

A Broken Perspective



Performance Issues In Matthias Pintscher's *Shining Forth* (2008)
& A Nudge Into The Pool Of Contemporary Trumpet Literature

Todd Walker, Fall 2012

In order to be complete musicians, we should not limit ourselves to repertoire from the past, but should know and understand contemporary music written for our instrument - at least those works by the prominent composers of our time.ⁱ

Gabriele Cassone

In striving for excellence in the performance of contemporary classical music, primarily in works from the past half-century, musicians are often faced with various performance issues. To varying degrees, such issues arise in much of the literature and the challenges they pose are often unique to specific instruments or voice types. For brass musicians, issues often materialize due to the inherent physical and technical limitations of their instruments. In terms of some of these limitations, the purpose of this study is to provide context as to how they relate specifically to both the trumpet and to the trumpet player, and how they often affect performance decisions in contemporary solo literature. To assist in illustrating this point, the following study examines apparent performance issues as they relate specifically to Matthias Pintscher's *Shining Forth* (2008), and provides the various solutions and general preparatory approaches suggested by three prominent performers.

For many, the physical, technical, and interpretive challenges found in contemporary trumpet repertoire can be significant and discouraging. Tragically, for the vast majority of trumpet players who are for the first time reviewing a new piece, regardless of genre or compositional category, their primary concerns are of a technical nature, including range and fatigue. Additionally, when considering works written for unaccompanied trumpet, such concerns become increasingly significant, as there are often fewer moments of rest and the pitch and interval range can be extreme. Should a piece contain such challenges alone, history has often shown us that performances of it have been, and will be, undoubtedly limited. Throughout my years as a student and performer of the trumpet, I have formed an opinion seemingly inline with most of my colleagues, teachers, and mentors: Unfamiliar technical requirements are considered to be extreme and much of the contemporary trumpet repertoire is perceived to be inaccessible. Therefore, many trumpet players often disregard many of the compositions for the trumpet written in the past 50 years. Instead, they frequently fall back on the standard recital literature provided

to us by Franz Joseph Haydn, Johann Nepomuk Hummel, Paul Hindemith, or Alexander Arutunian. Here I argue that the perceived difficulties of contemporary composition performance may be easily overcome if trumpeters were to change their perspectives on the music by adopting some relatively simple practice and performance techniques. Through a consideration of various elements found in Pintscher's piece, namely his musical aesthetic, the formal structure, the technical challenges posed and possible solutions for performance, I will demonstrate how to achieve new attitudes towards such compositions.

Time and again, we have found that the negative perception of the average trumpeter, one with great carrying capacity, encumbers his/her journey into the world of contemporary music. Internationally recognized soloist, former Principal Trumpet of the Rotterdam Philharmonic and San Diego Symphony orchestras, champion of contemporary trumpet repertoire, and current Professor of Trumpet and Coordinator of Brass Studies at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), Edward Carroll dedicates a portion of his personal website to a detailed list of works which he has labeled "Extreme Repertoire."ⁱⁱ While, in many cases, his label may be accurate, it exemplifies and contributes further to the persistent negative perception of the trumpeter that contemporary solos are impossible to perform, and that they are somehow more "extreme" than other virtuosic works from earlier compositional periods.

To better understand the trumpet player's perception of various technical challenges, it would be logical to provide a general sociological comparison to that of other instrumentalists. To do so, I will attempt to find similarities in sound production across the entire range of conventional musical instruments. While all performers deal with psychological challenges as they attempt to perform technical passages, only wind instruments and vocalists can be considered here. The reason being that others differ in their manner of sound production from that of wind instruments and the voice. Whereas

strings and percussion require a mallet, bow, or hand to function, winds and voice produce sound via the mouth and lips, consisting of a much more complicated series of actions. Paring down the distinction yet further, woodwinds produce resonance via vibrations created as a result of forced breath passing through reeds or over metal mouth holes (flute). While still posing many significant challenges, reeds rely on construction and moisture for their functionality. Therefore, they also cannot be included in any such comparison.

What remain are brass instruments and the voice. Since all brass instruments produce sound identically, and because it is the main focus of this study, I will streamline the comments to include the trumpet only. Similarities between the production of sound on the trumpet and the voice are nearly identical. The vocalist produces sound via the same process as a woodwind instrument; only the vocal chords replace the reed. The very same can be said for the trumpet. However, it is the lips on the mouthpiece that serve this function, replacing either the reed or vocal chords. Therefore, it can be safe to assume that both the trumpet player and the vocalist have similar physical concerns regarding tone production.

This is significant to the study in that it demonstrates the existence of a more fundamental challenge posed to both the trumpeter and vocalist. Sound production does not rely solely on technical ability, one that is considered to be acceptable and pure, that is, but also rather the physical make up and condition of the performer. Therefore, the physical state of the human body on any given day can dictate the outcome of a performance and, more importantly, it can greatly affect the psychological state of the performer. With such concerns regarding what would appear to be the performer's most automatic and basic of abilities, it leaves little wonder why trumpeters, like vocalists, choose their repertoire very carefully.

Although the common perception that all contemporary trumpet music is difficult to perform and, therefore, also undesirable to listen to, it begs to question whether so much of it is indeed “unplayable.” It is likely that the negative preconceived notions of contemporary trumpet literature have created a stylistic “traffic jam,” allowing few new trumpeters into the world of contemporary music performance. With that, it would be fitting to reexamine Charles Wuorinen’s 1964 article “Notes on the Performance of Contemporary Music” written for the journal *Perspectives of New Music*. Wuorinen seeks to enlighten the “modern musician” by suggesting that opinions of new music should neither emphasize “extreme difficulty,” nor should they assume that those performing it have developed as “virtuosi” to an abnormal degree.

...with the realization that new music is in fact not so difficult to perform as people think, and that the problems experienced by performers in dealing with it are the result of their having been trained in a tradition of no relevance to its performance requirements. Moreover, I have been emboldened by personal experience to conclude that even the most difficult new music is far from approaching the limits of human performance capacities: given sufficiently efficient instruments, anything that can be heard (in the sense of “musically perceived”) can, I am convinced, be played.ⁱⁱⁱ

Wuorinen implies that the current demands, those of the 1960s that is, were no more difficult or “impractical” than those of much virtuosic music of the past. In fact, he presents a valid argument regarding contemporary music from the last sixty years as being, on occasion, less demanding than some virtuosic works of much earlier compositional periods. In addition, Wuorinen translates the common opinion of certain contemporary works as being “unplayable” into what would be more accurately described as “unhearable.” In his view, such reactionary labels can only be blamed on the performer’s lack of understanding of modern music and the prevailing pedagogical focus of the student’s education: “Considering the irrelevance of the musical materials by which players are taught to “master” their instruments today, it is really a marvel that performances of contemporary music are possible at all.”^{iv} It would seem that, while written nearly fifty years

ago, Wuorinen's remarks continue to accurately describe the perspective of many of today's modern musicians, trumpet players being no particular exception.

Fortunately, a number of respected figures in the trumpet community exist who endeavor to "lead the masses towards change." In his encyclopedic publication *The Trumpet Book*, world-renowned historical and contemporary music specialist, Gabriele Cassone, urges performers to be "complete musicians" by not limiting themselves to past repertoire, but to understand the music of today's composers. When posed with challenges of contemporary music he suggests:

Students should try to enter into the spirit of contemporary works without preconceived notions or prejudice, setting aside the expressive conventions typical of earlier music. Instead, they should try to carefully realize contemporary pieces in all of their detail, and remain open to conveying more complex moods than in traditional music, such as melancholy, anxiety, irony, or anger.^v

A significant number of performance challenges found in contemporary literature, often existing similarly in compositions intended for instruments other than the trumpet, can frequently be solved with ever-increasing notational clarity and the presence of musical instructions. The majority of trumpet compositions have been traditionally written, clearly notated, and in the case of many unaccompanied works, often contain performance notes clarifying the incorporation of any *unusual* notation or markings. These instructions, descriptions of notational marks, etc., almost always provide the musician with sufficient assistance in making important performance decisions. The pervasive use of performance notes in contemporary music can be attributed to a number of issues, but often such instructions appear when compositions have been constructed with technical assistance and suggestions provided by the performer for whom the piece was written. The assistance provided in such situations is significant: the writing for the featured instrument(s) has been customized by means of a close relationship between the composer and a choice performer. The results of such collaborations are compositions producing, in theory, fewer interpretive and realization issues.

For the solo trumpeter, however, the unfortunate result of some such customizations is often the labeling of the compositions as “extreme repertoire.” Should a composer create a piece with a particular performer in mind, and with significant collaboration, many of the techniques, extended or otherwise, are likely to be included to suit that performer’s special interests, strengths, and virtuosic abilities. The resulting work may indeed, one day, become what is to be considered a true masterpiece. However, the discouraging fact for the remainder of the trumpet community is that this “masterpiece” may be perceived as unplayable. This is not to say such collaborations are uncommon with other instruments, nor could one claim an ability to accurately provide labels to such compositions as being comparatively more or less challenging. But the explicit focus here is aimed at the potential stalling of a widespread interest in performing much of the available contemporary solo trumpet literature.

One notable example of such a performer for whom a wealth of works has been written, is the Swedish-born trumpet virtuoso Håkan Hardenberger (b.1961). Touted in 2011 as “...the best trumpet player in the galaxy,”^{vi} Hardenberger undeniably possesses considerable virtuosic abilities. On a number of occasions, composers have customized their works to suit some of his more unique technical specialties, giving them extensive consideration. One example of such a piece is Heinz Karl (H.K.) Gruber’s *Aerial* (1998-1999). Gruber has collaborated closely with Hardenberger on a number of his works, *Aerial* being no particular exception. Making clear their close working relationship, Hardenberger showed his affection for the composer, commenting in a 2009 interview that he considers Gruber to be a “genius,” claiming also that he “...gave him [Gruber] all the *tricks*. There is a lot of collaboration with him.”^{vii} To further illustrate their close collaboration, Gruber also stated in a 2011 interview:

Håkan Hardenberger is...I think the most interesting trumpet player in the world. [He] came one day to Vienna and said, “Could you come to my hotel? I want to show you all the possibilities I have on the trumpet.” Then I asked him, “Håkan, did you ever play on a ‘cow horn?’”^{viii}

Gruber tells us the reply was “No,” but that some days later, Hardenberger left him a recorded voice message on which he presented his sudden, rapidly acquired abilities on the *cow horn*.

The relationship between Gruber and Hardenberger is well documented and they clearly worked closely in each of their collaborations. Such a connection benefits both the interests of the composer *and* performer and, in this case, the result is a wealth of forward-looking, beautiful works that push the traditional limits of the trumpet. However, it is often this customization that limits the performances to virtuosos, one with a cost of near preservation of such works as museum pieces.

As discouraging as it may seem, the fact is that many extraordinary recent works for trumpet are, for many, indeed unplayable. However, as Wuorinen suggests, the same can be said for many compositions from the Baroque era, for example. There exists a wealth of serious trumpet repertoire that *is* playable, and for the trumpeter, it is important to maintain a proper, positive perspective. Combating feelings of discouragement and general disinterest with optimism and an encouraging nudge towards change, Cassone suggests the performer, the *complete musician*, possess a “great curiosity” and that they view contemporary compositions as “intellectual challenge[s].”^{ix}

Since his 20s, Matthias Pintscher has been at the forefront of the world of contemporary music, having been commissioned to compose for leading orchestras ranging from the Berlin Philharmonic to the New York Philharmonic, to various prominent, contemporary chamber ensembles. *Shining Forth* is a challenging work for unaccompanied trumpet which introduces new techniques and a delicate soundscape worthy of exploration. Pintscher was unavailable for detailed comments regarding the composition and its developmental process. Without such information, often the bulk of the decisions regarding any performance issues would remain up to the better judgment of

the performer. While comments and clarifications from the composer are certainly beneficial, one often ultimately discovers any number of additional resources available in providing assistance with the various technical and aesthetic issues that may arise in the music they wish to perform.

In terms of researching musical and compositional influences, performers often find directional clarity in the background details of the composer. In this case, Matthias Pintscher was born in Marl (Nordrhein-Westfalia), Germany in 1971 and began his musical studies playing piano, violin, and percussion. Marl had its own *Stadt Jugendorchester*, which he was fortunate enough to conduct at the age of 14. Through this, he was inspired to compose, as biographer Markus Fein notes, desiring “to breathe life into the orchestra himself.”^{xv} Fein further outlines Pintscher’s developmental path:

In 1998 he began studying composition as a Junior Student with Giseller Klebe in Detmold; two years later, he encountered Hans Werner Henze, whose idea of an imaginary, instrumental theatre inspired Pintscher to compose in a narrative, gestural style. It was also Henze who encouraged him to study the sixteenth century composer Carlo Gesualdo.^{xvi}

From his examination of a Gesualdo madrigal, Pintscher was inspired to write his *Fourth String Quartet* (1992), a work to which he attached the subtitle “*Portrait: Ritratto di Gesualdo*.” By this time, he was 22 years old and had already written three symphonies, as well as a number of concertos and chamber music works. He soon relocated to Düsseldorf to pursue compositional studies with Manfred Trojhan and, within a couple of years, his career appeared to be soundly established, as “...the steady stream of commissions, prizes and scholarships had already begun.”^{xvii}

This background information brings us closer to understanding Pintscher, but what remains unknown is his musical aesthetic. In his 2003 review of the composer written for *The Guardian*, Andrew Clements makes an interesting observation regarding his attempts to categorize Pintscher’s compositional style. When compared to the profound polarity of what he calls, “the big names of the last decade,”^{xviii} namely Hans Werner Henze and

Helmut Lachenmann, Clements finds Pintscher's music to contain an "unclassifiable sensibility":

That clash of ideologies and musical personalities has surfaced regularly, with other composers invited to take one side or the other; the polarity has become quite a profound one. So it is very rare indeed to find a young composer who has won the public admiration of both Henze and Lachenmann, as Matthias Pintscher has done.^{xv}

Pintscher's music has been described as *sensitive, fragile, precise, extremely detailed*, and that it demonstrates an intense focus on his idea of an ideal sound: *das Vage* – the "vague" or "elusive." His attraction to the *elusive* and *ambiguous* is apparent, in that much of his music has been influenced by the poetry of E.E. Cummings (1894-1962) and by the paintings of such notables as Edgar Degas (1834-1917), Barnett Newman (1905-1970), and Cy Twombly (1928-2011). In fact, Pintscher credits Newman's painting of the same name with providing much of the inspiration for his own work, *Shining Forth* [Figure 1].^{xv} His music and his aesthetic, like that found in the works of these artists, surfaces uniquely in its differing tones of gray, in its subtleness, and in its blurred shades. Fein describes it as being *fragile*, "...his music breathes and shivers like a body...vulnerable. Matthias Pintscher composes music for the ear."^{xvi} He continues:

If there is a basic gesture in Matthias Pintscher's music, it is perhaps this movement of freedom, which lends the notes a floating lightness...for it is released from measured time and is not bound by the straitjacket of bars. It ebbs and flows in its own rhythm.^{xvii}

Figure 1: Barnett Newman, "*Shining Forth*" (1961)



Such information and observations provide a vivid image of Matthias Pintscher's influence and musical aesthetic. They also lend a hand to the performer who might choose to interpret *Shining Forth*. In the following sections, we will examine the piece by noting possible performance issues and, based on knowledge of the composer, his aesthetic, and of the instrument, will make any necessary determinations as to how it could be effectively and soulfully performed. To provide assistance with these determinations, the comments and perspectives of two prominent trumpet soloists will be considered throughout. Both having previously studied and performed *Shining Forth*, Matthew Conley and Gareth Flowers provide us with their personal approaches to preparation in general, as well as some insight into solving a number of performance and interpretive issues.

Beginning with the approach of the typical trumpet player (which I have admittedly caricatured in the preceding paragraphs), one would first peruse *Shining Forth* at its superficial level. This earliest stage is one where many players can, and have, become discouraged and will choose to abandon attempts to perform such a piece. It is frequently the utter quantity of notes, the issues of range and fatigue, the new techniques to be learned, or a combination of each, that are discouraging to the trumpet player. At first glance, an abundance of notes is apparent and there are a good number of dense, complex rhythms [Figures 2.1, 2.2].^{xviii}

Figure 2.1: *Shining Forth* (p.1, lines 1-2)Figure 2.2: *Shining Forth* (p.3, mm. 6-13)

There are two extended techniques to be interpreted and learned, few opportunities for rest, wide intervals of up to over two octaves, and the range expands from the extreme low to the extreme high registers. When faced with technical challenges such as these, and although wide ranges of abilities exist, the average professional trumpeter often experiences a significant negative psychological reaction.

As described earlier, technical concerns of sound production on the trumpet are no small matter. It is an extremely physical instrument that, when approached with tension, doubt, or anything other than confidence, the results are often unpleasant for not only the performer, but the listener as well. Therefore, it is necessary to address such concerns further, noting the specific fundamental technical issues and their psychological effects on the performer.

Any number of contemporary works by such composers as John Adams, Luciano Berio, HK Gruber, Hans Werner Henze, Frank Zappa, and Bernd Alois Zimmerman, among others, would provide us with sufficient examples producing technical woes for the

trumpeter. Aside from a relatively small number of accomplished contemporary trumpet music specialists and recording artists, there exists a population of capable musicians who, with dedicated practice, could also achieve a successful and meaningful performance of any number of the works by these composers, but they are unwilling to risk the psychological impact of possible failure and discouragement. Discouragement leads to doubt, tension, and fear, and together they can form an undesirable combination for any musician. As for the trumpeter, however, such a combination is likely to produce disastrous performance results. Therefore, it can be said that fear of failure and embarrassment is the spawn of negative, and quite possibly unrealistic, perspectives on challenging trumpet repertoire.

By examining the scores of various other contemporary trumpet works, one may discover challenges similar to those found in the Pintscher. Such a list might contain extended techniques, both short and sustained upper register pitches, extremely wide intervals, and little rest. To provide sufficient familiarity with general challenges as they relate specifically to the trumpet, some of which often play decisive roles in the performer's repertoire selection process, it is necessary to address a number of them at this point.

Frequently, the importance of practicing *extended techniques* is ignored. In practice sessions, I have often found the existence of an imbalance between the unfamiliar and what could be considered "routine" fundamentals. The perspective is such that extended techniques are required infrequently and, therefore, they do not warrant equal priority in the practice room.

As is the case for each brass instrument, access to the *upper register* is only gained as a result of years of trial and error and through the methodical repetition of any successful attempts. Only then will one possess the tools with which they may work to achieve facility, ease, and accuracy in that register. That said, there is no proven method guaranteeing success. Therefore, upper register abilities between trumpeters may vary

greatly. Moreover, whether or not there exists in them a willingness to admit it, most trumpet players define themselves — or at least aspire to define themselves — on their ability to produce powerful high notes (*ca. Bb5-Bb6 and above*). This is a phenomenon that has either developed or destroyed the egos of trumpeters nearly every day since their first on the instrument. It is also one that has, and still may, shape the impressions of those who listen. Generally speaking, if a trumpeter is unable to produce easily a full, resonant Bb6/C6 at any volume, they will find much of the serious trumpet repertoire difficult. This is not to suggest that those who struggle avoid attempts to perform pieces containing notes beyond their immediate abilities, quite the contrary. However, what is being illustrated here is the distress such a player might feel when faced with such a challenge, and whether they are willing to take significant risks in a performance.

Wide intervals appear physically far apart in the score, vertically, that is, and often result in the generation of a similar image in the mind of the performer. The inherent issue is that brass instruments rely on varying *horizontal* air speed to produce pitches in different registers. The direction of the air is often in direct conflict with the image created by the performer and, therefore, wide intervals can present not only physical, but significant psychological challenges.

Concomitant with a number of the above issues is the factor of *fatigue*. Berio's *Sequenza X*, for example, contains very little rest, and is considerable in length and technical difficulty. Unlike non-wind instruments, brass players require rest for two reasons: *breathing* and *embouchure fatigue*. As trumpet players perform, they require moments of rest to allow blood to return to their lips and embouchure. Some of the rests required may consist of shorter or longer moments, depending upon either the previous or the approaching passage. Many composers concern themselves with such issues, while others do not. Unfortunately, fatigue often sabotages performances and, in many cases, can hinder the performers' ability to fully express themselves musically. Notably, this particular issue is

unique mainly to brass players. Comparatively, woodwind performers may experience fatigue-related challenges, but there is little evidence demonstrating a similar level of concern.

To those who enjoy challenges, as well as those who thrive in the process of learning, preparing *Shining Forth* for performance will prove to be very rewarding. That being said, one first needs to examine the issues that remain below the surface. I will attempt to bring forth some of these issues and present possible solutions for the performer.

The Pintscher Aesthetic

Examining Pintscher's earlier compositions provides performers with a great deal of valuable interpretive insight as they begin to work on the dense rhythmic writing found in the piece. Although some of Pintscher's works, such as *Choc* (1996), *Fünf Orchesterstücke* (1997), and *Héradiade-Fragmente* (1999) may differ stylistically from his more recent compositions, there are indeed similarities to be found across the board. From piece to piece, it is not uncommon to hear many related gestures translated for various instruments. One example can be found in Pintscher's use of, to borrow Conley's term, "temporally-stretched,"^{xix} fragmented triplet figures [Figure 3].^{xx} He maintains that the existence of such odd groupings in a solo piece was unusual. What he discovered, however, was that each of the larger quintuplet groupings could be more effectively considered as single beats, with the triplet fragments existing simply as subdivisions of each:

You see these figures all over, [that is] everything that appears in the large quintuplets. When you [visualize] all of these notes in the context of one large beat subdivided into a quintuplet, it suddenly occurs to you that there is a lot of activity within one very long, "stretched" beat. I think one has quite a bit of freedom within that context.^{xxi}

Figure 3: *Shining Forth* (p.2, line 5)

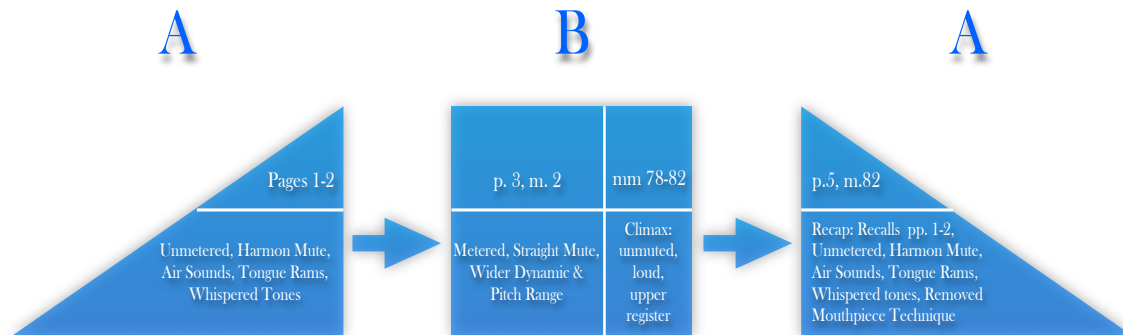
Such figures can also be found in Pintscher's *Towards Osiris* (2005). Interestingly, a significant portion of the material that makes up *Shining Forth* can be traced back to this piece and, in the orchestral version, the passages are often passed around to various instruments.

The composer was commissioned to write *Shining Forth* for the Westdeutschen Rundfunk (WDR). However, it is unclear as to whether or not it was written with a particular trumpeter in mind or, for that matter, with their compositional or notational assistance. Regardless, the notation appears to be clear and precise, nearly down to the granular level. A legend is found, clarifying any unusual symbols, indications, or trill speeds, and Pintscher has also included suggestions for the desired mute brands. Such attention to detail reveals much about the composer.

Formal analysis reveals a structure consisting of three large sections [Figure 4]. The first of which is unmetered, muted, contains very soft dynamic levels, and implies a whispered, introverted tone. Also muted, but now metered, the double bar on p. 3, m. 2 marks the beginning of the second section. Here the dynamic level has been raised, as have both the pitch range and emotional intensity. The climax is approached by a loud, but brief ascending passage in measures 78-82. Fittingly, as is not the case at any other point in the piece, these moments of excitement provide listeners with their only opportunity to hear an unmuted, pure trumpet tone. A recapitulation of sorts, the third and final section recalls the first. The whispered, airy tones return without meter and, with an added element of

near silence, fade into thin air, as the final moments are to be performed with the mouthpiece pulled a short distance from the trumpet's receiver.

Figure 4: *Shining Forth* (Formal Structure)



Narrowing our focus, we discover the need to clarify Pintscher's use of meter and rhythm. Beginning with the former, the first and last sections contain no meter. However, the middle section provides important phrasing indicators with its changing meters, much like more "traditional" music. This would indicate that, although it should be attempted throughout the entire piece, the performer must remain conscious of rhythmic and metric clarity in this section. That is to say, the impact here is achieved through metric divisions, rather than broad, gestural strokes.

Matthew Conley's 2010 performance from the annual advanced music seminar, *A Chosen Vale*,^{xvii} is the only readily available recording (video) of *Shining Forth*. Conley has worked closely with Mr. Pintscher on a number of his other works, and has experience with him as a conductor. Therefore, his perspective and understanding of Pintscher's rhythmic writing sheds light on the subject: "...Matthias' conducting of this type of material has become an important reference for me. As a soloist, he really gives me the space I need to play with the time, but the meter is absolute."^{xviii} In other words, while requiring strict observance of his metric divisions, Pintscher allows the performer to express by stretching the time *within* the measure lines. This is common practice with many classically trained vocalists and seasoned Jazz musicians, as they often stretch the time between beats

into musical phrases in which the larger metrical structures are present but elastic. In such cases, the written rhythms remain intact and are accurately realized, but it is the *sense* of *time* between the bar lines where one finds opportunity for personal expression. Most often, stretched *time* can best be achieved in the presence of a steady accompaniment figure. However, the knowledge and awareness of the effect can also provide the unaccompanied performer with an extremely valuable tool of expression.

What remains in terms of rhythm involves the complexity found in the two unmeasured sections. Questions raised are among the following: *With an absence of meter, how can one realize complex rhythmic groupings* (the duple and triple groupings placed under larger groupings of five, for example) *so that they accurately sound as such?* *Also, if Pintscher has painstakingly notated his score with articulations, dynamics, instructions, etc., does he demand precise rhythms from the performer, or does aesthetic prioritize the gesture?* Matthew Conley enlightens us in admitting that he initially found the rhythm to be intimidating. He notes, however, that the more he “lived” with the piece, and as he came to better know Pintscher and his aesthetic, the notated rhythms became much clearer.

The notation is certainly clear. One thing that I didn't figure out until a bit later (and something he [Pintscher] has still never mentioned to me), is that the large quintuplets that run through much of the piece do not really serve a rhythmic function. They certainly have an impact on the rhythm, but in a way they are used to group the phrases into smaller gestures, and to stretch out the time one has to work with within those phrases.^{xxiv}

This leads us to believe that in such instances there is a good deal allowed the performer to interpret the quintuplets found in *Shining Forth's* unmeasured sections with a greater sense of rubato [Figure 5].^{xxv} With such license, however, one must realize the stylistic parameters that they will need to observe. To an artist, *liberty* in interpretation is an entitlement. It is an invaluable tool of personal expression, but one that must remain contained within the context of the composer's compositional style. In the case of Pintscher, his style is mainly one consisting of gestures. Therefore, many interpretive decisions can be made through an awareness of a broader view of his statements and phrases, rather than a narrow focus on

specific notes and rhythms. In this broad view, it is important to understand how Pintscher's notation shapes his gestures and how one might perform them as such.

While Conley had the opportunity to collaborate with Pintscher on a number of *Shining Forth* occasions, he did not have that opportunity for his first performance. Helpful to him at the time, however, was the knowledge he acquired during prior collaborations of other works. Among these was a performance of *Celestial Object I* from the *Sonic Eclipse* [2010] cycle. This is a three-movement work in which the first two, *Celestial Object I* and *Celestial Object II* are, as New York Times reviewer Allan Kozinn describes them, "...essentially brief concertos, the first for the trumpet, the second for the horn."^{xxvi} The third movement, *Occultation* serves as a finale of sorts in which "...elements of the first two movements are overlaid – an idea suggested by the mechanics of a solar eclipse. The result is a colorful, energetic movement in which the trumpet and horn lines are alternately independent and interlocking."^{xxvii}

In Conley's view, Pintscher was never overly particular regarding performance choices or interpretation. Rather, he provided assistance when necessary and clearly emphasized a need for his music to have, above all else, "good energy and expression." By focusing their interpretive skills around Pintscher's gestural ideas, and bringing them to life effectively by transferring *Shining Forth's* implied emotional states into sound, I believe the performer can successfully achieve his expressive requirements. Additionally, as preparers and performers of music we strive for accuracy at all times, and we need to continuously remind ourselves that the overall *effect*, "...the forest through the trees,"^{xxviii} is of paramount importance.

Figure 5: *Shining Forth* (p.1, line 1)

Kompositionsauftrag des Westdeutschen Rundfunks

svelto - tempo giusto (tempo I°)

with harmon mute
(without stem)

tongue-rams *)

pp > *p* *molto leggero e misterioso* *pp* *ppp*

Building upon the general descriptions provided earlier, the following sections are devoted to an examination of the specific technical requirements found in *Shining Forth*. I will discuss both those considered to be “extended,” as well as others that are often seen as, for lack of a better term, “normal.”

Extended Techniques

Important to note is the manner in which Pintscher has incorporated the various extended techniques. Void of novelty, they, along with the various mute usages, widen the palette of available sounds. Pintscher’s work incorporates both *tongue-rams* and *air sounds*. While the *tongue-rams* are not technically difficult to produce, they pose a challenge in terms of timing and accuracy. With a sharp focus on both of these elements, along with simple repetition, the dedicated performer would no doubt gain ample facility to successfully execute the technique in a performance. *Air sounds* are not difficult to produce on the trumpet and, like tongue-rams, would merely require repetitive practice. This technique appears on the final page of the score where Pintscher instructs the performer to play softly and without use of the tongue. Instead, he requests that each note be articulated only with “air attacks,” making the technique dissimilar to *tongue-rams*. In last two lines of the piece, the mouthpiece is to be removed half way out of the receiver, and the *air sounds* continue without tongue articulation. Similarly, the final five notes are to be played with the mouthpiece fully removed from the instrument, this time requiring a short distance between it and the beginning of the receiver. As the airstream must enter into the instrument to ensure proper sounding of the indicated pitch, the unusual aspect to

this final technique is that accuracy depends heavily on the alignment of both the end of the mouthpiece and the entry into the receiver.

Rhythmic Speed

Two passages exist where the composer indicates *il più presto possibile* [Figure 6.1]^{xxx} (the second of which is marked *senza misura*, but warrants a similar treatment to the first [Figure 6.2]).^{xxx}

Figure 6.1: *Shining Forth* (m. 69)

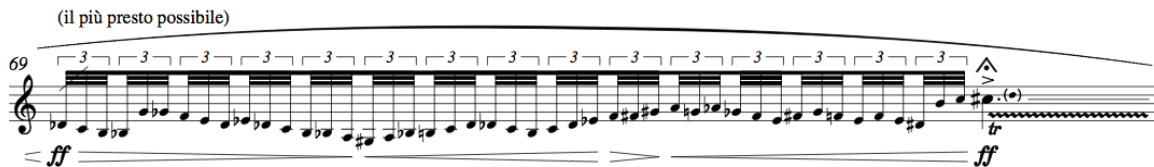


Figure 6.2: *Shining Forth* (m. 75)



The above figures present challenges for the trumpeter, as it is extremely difficult to make a notable difference in tempo from that of the preceding sections. With a great deal of practice with a metronome, one could possibly gain enough facility to maximize finger speed beyond that of the general tempo. However, this is a great challenge, as the bulk of the previous passages already lie near what one might consider “terminal finger velocity.” When faced with this issue, Conley found himself being forced to change various notes, allowing for a stronger effect. He also notes:

...usually in performance, I would end up involuntarily ‘doodling’ at some point in them [the *il più presto* passages]. When I played the piece for him [Pintscher] he was OK with this, and even apologetic about not understanding. In the subsequent version I think he changed them, but I’m not sure if it’s any easier. If one were to play the preceding material slower, they could be more accurate on the runs, but I think the excitement created by a brisker tempo is more important than total accuracy here.^{xxxi}

Mutes & Mute Changes

Next, the issue of mutes and mute changes requires much consideration. It is clear that Pintscher had previously consulted a trumpeter (or more than one) at some point

while composing this or one of his earlier pieces. The clue can be found in his specificity of mute preferences (types, brands, etc.), an intimate knowledge of which only a trumpet player would possess:

There are two different types of mutes used in this work: a straight mute and a Harmon mute. The preferred models (upon availability) would be Jo-Ral (Harmon) and Le Blanc, Alessi Vacchiano (straight). Please use two Harmon mutes of the same quality and brand (so that quick and quiet changes will be possible): one with the stem inserted, the other one without.^{xxiii}

Despite evidence of the composer's interest in various mute subtleties, and any assistance or advice he may have received on the subject, the fact remains that many of the mute changes required in *Shining Forth* are quite challenging. In fact, they indicate Pintscher's inexperience in writing for the trumpet and, more specifically, his lacking knowledge of the practical logistics involved in both mute insertion and removal.

Some of the more apparent issues in the score involve the *Harmon* mute. Generally, mutes have strips of cork affixed to their narrowest point [Figure 7.1].^{xxiii} With a bit of moisture (created by steaming the inside of the bell with a quick huff of one's warm breath, much like one would steam a mirror), the mute is inserted into the bell with medium pressure along with a slight twisting motion. These actions are routinely performed for two reasons: the steam ensures that the mute will remain securely in the bell until it is removed, *and* the tight fit allows the performer to produce the appropriate buzzing tone unique to that particular mute. The *Harmon* mute [Figure 7.2],^{xxiv} however, does not have strips of cork at its narrowest point, but rather a 2" wide piece wrapping around the top. Its vent lies at the bottom center and requires that the cork provide a complete seal in the bell of the trumpet, whereas the 3-cork (strips) mutes have no vent at the bottom. Instead, the air is directed between each of the 3 corks and into the mute itself.

Figure 7.1: *Straight Mute*Figure 7.2: *Harmon Mute*

The significant distinguishing features of the *Harmon* mute lie in its heavyweight construction and wide section of cork wrapping. This wrapping allows for full surface contact with the bell. These two factors require the performer to provide breath “steam” more thoroughly, ensuring secure placement and, thus, creating a much more adhesive and resistant removal process. On the surface, the difference between the placement and removal of a *Harmon* and any other mute, a *straight* mute, for example, is minor. However, the difference in *time* required to perform such actions can occasionally prove significant. Therefore, one must be use caution, as the *Harmon* is much more likely to fall out of the bell during a performance. In *Shining Forth*, the practical reasoning behind Pintscher’s request for two *Harmon* mutes is clearly the result of having worked closely with trumpet players. The process of inserting a stem into, or removing one from, the *Harmon* is not simple, and is an action that can by no means be performed gracefully or swiftly. Additionally, the *Harmon* containing a stem does not sit securely when placed onto a table or music stand (adjusted to substitute for a table), especially when the action is hastily executed.

In recognizing and addressing the various problematic mute changes found in *Shining Forth*, we look to some practical suggestions and solutions suggested by Mr. Conley. The first two mute changes appear to be practical, as there is no meter and, within reason, the pauses (rests) may allow for prolongation, if necessary. However, the changes

on the first line of the second page pose problems [Figure 8.1],^{xxxv} as there is very little time allowed for execution.

Figure 8.1: *Shining Forth* (p. 2, line 1)



Pintscher has notated another significant change in bar 78 [Figure 8.2].^{xxxvi} This time, however, it involves the removal of the *straight* mute. Prior to this moment in the piece, the *straight* mute has remained in bell of the trumpet for more than 2.5 pages. As the energy has built up tremendously and is nearing the climax of the piece, the mute is to be removed *very* quickly so that the line can continue to ascend, become louder, and reach its summit. For the performer, this is a very awkward moment to remove the mute. One reason for this is that the difference in compression, or backpressure, from various mutes can create a jarring sensation upon returning back to the *open* trumpet. Also, the register at this point is leading to the extreme upper realm, as dictated by the piece. Being forced to very literally *tear* the mute from the bell and set it down in an extremely short period of time (two 8th notes at 8th = 144 bpm, or .833 seconds) without allowing it to fall over, would pose a significant challenge even to the most graceful of performers.

Figure 8.2: *Shining Forth* (p. 5, m. 78)



Conley concurs that a number of the notated mute changes are indeed too fast. In his first performance, he attempted to execute each action as required. However, following a performance for Matthias Pintscher himself, they both agreed upon various compromises making the changes, as he puts it, “...more comfortable and less awkward.”^{xxxvii} Interesting to note are the two perspectives on this, one of the composer and the other of the performer. When asked about the piece, Pintscher’s brief response mainly consisted of this comment:

Let me just tell you that I am intending to revise and extend *Shining Forth* very soon. I am unhappy with the existing version as it has too many distracting mute changes and I don’t think the form holds it together the way it is right now.^{xxxviii}

Conley’s reaction to the response:

I’m afraid what he’s saying about the mute changes here is partly my fault. I see what he’s saying, but this is also part of the performer’s job (and one I didn’t do very well). So I think a lot of his perception about the awkwardness comes from watching me perform. That said, there is one at the top of the second page [Figure 8.1] that I leave out completely [meaning: he keeps the mute in the entire time] because it doesn’t make much sense and he [Pintscher] approved of this.^{xxxix}

Conley also agreed that the *straight* mute removal [Figure 8.2] is very awkward, and that he hoped to devise a solution with the composer when they work together again in November, 2012. He did feel, however, that with more practice dedicated to the cause, he might be able to perform the mute changes with a bit more grace and less distraction. Barring any revisions to the score as it currently exists, Conley pointed out one existing, yet, in his view, unfavorable alternative: the *Mute Belt* [Figures 9.1,^{xl} 9.2^{xli}]. His reluctance to adopt such an option stems from the fact that, “...outside of theatrical performances, one cannot help but conjure up Stockhausen.”^{xlii} Regardless of the performer’s perception of the belt and its appearance, the larger issue here is performative grace. Awkward mute changes and mute belts are likely to distract from the performance and will most certainly disrupt the music. Clearly, the most intelligent and practical solutions in this area include those providing the least disruptions and distractions.

Figure 9.1: *Mute Belt* (worn)Figure 9.2: *Mute Belt*

In *The Trumpet Book*, Cassone offers an approach to practicing contemporary music that instructs the player to focus on *one* line of music per day. His process begins without actually playing the trumpet, but rather it consists of careful examination of the music in order to fully understand its various indications. Only once these elements are understood should the player attempt a reading on their instrument. He suggests:

The secret is to proceed gradually, taking a small step forward each day. A good way to approach the study of a long and difficult piece is to practice one line of music per day. At the outset, do not play; instead, look over the music carefully, so that you understand all of its indication. Only then should you start to play the piece with the instrument, working gradually and on just one line of music.

The following day, practice the line of music from the previous day, and then go on to the next line, but not for more than a total of half an hour. Play slowly, and try right away to implement all of the techniques indicated in the score – tone color, accents, articulation and phrasing, theatrical gestures, and so on. Do not attempt to play at the indicated tempo; begin much more slowly. With this approach, it will take weeks to learn the whole piece, but in the end you will have laid a solid foundation. Only at this point should you gradually increase the tempo in the passages that need to be played faster.

Once you become accustomed to contemporary music notation, you can devote more of your practice time to studying a contemporary piece without losing concentration. It is useless and often damaging to proceed when the mind is not completely receptive to the learning process.^{slm}

No doubt, such focused, determined practice would provide a solid foundation. Of significance here is Cassone's suggestion that the musician experience and enjoy the *process* of learning new music. To test this theory myself, I set out to prepare the first 3 pages, or 16 lines, of *Shining Forth*. Following Cassone's suggestion, I proceeded to learn

no more, or less, than one line of music each day. From the onset, the restriction felt foreign to me and proved challenging to maintain. However, the challenge quickly transformed into a positive experience that made practicing an exciting activity. Most notably absent was any sense of urgency. On most occasions, I am provided with much less preparation time and, therefore, have a tendency to engage in relatively unfocused and ineffective practice sessions. Due to the physical and technical challenges present in trumpet playing, any outside distractions or sense of urgency, whether perceived or not, can significantly inhibit the performer's productivity during the preparation process. For me, Cassone's approach nearly eliminates all such distractions and allows me to remain relaxed, maintain a quiet mind, and focus wholly on the music. Admittedly, use of the term *allowing* may not be entirely accurate. Instead, I personally experienced what could best be described as *forced relaxation*. I was *forced* to slow my pace and *forced* to not move ahead. Clearly, this approach can, and should, be applied to the preparation of all music genres. That being said, a particularly useful byproduct of my test preparation was that the slow, methodical pace allowed for the discovery of details in the score that were initially unapparent.

Shining Forth consists of 46 lines of music. Therefore, to follow Cassone's directions, it should require as many days of practice in order to learn the piece. In this case, my study would be complete with the end of day 24. I began with *Day/Line 1* [Figure 10.1].^{xiv}

Figure 10.1: *Shining Forth* (Day/Line 1)

Kompositionsauftrag des Westdeutschen Rundfunks

svelto - tempo giusto (tempo I°)

with harmon mute
(without stem)

tongue-rams *)

pp > *p* *molto leggero e misterioso* *pp* *ppp*

As this is a short passage consisting of relatively few notes and technical difficulties, it posed no problems as I learned the pitches. However, Pintscher's rhythmic writing is dense and complex. Although I committed myself to execute each rhythm in the piece as accurately as possible, I did not want to lose sight of the gestural style in which the lines had been conceived. Therefore, if rhythmic accuracy hindered the overall effect, my decision was to perform by close approximation.

The first day of work using Cassone's *micro* process also allowed me to familiarize myself with the composer's incorporation of *tongue rams*. I was able to repeat the technique, one that was new to me, *and* make multiple attempts to realize Pintscher's desired effect. *Line/Day 2* and *Line/Day 3* progressed similarly. However, at the end of each of these new lines are mute change instructions [Figure 10.2, 10.3].^{xv} Therefore, in addition to performing the pitches, rhythms, sounds, and dynamics found on the page, I focused on the often-overlooked details of smooth, undisruptive mute insertions, removals, and exchanges.

Figure 10.2: *Shining Forth*, Line/Day 2 (incl. mute transition into line 3)

The figure displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff contains a single melodic line with a complex, dense rhythmic pattern. Above the staff, various rhythmic groupings are indicated with brackets and numbers: 5:4, 5, 3, 5:4, 5, 5:4, 5, 3, 3, 3, 5, and 3. Below the staff, dynamic markings are placed: *ppp*, *pp*, *ppp*, *p*, and *ppp*. A box labeled "mute off" with a downward arrow points to the end of the staff. The bottom staff shows two short musical phrases. The first phrase is marked with "tongue-air → rams *)" and the second with "(sim.)". Both phrases are preceded by a bracketed symbol [∞] and a sharp sign #. The dynamic markings for these phrases are *p < sfz sfz* and *p < sfz* respectively.

Figure 10.3: *Shining Forth*, Line/Day 3 (incl. mute transition into line 4)

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, featuring a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with various articulations and dynamics. Above the staff, there are annotations: 'tongue-air -> rams *)' with an arrow pointing to a specific note, '(sim.)' above a group of notes, and 'to harmon mute (with stem)' with an arrow pointing to the end of the line. The bottom staff is also in treble clef and contains a shorter melodic line, with annotations '(sim.)' and 'ord.' above it. The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *ffz*, *f*, and *ff*, as well as articulation marks like accents and slurs.

My *micro* preparation proceeded forth and, by the end of *Line/Day 8*, page 1 was complete. Over the course of these first 8 days, much had been learned and literally *every* printed detail in the score had been realized, and I felt confident in my newly acquired abilities to produce accurate and affective musical statements. The study continued for the next 16 consecutive days/lines/practice sessions, each of which produced comparable results to the initial 8 described above.

In summary, my personal experience with Cassone's method proved very useful and constructive. The most striking aspects of the study involved the positive psychological response I had to a perceived abundance of time in which to prepare a single line of music. An often tedious and frustrating process transformed itself into a thoroughly enjoyable experience, one that energized my practice sessions as I raked through the details of each passage that was to be prepared. This was an approach that, upon finishing each session, left me longing for more.

While restricting myself to learning single lines per session proved to have transformative effects on my practice methods and performance goals, a number of artistic issues remained in question. The musician employing such an approach to preparation must hold themselves additionally accountable for musically binding together not only each of their learned lines, but the piece as a whole. Such cohesiveness can be achieved with the

identification of any larger sections that may be present in the work, a necessary realization for any musician aspiring to produce meaningful performances.

In search of additional perspectives on this subject, I turned to a performer and colleague who has been celebrated as a champion of progressive contemporary trumpet and electronic music. Gareth Flowers has premiered numerous works which have been composed particularly for him, including the music of Joseph Phibbs and Walter Blanton. A member of the International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE) since 2003, Flowers has performed and recorded many recent works including Pintscher's *Sonic Eclipse* (2011) on the Kairos label.^{xlvi} In 2012, Pintscher revised *Shining Forth* for Flowers' performance at the Tilt Brass *Annual Chamber Music Show* in New York, NY. In terms of learning contemporary solo literature specifically, the particular interests of this study lay with Flowers' performance decisions during his preparations of *Shining Forth*, as well as any unique approach systems and routines he may have employed. Where applicable, I will also present various comparable elements in Conley's preparative approach and in the performance decisions he chose to make.

In cases where there are no formal recordings available, Flowers has a formulaic, *macro-view* approach to preparation. The process begins with an analysis of the composer's writing style for the instrument: "I find a lot of contemporary music often has a developed 'language' that the composer has chosen for the instrument. It's important to understand that language when learning a piece for the first time."^{xlvii} The "language" he speaks of refers to any number of items, including larger compositional forms and sections, gestural or non-gestural writing, notational details, etc.

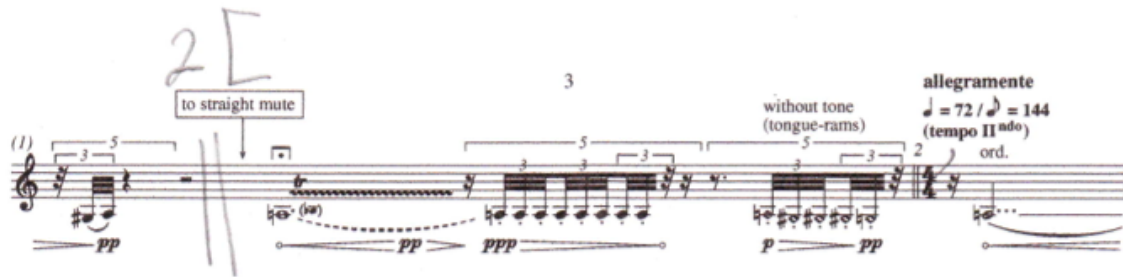
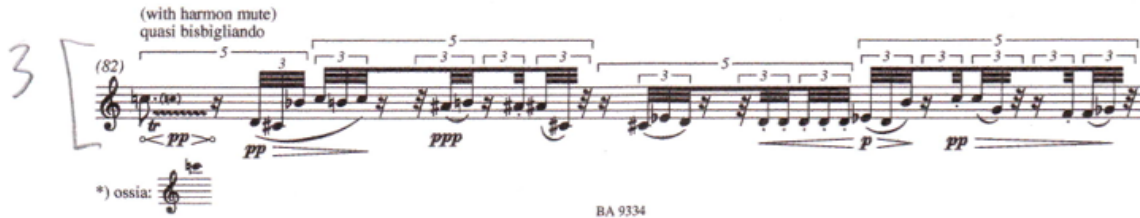
So as to ensure efficient practice, his next step is to divide the piece into large sections. This is similar to Cassone's approach in that it sectionalizes the music, but in many cases it would likely lend itself best to the more capable performer. That is to say, should a piece pose significant technical challenges for the average trumpet player, it

would be favorable to employ the slower, more *micro-view* of Cassone. Flowers' method assumes a relatively high level of technical competency on the instrument. Worth noting, however, is that Flowers' method provides the player with the possibility of randomizing the sections to be learned. It also lends itself well to the isolating and practicing of areas requiring extra attention. He finds the division of pieces into large sections [Figures 11.1-5]^{xlviii} not only allows him to learn in the most efficient manner possible, but it also eliminates his tendency, a habit of many performers, to repeatedly work from beginning to end:

I also divide things into large chunks so that I have a better chance of learning the piece in the most efficient manner. If one always starts at the beginning, then the middle and end usually suffer, especially when the notation is as dense as Pintscher's. So divvying up the piece allows me to practice efficiently as well.^{xlix}

Figure 11.1: *Shining Forth*, p.1, System 1 (Flowers Markings; Section 1)

Figure 11.2: *Shining Forth*, p.2, System 1 (Flowers Markings; Section 1a)

Figure 11.3: *Shining Forth*, p.3, System 1 (m.1) (Flowers Markings; Section 3)Figure 11.4: *Shining Forth*, p.5, m.78 (Flowers Markings; Section 2a)Figure 11.5: *Shining Forth*, p.5, System 7 (m.82) (Flowers Markings; Section 3)

Once these tasks have been completed, the practice sessions begin. In general, Flowers suggests “a consciousness of any metronomic tempo markings as they relate to notation.”¹ That is, he first takes tempo indications into account as they relate to the pitch content, making necessary subtle adjustments in speed to eliminate possibly frantic, unmusical executions of various passages. In speaking to Pintscher’s tempo indications, namely *allegramente* (*tempo IIado*, p.3, m.2), he notes:

In *Shining Forth*, I think the written tempo is too fast. Part of the reason I came to that decision is because of my experience with him [Pintscher] conducting *Sonic Elclipse* with *ICE*. When we performed and recorded the piece, he was open to various “tempo modifications” because he realized that as we pushed it, it began to sound frantic very quickly. That wasn’t what he was aiming for, so we relaxed the tempo of the piece. Pintscher also often expressed how he wished that some of his writing was more *dolce* and *espressivo*, while still retaining its virtuosity. So

one octave lower. This is an effective practice tool employed often by trumpet players.

Such practice allows for accurate and efficient pitch execution, as well as a produced sound devoid of tension or apprehension. However, and of particular relevance to this study, it is not common to employ such techniques as to avoid negative psychological responses to failure. In effect, he is *consciously* making an effort to avoid, or *fend off*, negative thoughts.

In his closing remarks, Flowers notes a particular focus he feels is of great importance, one that enables him to consistently produce successful and meaningful performances: *Breathing*. Throughout his practice sessions, he marks each point where he finds it necessary to breath. *Shining Forth* posed a significant stylistic challenge in this regard, as Flowers was reluctant to divide multiple lines to pause for breaths. In order to successfully avoid undesirable phrasing divisions, Flowers felt *circular breathing* provided a satisfactory solution [Figure 13.1, 13.2].^{lvii}

This breathing technique is used by both wind and brass players to allow for the execution of phrase lengths extending past what would be considered “normal” for the capacity of the human lung. In his essay “Circular Breathing: *A New Approach*,” Australian oboist Stephen Moschner describes the method as follows:

Describing the skill in the simplest form, it is the ability to consistently blow air from the oral cavity whilst taking in fresh air through the nose, with no break in the outward airflow. This is achieved through a combination of the closing of the soft palate at the rear of the throat whilst using muscles in the mouth to expel air out of the oral cavity. During which time fresh oxygenated air is taken into the lungs via the nasal passage in a quick “snorting” fashion, after which the soft palate is relaxed and air from the lungs is then expelled normally through the oral cavity. This cycle of air flow from the oral cavity and replenishment via the nasal airways is repeated to create a continuous stream of air from the mouth.^{lviii}

In one instance of the Pintscher, both Conley and Flowers arrived at the same conclusion. Figures 13.2 and 13.2.1^{lix} illustrate both performers’ clear need for breath, as each of their markings were made in similar locations (mm. 6-7). Rather than interrupt a particularly long phrase, both Flowers and Conley decided an appropriate solution was to

circular breathe. Red markers have been inserted so as to clarify the original, relatively faint, pencil notations found in each of the performers' scores.

Figure 13.1: *Shining Forth*, p.1, systems 5-6 (Flowers Markings)

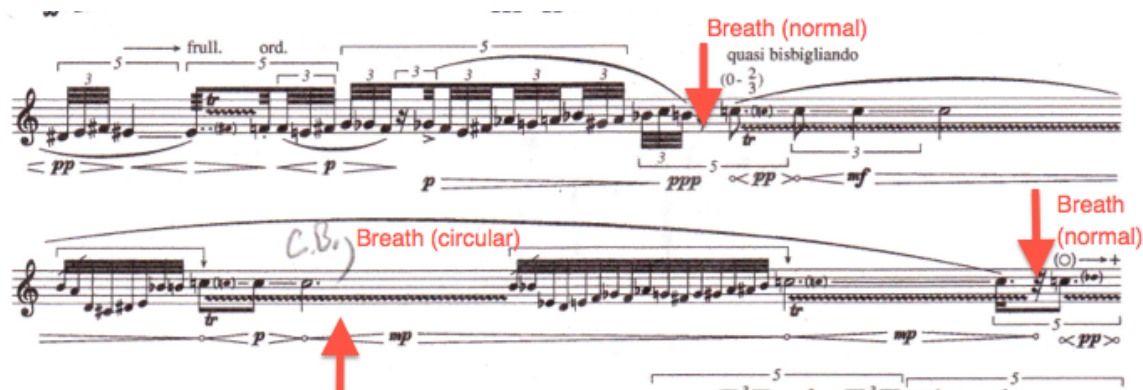


Figure 13.2: *Shining Forth*, p.3, system 2-4 (Flowers Markings)

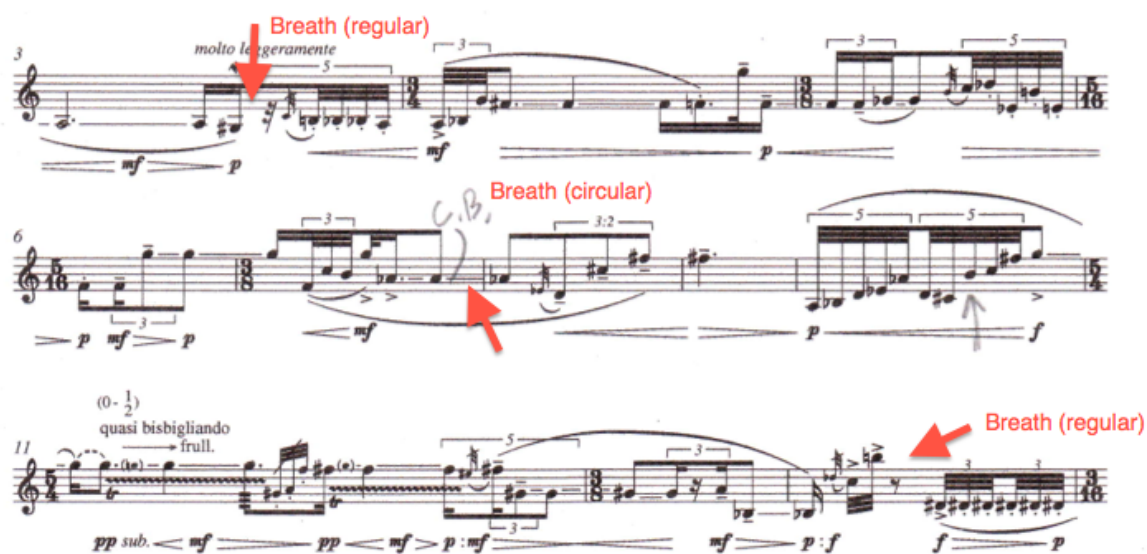


Figure 13.2.1: *Shining Forth*, p.3, m.6 (Conley Markings)



For Flowers, much of the new music he performs often contains extremely long notes or passages and, in the recent past, he was forced to discover a way to solve the problem musically:

I believe I became interested in circular breathing because some of the music I have played is written with less of an intent that it sound completely 'human.' I have found in some contemporary music that there is not always a desire to have so-called 'natural phrasing' and composers often write incredibly long ideas. As a wind player, I am often unable to perform some of the long ideas or single pitches, for example, without requiring a breath somewhere in the middle. Therefore, I taught myself to circular breathe out of pure necessity. The trumpet part in Ligety's *Lontano* is a good example of this. I would say that, in the world of contemporary music, circular breathing is very necessary and is no longer really considered to be an extended technique.^{lx}

While quite similar in approach, Conley's preparation regimen adds a visual element that cannot be found in Flower's score markings. He routinely utilizes not only a number of symbols signifying circular breathing and rhythmic groupings, but also a series of colors that assist him with more efficient preparation. Figure 14 (following page) best illustrates an example Conley's score marking technique:^{lxi}

U = circular breathing, Δ = grouping of 3, U = grouping of 2

Figure 14: *Shining Forth*, p.3 (Conley Markings)

The colored markings [Figure 14] refer to various sounds and extended techniques, mute changes and effects, and dynamics. The above page from the score has been marked as follows:

Pink = air sounds, tongue rams, flutter tongue
 Yellow = mute changes and wah-wah
 Purple = dynamics, crescendo/decrescendo

In reference to his marking system, Conley claims: “[The system] made it easy to view the page as a whole. I was able to clearly see what was important in any given section. This is not something I do in every case, but it proved to be a useful way for me to understand the piece more quickly.”^{lxiii}

Although they are often overlooked as exercises of music preparation, the meticulous marking of necessary breath locations, dynamics, extended techniques, mute changes, as well as any significant rhythmic or structural elements, afford both Flowers and Conley the ability to efficiently learn nearly any new piece presented to them. Of particular significance is the bi-product of employing standard practice procedures such as these. That is to say, there are striking similarities in the approaches used by both Conley and Flowers, but the most important is that the steps they take allow them to fully *enjoy* the often-frustrating process of preparation.

As should be the case when approaching any piece of music, a trumpet player prepared to accept the challenges posed by *Shining Forth*, must also be willing to enjoy the experience of the learning process. Part of that process involves both the possible discovery of an existing formal structure, as well as the development of a meaningful interpretation and realization of the “spirit” of the piece. Pintscher has constructed a structure consisting of bookends that surround a central, *straight*-muted section (beginning in p. 3, m. 1), and his score is filled with gestures having much to do with color, stretched time, and negative time. Discovering elements such as these provides a great deal of assistance to help engage the performer’s imaginative and interpretive skills.

It is important to remember as trumpet players that we are individuals who endeavor, like other musicians, to develop our own voice, over that of merely conquering the technical challenges of our instruments. Too often we dismiss new music as being “too difficult,” when it is simply misunderstood and foreign to our ears. We only thrive and feel validated when we are able to reproduce what we hear on CD recordings of old “standards”

in trumpet literature. The challenges found in *Shining Forth* are equal to many of those that trumpet players face when they approach most recent compositions, and there is a great need to gain a new perspective in order to perform such works successfully. That perspective can only be found when there exists a great musical curiosity, when the learning process is realized and enjoyed, and when diversity and individualism are at the forefront of the performer's mind.

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