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An approach to performing Handel sonatas on the saxophone

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AN APPROACH TO PERFORMING HANDEL SONATAS ON THE SAXOPHONE

A Monograph

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Musical Arts

in

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ABSTRACT

The saxophone has a long history with transcriptions and arrangements, which augment the saxophone’s repertoire and provide an historical context through which saxophonists may experience music that predates the invention of their instrument. Transcriptions, particularly those from the baroque period, provide excellent pedagogical material for inexperienced students whose educational needs would perhaps not be best served by more contemporary music.

The various transcriptions of baroque music contributed by Marcel Mule and Sigurd Raschèr continue to be valuable additions to the repertoire, serving students’ pedagogical needs by providing appealing, accessible, and suitably challenging music. However, these transcriptions provide only a minimum of attention to issues of style and historical performance practice.

This study provides a starting point for an historical approach to performing baroque music on the saxophone by focusing specifically on baroque performance practice as it applies to selected solo sonatas by Handel. Initially addressing general baroque style, this approach then presents several specific stylistic traits as they can be applied to a Handel transcription for saxophone.

This monograph provides a realistic means for saxophonists to benefit more from baroque transcriptions. The application of basic elements of baroque performance practice to saxophone transcriptions can provide a different and valuable experience of core musical elements such as 1) tension and release, as expressed, for example, in the baroque style of “leaning” in an appoggiatura, or through the concept of speaking rather
than singing and the resulting shorter phrases; 2) the understanding of the structure of a melody as realized by creating a skeleton and then composing or improvising one’s own ornamentation; and 3) a new understanding of the expressive devices available to performers as realized through a sparing use of vibrato, for example, or the use of beat hierarchy.

There is enormous musical value in the study of past performance practices and saxophonists only stand to benefit from understanding these concepts as they apply to the transcriptions in our repertoire.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY

The art of transcription, also known as “arrangement,”¹ has a long history owing to the fact that musicians have been borrowing, quoting, and arranging pre-existing compositions throughout the documentation of Western music.² There are many examples of composers arranging or re-setting their own compositions, including Brahms’s transcriptions of his op. 120 clarinet sonatas for viola and violin and Schumann’s cello and piano arrangement of his own Fantasiestücke, op.73, originally for clarinet and piano. There are also numerous instances of composers arranging the music of other composers, for example, Ravel’s orchestral transcription of Mussorgsky’s Pictures at an Exhibition originally for solo piano, Mozart’s re-orchestration of Handel’s Messiah, and Liszt’s piano arrangements of various operas and symphonies.

Although some transcriptions are still widely accepted and frequently performed (for instance, Brahms’s op. 120 on the viola and the Mussorgsky/Ravel Pictures), there is sometimes a stigma attached to them. This stigma stems largely from the objectives of the early music movement, particularly with regards to the performance of transcriptions of works composed prior to the 19th century.

The early music movement as it exists today began in the 1940s, picked up momentum in the 1950s, and grew exponentially throughout the remaining decades of the

century.  

This movement has raised important issues about performance practices and has consequently been the impetus for a substantial increase in the number of high-quality audio recordings of early music as well as general information on the topic.

The early music movement has also been the source of unyielding precepts among some of its practitioners, the most rigid of these precepts being that 1) music should be performed on period instruments—the instruments that the composer would have heard—in order to recreate, as exactly as possible, the sounds from the past and 2) music should be played in the style that was prevalent at the time of composition. Such assertions have been the springboard for an ongoing debate featuring many disparate opinions regarding the exclusive use of period instruments and the premise of “historically informed performance practice.”

The early music side of the argument relies heavily on written documents from the past—the treatises of Quantz, Leopold Mozart, and CPE Bach among others, as well as surviving manuscripts from the composers themselves—and attempts to ascertain the composers’ intentions based on historical context rather than on a “received tradition” that is passed down from previous generations of performers and teachers.

In contrast to the tenets held by the more resolute of early music practitioners is an opposing viewpoint that advocates this concept of a “received tradition.” This concept is represented by scholars such as Charles Rosen, who writes about “a living and unbroken musical language from the past into the new sounds of contemporary...
instruments”⁶ and Richard Taruskin, who claims that “no matter the instrument, it’s in the strategies and considerations [of the performer] that the artistry of performance resides…”⁷

In an essay titled “ Tradition, Anxiety, and the Current Musical Scene” musicologist Robert P. Morgan describes the dilemma faced by musicians regarding the performance of early music today. The following excerpt from Morgan’s essay sheds some light on the concept of a “living” or “received” tradition as opposed to the most extreme opinions found among early music specialists:

Given the impossibility of finding any definitive means of interpreting early music on our own terms, one understands the appeal—or, in the view of some, the moral imperative—of treating this music as irrevocably cut off from the present, hermetically sealed from the contamination of anachronistic impurities. Thus the tendency to handle these musical languages as fixed and inviolable entities, impervious to time and historical process. Rather than trying to revive them, to give them new life through an infusion of new ideas, lending them the sort of richness and flexibility characteristic of a living tradition, we bring them back as fossils, emblems from a lost world that we may greatly admire (indeed, perhaps infinitely prefer to our own) but in which we can never reside as natives.⁸

Scholars such as Rosen, Taruskin, and Morgan challenge any presumptions that claim to know the composers’ intentions (especially since these composers could never have heard any of the modern timbres in question) and suggest that performances of old music on modern instruments can be as relevant as the more historically accurate alternative of performing old music strictly on old instruments.

Some instrumentalists choose to perform baroque music, not on the historical instrument for which a work is thought to have been composed, but on the modern

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descendant of that instrument. For example, there are pianists who perform the Beethoven Sonatas on the fortepiano (the instrument for which the sonatas were initially composed) and there are pianists who perform this music on the modern piano. Bach’s Six Suites for Solo Cello (BWV 1007-1012) are often performed on the modern cello as opposed to the cello of the 18th century, which featured gut strings, a straight neck, and a lower bridge height. The flute sonatas by Bach and Handel were composed for a wooden baroque flute that is drastically different from the modern metal flute on which these works are often performed today. Should performers on the modern piano, cello, or flute discard the music of Beethoven, Bach, and Handel based solely on the fact that it was composed for an earlier version of their current instrument? Or should these performers learn to play period instruments and only perform early music in that medium?

While the issues of historical accuracy and the use of period instruments fuel a passionate debate for some early music specialists and their opponents alike, the present study is intended as neither an endorsement nor a refutation for either side of the argument. Instead, it seeks to promote the benefits from both sides of the debate by proffering the value of an historically informed approach to the performance of Handel sonatas on the saxophone.

Invented in the mid-19th century, the saxophone shares similarities with each of the other woodwinds, yet has no definitive ancestral ties to any single pre-19th century instrument. For example, the modern flute can claim the wooden baroque flute as a clear and obvious relation, but the saxophone has no such direct lineage. Moreover, the modern flute inherits the repertoire of its instrumental predecessors, whereas the

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saxophone, having no direct ancestors, cannot claim any repertoire written prior to its invention in 1838. This results in a relatively small body of original repertoire when compared to that of the flute and many other instruments.

Therefore, transcriptions have historically served saxophonists in three ways. First, by enabling access to music that pre-dates the saxophone’s invention, transcriptions provide an immediate means by which to understand the history of Western music; second, by augmenting the saxophone’s repertoire in both volume and quality; and third, by serving as high quality, yet accessible instructional material for aspiring saxophonists.

With regards to the first point, transcriptions in the saxophone repertoire provide a practical experience of the music of the past, which is essential for a core understanding of the music of today. This is true in the broad sense—that knowledge of a wide historical range of music is an absolute necessity for the serious music student—and in a more specific sense when, for example, composers acknowledge the past with historical models in their compositions. There are numerous examples of such historical references within the repertory of original works for saxophone. The Albright sonata, a significant work for saxophone and piano, has four movements entitled “Two-Part Invention,” “La follia nuova: A lament for George Cacioppo,” “Scherzo ‘Will o’ the Wisp’” and “Recitativo and Dance.” The designations of these titles compel performers to have some understanding of the history of music.

Other examples of pre-19th century references from the saxophone repertory includeIngolf Dahl’s Concerto for Alto Saxophone and Wind Orchestra, the first and second movements of which are entitled, “Recitative” and “Passacaglia” and the Sonata

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11Hemke, Early History of the Saxophone, 10.
for Alto Saxophone and Piano by Wolfgang Jacobi which features a “sarabande” as the second movement.

While saxophonists today enjoy a sizeable repertoire of original works, early saxophonists such as Thomas Ryan\textsuperscript{12} and Marcel Mule, among others, relied on transcriptions to augment their performance repertory. Transcriptions and arrangements have played a significant role in the saxophone’s history since its earliest appearances.\textsuperscript{13} In fact, a transcription provided the means for the saxophone’s first public performance: On a concert in Paris in 1844 Berlioz’ conducted a transcription of his own \textit{Chant sacré} which featured Adolphe Sax himself on the bass saxophone.\textsuperscript{14}

In addition to supplementing the repertoire and providing historical context, transcriptions have also aided saxophonists in the way that the instrument is both learned and taught. Saxophonist Jean-Marie Londeix remarked that it was through playing the Bach Cello Suites that he “truly learned how to play.”\textsuperscript{15} He lists specific ways in which his own saxophone playing was improved by practicing the music of Bach:

I thus acquired my endurance, and I also developed my mind, memory, lips, embouchure, and intonation. I also improved my awareness of style, developed my taste, the quality of my attacks, my technical accuracy and my sensitivity to pitch—all this while playing a music of such marvelous quality…\textsuperscript{16}

From a pedagogical standpoint, the body of original repertoire for saxophone can sometimes be found lacking in appropriate music for students. Early solo pieces for the instrument were often virtuosic \textit{tours de force}, used for showcasing Sax’s new invention

\textsuperscript{12}Hemke, \textit{Early History of the Saxophone}, 393-94.
\textsuperscript{14}Léon Kochnitzky, \textit{Adolphe Sax and His Saxophone} (World Saxophone Congress, 1972), 16-17.
\textsuperscript{16}Ibid.
or solos de concours, composed as vehicles for advanced students to pass an examination. In either case, the music would be inappropriately difficult for an inexperienced student. On the other hand, it is equally inappropriate to build students’ playing foundations on “modern” music alone, as the music of the 20th and 21st centuries often requires extended techniques or advanced playing skills beyond those of an undergraduate saxophone student. These circumstances create a need for high quality pieces that are more appropriate for a specific level of developing player. Baroque transcriptions fill this need in several ways: with pieces that are harmonically and rhythmically very accessible to developing players; with pieces where the tessitura of the instrumental writing is less extreme compared to that of contemporary music in general; and pieces in which the technical demands present suitably challenging yet attainable goals.

As mentioned previously, transcriptions have been a part of the saxophone repertory since the instrument’s earliest appearances. The mid-1900s saw the publication of many transcriptions, particularly from the baroque period, and a significant number of which are the work of Marcel Mule and Sigurd Raschèr.

Mule and Raschèr are widely recognized as the founders of classical saxophone playing. Both were concerned with broadening the saxophone’s repertoire and their association with composers resulted in numerous compositions, many of which now serve as the core repertoire for the instrument: Jacques Ibert’s Concertino da camera, Alexander Glazunov’s concerto, Paule Maurice’s Tableaux de Provence, and Henri Tomasi’s Ballade, to name a few. In addition to commissioning and inspiring new works

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17 Ingham, Cambridge Companion to the Saxophone, 52-53.
for the saxophone, both Mule and Raschèr contributed directly to the saxophone repertory by creating their own transcriptions of baroque music.

These published transcriptions—among them works by Handel, Bach, and Eccles—are widely known among saxophonists and are commonplace in saxophone teaching studios. These transcriptions are valuable additions to the repertoire, serving students’ needs in all of the ways mentioned previously. Nonetheless, they offer little direction on the subjects of historical performance practice or stylistic issues. In a brief note in his edition of a sonata by Eccles, Raschèr states that there “need not be any misgivings about the fact that the Saxophone did not exist in Eccles’ day as his contemporaries were rather liberal in transcribing their own works as well as those of other composers.” He concludes with: “It is altogether a question of style. A Saxophone player can develop such style by playing this music.”18 Clearly Raschèr was aware that a saxophonist would be faced with issues of style when approaching this transcription, but he offers no further direction on the topic.

Despite the enduring relationship between saxophonists and transcriptions, there has not been widespread attention given to the issues of style in the teaching and performing of baroque music on the saxophone. There remains much more to be gained from the study of this music if it is approached in an historically informed manner.

CHAPTER 2. PERFORMANCE

Considerations of Style

There is a perception that the current basic performance style in “classical” music relies on a “modern default setting.” For example, when a performer today sight-reads a piece of music about which they have no information beyond the notated score, the style in which he or she approaches the music is generally a combination of 19th century expressive devices combined with a 20th century sense of rhythmic accuracy.

In the case of “classical” saxophone playing, a sight-reading performance of an unknown composition will involve, more or less, these objectives: 1) a very present vibrato; 2) a very directed, continuous musical line increasing in intensity over several beats or measures; 3) an approach to dynamics featuring more extreme contrast between piano and forte; and 4) unless otherwise indicated, the tempo will remain generally constant.

Robert Philip, author of Performing Music in the Age of Recording (2004) observes that

a survey of recordings over the 20th century reveals a number of clear trends: the growing use of continuous vibrato, the decreasing use of portamento, a trend towards a narrower range of tempos within movements, a trend towards more accurate and literal interpretation of note values, a growing insistence on rhythmic clarity, a trend towards greater homogeneity of ensemble (in tone quality, phrasing and rhythm) and a general rise in standards of accuracy and discipline.

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There was also a tendency towards increasing volume, and greater force and intensity of expression…

If this is at all characteristic of the current stylistic approach to musical performance, then perhaps a study of 18th century performance practice would be, by virtue of its stark contrast, extremely illuminating for today’s performers.

For a 21st century performer, perhaps the most compelling and valuable attributes of baroque music are its flexibility and its subtlety. These ideals are espoused by Robert Donington, musicologist and author of several books on the performance of early music, in his statement that “so far from being, as once was thought, a rigid discipline, rhythmically strict and sonorously monotonous, baroque music abounds in variability. Beneath the symmetry, the flexibility; behind the scanty notation, the performer’s open options.”

It is a fact that some of this subtlety is directly related to the limited dynamic range of 18th century instruments, however, much of the flexibility and nuance that defines the baroque style is intimately related to performance choices of articulation, phrasing, and ornamentation. These are the broad topics through which the fundamental elements of baroque performance practice will be presented in this monograph.

**Preparing the Score**

As the purpose of this project is to provide a basic starting point for saxophonists studying baroque transcriptions, it is necessary to make some preliminary decisions about the music before proceeding to the specific stylistic issues of performance.

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I chose three sonatas by Handel to serve as the basis of this project. Two of these sonatas, HWV 370 and 373, are commonly known among saxophonists because many of us performed these works as students and now assign them to our own students.

Before continuing further, some clarification is required regarding these two sonatas: both HWV 370 and 373 are today considered to be spurious. Modern scholars have determined that it is unlikely that either sonata is a genuine work of Handel. The fact remains, however, that these pieces have been included among collections of Handel’s violin sonatas since their earliest appearances, including the latest edition of Bärenreiter—the preface of which includes an explanation by Terence Best of the puzzling history of these works and their dubious authorship. Furthermore, as the Händel-Werke-Verzeichnis\(^24\) (the authoritative catalog of the complete works of Handel and the source of the initials HWV) sees fit to assign each of these questionable works an official catalog number, then it is perhaps reasonable to consider the mystery to be irrelevant with regards to the scope of this monograph.

HWV 370 was arranged for alto saxophone and piano by Sigurd Raschèr and published in 1938 under the title *Sonata No. 3*.\(^25\) HWV 373, published in 1951 as the 6\(^{e}\) *Sonate*, was arranged for alto saxophone and piano by Marcel Mule.\(^26\) The third of the selected sonatas, HWV 367b, has not been published for saxophone and is one that I chose to arrange for alto saxophone and piano.


As the Händel-Werke-Verzeichnis was not published until 1978, neither Mule nor Raschèr could indicate the HWV catalog number on their respective transcriptions. Mule indicated on the title page of the 6th Sonata that the piece is originally for violin, however, apart from the scores themselves, there is no additional information included by either Mule or Raschèr in their transcriptions of these sonatas.

I began researching these pieces by purchasing a CD recording of Handel’s complete violin sonatas. Listening to this CD I recognized both the Mule and the Raschèr transcriptions, found their respective HWV numbers on the CD cover, and consequently have been able to find numerous recordings and a great deal of information about these works. I acquired an Urtext edition of the Handel violin sonatas (published by Bärenreiter) and also facsimiles of each of the original publications.

After identifying the pieces and securing a reliable performance score, I next needed to consider the particular issue of instrumentation. Even though both Mule and Raschèr offer a realization of the basso continuo part to be played on the piano alone, with no other continuo instrument, there is still enough speculation surrounding the historical performance of the basso continuo to warrant some investigation into the topic. Howard Mayer Brown, renowned scholar in early music performance practice, writes that in the 17th and early 18th centuries chamber music continuo practice seems to have been quite varied. There is little reason for assuming an obligatory partnership between a keyboard and a melodic bass-line instrument, and it is

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29 George Frideric Handel, Complete Works for Violin and Basso continuo, ed. Terence Best (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, 2002).
30 George Frideric Handel, Solos for a German Flute, a Hoboy, or Violin with a Thorough Bass for the Harpsichord or Bass Violin, (London: John Walsh, c. 1731-32) and Sonates pour un Traversière, un Violon ou Hautbois con Basso Continuo, (New York: Performers’ Facsimiles No. 151, 1996).
likely that Corelli and others who specified ‘violone ò cembalo’ for the bass parts of their sonatas really did regard either instrument as sufficient…

Terence Best, editor of the 2002 Bärenreiter Urtext edition of Handel’s *Complete Works for Violin and Basso continuo*, suggests that Handel may have sometimes abandoned the cello or bassoon and used just the harpsichord alone to perform his continuo parts. Today it is not uncommon to hear even baroque specialists presenting baroque sonatas on period instruments with only the keyboard playing the continuo, thus leaving out the cello or bassoon altogether.

I chose to adapt these Handel sonatas for solo saxophone and one player realizing the continuo part on the piano alone. I considered the possibility of performing these sonatas with harpsichord instead of piano—certainly the use of harpsichord would be more historically accurate—however, the saxophone and the harpsichord are mismatched when it comes to dynamic capabilities. So I decided that a parallel “modernizing” of the performing forces would be the most effective means for maintaining balance and capturing the flexibility and subtlety essential to baroque music, hence the selected instrumentation of saxophone with modern piano.

The next issue in preparing the score was to decide on a key for these pieces. With HWV 370 and 373, I elected to maintain the keys chosen by Mule and Raschèr. It is apparent that both Mule and Raschèr chose the keys for their respective arrangements with careful consideration for the integrity of the original score and of the range of the saxophone. Both of these transcriptions are set in a key that offers two and a half octaves within the saxophone’s normal range. Both arrangements place the alto saxophone in the

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32 Terence Best, preface to *Complete Works for Violin and Basso continuo*, by George Frideric Handel (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, 2002), XV.
key of F Major (A-flat Major for the piano), which is idiomatic and extremely suitable for players at all levels.

HWV 370 is originally written in the key of F Major for both the violin and the continuo, which allowed me to play the saxophone part directly from the Bärenreiter solo violin part. This was preferable to playing from the saxophone part in the Raschèr edition because I wanted to add my own articulations and ornaments. The Bärenreiter Urtext edition provided a “clean” solo part with no editorial additions.

Playing the saxophone part in the key of F Major requires that the piano part be transposed to the key of A-flat Major, thus leaving two options for the pianist: Take the continuo realization featured in the 2004 Bärenreiter edition and transpose it to the key of A-flat Major or just play from the realized version for piano (already in A-flat Major) provided in the Raschèr transcription.

For my own performances of HWV 370, I provided my collaborative pianist with the continuo realization featured in the Bärenreiter edition transposed to the key of A-flat Major. This transposition was a time-consuming task, but I preferred the Bärenreiter realization to that which is provided in the Raschèr transcription, which has thicker chords and more activity throughout, thereby detracting from the overall stylistic goals of the project. My pianist then edited the Bärenreiter part further, taking into account the lower range of the saxophone as compared to that of the violin or the traverso, and rendering a realization that worked in the key of A-flat Major on the piano.

The original key for HWV 373 is E Major and, while E Major fits well within the normal range on the saxophone, Marcel Mule elected to transpose the saxophone part up by a semitone, to the key of F Major (A-flat Major for the piano). I considered playing this sonata in E Major because, just as in HWV 370, I wanted to read directly from the
“clean” Bärenreiter solo violin part. However, I quickly realized Mule’s motives for changing the key: while E Major is idiomatic for the saxophone, it is more challenging for a young player than the key of F Major. For instance, the key signature of E Major is slightly more complicated, making the fast movements much more difficult for a younger student to play correctly at tempo. There is also one note (in bar 62 of the second movement) that is just beyond the saxophone range in the key of E Major. As Mule doubtlessly discovered, both of these problems are easily solved by putting the saxophone in the key of F Major.

Again, this transposition requires that the piano play in the key of A-flat Major, and, again, I provided my collaborative pianist with the realization transposed directly from the 2002 Bärenreiter edition. Also in order for me to have a clean saxophone part in the key of F Major, I transposed the entire written violin part in E Major up a semitone.

For my own transcription of HWV 367b, I found that the original key of B minor for the flute is perfectly idiomatic for the saxophone. Therefore I retained that key and played directly from the solo flute part from the 1995 Bärenreiter edition of Handel’s Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo. Then once again, I transposed the continuo realization featured in the 1995 Bärenreiter score.

These three sonatas, now catalogued as HWV 370, 373, and 367b, were initially published in two separate editions between 1730 and 1732. I consulted a facsimile of both original publications and compared them to the Bärenreiter Urtext edition and the arrangements by Raschèr and Mule. I considered performing HWV 370 and 367b from the facsimile of the original score because it included both the solo line and the bass line.

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33 George Frideric Handel, Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo, ed. Terence Best (Kassel: Bärenreiter-Verlag Karl Vötterle GmbH & Co. KG, 1995).
It was customary during the baroque period for the score to show only the solo line and the bass line with figured bass symbols, as the basso continuo part was realized at the performance. Reading this music on such a score is extremely beneficial because the soloist can then consider both the contour of the bass line and any chromatic alterations to the harmony.

Ultimately I elected to perform from the Bärenreiter parts instead of the original facsimiles because the notation on the original was slightly more difficult to read—for example, sometimes the stems of the notes appeared on the opposite side of the note head than is typical today—however, for future performances I will definitely re-consider this decision. It should be mentioned that Bärenreiter has in the past published an edition of Handel’s *Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo* that featured the bass line along with the solo line just as in the original facsimiles. This particular edition is not widely available now, but in my opinion, would be the most useful score for performance.

With regards to tuning, there was no set standard pitch during the 18th century, as pitch seems to have varied widely from place to place, although a’ = 415 is thought to have been fairly common and is often heard today when performers are using period instruments. Since my performances of these Handel sonatas involved playing on modern instruments, I elected to keep the tuning at the modern standard of a’ = 440.

It was typical in the baroque period for indications of tempo to also suggest the mood of each movement as well as the approximate speed. In his treatise from 1756, Leopold Mozart includes explanations of both tempo and mood for many of the most

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commonly found tempo markings in music from the period, such as “Largo: with much tranquility” and “Lentemente: quite leisurely.”  

Consideration of mood, combined with meter and the notation itself, presents the performer with some tangible information when searching for an appropriate tempo. Leopold Mozart asserted that, “Not only must one beat time correctly and evenly, but one must also be able to divine from the piece itself whether it requires a slow or a somewhat quicker speed” and that “every melodious piece has at least one phrase from which one can recognize quite surely what sort of speed the piece demands.” Similar advice comes from Johann Joachim Quantz who, in his 1752 treatise entitled On Playing the Flute, advises players to choose a tempo at which the music can be executed accurately and comfortably by the player.  

There is also a great deal to be learned about tempo choices in the baroque era as they relate to dance; however, Robert Donington reminds us that “under most conditions during the baroque period we are more likely to be confronted with instrumental forms which began as dances, but became more and more distantly removed from the ballroom and more and more liable to ornamental elaborations, as a result of which their tempos changed (usually by slowing down).”  

Donington, in his handbook, Baroque Music: Style and Performance, provides an extremely useful chart of various tempo indications with approximate metronome  

38 Ibid., 33.  
40 Donington, Baroque Music: Style and Performance, 17.
This chart is based largely on the detailed information provided by Quantz in his treatise from 1752, which also contains some relevant discussion and comparison of tempos.  

**Articulation and Phrasing**

Renowned harpsichordist and early music pioneer Gustav Leonhardt explains that most pieces of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries seem to want to speak instead of sing—though this is too simplistic a statement—whereas in the nineteenth century one thinks primarily about singing in long, sustained phrases. I think the nineteenth century, to put it roughly, is for sustained sounds, which are always under tension and always nourished; but I think before that it was exactly the contrary, it was more like speaking, which means wave-like, constantly rising then loosening up even within a single sentence.

On the same topic, pianist Malcolm Bilson states, “The concept of the long, continuous line was drilled into all of us in every conservatory in the world. [In order to approach baroque style] we have to learn a new language.”

In simple terms, baroque music thrives on shorter phrases as opposed to music of the romantic period, which thrives on longer phrases. This idea, based on the general concept of speaking rather than singing, is one of the core concepts of baroque performance style and is essential for an historically informed performance of baroque music.

For the purposes of this discussion, the general categories of articulation, phrasing, and ornamentation will be used to organize the many specific stylistic tools used by the performer. These three general categories will not always be clearly marked

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44 Ibid., 303.
because it is oftentimes impossible to determine where exactly one ends and the other begins: certain issues of phrasing are inseparable from articulation just as particular uses of ornamentation play an intricate part in the phrasing of a piece of music; and many ornaments can easily be discussed as articulations.

The term “articulation” can refer to the beginning of the tone. In instrumental music this would be known as the “attack” and would refer specifically to “tonguing” on a wind instrument or to the bow stroke on a string instrument such as the violin.

However “articulation,” in the broadest sense, can encompass many facets of musical style, including not only the beginnings of individual notes, but also the manner in which notes are ended, emphasized, and sustained. This discussion of articulation opens with a focus on silence and its relationship to the manner in which notes are sustained. Specific information on tonguing will be addressed subsequently.

Articulation distinguishes individual notes—or groups of notes—from the surrounding material. It breaks a constant flow of sound by separating it into units that range from single notes and pairs of notes, to groups of threes, fours, or more, to complete phrases.45 An historically informed performance of baroque music relies on the listener’s experience of these patterns or units; the separations in the line are just as important as the line itself.46 Flutist Peter Lloyd once said, “Silences in music are probably more important than noise.”47 Lloyd also talks about “letting light in between

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46 Ibid.
notes and between groups of slurs,” while others refer to “space,” “an ‘aeration’ between the notes,” and “articulatory silence.”

In order to apply these ideas of silence and space effectively, a performer needs to understand that, in the baroque period, notes were typically not held for as long as their notation would suggest. Peter Holman, in *A Performer’s Guide to Music of the Baroque Period*, reminds performers of the importance of realizing that “the written duration of a note is normally its maximum length in performance, and that you can achieve various things by shortening it. What is normally called ‘articulation’ involves shortening the last note of a phrase or section in order to distinguish it clearly from what follows.”

As mentioned previously, the term “articulation” can refer to tonguing, or what instrumentalists call the “attack.” This discussion now proceeds to the topic of articulation as it relates directly to “tonguing.”

Common among the treatises of Quantz, Tromlitz, and Hotteterre is the use of syllables beginning with *t, d*, and *r* to begin a note. For instance, each of these treatises demonstrates that syllables beginning with *t* have the most pointed and clear articulation, syllables beginning with *d* are slightly more legato and gentle, and those beginning with *r* are even gentler still. Each of the treatises then assigns vowel sounds to these consonants (*ti/ta/tu, di/da/du, or ri/ra/ru*) and then puts them into patterns such as: *ti-ri-di-ri* or *tu-ru*.

The use of *t* or *d* syllables is not unique to the 18th century and is, in fact, consistent with today’s general concept in wind playing of releasing the tone with the

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48 Peter Lloyd, “Peter Lloyd Masterclass,” (lecture).
tongue.\textsuperscript{51} The \textit{r} syllables, however, are more elusive for saxophonists. This may be because saxophone playing involves the presence of the mouthpiece and reed \textit{inside} the mouth, whereas in flute or trumpet playing there is no part of the instrument inside the mouth. Tromlitz suggests that any player who has trouble with the correct \textit{r} sound can translate the \textit{r} into a very gentle \textit{d}.\textsuperscript{52}

The particular topic of proper syllables for articulation, or “tonguing” is covered in such explicit detail in the period treatises that is can easily become overwhelming for some students. An excellent resource for articulation patterns is \textit{The Early Flute} by Rachel Brown. Brown, a performer and a teacher, seems to have a clear and practical understanding of the period treatises and the articulation section of her book provides a succinct summary of the instructions from Quantz, Tromlitz, Hotteterre, and Leopold Mozart.

One of the difficulties of determining correct articulation patterns for baroque music is that composers often did not include this information in the score. This was one of the options customarily left to the discretion of the performer. The articulation pattern of slur two/tongue two is commonly found in transcriptions of baroque music and it appears throughout the second movement of Raschèr’s edition of HWV 370 for saxophone:

\begin{center}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\end{center}
This slur two/tongue two pattern became very popular by the early 19\textsuperscript{th} century and certainly remains common today. However, it is important to remember that this articulation pattern was not yet common during the early to middle 18\textsuperscript{th} century, thereby making it more characteristic of the music from the late 18\textsuperscript{th} century classical period than of baroque music.\textsuperscript{53}

Another feature commonly found in transcriptions is long lines of many notes contained under a slur. Both of the slow movements in Raschèr’s edition of HWV 370 contain numerous examples of this:

\textsuperscript{53}Rachel Brown,\textit{ Early Flute}, 65.
context that suggests that they served as a guide to phrasing rather than an instruction to play legato…\textsuperscript{54}

On the basic approach to slurs in baroque music, Rachel Brown suggests that they were “generally short, over a whole beat or part of a beat, rarely more than a bar long,”\textsuperscript{55} and that they were “mostly placed…over two or three notes.”\textsuperscript{56} Regarding intervals, normally only those consisting of a perfect fourth or less would be connected by a slur, thus reserving the slurring of larger intervals for a “particularly expressive quality.”\textsuperscript{57}

For comparison, here is a sample from the original facsimile of HWV 370, movement I:

![Example 3: George Frideric Handel, Complete Works for Violin and Basso continuo, ed. Terence Best, Sonata in F Major HWV 370, mvt. I, m. 1-9](image)

The articulation patterns that were more common to the baroque period were pairs of slurred notes, slur 3/tongue 1, or tongue 1/slur 3.\textsuperscript{58}

![Example 4: Common baroque articulation patterns](image)

\textsuperscript{54} Holman, “Notation and Interpretation,” 36.
\textsuperscript{55} Rachel Brown, Early Flute, 64.
\textsuperscript{56} Holman, “Notation and Interpretation,” 36.
\textsuperscript{57} Rachel Brown, Early Flute, 64.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
Extremely important to baroque performance is the concept of a hierarchical rating for each of the beats in a measure of music. Baroque performers actually referred to “good” beats versus “bad” beats or “strong” beats versus “weak” beats.\(^{59}\)

If a movement has four beats to the measure (4/4 or 12/8 meter), the ranking of each of the beats, from most important to least important would be: 1, 3, 2, and 4. So the good/strong notes are those that arrive on beats 1 and 3 while the bad/weak notes are those that arrive on beats 2 and 4.\(^{60}\)

Awareness of this concept can immediately change a performance of a baroque movement. A great example of beat hierarchy can be heard in a recording of baroque flutist Barthold Kuijken performing the third movement of HWV 367b. The differences in emphasis can be challenging to achieve between beats 1/3 and especially between beats 2/4, but Kuijken manages to truly differentiate among all four beats.\(^{61}\) In the following example, the beats are shown in decreasing visual prominence according to the order of hierarchy (1, 3, 2, and 4):

\(^{59}\)Barthold Kuijken, "Modern and Historical Flute Course" (lecture, University of Indianapolis, Indianapolis, IN, Jan 30-31, 2007) and Quantz, *On Playing the Flute*, 123.

\(^{60}\)Ibid.

Generally, beat hierarchy requires that downbeats are usually the most important beat of any bar, thus requiring that the later beats in the bar should be lighter and less pronounced, especially in triple meter. There are exceptions to this “rule” – for instance, baroque violinist Andrew Manze, in his 2001 recording with harpsichordist Richard Egarr, performs the following passage from the 1st movement of HWV 373 with very little discernable regard for “good” or “bad” beats:

Manze’s performance suggests that the sequencing of the motive that begins on beat four of the third bar and continues through the fourth bar trumps the “rule” of beat hierarchy, at least temporarily. Other exceptions to the beat hierarchy may include

62 Rachel Brown, Early Flute, 74.
specific dances, like the sarabande, which usually has an emphasis on the second beat of the triple meter.\textsuperscript{63}

Musicologist John Butt suggests that the concept of beat or metrical hierarchy is so basic to 18\textsuperscript{th} century music that it is always present in the background (as opposed to the foreground), but he cautions against “downbeat-bashing.” The problem with a literal, inflexible interpretation of the importance of the downbeat or barline is that sometimes “it’s just a notational aid, and in fact the groupings might well go beyond that bar. In this regard, dance patterns can be of crucial importance, even in pieces which are not specifically labeled as dances.” He concludes, “it’s much more important that you have the idea of [metrical hierarchy] than that you play it out rigorously.”\textsuperscript{64}

Recognition of the hierarchy of the beats dispels the once popular belief that baroque music is “sewing machine-like” in its rhythmic continuity and “sonorous monotony.”\textsuperscript{65} Nonetheless, performers must always bear in mind that, “order and proportion, though unquestionably relevant, are only half the story of baroque music;” the other half are flexibility, variability, subtlety, and nuance.\textsuperscript{66}

Throughout the 18th century an important manifestation of the concept of agogic accentuation began to grow. This manifestation featured the accompaniment keeping time while the melodic part was free to employ hesitations which sometimes caused considerable modification of the rhythm.\textsuperscript{67} CPE Bach refers to this same idea in his 1753 treatise, \textit{Essay on the True Art of Playing on Keyboard Instruments}, “the finest lapses

\textsuperscript{63}Rachel Brown, \textit{Early Flute}, 75.
\textsuperscript{64}Sherman, \textit{Inside Early Music}, 180-81.
\textsuperscript{65}Donington, \textit{Baroque Music: Style and Performance}, 171.
\textsuperscript{66}Sherman, \textit{Inside Early Music}, 193.
from metre can often be industriously produced” when “one makes an alteration in one's own part alone, running against the organization of the metre, while the main movement of the metre must be observed precisely.” Sometimes called “expressive lingering,” this technique can be heard in Barthold Kuijken’s 1991 recording of HWV 367b where the basso continuo players maintain the same steady tempo while Kuijken takes great liberties.

Another rhythm altering device from the 18th century is the technique of notes inégales or unequal notes. Notes inégales is the idea that groups of equal notes, either eighth notes or sixteenth notes, can be played unevenly. Peter Holman offers this succinct description: “Inequality should be gentle rather than aggressive, achieved by playing pairs of notes strong-weak rather than by markedly changing even notes to dotted notes, and it should be applied to the fastest predominant note values so long as the tempo allows; it is impracticable to play very fast notes unequally. It should not be applied to groups of repeated notes, or to notes that move by leap rather than step…”

There exists some controversy regarding the amount of inequality—which in the extreme, can ultimately turn a mildly lilting rhythm into a dotted rhythm—and whether the first or second note within a pair would get more length.

Ornamentation

Baroque ornaments were embellishments such as trills, appoggiaturas, mordents, and generally added notes that help to shape the melodic line and emphasize harmony and rhythm. In addition to added notes, ornaments in the baroque era could also extend to

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69 Holman, “Notation and Interpretation,” 38.
the use of vibrato and various expressive devices using dynamics.\textsuperscript{70} It was typical for 18\textsuperscript{th} century musicians to improvise most, or sometimes all, of the embellishments in a movement, and cadenzas were improvisations based entirely on the imagination and skill of the performer.\textsuperscript{71}

There were three recognized styles of ornamentation from the 18\textsuperscript{th} century: the French style, the Italian style, and a somewhat “mixed” German style. The specific nationalistic traits and the ways in which they were applied to the music are complex topics.\textsuperscript{72} Howard Mayer Brown and Peter Walls co-authored an explanation on baroque performance practice in which they provide a brief summary of the issue of nationalistic styles of ornamentation:

Each of the two main styles of the Baroque period [French and Italian] presupposed a different technique of playing and singing, a fact that should always be kept in mind when considering particular aspects of performing practice during the period. French music was very different from Italian in its ornamentation, for example, and the principles for applying it. The extent to which the two competing national styles interpenetrated, particularly in ‘peripheral’ countries like Germany, remains debatable. Few other aspects of performing practice will elicit such diverse or such heated scholarly opinion as, for example, the question of the propriety of applying French ornaments or French rhythmic alterations to the music of J.S. Bach. Paradoxically, the very fact of Germany’s being outside these two main performing traditions helps explain why we owe to German musicians (Muffat, Quantz) the most thorough instructions on how to perform in the French and Italian styles: the conventions could not be taken for granted.\textsuperscript{73}

This issue of nationality as it pertains to baroque musical style and ornamentation is a broad topic that is the specific focus of much research and discussion. Therefore, the

\textsuperscript{70}Rachel Brown, \textit{Early Flute}, 87.
\textsuperscript{71}Donington, \textit{Baroque Music: Style and Performance}, 95-99.
\textsuperscript{72}Rachel Brown, \textit{Early Flute}, 87.
\textsuperscript{73}Howard Mayer Brown, et al, “Performing Practice.”
Ornamentations described in this section will not necessarily be related to their nation of origin.

Modern usage of the terms “ornament” and “embellishment” implies something that functions as an accessory—something extra that is not required—but ornamentation in the baroque period was as essential to a performance as the composition itself. As Robert Donington succinctly states, “[b]aroque ornamentation is more than a decoration. It is a necessity.”

Ornamentation in baroque music can be discussed in two separate categories: the essential (or obligatory) ornaments and free ornamentation. Those that are generally known as essential ornaments are the appoggiatura, mordent, trill, and turn. These devices were used to embellish a preconceived melody, but their presence was also an assumed and “essential” part of the melody. Typically it was at cadences that certain ornaments—the cadential trill and the appoggiatura, in particular—were so regularly employed that they became standard practice. Donington says that “certain contexts implied a specific ornament so habitually that leaving it out is like making a wrong note.” Having established that certain ornaments are necessary, it is important to keep in mind that a tasteful interpretation will maintain an effective amount of embellishment without adding too much. For example, Quantz, in reference to “essential graces” or “little embellishments,” urges performers to “accustom themselves to singing and playing neither too simply nor too colourfully, always mixing simplicity and brilliance. The little

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74 Donington, Baroque Music: Style and Performance, 91.
76 Donington, Baroque Music: Style and Performance, 91.
embellishments should be used like seasoning at a meal..." The example below shows a minimum of essential ornaments added to the *Vivace* from the Sonata in B minor by Handel (HWV 367b) as performed by Barthold Kuijken on his 1991 recording *Georg Friedrich Händel: Flute Sonatas*. In this passage, Kuijken only adds three short trills, the last of which occurs at the cadence in bars 13-14 and is preceded by an appoggiatura.

![Example 7: George Frideric Handel, Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo, Sonata in B minor HWV 367b, mvt. II, m. 1-14, asterisks indicate Kuijken’s added ornaments](image)

Free ornamentation demands more improvised melodic material from the performer and was typical in variations, repeated sections, and in many slow movements. This example from Kuijken’s 1991 recording of HWV 367b features a great deal of improvised free ornamentation on the repeat of each of the two sections of the *Andante*. Here is the first section of the movement as it appears in the score:

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Example 8: George Frideric Handel, *Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo*, Sonata in B minor HWV 367b, mvt. VI, m. 1-8, with continuo realization from the Bärenreiter 1995 edition transposed to the key of D minor
Here is the improvisation that Kuijken plays on the repeat:

Example 9: George Frideric Handel, *Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo*, Sonata in B minor HWV 367b, mvt. VI, m. 1-8, with Kuijken’s ornamentation

The sparse notation of slow movements such as the *Adagio* from Handel’s HWV 367b also necessitates free ornamentation. Kuijken, again on his 1991 recording of Handel sonatas, supplies a great deal of improvised melodic material in this movement.

Here is an example from the original score:
Example 10: George Frideric Handel, *Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo*, Sonata in B minor HWV 367b, mvt. IV, m. 1-10, with continuo realization from the Bärenreiter 1995 edition transposed to the key of D minor

Here is the same passage showing Kuijken’s freely ornamented interpretation:

Example 11: George Frideric Handel, *Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo*, Sonata in B minor HWV 367b, mvt. IV, m. 1-10, with Kuijken’s ornamentation

An excellent resource on the practice and application of free ornamentation is

*Free Ornamentation in Woodwind Music: 1700-1775* by Betty Bang Mather and David
Lasocki. This book provides numerous examples of free ornamentation in comparison to the original manuscripts.

It is important to remember that at no stage during the baroque era was there ever an official distinction made between free ornamentation and the essential ornaments; these distinctions arose as musicians discovered habitual tendencies within certain contexts. While such categorization is helpful when studying the music of the past, Donington reminds us that “the behaviour of ornaments crossed and multiplied so inconsistently that any classification is liable to be somewhat arbitrary.”

Before introducing specific essential ornaments, the present discussion on ornamentation will begin with vibrato, an expressive device that is one of the basic tools for most modern performers. Baroque musicians used vibrato as an ornament, intending it to be applied much more sparingly in contrast to the presence of vibrato in the romantic period and following. Donington cautions that “Vibrato requires great discretion in baroque music” and explains that although it is not “authentic to exclude vibrato…it is not appropriate to introduce it continuously.”

The topic of vibrato in 18th century music can be a nebulous affair, particularly in the specialized techniques of producing this effect on the baroque flute. Vibrato on the modern flute as we know it today involves a manipulation of the air column—this was known in the 18th century as “chest vibrato.” A vibrato-like technique called flattement was generally preferred over chest vibrato for use on the baroque flute. Flattement is an effect where the flutist manipulates the tone by disturbing the air as it exits the unused

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79 Ibid.
tone-holes. To further obscure the topic, *flattement* was also called *tremolo* (Leopold Mozart), \(^{81}\) shake, trill, finger vibrato, or just vibrato. \(^{82}\)

Saxophonists will need to carefully assess how to use an idiomatic vibrato in relation to the effect of *flattement*. Generally, the effect of *flattement* is much more subtle than the typical vibrato used by modern saxophonists, which involves a slight motion of the jaw. An excellent example of *flattement* on the traverso can be heard on Barthold Kuijken’s 1991 recording of the Handel sonatas for flute (bar 4 of the *Adagio* from HWV 367b). This particular nuance will require some special attention from the saxophonist who wishes to imitate it appropriately.

The first and most basic of the essential graces is the appoggiatura. The term “appoggiatura” comes from the Italian term *appoggiare*, meaning “to lean.”

Appoggiatura in baroque music implies the presence of an auxiliary note occurring directly on the beat which is usually dissonant, always stressed, and is slurred to its less-important resolution. \(^{83}\) The “leaning” quality is extremely important as it enhances the harmonic function of the appoggiatura, emphasizing the dissonant, non-harmonic note. Equally significant to the effect of the appoggiatura is the (agogic) silence that often precedes it—this is a particularly expressive stylistic trait in baroque performance practice and one that emphasizes the previously mentioned concept of baroque music resembling the act of speaking more than that of singing. Donington proposes that a slight silence of articulation preceding the appoggiatura may “enhance its brilliance or its expressiveness as the case may be.” \(^{84}\) The 18\(^{th}\) century concept of emphasizing

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\(^{84}\) Ibid.
dissonance and de-emphasizing consonance manifests itself succinctly in the appoggiatura.

The trill is a rapid alternation between a main note and an auxiliary note, either a tone or a semitone above it. Trills can serve the music in several ways: melodically, rhythmically, and harmonically. Basically if a trill has a harmonic purpose, it is appoggiatura-like and requires a start on the auxiliary note. If a trill has only a melodic and/or rhythmic purpose, it may have some flexibility with the option of starting on the main note, although Donington reports that such trills were more common in the first half of the baroque period and that “the upper-note start seems by the middle of the baroque period to have become habitual, though not invariable.” As a general rule, it is customary to begin trills on the upper auxiliary note in baroque music.

The speed of the trill is an important consideration as it is something that can drastically affect the mood of the music: a fast trill generates excitement and energy while a slow trill has a calming effect. A particularly useful expressive device is to start a trill slowly and then make it faster towards the end. Trills became so common and obligatory at cadences that a special designation arose: the cadential trill. The cadential trill begins with a harmonic purpose, making it appoggiatura-like, thereby requiring a start on the auxiliary note.

The turn basically consists of four notes that encircle the main note: an upper auxiliary note, the main note itself, a lower auxiliary note, and then a return to the main

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85 Donington, Baroque Music: Style and Performance, 124.
86 Ibid., 131.
87 Ibid., 125.
A turn, or grupetto, may start either from the upper auxiliary (standard turn) or from the lower auxiliary (inverted turn). It is most common in the baroque period for turns to serve a purely melodic purpose, although they can have a harmonic function if they are accented.

A mordent is an alternation between a main note and an auxiliary note, either a tone or a semitone, below it. Mordents serve the music melodically and rhythmically but have no significant harmonic purpose. Mordents always start on the main note and are relatively short in duration, as opposed to a trill, which may be short, but is typically longer than a mordent. Donington offers that, just as “an appoggiatura ‘leans’ upon the beat, so the mordent ‘bites’ upon the beat, as their names imply. In both these ornaments, therefore, the standard performance is not before but on the beat…”

Baroque musicians used many different ornaments and combinations thereof in their performances, however only a few of the most commonly found essential ornaments are discussed in this study. The ornaments discussed here were selected because of their relatively uncomplicated nature; these are easily described and executed, rendering them particularly useful to an undergraduate saxophone student pursuing an initial approach to baroque performance practice. An excellent and practical guide for ornamentation is Robert Donington’s handbook, *Baroque Music: Style and Performance*, which provides concise and reliable descriptions of the most commonly found ornaments from the baroque period. Another excellent resource is Frederick Neumann’s *Ornamentation in*...

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90 Ibid., 139.
91 Ibid.
Baroque and Post-Baroque Music, which serves as a more comprehensive catalog of ornaments.

A common misconception about baroque music is that 18th century music abounded with “terraced” dynamics, which featured abrupt changes of the dynamic level from section to section. As Howard Mayer Brown explains, the concept of “terraced dynamics” was, in fact, a reality, but occurred in the centuries preceding the baroque era: “‘Terraced dynamics,’ traditionally associated with Baroque music, probably originated before 1600, when in so many of the instruments in general use the possibilities of controlling dynamic nuances were relatively limited. Crescendos and diminuendos are impossible, or nearly so, on many 16th-century instruments, such as flutes, recorders, crumhorns, harpsichords and organs.” The instruments that flourished into the 18th century were those that could play more of a solo role rather than a predominantly consort role. The less flexible, consort-based woodwinds were replaced by more refined instruments with a solo potential.

The misconception that dynamics in all baroque music involves a “terraced” approach may also stem from the fact that 18th century composers did not indicate much additional information beyond the notes and meter on their scores and dynamic markings in particular, were especially rare. The erroneous concept of “terraced dynamics” may have originated from interpreting baroque composers’ sparse volume indications too literally. Matters are further confused when one considers the notable use of “terraced

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93 Ibid.
94 Ibid.
95 Ibid.
dynamics” to delineate the concertino-ripieno form that was popular in the baroque concerto grosso, but it is important to recognize that this particular usage is purely structural and is in no way an indication of performance practice.97

Contrary to the model of “terraced dynamics,” an historically informed performance of a baroque piece would involve a great deal of dynamic nuance, but on a relatively smaller scale when compared to the music of today. The overall range of volume of an 18th century instrument is simply smaller than that of a modern instrument. Subtlety is the presiding factor with regards to dynamics, at least in the chamber music of the time, and performers were expected to add dynamic nuances at their discretion. Quantz refers to piano and forte as “light and shadow” respectively, and he maintains that the alternation of loud and soft dynamics, “must be used with great discernment, however, lest you go from one to the other with too much vehemence rather than swell and diminish the tone imperceptibly.98 Peter Lloyd proposes an extremely useful concept regarding dynamics in the baroque era. He suggests that forte meant “rich” instead of “loud,” and piano meant dolce instead of “soft.”99 A general principle regarding dynamics in baroque music is that an ascending melodic line would crescendo and a descending line would diminuendo.100

The effect known as messa di voce is a device dealing with dynamic contour, however, in baroque music it is applied in much the same manner as vibrato—a nuance employed to enhance or add shape to a long note. The messa di voce, also known as a

98 Quantz, On Playing the Flute, 165.
99 Peter Lloyd, “Peter Lloyd Masterclass” (lecture).
100 Colin Lawson and Robin Stowell, Historical Performance of Music, 54.
“hump” is the gradual swelling and diminishing of a single long note. On the topic of *messa di voce*, Quantz teaches that long notes “must be sustained in an elevated manner by swelling and diminishing the strength of the tone” and flutist Stephen Preston advises that “long notes were often played crescendo for half their length, then diminuendo, with vibrato added in the middle of the note.”

Barthold Kuijken suggests that 18th century music does not need consciously added dynamic contrast because, he claims, “the piece plays itself.” He believes that, if the performer’s basic stylistic concept is in place, the appropriate dynamics will occur naturally. He cautions, “Don’t speak of dynamics; speak of the importance of the entire landscape.” For instance, if the performer is aware of such techniques as the “good/bad beats” and “leaning” on dissonances in appoggiaturas, the correct dynamics will happen in the correct places.

Kuijken also says that “microdynamics” make “macrodynamics” superfluous. This is in keeping with Leonhardt’s concept that baroque music is more like speaking rather than singing. Conversation has many small hills over the long term; singing has more immediately dramatic mountains. “Microdynamics” are the regular, short-term ups and downs of conversation; “macrodynamics” are the long-term, sustained tension-builders of singing.

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105 Barthold Kuijken, ”Modern and Historical Flute Course,” (lecture).
CHAPTER 3. TEACHING

Teaching Considerations

It has been established that transcriptions are extremely valuable in the saxophone teaching studio and countless saxophonists—including students, performers, and teachers alike—are indebted to Marcel Mule, Sigurd Raschèr, Larry Teal, Eugene Rousseau, Fred Hemke and all of the individuals who have contributed transcriptions to the saxophone repertory. It is with the utmost gratitude and respect for the transcriptions and arrangements of the aforementioned individuals that I approach the topic of historically informed performance on the saxophone.

This monograph seeks to provide a starting place for saxophonists who wish to draw more musical insight by means of an historically informed approach to the performance of baroque music. Having re-stated that purpose, I can now introduce the contradiction that playing baroque music in any way—even with no regard for historical performance practice whatsoever—may still be the most beneficial approach for a particular student. Students need accessible and engaging music to play and transcriptions of baroque music have become valuable resources for meeting the needs of developing students. The matter of applying an historical approach to these transcriptions depends entirely on the needs of the individual student and an appropriate expectation of growth based on his or her level of experience.

Professionals may make their own decisions regarding the issue of historical performance practices in baroque music; students may explore baroque transcriptions for saxophone, experimenting with some or none of the suggested historical considerations.
It is the teachers who, when assessing whether or not to assign a baroque piece to a student and the degree to which historical performance practice may be pursued—if at all—must first ask: What do I expect this student to gain from studying this particular piece of music at this time? Do these expectations include musically and stylistically advanced elements, and, if so, what degree of pursuit of these elements is a reasonable goal for this student?

Indeed, these are the same questions that a teacher asks before assigning any piece to a student. However, the required additional consideration concerning baroque music is one of style: in order for a student to pursue historically-informed performance practice of 18th century music, it is necessary that he or she have already attained a solid foundation in the standard mode of performing “classical” music. Otherwise there is no basis for comparison—a comparison of stylistic traits between what is familiar to the student (general, post-romantic style) and what is unfamiliar (18th century performance style).

From my own personal experiences both as a performer and a teacher, I have often relied on this comparison. Throughout the preparation of the three Handel sonatas selected for performance, I found considerable clarification through the exercise of first playing a phrase in a standard, post-romantic style and then repeating the phrase in a contrasting baroque style.

For example, I would take a phrase and play it in an uninterrupted, sustained manner, with no silences or lessening of intensity, and with a highly present vibrato. Then I would repeat the same phrase, but focusing on the opposite of each of those criteria: allowing light and aeration through silences, varying intensity, and no vibrato.
I often use the tool of comparison in the teaching studio, asking a student to alternate between the “right” way and the “wrong” way. The clarification of the “wrong” way yields a basis by which to understand, through comparison, a contrasted “right” way. Naturally, the terms “right” and “wrong” are used very specifically to quickly identify goals within the immediate context. This use of comparison as a teaching tool relies on a number of perceptions, including aural imitation.

A musical performance is an aural phenomenon: its essence is received as sounds that are heard and understood in countless ways. When we consider that music is often associated with language, it is conceivable that some of the processes in which we learn language are, similarly, processes in which we learn to play music. For instance, babies do not first learn about pronunciation or grammar from a book; they learn by imitation. Likewise, a studio teacher may play an example and ask the student to play back an imitation of that example.

Schools of music provide faculty and guest artist performances for the benefit of the students because it is important for music students to hear music. Listening and imitating are valuable skills for any performer, particularly those who will collaborate with other musicians. For instance, an ensemble conductor often instructs the students to “listen to each other” in order to match in stylistic approach.

In my experience with preparing to perform the selected Handel sonatas, I realized the necessity of keeping an aural model in mind. As I perused 18th century treatises and tutors, read articles, and researched numerous publications on the topic, I would sometimes become overwhelmed with the sheer quantity of information—

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information that seemed completely abstract when removed from actively playing the music.

Without experimenting with these ideas on the saxophone and listening for them in the recordings, the valuable information I had gathered from the written documents became a confusing and daunting mass of details. It became apparent that, in order for this project to be successful, I needed to remain in touch with what appealed to me in the first place: the performance of this music. It was essential to the project to keep its focus related directly to playing. As a performer, I cannot conceive of learning about musical performance without playing; similarly, it seems logical that the students in my teaching studio will benefit from the same performance-based approach to understanding this music. To be sure, I am not suggesting only playing; I am suggesting that perhaps, for performers, a careful balance of listening, reading, and playing will be most effective when learning about musical performance.

Cellist Anner Bylsma, widely considered to be one of the foremost baroque instrumentalists today, was once asked about the development of his own baroque playing and the role that the examination of treatises played in that development. Bylsma replied, “I think the mastering of an instrument never goes through reading first, and then playing. It goes through playing first, and then reading…”107

Baroque flutist Stephen Preston, when giving advice about the specialized techniques in performing 18th century music, first asks that players, “develop an awareness, through listening…”108 Listening and imitating are inextricably connected with the performance of music and, in my experience with learning and teaching musical

107 Sherman, Inside Early Music, 209.
style, these are the most basic tools for a performer. Any distinct style of music comprises an infinite number of details. Many of these details can be discussed and analyzed, but many are too elusive or too subtle to be sufficiently described in words.

It is an indisputable fact that none of the performers today or any of the performances available on recordings are truly authentic products of the 18th century. However, the current specialists in baroque performance practice—Barthold Kuijken, Andrew Manze, Richard Egarr, Stephen Preston, and Anner Bylsma among others—are known authorities in the specialized area of early music performance practice. They have made careful study of the written resources from the period and have interpreted this information into their own performances. If these individuals are recognized—among their peers and the wider world of “classical” musicians and scholars—as experts in the field of early music performance, it is reasonable that their opinions can be trusted as authoritative.

In addition to their audio recordings, some renowned performers of early music have also contributed written resources and performance guides. For example, Rachel Brown, flutist in the Academy of Ancient Music, is the author of The Early Flute: a Practical Guide (2002) and Barthold Kuijken has authored a treatise entitled The Notation is Not the Music: Reflections on More Than 40 Years’ Intensive Practice of Early Music, to be released in 2011.

In fact, it is often the early music practitioners themselves who recognize the need among students and enthusiasts of early music for more practical and accessible information on approaching baroque music in an historically informed manner. For example, Rachel Brown’s book is one of a series entitled Cambridge Handbooks to the Historical Performance of Music. This series also includes “practical guides” to violin,
horn, keyboard, and clarinet, as well as the first book in the series, entitled *The Historical Performance of Music: An Introduction* by Colin Lawson and Robin Stowell. On the purpose of the series, editors Lawson and Stowell remark that, in spite of the growing attention to historical performance practice in mainstream musical life, there is a lack of resources that provide performers and students with an overview of stylistic concerns. This series of handbooks addresses practical matters of historical performance practice and “guides the modern performer towards the investigation and interpretation of evidence found both in early performance treatises and in the mainstream repertory.”

The desires presented in such an overview—brevity, clarity, and practicality—are mirrored in this monograph.

This study, while making several direct references to primary sources, refers more often to secondary sources, such as works by Robert Donington and Rachel Brown. Most of the primary sources—the treatises and tutors by Quantz, Leopold Mozart, CPE Bach, Hotteterre, Altenburg, Boismortier, and Türk, among numerous others—are indeed readily available and it is essential that these works be repeatedly consulted during the course of any serious pursuit of historical performance practices. However, a need has been perceived by scholars such as Robert Donington and those performer/authors mentioned previously for more concise handbooks or guides with which performers and students can begin the pursuit of historical performance practice. The primary sources are indispensable; however, a well-organized overview or outline of major stylistic concerns can perhaps provide a more amenable introduction to the topic, thus reserving the primary sources for intermediate or advanced levels of study.

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I propose an initial approach to baroque performance practice that is rooted in careful listening to performances of the experts in the genre and imitation of their playing styles. This aural foundation should then be combined with the examination of selected written resources. These resources may include primary sources, but I am suggesting that an initial approach to this music would benefit tremendously from the brevity and clarity provided in secondary sources in the form of handbooks, outlines, or overviews.

**Practical Considerations**

When determining appropriate repertoire for students, the studio teacher considers many issues specific to both the piece and the individual student. Therefore, a baroque sonata may be perfectly suited to the needs of a relatively inexperienced player. This student may not yet be at a level to benefit from a study of historical performance practice, but a piece such as HWV 370 or HWV 373 (as arranged by Raschèr and Mule, respectively) can certainly provide a suitable opportunity for growth.

For example, I have on several occasions, assigned Mule’s arrangement of Handel’s 6th Sonata (HWV 373) to inexperienced students. The piece is engaging, poses some technical challenges, offers no particularly difficult rhythms and is, therefore, an assignment well suited to the needs of a young player.

In fact, it was with this particular sonata that I first learned how to use vibrato for sustaining very long, romantic phrases when I was a high school student. At the time, such basic playing issues were sufficiently challenging for me without any attention devoted to historical performance practice.

I suggest having the student sight-read one slow movement and one fast movement of the piece. For example, if Handel’s 6th Sonata as arranged by Mule (HWV
373) is the assigned piece, then the first two movements (Adagio and Allegro) serve as good sight-reading material for this purpose.

If the student is not successful with the sight-reading experiment—difficulty playing the correct notes and rhythms throughout—then perhaps he or she will be best served by using this piece to form a basic playing foundation with very little, if any, attention to issues of baroque style. If, however, the student seems to progress more quickly than initially thought, then it may be appropriate to introduce one or two of the most basic stylistic elements into his or her performance.

In the first movement, the student may be fully capable of learning to begin the trills from the upper auxiliary note rather that on the main note. I would also ask that the trills begin directly on the beat and not before.

In the second movement, the student could observe the repeats, which requires some physical endurance, but is likely not a new musical concept. Mule has included some dynamic markings, but perhaps the student could experiment with altering the dynamics on the repeat. For example, the student could just play more varied dynamics that follow the contour of the melodic line. Mule seems to have this in mind, but the student may find some opportunities to change it.

This may be more than enough attention to baroque style for this student because he or she will still need to devote some time and attention to intonation and the various ensemble issues that arise when collaborating with a pianist.

If, however, it seems appropriate for this student to continue exploring more stylistic options, perhaps he or she could vary some articulations on the repeats. For example, the first time through a section, the student could consistently use the basic pattern of slurred pairs of notes, as in m. 1-4 below. Then, on the second time through a
section, the student could retain some of the previous patterns (slurred pairs) in combination with a different pattern, such as tongue 1/slur 3 (see m. 5-8 below):

Example 12: George Frideric Handel, *Complete Works for Violin and Basso continuo*, Sonata in E Major (saxophone part transposed to F Major) HWV 373, mvt. II, m. 1-14, with added articulations

For the purposes of this monograph, such a student as described above is classified as pre-Level 1. These are students who are using a baroque piece primarily for reasons other than the pursuit of baroque performance practice. Pre-Level 1 students are at one extreme end of the experience spectrum and would typically be high school students or freshmen undergraduates.

Level 4 students, who operate at the other end of the experience spectrum, are more advanced and are typically undergraduate juniors or seniors. There may be graduate saxophone students who have never addressed historical performance practice in a baroque transcription: these students may benefit from the information presented in this monograph because they are approaching an historically informed approach for the first time. It is, however, beyond the scope of this monograph to address any student who already has some experience with and a practical knowledge of historical performance practice.

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110 See Appendix A for an outline of Levels 1-4.
In my experience, I have found that, while some high school students benefit from a pre-Level 1 exposure to a baroque sonata, most of my undergraduate freshmen and sophomores are served well by original works in the saxophone repertoire.

I find that the first two years of undergraduate study are crucial for forming the foundations of musicianship, technique, tone production, and basic playing skills, therefore it has been my approach in the teaching studio to generally wait until the junior year before broaching the sophisticated topic of baroque performance practice.

At the junior or senior year, a student who possesses strong basic playing skills, has some performing experience, and can sight-read a baroque piece successfully will be more than capable of pursuing stylistic issues at Levels 1-2 and will likely advance into Levels 3-4.

For instance, I currently have a saxophone student who meets the above criteria and is ready and extremely interested in pursuing the subtleties of a baroque solo sonata. He is an undergraduate junior who will, in the course of one semester, be able to advance through to Level 4. He is also capable of achieving some flexibility with improvisation (this particular student has gained a great deal of experience with improvisation in the jazz idiom during his freshman and sophomore years).

Having already presented a practical approach to a baroque transcription with a pre-Level 1 student, I will, in the last section of this monograph, present a detailed approach to teaching a baroque transcription to a Level 4 student.

Teachers will, of course, encounter many different levels of student ability between pre-Level 1 and Level 4, but I trust that the description of two extreme cases will provide ample information for a teacher to design his or her own approach to teaching those students in between.
Preparations

Before I begin the process by which I would have this student approach playing HWV 373, I would like to clarify two important tools that can be very useful for more advanced students.

As I have stated, I recommend imitation of the recorded experts as a fundamental means to understanding baroque style in performance, it becomes necessary to address the issue of transposition. For instance, HWV 373 is originally in the key of E Major and is performed in that key on the violin. The saxophone, as a transposing instrument (the alto saxophone is in the key of E-flat), would need to play in the key of G Major in order to be heard as E Major on the violin. In the specific case of HWV 373, Mule elected to put the saxophone in the key of F Major, which now causes the saxophone to be heard, and the continuo part to be realized in, the key of A-flat Major.

Now we are playing sonata HWV 373 in A-flat Major, but listening to recordings of it in the key of E Major. With digital recordings, there is a simple means by which to transpose the recording to any key.

Programs such as Audacity and others can transpose a digital sound file (mp3) to a different key without changing the tempo, thus enabling the saxophonist to hear the piece played in the performance key. This makes the process of imitation much more feasible for a saxophonist or any other instrumentalist who will play a piece in a key other than the original.

The second item I wish to discuss before beginning the teaching process is the exercise of analyzing a movement in order to create a skeleton of its melodic line.

A fast movement is, by its very nature, more active with notes supplied by the composer and therefore typically requires less ornamentation from the performer than
would a slow movement. For the purposes of focusing on ornamentation, however, it is extremely useful to choose a slow movement and create a scaffold—or skeleton—of its melody.

Begin by analyzing the melodic line to determine which notes are important and then start removing the notes that seem unimportant, thereby paring the melody down to its barest state. This process will reveal which notes are absolutely essential to the basic framework of the melody and which notes are ornamental in nature. Strip away everything but the basic melodic scaffold, and what remains is the skeleton of the movement.

Stephen Preston said, “Baroque music works on the elaboration of simple ideas. A well-composed piece should be reducible to a chorale melody, i.e. conjunct melodic lines, tonic-dominant harmonies and equal rhythms. It is these underlying ideas which give the elaborated music its meaning, and the way to understanding is to strip away the elaboration and make a playable musical skeleton of the score.”¹¹¹

The idea is to find the simplest reduction of the musical line. The process of reduction will result in the preservation of the critical, structural notes as they are separated from the notes that are essentially ornamental in nature. After completing this exercise, a student will have a much keener sense of the movement and will be ready to assign his or her own ornaments to it.

Here is the solo part from HWV 367b, I. Largo:

Example 13: George Frideric Handel, *Eleven Sonatas for Flute and Basso continuo*, Sonata in B Minor HWV 367b, mvt I

Here is an example of measures 1-11 of this movement reduced to a skeleton:

Example 14: Skeleton of m. 1-11, Sonata in B Minor HWV 367b, mvt I

**Practical Application**

Having clarified the issues of transposition and creating a skeleton analysis, the following section will describe a possible process by which a third-year undergraduate saxophone student can realistically approach performing an instrumental sonata by Handel with a focus on historical performance practice.

This student will begin by purchasing the Mule transcription of HWV 373 (entitled 6° *Sonate* as published by Leduc). Mule’s edition contains suggestions for articulations, ornaments, and dynamics, so I recommend that the student photocopy the saxophone part from the Mule edition, remove all such markings provided by Mule, and
make a clean copy. Once this clean part has been created, the student can begin working on the piece and creating his or her own articulations and ornaments.

At this point, a detailed approach will be presented in the basic structure and format of weekly lesson assignments.

**Assignment 1**

The first assignment will be to begin practicing the first two movements, omitting any vibrato, experimenting with the beat hierarchy (see explanation below) and adding articulations in the second movement (avoiding the slur two/tongue two pattern). The student will also begin listening to recordings of the piece by respected performers who use baroque performance practices on the violin.

Omitting vibrato from a piece of music will be challenging for the student, simply because using vibrato is likely to be so ingrained in his or her playing concept that they will have difficulty remembering not to vibrate. The instruction to omit vibrato is extremely important to an historical approach to this music because 1) in baroque music, vibrato is generally employed in a manner that is starkly contrasted to the typical habits of today’s students, and 2) the omission of vibrato provides a sudden and extreme clarity, which causes the student to hear both the music and their own playing quite differently from what the usual circumstances allow.

A starting point for practicing the subtle degrees of emphasis in the beat hierarchy is to try just distinguishing between the odd beats and the even beats: focus on emphasizing beats 1 and 3 as the good/strong beats and allow beats 2 and 4 to have no emphasis. Just practicing a passage in this simplified manner will very quickly reveal something inherent in the nature of the music.
During the first lesson on the piece, it is necessary to address the topic of emphasis by asking the student, “How exactly is an emphasis expressed?” In some cases it would be by making the “strong” note louder, although performers on modern instruments must be careful that such an emphasis is not always a hard attack with the tongue at the start of the note. Besides added volume, experiment with other ways of emphasizing a note, perhaps by sustaining it longer or adding space before it. The specific topic of emphasis is an excellent one by which the teacher can introduce the value of listening to and imitating excellent recordings: there is no better way for a student to learn about such an elusive subject.

In fact, since part of the assignment is to listen to recordings of the piece, it would be extremely beneficial to clarify for the student exactly what to listen for. This first assignment requires listening for:

- Vibrato (Is any being used? If so, where? In the slow movement or the fast movement? Only at cadences? How wide or fast is it?)
- Beat hierarchy (Is it observed? Is it regular?)
- Articulations (What tonguing patterns are used? Are the same ones used on the repeats?)
- Emphasis (How is emphasis generally expressed: through volume, attack, length, something else?)

**Assignment 2**

The second assignment will involve the same concepts as the previous week, but with a focus on the last two movements. Now it would be useful to discuss any elements of dance that may be present in the music. None of the movement titles in HWV 373 make specific reference to dances, however the form, character, and meter of the last
movement may be indicative of the minuet. There is a very useful book called *Dance and the Music of J. S. Bach* by Meredith Little and Natalie Jenne which offers a great deal of information about the dance forms that are commonly found in baroque music.¹¹² Notably useful within this book is the description and chart of different levels of metrical significance, including what Little and Jenne label the “beat,” “pulse,” and “tap” levels.¹¹³ At this point, a student could benefit from reading the opening pages of Chapter 2 in this book, which cover the topics of meter and tempo and show the chart mentioned above.¹¹⁴

Also, since the student is still not using vibrato, perhaps a discussion of *messa di voce* would be in order. Now it may be appropriate to assign some reading on specific topics in a style manual such as *Baroque Music: Style and Performance* by Robert Donington.

It would be ideal if the student were so stimulated by this assignment that he or she, having fully prepared the assigned material, arrives at the lesson brimming with questions. Such questions may lead to specific issues that are either not mentioned in this sample course, or are listed as issues beyond the level of the second lesson. The organizing of topics into Levels 1-4 is intended only as an example of a logical course of study; it is not a rigorous method to be followed in strict succession.

¹¹³ Ibid., 17.
¹¹⁴ Ibid., 16-21.
**Assignment 3**

The third assignment will focus on imitation from the recordings by having the student determine the specific articulations used for the fast movements (movements II and IV). This assignment will also include the student creating a skeleton analysis of the first movement. It may be appropriate to assign further reading.

**Assignment 4**

The fourth assignment will involve the student listening very carefully to the recording of the first movement with the skeleton in mind. Can the student ascertain the performer’s idea of a skeleton? Does this change the student’s idea of his own version of the skeleton? Does knowledge of the skeleton provide more clarity with such elements as beat hierarchy?

A worthwhile exercise at this point would be to have the student compose ornaments for a section of the skeleton of the first movement. Then have the student transcribe the ornaments used by the recorded performer on the same portion of the movement.

Now that ornamentation is the focus, perhaps the student should consider the use of vibrato. Where would this be appropriate and most effective in a movement?

Another part of this assignment could be to isolate and focus on specific ornaments. For example, assign the student to do some research on the topic of appoggiaturas by consulting Frederick Neumann’s *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post- Baroque Music*.

Next the student will listen very carefully for appoggiaturas in the recordings and then he or she will incorporate some appoggiaturas into their own arrangement of the piece.
Assignment 5 and Beyond

After listening so carefully for several weeks, the student will undoubtedly be very familiar with the tempos used by the performers on the recordings, and will likely have already have adopted these tempos when practicing. Nonetheless, it would be useful to discuss the issues of tempo in baroque music and to have the student read about tempo in Donington and any other pertinent resources. Then the student can compare the tempos from the recordings with the advice in the written resources: Would the author consider these tempos to be stylistically appropriate? Do these tempos work with regards to conveying the mood of the movement? Are these tempos practical with regards to the technical execution of the notes by the performer?

It would be fortunate if the saxophone student could collaborate with a pianist who has the time to carefully examine the basso continuo part and make possible edits to the Mule edition, which features chords that are somewhat thickly voiced and a generally more active and busy part than other realizations.

In any case, the Mule edition provides a practical realization for the piano already transposed to the key of A-flat Major. If the pianist wished to do some research, he or she could consult the basso continuo realization in an edition such as Bärenreiter in order to compare it with the Mule realization.

There are many aspects of baroque performance practice that were not specifically discussed in these sample lessons or discussed at length in the previous chapters, including various ornaments, notes inégales, and improvisation.

In order to stay within the scope of this project, the ornaments selected for discussion in the Ornamentation section are those that are most commonly described in various style manuals and, from that initial collection, I selected the ornaments that seem
most suitable for an undergraduate student to understand and use in performance. Another reason for this relatively small list of ornaments is the fact that, in my experience, students tend to assign too much attention to matters dealing with notes and not enough attention to matters of articulation, emphasis, and phrasing. I prefer to have students capitalize on the benefits of fewer ornament choices, thereby encouraging more focus on style and nuance. Naturally, the listening assignments will lead students to different and more complex ornaments and those can be explored as deemed appropriate by the teacher. There are several excellent resources devoted specifically to ornamentation, including Frederick Neumann’s *Ornamentation in Baroque and Post-Baroque Music* and Betty Bang Mather and David Lasocki’s *Free Ornamentation in Woodwind Music, 1700-1775*.

The particular issue of *notes inégales* is perhaps too contradictory and intangible for an undergraduate student, but that certainly depends on the capabilities and progress of the individual student. Again, students may hear this kind of rhythmic variation in recordings and will desire to imitate it in their own performance. I feel that this is the correct approach to a technique as elusive as *notes inégales*: listen to it first, imitate it, and then consult written resources. At this point a reconciliation of all this information is necessary, which will provide the performer with a dependable means to edit performances.

Improvisation, as an essential element of baroque music, remains fundamental to the baroque style and is necessary in order to impart the inherent flexibility and freedom of the music. The course of study provided in the sample lessons represents exactly how I would approach teaching an undergraduate to improvise in any style of music and is the exact set of instructions I use for teaching improvisation in the jazz idiom: listening to
recordings of great players, imitating their style, and transcribing their note choices, phrasing, articulations, and inflections. It is also very useful when teaching jazz to have a student analyze a melodic line to find the important structural notes (the skeleton).

It is important in jazz improvisation for the performer to play the melody and the harmony entirely from memory. Memorization allows the greatest amount of freedom and encourages the highest levels of creativity for improvisation. If improvisation in the baroque style is the goal, I would encourage memorization for the exact same reasons. No matter what the style of the music may be, the fact remains that teaching improvisation involves the same approach—an approach that is largely based on listening and imitation. With regards to transcribing directly from recordings, there is one issue that I would caution teachers to anticipate. Imitation is the single best route to adopting style in music, however it is possible to imitate undesirable traits. For instance, a saxophonist who is deeply involved in imitating all of the aspects of a baroque flute performance may not realize that he or she is also imitating the sound of the baroque flute. This may yield some interesting results, however a student who begins approaching the saxophone in an un-idiomatic manner may also acquire some bad playing habits. This issue is one of the reasons why I advocate waiting until a student has formed a solid playing foundation before beginning a serious study of baroque performance practice. It takes an experienced student to be able to distinguish between imitable stylistic traits and un-imitable traverso traits, even with the guidance of a conscientious teacher.
CHAPTER 4. CONCLUSION

It has been determined that the saxophone has a long history with transcriptions and arrangements, which augment the saxophone’s repertoire and provide a historical context through which saxophonists may experience music that predates the invention of their instrument. Transcriptions, particularly those from the baroque period, also provide excellent pedagogical material for inexperienced students whose educational needs would perhaps not be best served by more contemporary music.

There have been many transcriptions contributed by numerous individuals, but it is the baroque transcriptions provided by Marcel Mule and Sigurd Raschèr—two of the most prominent saxophonists in the instrument’s history—that are perhaps the most enduring, and thus remain the most commonly found transcriptions in the saxophone teaching studio. The various transcriptions of Mule and Raschèr continue to be valuable additions to the repertoire, serving students’ pedagogical needs by providing appealing, accessible, and suitably challenging music. However, these transcriptions provide only a minimum of attention to issues of style and historical performance practice.

This study provides an historical approach to performing baroque music on the saxophone by focusing specifically on baroque performance practice as it applies to selected solo sonatas by Handel. This approach initially addresses general baroque style and then presents those specific stylistic traits as they can be applied to a Handel transcription for saxophone.

This monograph provides a realistic means for saxophonists to benefit more from baroque transcriptions. The application of basic elements of baroque performance
practice to saxophone transcriptions can provide a different and valuable experience of core musical elements such as 1) tension and release, as expressed, for example, in the baroque style of “leaning” in an appoggiatura, or through the concept of speaking rather than singing and the resulting shorter phrases; 2) the understanding of the structure of a melody as realized by creating a skeleton and then composing or improvising one’s own ornamentation; and 3) a new understanding of the expressive devices available to performers as realized through a sparing use of vibrato, for example, or the use of beat hierarchy.

There is enormous musical value in the study of past performance practices and saxophonists only stand to benefit from understanding these concepts as they apply to the transcriptions in our repertoire.
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DISCOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A

LIST OF BASIC BAROQUE ELEMENTS

The following list is a compilation of the basic elements of baroque performance practice discussed in this monograph. An asterisk indicates the elements that were suggested for a pre-Level 1 student. The designation of levels is for organizational purposes only and is not intended to be followed strictly.

LEVEL 1-2
Vibrato: omit it (may be approached later as an ornament)
Shorter phrases: speaking, not singing
Concept of space/aeration/light (allowed by shortening ends of notes)
*Articulation patterns (not slur two/tongue two; vary pattern on repeat)
Beat hierarchy: good beats vs. bad beats
*Trills (beginning from upper auxiliary note)
Mordent
*Dynamics (forte = rich; piano = dolce; follow contour of the melodic line)
Messa di voce
Expressive lingering
Appoggiatura: leaning
Comparison
Transcribing from recordings
Reading handbooks such as Donington and Brown

LEVEL 3-4
Skeleton (for slow movements)
Notes inégales
More ornaments (consult handbooks and/or Neumann and Mather)
Improvisation of ornaments
Reading Sherman and Quantz
More research regarding national style differences
APPENDIX B

LIST OF RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

This list is intended as a quick guide providing a brief description of the resources that proved most useful to this monograph.


An excellent resource for brief explanations of the fundamental elements of baroque performance style. Donington provides many quotes from CPE Bach, Quantz, Leopold Mozart, Hotteterre, Tromlitz, et al, so his Handbook also serves as an introduction to these important baroque figures. Offers suggestions for further reading.


Another excellent resource for brief explanations of the basics, this book presents general baroque stylistic issues in a clear and concise manner. This manual also makes many references to primary sources and offer suggestions for further reading.


This books is more specifically aimed at flutists, however there is still an enormous amount of clearly explained stylistic information.


This is one of the major treatises from the 18th century. It contains some information specific to flute playing, but more of the book is about general baroque performance practice. This treatise is surprisingly witty, easy to read, and contains excellent advice for all musicians.

This is an exceptionally informative collection of interviews of some of the biggest names in early music, including Anner Bylsma, Gustav Leonhardt, William Christie, and several others.


This book discusses historical informed performance and early music in relation to modern performance. Butt presents many different opinions both for and against historical performance practice.


This is an extremely thorough (600+ pages) collection of 18th century ornaments. It provides highly detailed descriptions and examples of most, if not all, of the known ornaments from the 18th century. An essential reference.


A collection of examples of written ornamentation with information about different composers and national styles. The examples are numerous and are set in a format where the reader can easily compare several interpretations of the same passage.
APPENDIX C

LIST OF PRIMARY SOURCES


Amy Griffiths received a high school diploma and Bachelor of Music degree in saxophone performance from the North Carolina School of the Arts in 1989 and 1993, respectively. After a period of study in Paris, France, she received a Master of Music degree in saxophone performance and pedagogy from Arizona State University in 1997. She is currently on the faculty of the Schwob School of Music at Columbus State University in Columbus, Georgia, where she teaches saxophone and jazz.