While studying with Lemmens, Guilmant matured as an organist and began composing. The organ techniques of Lemmens are evident in Guilmant’s compositions.
After completing his studies, Guilmant went back to Boulogne-ser Mer and started his career by working as a theory teacher and church organist. In 1871, he left for Paris to assume the post of organist for the Church of the Trinity, a position he would hold until 1901. In addition to being a church organist, he was a dedicated teacher. He founded the Schola Cantorum in 1894 and accepted the organ professorship at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in 1896. It is at the Conservatoire where he met Louis Allard, the trombone professor, and eventually composed Morceau Symphonique for the Conservatoire’s annual concours, or contest. The piece was written in 1902, and during that year, Guilmant was writing almost exclusively for organ. He completed only one other piece that year, his Organ Sonata No. 72.

Louis Allard has proven to be a giant figure in trombone pedagogy. He began his tenure at the Conservatoire in 1888 and held the position until 1925. During his tenure, he transcribed many works for trombone including the Vocalises of Marco Bordogni and edited the famous Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet by Jean B. Arban; both are still pillars of trombone methodology. As a teacher, he is noted for

placing emphasis on sound and for playing expressively. It has been speculated that Guilmant would have been keenly aware of that and kept that notion in the front of his mind as he composed *Morceau Symphonique*. The piece serves as a wonderful example of Guilmant’s lyricism and harmonic sensitivity. While staying true to the sonority that one would expect from a composer who writes for organ, it is grounded in both technical and musical constructs that trombonists would find mirroring the pedagogical materials and orchestral trombone parts of the time.
CHAPTER 2

*Morceau Symphonique* is ostensibly a two-movement work connected by a cadenza. Though the first section is brief, it contains three distinct moods. The first, measures 1-15, is languid, yet agitated. The second, measures 16-26, is more optimistic, and the third mood, measures 27-36, is generally nostalgic. The harmonic ambiguity of the two-measure introduction in the piano encapsulates the varying characteristics of this section (example 1). The key of E-flat minor is present in those measures, but Guilmant disguises it by decorating the melody with chromaticism and presenting it without a harmonic accompaniment.
With the entrance of the trombone in measure 3, the E-flat minor key area is firmly established, and the languid material begins.

The first phrase is eight measures. In order to achieve con espressione, note values longer than a quarter-note must have forward direction musically, and the non-harmonic notes have to be highlighted (example 2). One way to stress the non-harmonic notes would be to place an agogic accent on them. Using a hint of vibrato in measures 3 and 5 on the longer note values will also help highlight the non-harmonic tones.
Example 2 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 3-11

The dynamic is marked piano, but instead of starting at the softest point on the B-flat, the player should start slightly stronger only to pull back immediately so that the beginning of the G-flat is actually the softest point. Upon the arrival at G-flat, a slight crescendo to the non-harmonic D in measure 4, followed by a slight diminuendo to E-flat on the second beat, will make for a nice opening phrase. The sound should intensify through the E-flat because it leads dynamically to the C-flat in measure 6. Measure 7 is a foreshadowing of the optimistic mood to come and should be played in a fanfare-like manner using crisp articulation and a small amount of space between the dotted eighth- and sixteenth-notes, only to revert to the more lyrical style of playing after beat 3. Playing measure 7 in this way and highlighting the non-harmonic tones agitate the music in this first phrase. In order to make the second half of the phrase work musically, the crescendo in measure 6 must crest on the D-flat three measures later. Coupled with the diminuendo that follows, this will insure the seamlessness with which con espressione requires. The next phrase, measures 11-15, represent the end of the first mood. It should be played softly and with a reflective character. It is imperative to play
the crescendo in measure 12 on the note G because it will strengthen the overall beauty of the passage. A slight ritard at the end of measure 15 gives the first mood closure while signaling the start of the optimistic material.

The accompaniment in measure 16 is a two-measure link to the optimistic section and should dictate that character by using march-like articulation. The mood change is confirmed in measure 18 with the entry of the trombone part in the more cheerful key of G-flat major. In addition to the articulation change, the material in the piano accompaniment should be played with a slight accelerando until measure 18 (example 3). By approaching the passage this way, the overall style of this new mood is magnified.

The next phrase, measures 18-26, is the whole of the optimistic second mood. The first half of the phrase has two styles. The first should be played powerfully but without harshness while the second part harks back to the languid quality of the opening material. The second half of the phrase, beginning with the sixteenth-note ascending passage in measure 22, should be played in the march-like style used before, paying special attention to the accented syncopated material as it rises to the musical peak of the first section in measure 26.
Example 3 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 10-30

The material in the piano accompaniment in measures 27 and 28 should gradually return to the original tempo, for the slower tempo is needed to execute the nostalgic third mood. The articulation should also change from the heavy *marcato* style to one more sustained and lyrical in nature.

The final mood of the first section begins in measure 27 with the piano. The accompaniment is particularly compelling because in contrast to the trombone part that hovers around the F5 (the F above middle C), the material gradually descends to the very dark and densely scored B-flat major chord in measure 36; this underscores the trombone cadenza. The music in the trombone part is a series of two-measure passages that anticipate the cadenza. Generally, they should be played softly with only a small hint of dynamic coloring. The one exception is the material in measure 33. Guilmant took the time to actually notate the *crescendo* and *diminuendo* in order to be sure that the
performer would accentuate the rich harmonic motion of these two measures. The crescendo should go as far as mezzo-forte in order to achieve the desired musical effect. The final two-measure figure, both harmonically and rhythmically, slows down to set up the cadenza. By adding a tenuto to the B-flat eighth-note in measure 35 in the trombone part, the music will sound more settled, making the silence between the fermata in the piano and the beginning of the cadenza seem more appropriate (example 4).

Example 4  Guilmant, Morceau Symphonique, mm. 35-36

The cadenza, if interpreted as such, is a wonderfully simple transition from the beautiful slow section to the more lively music that follows. It should be thought of in two halves with the eighth rest as the divide. The first half should start very slowly and softly in order to bridge the material that precedes it. From the start, the music should accelerate and get louder through use of a stringendo until a forte dynamic is reached on
the half note B-flat. The articulation should be in the same *marcato* style of the second mood of the slow section (example 5).

**Example 5** Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 35-38

The second half of the cadenza outlines a B-flat dominant chord and should be interpreted so that it serves as a harmonic bridge from the slow material in E-flat minor to the E-flat major tonality of the livelier second half of the piece (example 6).
Example 6 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, cadenza

With that, it is important to highlight the highest note in the implied three-note figures that descend to the quarter notes. The *rallentando* on the broken B-flat dominant chord would not get any slower than the tempo of the first section. Most of the *rallentando* will take place from the piano part in the next measure. The notes would lengthen as the music slows.

If the first part of *Morceau Symphonique* is performed well, it creates a tremendous amount of suspense due to the already harmonic instability. A great performance would highlight that instability through dynamics and slight tempo adjustments. The second half of the piece can serve as a great release from that suspense.

The second part of the piece is an energetic truncated sonata form. Although Guilmant does not follow the traditional rules of the form, he did maintain enough of its characteristic traits to label this part of the piece as such. There are varying thoughts on the tempo of this half of the music. The quarter-note pulse should be no slower than mm. 116, but preferably mm. 120 because the most technical passages
are more virtuosic at this speed. The four-measure introduction in the piano should be played paying very close attention to the articulation and pedaling because both elements are critical to establishing the correct style for the opening material in this section. The first theme has unusual phrasing in that it is divided into three parts. The first four-measure sub-phrase, beginning in measure 43, exemplifies the march-like character that permeates this section (example 7). This music should be played with bravura, using a *staccato* articulation unless otherwise noted.

**Example 7** Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 43-46

Because of the nature of the standard slide positions, the E-flat major scale in measure 43 can be quite cumbersome at the correct tempo. The note D in the second beat should be played in fourth position which allows for a more fluid slide motion and better clarity. As a general rule, when there is a D in between third position notes, a trombonist should play the D in fourth position.

The next four measures function as a pair of two-measure units that propel the harmony towards the eventual goal of the dominant, B-flat major, in measure 55. Each
two-measure unit should have its own crescendo within the overall crescendo, which should arrive at forte in measure 51. Playing in this manner will aid the harmonic tension, making the juxtaposition of characters from trombone part to piano accompaniment that follow more interesting. The final four measures of the opening phrase, beginning at measure 51, should be played in the fanfare-like style of measure 43 for the trombone part while the accompaniment finishes the lyrical idea from the previous phrase. In measure 52, when the accompaniment joins the new style, it makes for a particularly special moment within the entire first phrase.

From measure 55 until 110, both the piano and trombone parts should be played with a keen awareness of the imitative writing. A compelling performance would highlight the imitation by treating it exactly the same in both the trombone part and accompaniment. The next twelve bars, beginning at measure 55, function as a transition from the first theme to the second beginning in measure 67. It uses easily identifiable material from the first theme and reintroduces what has become an important transitional motive in measures 63 and 64. Those two measures, and the two that follow, have similar characteristics to measures 47 and 48 in that chromaticism is used to cause tension, and they ultimately function as bridge material between two major ideas. The dynamics in measures 63 through 66 should be followed without compromise, for they accentuate the harmonic tension and release.
The second theme starts in measure 67 and ends at measure 81. It is made up of two seven-measure phrases. The first phrase is made up of two smaller units. Although there is no dynamic marking for this material, it should be played softly with minimal inflection. The dynamic supports the dolce marking and will be a nice contrast to the loud volume of the first theme. For effective phrasing, the trombonist should simply follow the contour of the line. By making a crescendo through the eighth-notes in measure 68 and dimuendo in measure 69, the dolce quality will be retained (example 8).

**Example 8** Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 67-69

Measure 70 is interesting in that it serves as the last measure of the first part of the phrase, yet the melodic material is repeated verbatim in the trombone in the next measure at the beginning of the second half of the phrase (example 9).
Example 9 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 71-72

The second half of the phrase should start at mezzo-forte, again returning to a softer dynamic in measure 73. The accent in measure 72 could potentially ruin the phrase if interpreted improperly (example 9). Young brass players tend to see an accent and not differentiate its interpretation as it relates to style. This particular one should be executed more with air speed rather than the traditional relying on the tongue. Using a heavy accent would be out of character for this section. The last seven measures of the second theme, 74 through 80, are a single idea. While the crescendo and diminuendo in measures 75 and 76 are important, the performer must not overplay the diminuendo because the music needs room to be softer still through the descending passage beginning in measure 77 (example 10).
Measures 81 through 88 represent the transition from the exposition to the development (example 11). When the trombone enters, it should be played *pianissimo* with no inflection. The triplets in the accompaniment provide the musical interest and momentum as this brief material leads to the development.
Example 11 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 81-88

Although the development section only last for 15 measures, it contains every important motive from the exposition (example 12). It travels through many key areas while setting up the key of the next important section of the piece.
Marked *con fuoco*, the music is highly charged, especially with the unstable harmony, and should be played with a strong sound and great intensity. It begins with the fanfare material from the first theme in measure 89 in the key of D major in the piano part and is presented again in the trombone part in measure 91. The same material is played in F major starting in measure 96. There is no dynamic marking in
that measure, but it, along with the next three should be played louder than the previous five in order to highlight the rise in pitch level. As previously mentioned, Guilmant includes every important motive from the exposition, and they should be played in the same style as they were previously. In order to create musical drama, the material in measure 100 should start at the piano dynamic, and a big crescendo should be made for four measures only to play subito pianissimo in measure 104 (example 13). This should be done without even the smallest hint of ritardando because it will ruin the gesture in addition to minimizing the rallantando in measures 108 and 109.

**Example 13 Guilmant, Morceau Symphonique, mm. 100-106**

The next six measures, starting in measure 104, transition to a restatement of the material from the very opening of the piece. The material should be played in the same melancholy manner as it was previously stated starting in measure 83.

Recalling the music from the first major portion gives the piece symmetry of sorts. Guilmant takes great care in marking every musical nuance in this section; therefore, editions beyond the printed score are unnecessary. Measure 115 is the culmination of the entire piece because of the C-sharp, an extremely challenging note,
particularly for young trombonists. It is amongst the highest notes that composers write for the instrument. In this particular passage, it is even harder because it is preceded by leap rather than by step. Therefore, it is important to organize a breathing scheme to support playing the C-sharp. If the upper register is problematic for a player, having a good supply of air for support is best for overcoming the issue. One effective breathing scheme would be as follows:

**Example 14** Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 110-115

Guilmant indicates a *marcato* marking in measure 115 to insure that the eighth-notes in that measure are played in the correct style (example 11). That marking should come in measure 114 to facilitate the dotted eighth-sixteenth rhythm as well as the breath between beats 3 and 4. Once the C-sharp has been reached, one should maintain the *fortissimo* dynamic for two whole measures before starting the *diminuendo*. One can breathe after any of the quarter notes in measure 116 if the accents are interpreted correctly, for the space should be equal between notes. In order to give this brief section continuity, the broken chord and fermata in measure 119 should not be played in a hurried manner. A small silence before the recapitulation will further highlight that notion.
The recapitulation starts, as it should, with a literal repeat of the material from the exposition (first theme) in E-flat major. This music should be played with the exact phrasing and dynamics as before providing symmetry. The departure from the previously stated material comes in measure 127 (example 12). This is one of the most exciting moments of the piece, and it deserves some attention. At this point, the dynamic level is forte, but a crescendo to fortissimo at measure 130 is needed in order to strengthen the harmonic motion from the dominant to tonic in measure 130. To provide more excitement to this material, the downbeats in measures 128 and 129 should be played staccato so that the accent on beat 2 is more pronounced.

Example 15 Guilmant, Morceau Symphonique, mm. 126-130

Measure 130 begins the coda material which is marked piu mosso. With that, a brisk tempo marking of mm. 132 is recommended. At that tempo, a player has an opportunity to demonstrate the kind of technique that all trombonists yearn to have. With both the solo and accompaniment material starting at fortissimo, the material should be played much stronger and heavier than any other time previously. The note values shorter than a quarter-note should be played using a staccato articulation. The
longer note values should be played using the marcato articulation that begins this half of the piece. Measure 132 begins a ten-measure phrase that is unrelenting, for there is a great deal of music to be played without many opportunities to take a good breath. The player should take a good breath before measure 134 in order to facilitate the triplet passage the follows. The triplets are idiomatic if the following slide positions are chosen:

Example 16 Guilmant, Morceau Symphonique, mm. 134-135

The trombonist can breathe between the dotted quarter-note and the eighth-notes in measure 136 if needed, but should be sure to take a breath in the next measure between the two E-flats, accenting the second one. This will allow for great drama because the E-flat on beat 3 anticipates the harmony in measure 138.
Example 17 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 136-140

The music from measure 138 through 140 represents the biggest technical challenge in the entire work (example 17). Diligent practice would have to be done to insure good articulation and intonation. The trombonist should practice this spot slowly, concentrating on precise slide motions and landing solidly on every note in order to acquire precise intonation. It should be played at the correct tempo only when those skills have been acquired.

Guilmant could have finished the piece after the last statement in the trombone but chose to play the music in G-flat major starting at measure 144, which gives the piece even more symmetry, recalling the key area of the first part of the piece (example 18). The same rules apply relative to phrasing and breaths as before. Again, the triplet passage is easily managed with good slide position choices.
Example 18 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 144-150

The articulation in measures 149 and 150 should be the same as it is in measures 128 and 129. The final cadential material which occurs in measure 153 ending in measure 155 is the most glorious moment in the entire work (example 19). It is the first time that Guilmant slows down the harmony and the rhythm simultaneously. Because of this, the two measures leading up to measure 155 should be played with *molto ritardando*. Measure 155 should be played at the original tempo until the very end with only a slight hesitation before the last two notes. That hesitation provides panache that a professional soloist would add to the end of this wonderful piece.
Example 19 Guilmant, *Morceau Symphonique*, mm. 153-160

Playing this piece for a collegiate audition will suggest to a committee that the student auditioning has adequate knowledge of trombone repertoire. This piece is performed so often that most audition panels will have some preconceived notions about the piece. The job of the trombonist is to meet expectations of the piece and the aesthetics of the instrument while standing out as a musician within that context. There are several etude books and exercises that could be used in preparation of this work;
although, in my opinion, the *Melodious Etudes* by Bordogni, edited by Johannes Rochut\(^3\) would be a tremendous resource for working on the lyrical style the first half of *Morceau Symphonique* requires, while the *Complete Conservatory Method for Trombone* by Arban, edited by Joseph Alessi and Brian Bowman, contains many exercises that specifically target virtuoso technique. Both methods serve as the pillars of trombone pedagogy throughout the United States; therefore, a student auditioning for a music program in trombone must have them.

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CHAPTER 3

When a composer as well-known and respected as Camille Saint-Saëns writes a solo piece for the trombone, the instrument acquires credibility as a solo voice that it might otherwise lack. By 1915, the year that Cavatine was written, Saint-Saëns had already written some of his most-recognized pieces: the Symphony No. 3, the opera Sampson and Delilla, Danse Macabre for piano and orchestra, and his orchestral bon-bon, Carnival of the Animals. He wrote other important small works that year such as Elegie for Violin and Piano and an Ave Maria for chorus.

Saint-Saëns was born in Paris in 1835 and from childhood was considered by many to be as prodigious as Mozart because of his extraordinary talents on piano⁴. As a young musician, he studied the music of Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven, and those composers would mold the foundation of his compositional style.

He began his studies at the Paris Conservatory in 1848 and would complete his
first symphony three years later. Similar to Guilmant, he began his professional life as a
church organist and would eventually work at La Madeleine, “a prestigious and
fashionable parish”\textsuperscript{5}. After holding a brief piano professorship at École Niedermeyer,
he resigned to concentrate on his extremely active solo career. Saint-Saëns was busy as
a performer on both organ and piano but continued to compose. After the end of the
Franco-Prussian War of 1870, he co-founded the Société de Musique, dedicated to
promoting modern French compositions. This event shifted his focus to composition.

Saint-Saëns’ compositions are noted for being concise and deeply-rooted in classical form. In *Cavatine* those traits are pronounced, and his musical influences are clearly represented. Imitation is the primary compositional technique of the first and last section which can be traced to his affection for the music of Bach. There are beautiful melodies in the trombone part coupled with virtuosic piano writing in the second section, harking back to the music of Mozart and Liszt. The care that he takes to highlight the form, in this case ternary, while stepping out of bounds enough to write for the trombone, is one of the many reasons Saint-Saëns is held in such high regard by trombonists. While his influences are clear, Saint-Saëns combines them beautifully to make his own unmistakable voice.
The Cavatine by Camille Saint Saëns highlights two contrasting styles of trombone playing. The A section explores the fanfare-like brassy style of playing that is mostly utilized in orchestral writing for the instrument. By contrast, the B section exploits the lyrical qualities. This piece is deceptively difficult. Although the sections are relatively brief, each one contains difficult passages that require ample technical facility. If this piece is performed well, one will have demonstrated many of the attributes found in the most successful trombonists: a great sound and melodic sense, solid slide technique, varied articulations, and a command of the full range of notes for the trombone.

The first A section, beginning in the first measure, is full of panache. With that, there are moments that serve as prelude to what will happen in the B section. A tempo marking of mm. 69 (being that the dotted half-note is the pulse) will help capture the correct style. The first phrase for the trombone, beginning in measure 3, is loaded with opportunities to miss the mark musically. There are no indications as to what articulation to use, which could serve as the primary source of confusion. The governing articulation should be *marcato* or even *maestoso*. The player should maintain this style for the first 7 measures.
There is an accent in measure 5, but it simply serves as an arrival for the ascending arpeggiated figure that precedes it. It is important that the hemiola in measures 6 and 7 is highlighted by accentuating the E-flat, D-flat, and C in those measures (example 20).

**Example 20** Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm. 6-8

The second half of the first phrase, measures 9 through 16, delves briefly into a more lyrical style. Measure 10 initiates the first of two two-measure figures that should be played with as much connectivity as possible (example 21). The player must make certain to give the third beat in measure 13 its full value so that there is minimal space between that passage and the articulated one that follows:
The next phrase is from measures 16-29. It is divided into three parts. The first part of the phrase has many of the same properties as the previous phrase while the second provides the first technical challenge of the piece. At this tempo, the ascending B-flat melodic minor scale poses a tremendous challenge for a young player. The notes lay well on the slide with one exception. Assuming that a student auditioning to major in music would have a trombone with an F attachment, the challenge would come with trying to get from the C, using the attachment along with first position, to D-flat in fifth position. The distance on the slide for those two pitches is great, and at the speed of the passage, is quite difficult to reach. The best way to address the issue is to keep the air moving steadily and allow the natural break between the two notes to help create the articulation (example 22).
Example 22 Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm. 20-21

Ideally, one would have a good reserve of air to tackle such a difficult passage. Because there is only an eighth-rest between the first half of the phrase and this passage, taking a quality breath is an issue and may prevent a steady air stream from occurring. The last part of the phrase begins with an F-melodic-minor ascending passage. This scale passage is a little easier than the first because the slide positions are much closer together throughout the figure. The difficulty lies in the range and the limited amount of air at this point. From measure 21 until 29, the music should have a sense of urgency (example 23).

Example 23 Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm. 21-28
The direction of the lines and the repetition of the melodic material at a higher pitch level suggest this. With that, the music should be played with a constant crescendo. Because of the lack of good places to breathe, the melodic intensity, and the overall dynamic level, this phrase should be practiced with great care in order to solve these issues. The next phrase is 8 measures long and begins at measure 29. This section should be played using a marcato articulation so that the music sounds like a fanfare. Because of the rapid speed of the triplets in measure 29 and similar places throughout the piece, the triple tongue technique is needed in this phrase. Generally, brass players generate articulation by having the tongue strike somewhere within the mouth. Where the tongue strikes depends on the particular instrument, the tessitura of the pitch to be played, and whether or not it starts a series of similarly articulated notes. In trombone pedagogy, that syllable is referred to as ta or da (example 24).

Example 24 Saint-Saëns, Cavatine, mm. 29-31
Triple tonguing requires a player to generate an articulation from another source other than the front of the tongue. By changing the position of the tongue, the *kah* or *gah* sound can be created, an integral component of a triple tonguing. Instead of using *ta-da-ka* which is taught in conventional methods such as Arban’s *Complete Conservatory Method for Trombone*, using the *da-ga-da* (or *du-gu-du* depending on the register) articulation works better for low brass instruments because it keeps the attacks from being too harsh. This technique proves to be one of the most difficult to master.

The next eight-measure phrase, beginning at rehearsal 1, contains two arpeggiated passages that could be problematic because of the potentially awkward slide positions. Both can be facilitated by playing the F in measure 38 and 40 using fourth position (example 25).

**Example 25** Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm. 37-44

The slide technique will be much more fluid, and one would show advanced knowledge of alternate position, very important for good trombone playing. The next phrase is also 8 measures long. In order to create a strong musical impact, the dynamic level should change from *forte* to *mezzo piano* at measure 45 (example 26). At that point,
a crescendo should be added for two measures arriving at forte in measure 47. The
dynamic level should remain at forte through the F in that measure so that the
diminuendo does not come prematurely. Saint-Saëns notates a diminuendo in measures
48 and 50 and both should be performed under the umbrella of a global four-measure
diminuendo to pianissimo.

Example 26 Saint-Saëns, Cavatine, mm. 45-51

Measure 53 through the end of the first section functions as a transition to the second
part of the piece. The harmonic rhythm slows down in addition to the larger note
values and rests. This final phrase should sound as if it is making a slow but constant
diminuendo. The passage should begin at mezzo forte and then follow the printed
dynamics.

Albeit brief, the A section is exciting and beautifully crafted. Although the
trombone writing is extremely idiomatic, if the potential problem areas are not
addressed properly, this section will expose poor training and decision-making,
ultimately leading to an unsuccessful performance.
The B section of Cavatine should be played in a legato style with great expression. The harmonic rhythm is slow compared to the first section, and because of that, dynamics and tempo have to be nurtured so that the music maintains a natural ebb and flow. The first phrase is eight measures long and begins at rehearsal 2 (example 27). There is nothing complicated about it; however, it is necessary to point out one important aspect; there are no dynamic markings indicated in the original score. The opening dynamic should be marked piano which will help make a seamless transition from the first section that also ends softly. The music should remain soft for the first four measures. A slight crescendo should be made from measure 75 arriving at mezzo piano at the downbeat of measure 77, only to make an immediate diminuendo from the third beat arriving at piano in measure 78.

Example 27 Saint-Saëns, Cavatine, mm. 71-78

The second phrase, beginning in measure 79, is the first opportunity to use rubato as a form of musical expression. The trombone plays unaccompanied in measures 79, 81 and 83 which allows for flexibility with regards to tempo (example 28).
Example 28 Saint-Saëns, Cavatine, mm. 79-86

The third phrase, beginning with the D-sharp in measure 86, is only four measures long but represents a microcosm of the rest of the B section (example 29).
Saint-Saëns carefully chose this passage to employ the term *espressivo*. There are four primary ways a trombone player can be expressive: dynamics, tempo, color, and articulation. The dynamic indications that are present in the score should be followed literally. It is integral that the performer start the phrase at a *piano* dynamic so that the *crescendo* in that measure does not go beyond what is musically sensitive. The tempo should move forward slightly through the descending eighth-notes in the trombone and piano parts respectively only to pull back at the end of the next measure. A *diminuendo* from the B to A-sharp in measure 88 would highlight the middle of the phrase in a nice and somewhat unexpected way. The articulation on the second beat should be interpreted as a long eighth-note which will create a lift between the second and third beats. This articulation also adds the beauty of this passage. The F-sharp should be played at the same dynamic level as the end of the A-sharp and *crescendo* across the barline. Adding vibrato to the F-sharp, particularly as it crosses over the barline, will increase the tension of this moment. The trombone, particularly in the United States, is generally played with not much, if any, vibrato. Most likely this comes
from the legendary sound of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra trombone section dating back to the 1960's, which many modern American trombonists try to emulate. A *tenuto* should be placed over the third beat in measure 89 which would add a poetic touch to this very active and extremely gorgeous phrase. The four elements of expression that have been employed in these four measures should be used throughout this section to generate tension and beauty.

The next phrase is from beat three of measure 90 through beat 2 of 97. The first three full measures should maintain the *piano* dynamic, as marked, while allowing the ascending sequential passage to propel the music forward. Young players tend to make a *crescendo* when ascending lines are present but in this passage, it is critical that one is not made. The *crescendo* should be saved for the next four measures. It is important to note that the accents in measures 94 and 96 are not executed with a heavy tongue but more with air speed (example 30). The music is still under the umbrella of *legato*, and a heavy accent would be musically inappropriate. The treatment of measure 97 is critical to the success of this passage. The *crescendo* should last through the release, and that release should take place just after the second beat as opposed to the upbeat of 2. Saint-Saëns must have notated the measure as such so that there would not be an abrupt release exactly on the second beat. If the release is interpreted literally, there will be enough time for a proper breath. Too much space between beats 2 and 3 will cause beat 3 to sound accented.
The next 10 measures are one large idea split into two smaller parts (example 31). These measures represent the kind of playing for which the trombone is noted. The playing here should be loud and sustained. This kind of playing is most common in symphony orchestra trombone parts, especially in the time period of *Cavatine*. The first five measures should establish the volume which governs this passage. The *largamente* marking in the first part of the phrase suggests that the music is broad and should be played with panache. For an even stronger musical impact, a sudden dynamic change to *mezzo piano* on beat 3 of measure 100, only to make a *crescendo* from that dynamic to *fortissimo* in measure 103, should be employed. That dynamic level is to be maintained for the next five measures. The accents in measures 103 and 104 are to be played in the more traditional manner using a clear articulation at the beginning of the note, using a fast airstream. The next four measures, beginning at 108, are meant to serve as a release of tension. They should be played with a warm sound while carefully pacing the *diminuendo*. 

*Example 30* Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm. 94-98
Example 31 Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm.100-111

The next 12 measures in the piano accompaniment make the transition from E major back to D-flat major. The young trombonist will welcome this break, for the type of playing that would have been utilized to play the previous section is very strenuous.

The *allegro* marking at rehearsal 4 represents the return of the A section. The material is repeated verbatim for the next 30 measures; therefore, it should be treated in the exact same manner as before, providing continuity. The departure from the recapitulation happens in measure 153, in the middle of the phrase that begins in measure 149. This phrase is 14 measures long and deserves a great deal of attention. First, the fanfare-like articulation must be used similar to the first occurrence of this material (measures 21-27). Secondly, with the dynamic level at *forte*, there are three musical arrivals to pay attention to: the downbeats of measures 153, 157, and 161 (example 32). Each one should be preceded by a small *crescendo*. Lastly, it is important
that the tied A-flat in measures 161 and 162 is held for the full value and is played at the
*fortissimo* dynamic, enriching the harmony in those measures.

**Example 32** Saint-Saëns, *Cavatine*, mm.149-162

The next phrase, beginning at measure 163, is 14 measures, and its sole purpose
musically is to move towards the dominant. Good advice for a young player would be
to play the F in measure 165 in fourth position (example 33). Because both the D and B
would also be played in fourth position, this will make for less awkward technique. An
adventurous player might take the entire measure in fourth position, including the G.
There is a slight risk of intonation problems because in actuality, all four pitches are in
slightly different places within fourth position due to the natural intonation properties
of the harmonic series. If performed that way in an audition, a certain knowledge about
the trombone and its alternate positions as well as a high level of personal
sophistication would be on display.
Example 33 Saint-Saëns, Cavatine, mm. 165

The music has been at a loud dynamic since the return of section A. Adding a *mezzo piano* starting in 167 and making a steady *crescendo* to *forte* in measure 171 will provide a nice contrast and give the end of this phrase more impact (example 34).

Example 34 Saint-Saëns, Cavatine, mm.167-172

The five measures, beginning at measure 175, may be the most difficult in the piece. The pedal register has its own problems, and trying to play those notes beautifully adds to the difficulty. Many players have to make a slight shift within the embouchure to play in that register. The shift would place more than the normal amount of top lip into the mouthpiece while allowing the bottom jaw to drop in order to create a bigger oral
cavity. With that shift there is a risk of being out of tune. If one is able to play those notes without changing normal embouchure, the pitch must be monitored because the pedal register tends to be sharp. The next 8 measures, beginning at measure 177, are a beautiful interlude for the piano and serve as a mood change from the majestic music from before. There is a wonderful call and response between the piano and trombone beginning at measure 185. The arpeggiation in measures 187 and 191 is very difficult because of the speed of the passage. All of the notes in those measures are in the same position and have to be performed as a lip slur. It is extremely difficult to have rhythmic control over a lip slur at that speed. Because of the difficulty, those measures are played somewhat out of rhythm even among the most accomplished players; therefore, there are several etude books and warm up exercises dedicated to this technique. The next thirteen measures in the piano part, rather quickly, reaffirms the key of D-flat major with strong single-note octaves leading the music to a second inversion D-flat major chord as prepares Saint-Saëns prepares for the end of the piece. The last thirteen bars of the piece start out as a faster version of the opening material but instead of following that exact path, Saint-Saëns brings the piece to an exciting conclusion by having the trombone part outline a D-flat major chord up to the highest note in the piece. That D-flat should be played as strongly as one can play and maintain the integrity of the fundamental trombone sound.
Again, for a piece that takes less than five minutes to perform, it is filled with opportunities to display many of the important technical skills required to play the trombone professionally. Many professionals use this piece to begin recitals to balance larger works. In a 1986 article in the *International Trombone Journal*, it was noted that the piece was performed more than any other piece as noted by programs sent to the publication since its inception⁶. Because of its musical merit and accessibility, this piece will continue to be a staple of the standard repertoire.

CONCLUSION

Resources for study and preparation for collegiate auditions can be invaluable to students with no formal training as well as those who have had the opportunity to study privately. When possible, students should seek advice about the standard repertoire from professional performers and teachers. This document discusses, in detail, the types of things students should know going into an audition or any other performance of *Morceau Symphonique* and *Cavatine*. Hopefully, others will deem it necessary to do similar meticulous research and study of other pieces that constitute the standard trombone literature.

A logical step in the continuation of this research would be to discuss the following pieces: *Sonate* by Paul Hindemith, *Concertino* by Ferdinand David, *Concerto* by Launy Gröndahl and the *Fantasy* by Paul Creston. Not only do these pieces often recur as material for many Junior and Senior Recital programs but also serve as cornerstones in auditions for professional band and orchestra positions.
These pieces overall are more complex both rhythmically and harmonically, longer, and present even more challenging technical aspects than does *Morceau Symphonique* and *Cavatine*. Examples of scholarship at this level will hopefully encourage students to be assertive in establishing their own ideas about music based on historical and theoretical knowledge which will enhance their personal interpretation.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A: Supporting Material for *Morceau Symphonique*
MORCEAU SYMPHONIQUE

TROMBONE TENOR ET PIANO

par Alexandre GUILMANT.

OP. 88.

Andante sostenuto (c=63) Trombone.

P. Con expression.

Cres.

Dim.

f Con anima. Marcato.

Tranquillement.

Delee.

Cadenza ad lib.

Allegro moderato (c=108).

Piano.

Trombone.

p

Cres.

Dim.

p

Delee.
Tenor Trombone

Morceau Symphonique

Alexandre Guilmant

Andante sostenuto \( \frac{3}{8} \)

\( \text{p} > \text{pp} \leftarrow \text{p} \)
cresc.

\( \text{dim.} \)

\( \text{p} \)

\( \text{a tempo} \)

\( \text{p rit. accel.} \)

\( \text{con anima e marcato} \)

\( \text{f} \)

\( \text{a tempo e sostenuto} \)

\( \text{ff rit. p p} \)

\( \text{tranquilmente} \)

\( \text{p dolce} \)

\( \text{p mf p} \)
I. **Slow introduction**
      i. (1-2) Introduction in piano
      ii. (3-10) i-V\(^6/5\)-i-V (half cadence)
      iii. (11-15) V-I (perfect authentic cadence in E-flat minor)
   b. G-flat Major: Measures 16-26, “optimistic material”
      i. (16-18) Link from languid material to optimistic material
      ii. (18-26) I-V
   c. D-flat major: Measures 27-36, “Nostalgic material”
      i. (27-36) V\(^6/5\)-V of VI (m. 30)-B-Flat major-I-V\(^7\)-I
   d. B-Flat Major: Measures 36-38, Cadenza
      i. I turning into V\(^7\) of E-Flat major

II. **Sonata Form**
   a. E-flat major: Measures 39-89, Exposition
      i. (39-42) Introduction, I-V
      ii. (43-58) First Theme, E-flat major to B-flat Major, I-V-I-V/VI-VI-V/V-V becoming I-V
      iii. (59-66) Transition 1, vi-V-I-vi\(^6/5\)-V\(^4/2\)
      iv. (67-80) Second Theme, I\(^6\)-V-I-V\(^7\)
      v. (81-88) Transition 2, B-flat-G-flat-D-flat
   b. D-major to F-major to D-flat major: Measures 89-109, Development
      i. (89-103) I-V\(^7\)-IV\(^6\) becoming ii\(^6\) in F major-V-I-IV-V-I-V/iii augmented sixth chords? to D-flat major
      ii. (104-109) Transition 3, V
   c. D-flat major: Measures 110-119, Slow Introduction Recapitulation
      i. (110-119) I-ii\(^6\)-(D-flat major becomes C-sharp minor which cadences on A-major, then it uses the French sixth chord to modulate to a half cadence in E-flat major)-V
   d. E-flat major: Measures 120-129, Recapitulation
      i. (120-129) First Theme, I-V-I-IV-V\(^7\)
e. E-flat major: Measures 130-159, *Coda*
   i. (130-131) 1st bridge, I
   ii. (132-141) 1st Phrase (second theme fragment), I-V-V/V-V-I
   iii. (142-143) 2nd bridge, I-V-V/V going to the flat VI
   iv. (144-154) 2nd Phrase (second theme fragment), flat VI-V-I\textsuperscript{6}-V\textsuperscript{6/4}-V\textsuperscript{7}-I
   v. (155-159) Extension, I
APPENDIX B: Supporting Material for *Cavatine*
CAVATINE

pour Trombone et Piano

TROMBONE Ténor

C. SAINT-SAËNS
Op. 144
Trombone - 2

Cavatine

\[\text{dim.}\]

\text{p dolce}

\text{expressivo slight accel.}

\text{cresc.}

\text{f largamente}

\text{mp}

\text{p}

\text{Allegro}

\text{mf}
Cavatine

I. Ternary Form
   a. D-flat major: Measures 1-70, A-section
      i. (1-2), Introduction in piano
      ii. (3-28) 1st melodic idea, I-6-V-I6-vi6-V/ii-flat VII
      iii. (29-52), 2nd melodic idea, flat vi-I-flat vi-V/V
      iv. (53-70), transition, chromatic decent to V in E major
   b. E major: Measures 71-122, B-Section
      i. (71-78), 1st phrase, I-IV4/3-V7-I-V6
      ii. (79-86), 2nd phrase, V6-flat VI6
      iii. (87-97), 3rd phrase, vii/IV-V-V6/4-G major as a passing chord to V7
      iv. (98-111), 4th phrase, e-sharp fully diminished chord used to delay tonic-V7-I-IV-V6/4.5/3-I
      v. (112-122), transition, I-flat VI-VI as a static modulation back to D-flat major
   c. D-flat major: Measures 123-219, A’
      i. (123-148) 1st melodic idea, I6-V-I6-vi6-V/ii
      ii. (149-176) 2nd melodic idea, flat VI-Chromatic descent to V
      iii. (177-206) transition, V-I-V6/4
      iv. (207-219) tag, V6/4-iii (substitute for V5/3-I(i 1st perfect authentic cadence of either A-section)