A PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO ARVO PÄRT’S *CONCERTO PICCOLO ÜBER B-A-C-H* FOR TRUMPET, STRINGS, HARPSICHORD, AND PIANO

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Arvo Pärt’s *Concerto Piccolo über B-A-C-H* for trumpet, strings, harpsichord, and piano is a brief yet challenging work in the trumpet repertoire. A carefully articulated performance guide is necessary to aid trumpeters in overcoming the numerous musical challenges presented in this piece. Currently, there is no resource that helps in solving performance choices and difficulties in this work.

This first section of this document provides historical and contextual information on Arvo Pärt, his compositional output during his experimental period, and subsequently, *Concerto Piccolo*. The second section includes a performance analysis of the work, while the third gives trumpet players pedagogical suggestions and practical exercises for proper preparation of *Concerto Piccolo*.

This guide presents performers with relevant background, analytical, and pedagogical information required for an informed and high-level performance.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Arvo Pärt’s *Concerto Piccolo über B-A-C-H* for trumpet, strings, harpsichord, and piano is a brief yet challenging work in the trumpet repertoire. A carefully articulated performance guide is necessary to aid trumpeters in overcoming the numerous musical challenges presented in this piece. Dedicated to world-renowned trumpet soloist Håkan Hardenberger, conductor Neeme Järvi, and the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra, *Concerto Piccolo* is Arvo Pärt’s only solo trumpet work. Pärt arranged the concerto in 1994 from his 1964 composition *Collage sur B-A-C-H* for strings, oboe, harpsichord, and piano. This collage style concerto contains musical elements influenced by both the Baroque period and twentieth century post-tonality. Each element is highlighted by abrupt shifts in style requiring the performer to be both stylistically sensitive and historically informed. Performance choices must be approached with an understanding of the Baroque style and post-tonal characteristics in order to depict an accurate interpretation. *Concerto Piccolo* also employs demanding trumpet techniques such as unusually wide intervallic leaps, difficult fingering patterns, and extreme range not found in most contemporary trumpet works. These challenges require pedagogical instruction and proper preparation in order to be performed successfully. This document provides performers with historical and pedagogical information required for such challenges.

Born in Paide, Estonia in 1935, Arvo Pärt is a prolific and unique contemporary composer. His music is “celebrated around the world to a degree rivaled in recent times only by that of the American minimalists.”¹ Since 1976, his “tintinnabuli”² technique has

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allowed him to establish a “highly individual, instantly recognizable style using the simplest materials.” However, *Concerto Piccolo* represents an earlier period that was greatly influenced by Johann Sebastian Bach. Based on the 1964 composition *Collage sur B-A-C-H*, *Concerto Piccolo* reflects a significant evolution in Pärt’s compositional development. Each piece uses direct quotations from J.S. Bach (in the second movement) and a B-A-C-H cipher (Bb, A natural, C natural, and B natural) to reveal a transitional period from Pärt’s post-tonal style to his tonal tintinnabuli style. Gaining an understanding of Pärt’s compositional approach during this period will guide the performer to an appropriate interpretation of *Concerto Piccolo*. Performers will make accurate choices concerning instrument choice, timbre, articulation, gesture, and balance with this understanding.

**State of Research**

Limited scholarly information exists about Arvo Pärt’s *Concerto Piccolo*, although sources concerning his life and other compositions are plentiful. Specifics on *Collage sur B-A-C-H* (*Concerto Piccolo*’s predecessor) are included in much of the available literature making it possible to research the stylistic and historical implications contained in the concerto. For example, Paul Hillier’s book, *Arvo Pärt*, is a comprehensive source of the composer’s life and music. It devotes the first three

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2 From the Latin for “sounding bells.”
5 Hillier, pg. 34
chapters to Pärt’s life, his stylistic development, and (what Hillier calls) his early serial/collage works.

Lyn Henderson’s article, “A Solitary Genius: The Establishment of Pärt’s Technique (1958-68)” concerns itself primarily with the beginning of Pärt’s musical output. Citing compositions from the late 1950s and 1960s, Henderson discusses Pärt’s journey through Modernism and the Avant-guard while referencing specific theoretical details of each composition. *Collage sur B-A-C-H* is referred to at length to support Henderson’s idea that 1964 was a significant turning point for Pärt’s compositional technique.\(^6\)

Benjamin Skipp’s “Out of Place in the Twentieth Century: Thoughts on Arvo Pärt’s Tintinnabuli Style” and Peter Quinn’s “Out with the Old and in with the New: Arvo Pärt’s ‘Credo’” reveal Pärt’s strong ties to J. S. Bach. Both authors argue that Bach’s influence guided Pärt to create innovative techniques that allowed him to combine post-tonality and Baroque characteristics.

Only one commercial recording exists of *Concerto Piccolo*. Performed by Håkan Hardenberger, Neeme Järvi, and the Gothenburg Symphony, this recording serves as an example for appropriate performance choices for the trumpeter and accompanying musicians.\(^7\) A greater number of performance options are found in the numerous recordings of *Collage sur B-A-C-H*. These recordings offer performers an opportunity to hear a foundation of sound concept and stylistic approach minus the trumpet solo. Each recording allows listeners to hear appropriate shifts in tempo, dynamic range, color,

\(^6\) Henderson, pg. 81-88.
balance, and style of both Collage sur B-A-C-H and Concerto Piccolo. However, these recordings do not provide the historical information and pedagogical suggestions required for successful preparation. Practicing the suggestions contained in this performance guide in addition to studying the available recordings is essential to executing a high-level performance.

Purpose

This document gives trumpet performers pedagogical suggestions and practical exercises to help overcome the extreme high and low-registers, unusually wide intervallic leaps and virtuosic fingering patterns presented in Concerto Piccolo. It will also give performers historical information to provide audiences with a more informed interpretation. Currently, there is no resource that helps in solving performance choices and difficulties in this work. Considering these difficulties and Arvo Pärt’s growing reputation among scholars and performers, a performance guide of Concerto Piccolo is required.

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CHAPTER 2

CONTEXT

Arvo Pärt is considered one of the world’s great minimalist composers. His “tintinnabuli” technique has given him individuality among his contemporaries, and has been the practice for his entire musical output since 1976. Pärt’s work prior to the 1970s incorporates an experimental period that navigated Modernism, Serialism, and the Avant-Guard. *Concerto Piccolo* represents a compositional style that Pärt utilized in the early 1960s. He uses a collage form in which conflicting aesthetics of Baroque style tonality and post-tonal dissonance exist simultaneously as the main idea of the concerto.

Biographer Paul Hillier states:

Pärt’s earlier compositions offer a direct allegory of recent musical history, not just in the stylistic evolution they represent, but in the growing frequency with which, in a single work, tonality and dissonance are placed in direct opposition. This opposition duly becomes the thematic “subject” of the music.9

In an interview, Pärt states that he had “very few” compositional influences during this experimental period.10 The political climate of Soviet Estonia during the late 1950s and early 1960s allowed for little Western influence. Pärt explains that he had only “heard some works by Boulez and Webern, and some by Nono…that’s about all.”11 In the early 1960s, Pärt was studying composition at the Tallinn Conservatory where he described his experience as follows:

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9 Hillier, pg. 2.
11 Arvo Pärt, “An Interview…” pg. 130.
When I was studying we had two books of exercises by Eimert and Krenek and that was all, apart from a few odd examples or illegal cassettes. But one doesn't need to know that much - if someone says that there's a country where the people dance on only one leg and you've never seen it, then you can try it yourself if you want: you might do it better than the people who did it in the first place!\(^{12}\)

However, by 1964, Bach’s influence on *Collage sur B-A-C-H* and subsequently *Concerto Piccolo* would become obvious. *Concerto Piccolo* and *Collage* are constructed around a B-A-C-H cipher and use direct quotations from Bach’s *Sixth English Suite*, which show an obvious homage to the Baroque composer. When discussing Pärt’s *Collage sur B-A-C-H* and *Credo*, Benjamin Skipp states, “they share a reliance on the effect of alternation achieved through quotation of Bach’s music and the playing of his own [Pärt’s].”\(^{13}\)

This influence greatly effected Pärt’s reputation in the world of Modernism. Lyn Henderson states that Pärt’s early works “revealed a remarkable eclecticism in his creative style.”\(^{14}\) Compositions preceding *Collage* contained a range of existing twentieth century compositional techniques such as serialism, atonality, and a neo-baroque style. The use of Bach’s music allowed Pärt to expand and evolve on his own ideas by combining the old with the new, a technique later perfected in his “tintinnabuli.” Peter Quinn describes the direct quotations of Bach’s music as “another means of furthering [Pärt’s] musical development.”\(^{15}\) Henderson uses the direct quotation and the B-A-C-H cipher as evidence that 1964 was the year Pärt “embarked on his momentous

\(^{12}\) Arvo Part, “An Interview…” pg. 130.
\(^{14}\) Henderson, pg. 84.
journey back to tonality.”¹⁶ For the sake of this study, the musicological significance of
Concerto Piccolo’s compositional style lies in its transition from Pärt’s experimental
phase to his tonal “tinntinabuli.”

¹⁶ Henderson, pg. 84.
CHAPTER 3
PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

A performance analysis for each movement must be done to examine orchestration, formal construction, motivic development, and melodic/harmonic structure of *Concerto Piccolo*. This analysis will give trumpet players a musical understanding required for an accurate interpretation.

The scored orchestration for *Concerto Piccolo* is essential for a high level performance. Benjamin Skipp explains that the effect of contrast between tonality and atonality is achieved “through the play of vastly alternating musical parameters.”\(^{17}\) In order to accomplish this, performers are required to use the instruments Pärt calls for. Although temptations to create a piano reduction of this work may exist, it is impossible to successfully perform *Concerto Piccolo* unless the proper instrumentation of trumpet, strings, harpsichord and piano is utilized.

Movement I: Preciso

The first movement of *Concerto Piccolo* is organized around 4 motives contained in the trumpet part (Figure 1a). These motives are accompanied by a harmonic structure that incorporates the B-A-C-H cipher, which highlights the framework for the entire piece (figure 1b).

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\(^{17}\) Skipp, pg.7-8.  
In this case, Skipp refers to the orchestration of Part’s *Credo*, but the same is true for *Concerto Piccolo*. 
Figure 1a: Measures 1-4, 10, 28-32, and 62 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* showing motives A-D. These trumpet motives are centered on throughout the entire piece.  

Figure 1b: Measure 9 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the B-A-C-H harmony in the strings. Notice the Bb in the Viola, the A natural in the Celli, the C natural in the first violins, and the B natural in the second violins.

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19 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 3
The four motives highlight contrasting sections within the movement (Figure 2), and are expanded upon to create thematic material throughout.

**Figure 2:** Table that outlines the structure and form of the 1st movement of *Concerto Piccolo*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section/Motive</th>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Harmonic Structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/A</td>
<td>1-9</td>
<td>Bb Major</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/B</td>
<td>10-27</td>
<td>Bb-A-C-B natural (cipher) and transpositions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/C</td>
<td>27-52</td>
<td>A minor and Bb-A-C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/D</td>
<td>52-82</td>
<td>ambiguous and ending in b minor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Organization around motivic material as a means for formal construction was a technique used by Johann Sebastian Bach. Modernist composers, such as Arvo Pärt, drew on this influence. Phillip Glass explains:

> The techniques you learn through the study of Bach work very well for contemporary music. If you take a look at the way fugues are written, the key of the piece and the structure of the melody will determine how the fugue is written, in other words, the content and form are linked very close together. That’s a very modernist idea. You don’t have that idea in the classical or even romantic periods, you have it in the [Baroque] period, and you have it in the modernist period. So the idea of form and content for Bach was almost identical, so therefore certain procedures of Baroque music…turn up in contemporary music…

Performers will notice that the form is organized around the content presented by each motive throughout the entire movement. New motivic material is presented only when preceding thematic material is concluded. This methodology identifies clear sections and allows performers to recognize the overall structure of the movement.

The first section is based on motive A, as seen in Figure 1a. Pärt creates a trumpet-like character by presenting the performer with a fanfare motive that explores the

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entire range of the instrument. Clear articulation and precise rhythm are essential to executing this character properly. The thematic material created from the beginning trumpet motive outlines a Bb major triad that exhibits a tonal sonority. The accompanying voices support this character with an ostinato eighth note figure in the same key, as seen in Figure 3.

**Figure 3:** Measures 1-3 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting eighth note ostinato in the strings.  

Pärt continues this accompanying ostinato throughout the entire movement, but transitions to a completely atonal sonority beginning in the second section. Within this sonority exists the first example of the B-A-C-H cipher used as part of the harmonic structure (Figure 1a).

Motive B in the trumpet part highlights a Bach-like sequential pattern similar to the Prelude of Bach’s Cello Suite no. 1 (BWV 1007), as seen in Figure 5. Pärt draws from Bach’s influence by allowing the performer to explore this similarity while maintaining his own atonal sonority and strict rhythm. Performers must maintain the given tempo without rubato in order to adhere to Pärt’s Preciso style.

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21 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 2
Figure 5: Measure 10 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* and Measure 1 of the Prelude from *Cello Suite No. 1* by J.S. Bach highlighting similar sequential patterns.

![Figure 5](image)

The third section is based on the rhythmic and melodic expansion of Motive C. The motive begins as a simple five-note statement in the key of a minor. Pärt then utilizes diminishing rhythmic values and incorporates half step intervals to support the growing tension and shift to atonality. The fully developed theme based on Motive C is highlighted below in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Measures 39-44 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the developed theme from Motive C.

![Figure 6](image)

The re-statement of Motive A in the key of c minor in measures 45-52 represents the climax of the movement and the end of the third section. Pärt calls for the movement’s fullest dynamic (ff) and thickest accompaniment texture to highlight this climax. He also requires the trumpeter to perform an accented version of the opening motive that expands to the top of the instrument’s range. These characteristics are presented in Figure 7.

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22 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 3.
The final section is based on Motive D. Pärt uses the development of this simple figure to frame the conclusion of the first movement. He augments rhythmic values and adds one pitch per augmentation to complete a transposed version of the B-A-C-H cipher, as seen in Figure 8. The last four measures contain the full statement of this cipher in the solo trumpet part. Performers must be aware of the development of this figure in order to
present it clearly to an audience. Allowing the trumpet part to be heard above the texture will add clarity to the performance.

**Figure 8:** Final statement of transposed B-A-C-H cipher in measures 83-86 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo*.²⁵

Movement II: Lento

The second movement of *Concerto Piccolo* is a clear example of Arvo Pärt’s collage form. It contains a direct quotation from the Baroque period in the form of the Sarabande from Bach’s *Sixth English Suite* followed by thick, atonal tone clusters characteristic of Twentieth century post-tonality. Figure 9 outlines the structure of the second movement.

**Figure 9:** Outline of *Concerto Piccolo*’s 2nd Movement Collage Style.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-10</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>11-16</td>
<td>Atonal/Distorted Melody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>12-25</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>26-32</td>
<td>Atonal/Distorted Melody</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>33-41</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

²⁵ Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 16
The first 10 measures of the movement begin in a Baroque style in the key of D minor with the ornamented melody in the piccolo trumpet, as seen in Figure 10. Mary Cyr sites Michel Corrette’s 1738 method, *L’école d’Orphée*:

In sarabandes, adagios, largos, and other expressive pieces, it is necessary to play the whole notes, half notes, and quarter notes with long bow strokes and swell the sounds at the end. But for the ends of phrases and of sections, it is necessary to begin the bow stroke quietly, strengthen in the middle, and finish it by diminishing the sound. This bow stroke makes a very beautiful effect.  

**Figure 10:** mm. 1-9 of Movement Two of *Concerto Piccolo über B-a-c-h* highlighting Pärt’s Baroque Style.  

In this case, the trumpeter should maintain the proper style and emulate string-like musical gestures in order to best represent the Baroque character. By measure 11, Pärt shifts to a completely atonal harmonic structure highlighted by the tone clusters in the piano (as seen in Figure 11).

**Figure 11:** mm. 10-13 of Movement Two of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting Pärt’s Post-Tonal Style.  

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These characteristics are repeated throughout the movement. Pärt alternates styles by presenting opposing material when a preceding style is brought to rest.

Pärt connects each style in this movement by utilizing a simple, yet brilliant compositional technique. He constructs a distorted melody directly related to Bach’s Sarabande in each atonal section. Each individual voice is required to play a transposed version of the Baroque melody. However, when played within the ensemble, all melodies are separated by half step (seen in Figure 12).

**Figure 12:** Measures 9-12 in the 2nd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the melodic material in the strings separated by half step.\(^{29}\)

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\(^{29}\) Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 17.
The dissonance created by this distorted melody achieves an atonal aesthetic while representing the melodic structure of Bach’s Sarabande.

Pärt’s prescribed instrumentation of trumpet, strings, harpsichord, and piano is essential for the presentation of *Concerto Piccolo*. Perhaps the best example of this mandate is the complete quotation of Bach’s *Sarabande* from his *Sixth English Suite* juxtaposed with Pärt’s post-tonal style in the concerto’s second movement. Figure 13 outlines Part’s use of instrumentation in this movement.

**Figure 13:** Outline of Part’s use of instrumentation in the 2nd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Instrumentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
<td>Trumpet, Strings, Harpsichord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Atonal</td>
<td>Strings, Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
<td>Trumpet, Strings, Harpsichord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Atonal</td>
<td>Strings, Piano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
<td>Trumpet, Strings, Harpsichord</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The choice of piccolo trumpet, strings, and harpsichord highlights a baroque aesthetic while the percussive nature of the piano combined with dissonant chords in the strings presents the “abrasive” characteristic of post-tonality.\(^{30}\) \(^{31}\) These shifts in style and

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\(^{30}\) Edward Tarr, *The Trumpet*, 3rd Ed., trans. S.E. Plank and Edward H. Tarr, (Chandler, Arizona: Hickman Music Editions. 2008), p. 134. Tarr mentions that since the rediscovery of Bach’s music, smaller trumpets in higher keys are being used. The use of piccolo trumpet here not only makes it stylistically appropriate, but easier on the trumpet player as well.

\(^{31}\) Hillier, pg. 2.
orchestration are the most important aspects of the second movement and should be emphasized when presenting the concerto to an audience.

Movement III: Deciso

The third movement of *Concerto Piccolo* is organized over transposed and inverted versions of the B-A-C-H cipher. The note row seen in figure 14 is used as a means of formal and melodic construction in the accompanying voices throughout the movement.

**Figure 14:** Measures 1-4 of the 3rd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the 10 note fugue subject. Notice the first 4 notes are the B-A-C-H cipher.\(^{32}\)

Pärt weaves each statement together with strict imitative counterpoint, much like a Bach fugue. The first three measures (figure 15) show this compositional technique that sets the tone for the entire movement.

**Figure 15:** Measures 1-4 of the 3rd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the beginning of the Fugue using the B-A-C-H cipher.\(^{33}\)

Hillier describes Pärt’s serial/collage style as an “abrasive idiom.”


The thematic material presented in the trumpet part supports the B-A-C-H subject and outlines the overall structure of the movement. The development of this material clearly defines each section much like the first movement. Figure 16 highlights the form of Movement III.

**Figure 16:** Outline of the 3rd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Thematic Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-14</td>
<td>B-A-C-H Ciphers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>15-34</td>
<td>Ornamented Fugue Subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>35-end</td>
<td>Wide intervals and ascending scales</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The trumpet material beginning in measure 4 is an example of the inverted and transposed versions of the B-A-C-H cipher (seen in Figure 17).

**Figure 17:** Measure 4 of the 3rd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the trumpet motive that represents an inverted version of the B-A-C-H cipher.\(^{34}\)

![Musical notation](image)

The entire first section consists of these four note motives that change in rhythmic value and extend into the upper register. Each motive begins on an offbeat and is presented as sixteenth notes, triplets, and eighth notes. Pärt gives the trumpeter accents on each downbeat to aid in maintaining the pulse. Rhythmic precision is crucial in highlighting development and progression throughout the first section.

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\(^{34}\) Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 24.
The second section consists of ornamented and inverted versions of the fugue subject. Figure 18 highlights each statement.

Figure 18: Measures 15-17, 21-22, and 25-27 of the 3rd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting the thematic material presented in the trumpet part.\(^{35}\)

![Material 1](image1.png)
![Material 2](image2.png)
![Material 3](image3.png)

Each statement in the second section is a transposed inversion of the fugue subject. The motives are separated by a sequence of ascending half steps, descending minor thirds, and descending half steps. This group of intervals organized over repeated triplets, sequential sixteenth notes, and sustained pitches create an ornamented version of the subject. This material allows the trumpeter to join the imitative counterpoint while maintaining a soloistic quality.

The primary material in the third section consists of wide intervals and ascending scales (Figure 19).

Figure 19: Measures 36-38 of the 3rd Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting wide intervals and ascending scales.\(^{36}\)

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\(^{36}\) Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 27.
Pärt displaces each interval by almost two octaves, which sets a very different tone from the close intervals of the subject. He also creates a sense of progression by increasing the repetitions of ascending scales as the movement ends.
CHAPTER 4

PEDAGOGICAL PERFORMANCE GUIDE

Concerto Piccolo presents the soloist with opportunities to perform physically demanding trumpet techniques, such as the extreme upper register, unusually wide intervals, and difficult fingering patterns. This chapter will examine specific passages in the concerto that prove to be both physically and musically difficult. Each passage will be accompanied by practical exercises and pedagogical suggestions that will aid in proper preparation.

Extreme Upper Register

Concerto Piccolo presents challenges that require the trumpeter to be both physically strong and musically sensitive. The ability to execute pitches in the extreme upper register with a wide range of dynamic colors is a challenge unique to this concerto. This difficulty is primarily due to the physical strain placed on the embouchure. Kristian Steenstrup’s Teaching Brass explains:

If C6 and above are played, it is exceedingly exhausting for the lip musculature, since these notes have a few harmonics in common with the natural frequencies of the instrument. Hence, these notes get no help from shared frequencies, which would let the oscillations go back and forth in the instrument, thus maintaining the standing wave; instead, everything is sent into the surrounding room, and in connection with the trumpet player’s efforts to maintain sufficient contraction of the lip musculature for such notes, this creates quite a strain on the musculature of the lips.\(^\text{37}\)

The first movement of Concerto Piccolo presents a passage that requires the trumpeter to play and sustain a string of high concert Eb’s (Figure 20).

\(^{37}\) Kristian Steenstrup, Teaching Brass (Gylling: Narayana Press, 2007) pg. 22-23.
Figure 20: mm. 49-52 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting high concert Eb’s in the trumpet\(^{38}\)

![Musical notation](image)

The performer must develop a reliable upper register in order to perform this passage successfully. The daily practice of fundamental exercises and musical studies will enable the performer to develop consistently reliable skill in the upper register (as seen in Figures 21a and 21b).

**Figure 21:** Exercise/Etude from James Stamp’s *Warm-ups and Studies* stretching to and sustaining a high E.\(^{39}\)

![Musical notation](image)

**Figure 21b:** Exercise from W. M. Smith’s Top Tones for Trumpet extending to a high Eb.\(^{40}\)

![Musical notation](image)

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\(^{38}\) Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 11.


\(^{40}\) W.M. Smith, *Top Tones for the Trumpeter: 30 Modern Etudes* (New York: Carl Fischer Inc., 1936) pg. 3.
These exercises require large amounts of strength and flexibility. Steenstrup gives insight on building embouchure strength by stating that “many brass players find it valuable to practice flexibility exercises going through the harmonics using the same fingering or slide position over the entire range, as this procedure is very efficient in strengthening the lip musculature.”

Having clear musical goals must be the starting point when preparing an exercise or study. Keith Johnson’s *The Art of Trumpet Playing* states: “[p]racticing in the extreme registers must be approached artistically, by utilizing increased range in truly musical studies.” Preparing these materials in an artistic fashion will help the trumpeter develop a strong range within a musical context.

The process of developing a strong upper register takes time. The trumpeter must first be able to produce a full, relaxed sound in the middle register. A proper balance of “embouchure contraction, air compression, and flow-rate” must be discovered in order to extend one’s range. Developing the ability to play a half step higher every few weeks is a successful way to obtain a strong and comfortable upper-register. It will then be possible to prepare the mentioned exercises and studies.

**Wide Intervals**

Performing wide intervallic leaps, like those seen in figure 19, is a challenge to the trumpet player in *Concerto Piccolo*. Other examples of this challenge also exist in the first and third movements (figures 22a and 22b).

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41 Steenstrup, pg. 23.
43 Johnson, pg. 100-104.
**Figure 22a:** Measure 7 of the 1st Movement of *Concerto Piccolo* highlighting a two-octave leap.  

![Figure 22a](image)

**Figure 22b:** Measures 50-52 of the 3rd Movement of Concerto Piccolo highlighting a two-octave leap.  

![Figure 22b](image)

Good listening skills are critical to accuracy. Steenstrup explains that:

"[f]or many brass players, lack of success comes from being unable to relate mentally to written music; that is, they cannot activate the brain to ‘hear’ the music that they see on the page…In the absence of singing, the lip musculature does not receive any message regarding the degree of contraction required for each pitch…"  

Jean Baptist Arban’s *Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet* designates an entire chapter to the practice of intervals. Figure 23a illustrates an exercise from this chapter.

**Figure 23a:** Page 125 of Arban’s *Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet* highlighting the practice of wide intervals.  

![Figure 23a](image)

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44 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 3  
45 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 28  
46 Steenstrup, pg. 46  
Another beneficial study comes from the chapter entitled “Timing Drills” from Michael Sachs’ *Daily Fundamentals for the Trumpet* (Figure 23b).

**Figure 23b:** Page 36 of Michael Sachs’ *Daily Fundamentals for Trumpet* highlighting the practice of two octave leaps.  

Each of these exercises present similar challenges to *Concerto Piccolo*. They allow the trumpeter to isolate the skills needed to perform wide intervals. Practicing these studies slowly and thoughtfully will help develop the strength and flexibility needed to properly prepare *Concerto Piccolo*.

Preparation must begin with a lyrical approach. As mentioned before, trumpeters must first be able to sing what they wish to play. Keith Johnson states “[t]he trumpet sounds best when it conveys these same voice-like qualities in as musical and unmechanical a fashion as possible…[t]he most technically difficult passages should always be well sung.” Singing each interval slowly and accurately will help the trumpeter gain the correct musical approach.

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Difficult Fingering Patterns

*Concerto Piccolo* contains passages that require great technical proficiency. For example, figures 24a and 24b present difficulties that necessitate masterful fingering technique.

**Figure 24a:** Measures 12-13 of the 1st Movement of Concerto Piccolo highlighting difficult fingering requirements. 49

![Difficult Fingering Patterns](image1)

**Figure 24b:** Measures 45-46 of the 3rd Movement of Concerto Piccolo highlighting a technically difficult passage. 50

![Difficult Fingering Patterns](image2)

Problems with this material arise when prepared too fast or without musical goals. Keith Johnson explains, “Emphasis on sheer technical virtuosity leads many players to work almost solely for speed rather than fullness and smoothness in moving from note to note.” 51 Airflow and sound must be the primary focus when preparing such technically difficult passages.

Many sources exist that aid in developing finger dexterity. Perhaps the most widely used book in this regard is Herbert L. Clarke’s *Technical Studies for the Cornet*. Figures 25a and 25b are examples from this work that relate to the difficulties presented in *Concerto Piccolo*.

49 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 4.
50 Arvo Pärt, *Concerto Piccolo*, pg. 28.
51 Johnson, pg. 76.
The concept of a beautiful sound created by full and free airflow must be used to prepare these passages. Johnson makes the assertion that “proper fluidity is needed if the connections are to enhance the musical line rather than convey the impression of disjointed pitches…[s]uch musical connections can be realized when the air flow is both free and sustained.” The musical phrase should be highlighted similar to a flow study or familiar tune. Speed may be gradually increased as this concept is mastered. This process will allow the performer to prepare difficult passages efficiently and musically.

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53 Clarke, pg. 16.
54 Johnson, pg. 76.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Concerto Piccolo uber B-A-C-H for trumpet, strings, harpsichord, and piano represents an important transition in Arvo Part’s compositional life. The opposition between the Baroque style and 20th Century post-tonality allows performers to experience a shift from modernism to a tonal nature that developed into his well-known “tintinnabuli” style. Pertinent historical information is required for an accurate interpretation. The abrupt aesthetic changes within this work must be supported by informed performance choices. Trumpet players will find the concerto technically demanding and musically challenging. Pedagogical suggestions and practical exercises, presented in this document will assist trumpeters in overcoming difficulties and should serve as a guide for successful performances.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


