

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: 45 CONCERT ETUDES ON THE THEMES OF
RICHARD STRAUSS, GUSTAV MAHLER, AND
JOHANNES BRAHMS

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The composition of these etudes was influenced by Franz Strauss' pedagogical study, 17 Concert Studies for Valve-horn after themes from Beethoven. Strauss' etudes were designed as pedagogical tools to enhance his students' abilities on the horn as well as to enable greater ease in the performance of the works of Beethoven. Strauss borrows themes from Beethoven, each of which is woven into an etude designed around specific technical goals. Each etude is designed as a concert piece, rather than a repetitive technical etude.

The etudes of particular interest are those Strauss has composed based on Beethoven's *Second Symphony*, *Fifth Symphony*, and *Sixth Symphony*. Strauss has taken challenging symphonic passages from each, creating etudes that contain the original excerpts, while pushing them far beyond the level of their inherent difficulty.

Following Franz Strauss' example, this project involves the creation of 45 concert etudes that are based on themes from the works of Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, and Johannes Brahms. Each etude focuses on particularly demanding technical or musical challenges that horn players encounter in preparing these works for performance or audition. Each etude is composed

in a manner that is stylistically coherent with the composer upon whose theme it is based. While striving to make each etude extremely challenging, each etude is composed so that it could be performed as an unaccompanied recital piece.

Each etude pushes the technical envelope past the excerpt upon which it is based, whether the etude is based on articulation, dynamic control, transposition, lyricism, or pure finger technique. It is intended that achieving mastery on a particular etude will directly translate into an overall ease in performing the work upon which it is based. Furthermore, these etudes will develop technique that directly correlates to the performance of a symphonic work in a manner that is more musically liberating than constant repetition of a particular excerpt. Therefore, these etudes are not only beneficial to those who are learning the orchestral literature from the ground up, but for those who need a new way in which to practice and to enhance their understanding of a particular excerpt.

45 CONCERT STUDIES ON THE THEMES OF RICHARD STRAUSS, GUSTAV
MAHLER AND JOHANNES BRAHMS

By

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving, supportive wife, my parents who have stood behind me academically for thirty years, and to Professor Greg Miller who has driven me to complete this DMA.

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45 Concert Etudes on the Themes of Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, and Johannes Brahms.

Chapter I

An Analysis of the 17 Concert Studies on the Themes of Beethoven

Etude books are inherent in the pedagogical process of any instrument. Etude books specifically designed for each instrument of the modern orchestra have followed closely behind the invention of and technical advances of each instrument. Horn pedagogy is therefore founded on the *Sixty Selected Studies* by Georg Kopprasch for *cor basso*, written around 1830, five to ten years after the creation of the valve-horn. These etudes encompass most of the techniques that a horn player will encounter in a piece of music. However, horn players and teachers through the ages have all come to the same conclusion that while these etudes are essential, a horn player should seek out many different ways to become a more proficient and well rounded player. A great many horn pedagogues have created etude books that cater to specific ideals they hold as musicians. So, horn players seek out and spend time with etudes by Gallaay, Kling, Neuling, Maxime-Alphonse and Reynolds in addition to countless hours devoted to the study of solo repertoire and orchestral excerpts. It is with the latter that Franz Strauss sought to combine the standard technical etude.

Franz Strauss was born in Parkenstein, Bavaria in 1822, the illegitimate son of Urban Strauss and Kunigunda Walter. His father assumed no responsibilities in his rearing. Those duties instead fell to his mother's brothers Johann, a freelance musician, and Franz a tower master. Johann was an accomplished hornist and Franz, as tower master, was charged with playing the hourly trumpet signal and maintaining the Nabburg parish band. Both brothers also played a wide variety of other instruments to supplement their income and passed this instrumental versatility onto Strauss. As a boy he learned guitar, violin, clarinet, and all brass instruments as well as rudimental theory and composition. By his tenth birthday, young Franz was performing the violin at weddings and fairs as well as teaching lessons. At age 15, Strauss found himself in the employ of Duke Maximilian as a guitarist. However, he was becoming incredibly proficient at horn and before age 25 he was appointed as a hornist with the Munich Court Orchestra. Franz performed principal horn on the premiers of *Tristan and Isolde* (1865), *Die Meistersinger* (1868), *Das Reinhold* (1869) and *Die Walkure* (1870). He would later become a professor at the Academy of Music in Munich, teaching from 1871 until 1896, as well as conducting the amateur orchestra *Wilde Gung'1* during the same period.

As a professor at the Academy, Strauss surely sought out every conceivable method with which to share his abilities on the horn with his pupils. His talents as a composer enabled him to create that which did not exist. Such was with his great solo works for horn, notably the opus 8 *Concerto*, opus 7 *Nocturne*, and opus 13 *Introduction, Theme and Variations*. He also wrote etudes for both valved and natural horn. Included in these were the *17 Concert Studies on the Themes of Beethoven*. These etudes were masked as unaccompanied solo works for horn, while focusing on expanding the technical foundation and ability of the hornist who was

performing them. While all of the etudes are composed in this manner and based on themes of Beethoven, three of these etudes are directly formed from themes and excerpts of Beethoven's symphonic works that Strauss' students would surely perform as professional horn players. If his students could master these etudes, they would have little problem in performing the works from which the etudes were derived.

The first of these etudes to be examined is *Etude No. 10*, derived from Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*. One can see from the two examples provided below that Franz has utilized two contrasting themes in constructing this etude, which follows an ABA form. The A theme is the principal four note motif that is the main construct for the *Fifth Symphony*. Musically, this section of the etude alternates between fortissimo and piano statements of the motif. In driving the etude forward, Strauss' primary melodic development of the motif is through the use of sequence. This section of the etude is an excellent pedagogical tool for developing solid articulation, emphasizing both the ability to cleanly articulate and rapidly rearticulate at both loud and soft dynamic levels.

Example 1 – Beethoven; *Symphony No. 5*, First movement (excerpted)



Example 2 – Franz Strauss; *Etude no. 10*



The second section of this etude is based on the lyrical theme presented in the final movement of the *Fifth Symphony*. After 162 measures of intense articulation, Strauss asks if the horn player can now directly shift into smooth, controlled lyricism, complete with octave leaps. It is imperative that a horn player be able to quickly transition from one style of playing to another and this section of the etude demands as much. Furthermore, while the triplets in this section are articulated and marked staccato, they should be played with a less aggressive attack in comparison to the A section. Strauss' tenth etude then closes out with a reprise of the first 162 bars, shifting back to aggressive horn playing.

Example 3 – Beethoven; *Symphony No. 5, Fourth movement* (excerpted)

Horn 1 in C

Allegro $\text{♩} = 84$

p dolce *cresc. poco a poco*

7 *p dolce* *p cresc. poco a poco*

Example 4 – Franz Strauss; *Etude no. 10, mm. 163-217*

14 Allegro. (M. M. $\text{♩} : 84$)

p

3

Tempo I.

ff sf sf sf sf sf sf

sf sf sf sf sf sf

The materials for the eleventh Strauss etude come from Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony*. This etude is also in ABA form with the A section focusing on the solo horn line from measures 132 – 161 in the third movement of the Beethoven. This passage is particularly difficult to keep in time while performing it in the very light-hearted style that is required. The first and third sections of the Strauss etude comprise well over two hundred bars of virtual repetition of this solo. Strauss' etude relentlessly asks the horn player to perform this line consistently, smoothly, accurately, and in time. If the horn player can keep up with the torrid pace of this study and master it, playing the actual excerpt in the symphony will seem no more difficult than a children's nursery rhyme.

Example 5 – Beethoven; *Symphony No. 6, Third movement*, mm. 132 – 161

Example 5 shows three staves of music. The top staff is for Horn II, the middle for Violins and Violas, and the bottom for Violas and Cellos. The score includes dynamic markings such as *cresc.*, *p dolce*, and *f*, and performance instructions like *sempre più stretto* and *a tempo Allegro (♩ = 132)*.

Example 6 – Franz Strauss; *Etude No. 11*, mm. 19 - 82

Example 6 shows six staves of music. The score includes dynamic markings such as *p*, *dolce*, *cresc.*, and *f*, and performance instructions like *sempre più stretto* and *a tempo Allegro (♩ = 132)*.

The B section of the eleventh etude is based on the solo horn line that begins the fifth movement of the symphony. This excerpt requires smooth articulations, as well as precise, wide, intervallic leaps of the fourth, fifth, and octave, beginning at a piano dynamic and utilizing a controlled, even crescendo to a sforzando. Strauss repeats slight variations of this solo in his etude eight times, one repetition leading into another. He again asks for consistency and control. All of the crescendos should sound the same, all articulations should be consistent, and all slurs should be smooth.

Example 7 – Beethoven; *Sixth Symphony, Fifth Movement, intro*

Hirtengesang, Frohe und dankbare Gefühle nach dem Sturm
 in F Allegretto (♩ = 60)

Example 8 – Strauss; *Etude No. 11, Second section, mm. 145-180*

16 **Meno Allegro** (M.M. 60 = ♩)

Strauss' *Etude No. 13* is written to deal with the two incredibly difficult solo passages from the second movement of Beethoven's *Second Symphony*. The first from measures 89 to 98 and the second from measures 253 to 260. The horn player encounters seven high B's or concert E's between the two solo passages. Both passages are extremely exposed and the high, delicate playing needed here can make even the most seasoned professional a little edgy. Therefore, in preparing the horn player to tackle these passages, Strauss goes through multiple permutations of these passages asking the hornist to play not seven high B's, but twenty-four throughout the course of the etude. As a result, mastery of this etude will directly translate into more comfortable performances of the symphony. Furthermore, Strauss keeps the articulation in the etude consistent with that of the symphony. Curiously, this etude is for horn in F. The first solo statement in the Beethoven symphony is horn in E, the second horn in A. Even though the Beethoven was written for natural horn, while the Strauss was composed for valve-horn in F, it is not apparent why Strauss would not also factor the art of transposition into this etude, keeping with the performance practice of the Beethoven symphony.

Example 9 – Beethoven; *Symphony No. 2, Second mvt. Mm. 89-98*

Musical score for Example 9, showing two staves of music from Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, Second movement, measures 89-98. The top staff starts at measure 85 and the bottom staff at measure 89. Dynamics include *p*, *cresc. f sf*, *sf*, *f p*, *decresc. pp*, *p cresc. p*, *p cresc.*, and *f*.

Example 10 – Beethoven; *Symphony No. 2, Second mvt. Mm 249-260*

Musical score for Example 10, showing a single staff of music from Beethoven's Symphony No. 2, Second movement, measures 249-260. Dynamics include *n*, *cresc. f sf*, *sf*, and *f*.

Example 11 – Strauss; *Etude No. 13, mm. 1 – 45*

Nº 13. *Larghetto*. (M.M. ♩ = 92) Über Motive aus Beethovens D dur Sinfonie.

Musical score for Example 11, showing a single staff of music for Strauss' Etude No. 13, measures 1-45. The score is in D major and 3/4 time, featuring complex rhythmic patterns and triplets.

While Strauss' concert studies are not a comprehensive study of the orchestral works of Beethoven, they are a wonderful tool in the study of the works he has chosen to cover. Each study is musically relevant, well composed, and holds a great deal of pedagogical value. Each etude will greatly enhance the overall horn playing ability of those who use these studies, as well as directly and positively affecting the performance of the works upon which they are based.

Based on Franz Strauss' compositional example of inherent performance value in each of the etudes contained in *Seventeen Concert Studies on the Themes of Beethoven*, in combination with the pedagogical versatility in mastering orchestral excerpts while expanding technique found in the three afore mentioned studies, this project involved the composition of three books of etudes based on the orchestral works of Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler and Johannes Brahms.

In addition to Franz Strauss' pedagogical ideals, etudes designed as concert studies are also valuable as they do not merely focus on technique for the sake of technique. Therefore, while most of the etudes are technically challenging, they directly relate to something a hornist will be asked to play. Just as Strauss knew that the technical ability gained from his etudes would enable his students to play the works of Beethoven from which they came with relative ease, mastering these etudes will give the hornist who uses them a new tool to understanding and performing the works of Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler and Johannes Brahms.

Chapter II
An analysis of Fourteen Concert Studies on the Themes of Richard Strauss

The first book of etudes composed, *Fourteen Concert Studies on the Themes of Richard Strauss*, is derived from the orchestral and solo works of Franz Strauss' son. In fact, Richard Strauss edited the version of Franz Strauss' *17 Concert Studies* that is used in this project, suggesting that he saw the inherent value of such an etude book. Therefore, it felt quite comfortable to begin this project by composing etudes based on Richard Strauss' orchestral works.

The book begins with a soaring etude based on the tone poem, *Don Juan*. As with all of Richard Strauss' tone poems, this work features wonderfully exciting writing for horn. The etude is primarily based on the prerequisite boldness with which the horn player must attack the *Don Juan* theme that begins 17 measures before letter O.

Example 12 – Richard Strauss; *Don Juan*

The musical score for Example 12, Richard Strauss's *Don Juan*, is presented in four staves. The top staff is for the horn, starting with the tempo marking 'a tempo' and the instruction 'senza sord.'. The horn part features a melodic line with dynamic markings including 'molto espr. marc.', 'ff', and 'p'. The second and third staves are for the string ensemble, with the third staff specifically marked 'string.'. The string part includes a section marked 'a tempo giocoso' and features complex rhythmic patterns such as triplets, duplets, and sixteenth notes. The score concludes with a final measure marked '1'.

The etude is also designed to showcase the expressive and fluid musical ideas in the tone poem, punctuated by dotted eighth – sixteenth rhythmic figures and soaring chromatic passages. Of all the Strauss etudes, this one is most designed to focus on the sheer art of playing the horn in the style of Strauss, rather than on any particularly difficult excerpt or technical capabilities found in *Don Juan*. It does, however, feature its own intrinsic rhythmic difficulties, alternating between duplets, triplets and sixteenths with fivelets thrown in to add to the excitement. The etude also offers room for some degree of musical interpretation in regards to tempos and articulation.

Example 13 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 1*

The musical score is for Horn in F, Strauss Etude No. 1, measures 1 through 41. It is written in a single staff in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. The tempo is marked 'Moderato' at the beginning. The score includes various dynamic markings: *mf*, *f*, *p*, *mp*, *ff*, and *p rit.*. It features several technical challenges, including triplet patterns (marked with '3'), slurs, and accents. The tempo changes to 'Tempo Primo' at measure 15. The score concludes with a 'Stringendo' marking at measure 19. The piece ends with a double bar line at measure 41.

The second etude is derived from *Sinfonia Domestica*, specifically, the motif that comprises the *Finale*. This etude begins with horn in E and moves to horn in F at measure 23, as the tone poem in this section consistently bounces between horn in E and horn in F. The motif on which this etude is based is quite playful, so the etude is designed to reflect that character, while pushing the hornist beyond the technical and transposition difficulties as composed by Strauss. Due to personal struggles with the immediate transition from high to low tessitura playing; a struggle faced by many horn players; it was imperative to compose the passage from measure 26 to 41. In

these fifteen bars, the horn player is asked to transition from a high C to a pedal A all the way back up to a high B, in the midst of an extremely technical passage. This is required of the horn player after already encountering 25 bars of extreme technique. Again, measures 45 through 48 showcase the high to low, low to high, rapid alternation of tessitura, separated by as much as an octave plus minor sixth. Through all the changes in tessitura, strong articulation with a great deal of front on the notes is required to successfully perform the etude. Additionally, a mastery of this etude will leave the hornist with quite a showcase for agility.

Example 14 – Strauss; *Sinfonia Domestica*, Finale

The image shows a musical score for the Finale of Strauss's *Sinfonia Domestica*. The score is written for Tromba (E.) and Clarinet in B. The tempo markings are *molto rit.*, *a tempo*, and *Finale. (sehr lebhaft)*. The key signature is E major. The score includes various dynamics such as *ff*, *f*, *marcato*, and *ritend.*. The score is divided into measures, with some measures numbered (1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97). The score includes a section marked *Tempo primo.* and a section marked *Fos. I.*. The score is written in a single system with two staves.

Example 15 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 2*

2

Allegro
In E

II

7

13

19

25

32

38

44

f

p

f

p

f

p

f

f

p

ff

f

p

ff

In F

Lyricism is an all too often ignored aspect of a horn player's technique. While hornists pride themselves on the ability to show off with flashy technique, it is the tone of the horn that is so endearing to an audience. For example, in Stravinsky's *Firebird*, the *Infernal Dance* is thrilling to perform, but it is the solo in the *Bercuese* that can bring an audience to its knees. With this in mind, placed throughout the three books are etudes that focus on sustained, lyrical playing. The third etude in the Strauss studies is just such an etude and is based on a solo passage from Strauss' opera, *Salome*. The etude starts off with a slowly progressing line, climaxing in bar

8. The etude then moves forward with a chromatic passage, infused with triplets. The key here is pacing, so that the hornist has enough lip left to sing out the high A at measure 22 for seven counts, immediately transitioning down an octave and a diminished fifth to end the etude with a flowing eighth and triplet eighth passage. Again, pacing is of utmost importance in this etude to move from beginning to end without losing momentum or lyricism. As in the original, this etude is for horn in E.

Example 16 – Strauss; *Salome, Salome's Dance*

Example 17 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 3*

The fourth Strauss etude is based on the *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*. Specifically, most of the etude is derived from the "Till Call", one of the most practiced, yet often incorrectly performed of all horn excerpts. A motif, as legend has

it, was derived from something the younger Strauss heard the elder Strauss practicing over and over.

Example 18 – Strauss; *Till Eulenspiegel*, mm. 1-20

Horn players often fail to perform this solo with the proper inflection. That is to say that the solo, based on a six note motif as Strauss composed it, begins on beat two of six, and is immediately restated on beat three of six before it finally settles on strong beat two of the third 6/8 bar to lead into the strong, accented downbeat on the fourth bar of the solo. The six note motif begins on G and that G is often treated agogically as if it occurs all three times on a downbeat. Therefore, it seemed the perfect opportunity to use this motive in a 5/8 etude, thus minimizing the desire to constantly associate the G with a strong downbeat. Of course, the added benefit of gaining confidence in playing in a five feel makes this etude even more useful. The B section of the etude is comprised from a quotation of the chromatic passage found at section 37 in the Strauss, here every so often skipping notes from, or adding notes to the original to keep the eyes focused on what is actually on the page rather than what the ears say should be there.

Example 18 – Strauss; *Till Eulenspiegel*, section 37

The study ends with the chromatic run from 9 bars after section 10 in the Strauss, which is broken into the 5/8 feel in the etude.

Example 19 – Strauss; *Till Eulenspiegel*

Example 20 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 4*

IV

Allegretto

mp *sim.* *f* *mf* *ff* *pp* *ff* *mf* *f* *f*

The fifth etude is based on the horn line from the introduction to *Don Quixote*.

Example 21 – Strauss; *Don Quixote*, Introduction

ff *ff*

In this etude, the intent was to capture the essence of the Strauss with a floating, heroically singing line. The passage from the Strauss in which this is taken is required to be performed muted, but in keeping with the idea that this was written to be a concert etude, it seemed best to allow the lines to sing unobstructed. As in the second etude, the ability to transition quickly in tessitura from very high to very low

is of central focus, especially in bars 19 through 26. This passage is strongly emphasized with the use of the *fortissimo* dynamic marking. The horn player is required to traverse many wide ranging runs while slurring which demands accuracy and air support.

Example 22 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 5*

The musical score for Example 22, Strauss Etude No. 5, is presented in a single system with eight staves. The tempo is marked 'Moderato'. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The time signature is 3/4. The score begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a variety of articulations and dynamics throughout. Notable dynamics include *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *ff* (fortissimo). The music is characterized by wide-ranging runs and slurs, particularly in the later staves, which are emphasized with *ff* dynamics.

The sixth etude is the first of two studies based on the tone poem, *Death and Transfiguration*. This etude reflects the bold, intense first section of the tone poem. Even though the etude contains few accent markings, the *Bravura* printed at the beginning should account for strong articulations with plenty of “front” on the notes, meaning that the notes should sound fullest at the point of attack. Most of the main thematic elements of the first section are present, alternating between being quoted directly (ex. 23 to Miller mm. 21-22 and 24 to Miller m. 11) and, as is appropriate, being transfigured (ex. 25 to Miller mm.33-35). This leaves the hornist with an etude

that is challenging technically, but also stands alone as a concert etude.

Example 23 – Strauss; *Death and Transfiguration*, 3 before F



Example 24 – Strauss; *Death and Transfiguration*, 4 after G



Example 25 – Strauss; *Death and Transfiguration*, 11 after K



Example 26 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 6*



Etude No. 7 is the first of three etudes based on the tone poem, *Ein*

Heldenleben. The source motif for this etude is derived from section 10 in the Strauss as well as pulling in some of the octave leaps from section 101 before the final *langsam*. The feel of this etude was directly inspired by the Franz Strauss *Etude No. 8*, which is not derived from one of Beethoven's symphonic works. Strauss' etude features long phrases of flowing eighth notes that quickly traverse registers. The etude upon which it is based also emphasizes the need for a fluid range while controlling extremely long phrases. However, Strauss' etude differs slightly in articulation. Regardless, Etude No. 7 is definitely charged with the overall heroic character Strauss displays in *Ein Heldenleben*.

Example 27 – Strauss; *Ein Heldenleben*, section 10

Example 28 – Strauss; *Ein Heldenleben*, section 101

Example 29 – Franz Strauss; *Etude No. 8*

Example 30 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 7*

VII

The musical score for Strauss Etude No. 7 is presented in seven staves. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto' and the piece is numbered 'VII'. The first staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The second staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The third staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The fifth staff begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The sixth staff starts with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The seventh staff begins with a crescendo (*cresc.*) dynamic, followed by a ritardando (*rit.*) dynamic, and ends with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

The eighth etude is the first to be derived from a solo work, in this case Richard Strauss' Opus 17, *Concerto for Horn and Orchestra*. In this etude, the meter has switched from four to three to create a lilting, waltz feel. The main focus in this etude is achieving clean octave leaps and is designed so that the lilting character will enhance the player's ability to keep loose on the leaps. This then translates back into the concerto, allowing the player to easily navigate the two opening phrases, not getting stuck on the delicate octave leaps. The two high B flats in the first movement also have a way of distracting the player from the overall musical goals in the movement. It is easy to lock down on those two B flats, focusing only on being able to pop them out. Any sense of musical accomplishment is often lost by inexperienced hornists who don't quite get these two notes to speak. Therefore, it seemed logical that this etude should push even higher, up a step to a C. Therefore, if the hornist learns to master this etude, those B flats and octave leaps should no longer get in the way of the overall musical ideals.

Example 31 - Strauss; *Concerto No. 1*, mm. 27-75 (excerpted)

Horn in F

(♩ = 112) *con espressione*

8 *p*

16 *pp* *pp*

24 *p*

32

Example 32 - Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 8*

Moderato

mf

8 *f*

10 *p*

24 *f* *p*

32 *cresc.*

40

48 *p* *cresc.*

56 *f* *p*

64 *f* *ff*

The ninth etude is derived from the third movement, *Rondo*, of Strauss' *Second Concerto for Horn and Orchestra*. The third movement of the Strauss is marked *allegro molto* and is extremely technically challenging. It is quite easy for a horn player to be inaccurate in performing these passages. Therefore, the design of this etude will focus the horn player's attention on finding the "center" of these pitches. To help find the "center," much of the material from the beginning of the movement to measure 32 is transcribed directly, but stretched out and slowed down rhythmically. Once again, the lilting three feel is employed to suggest a feeling of ease. The high range is not over emphasized in this etude allowing for focus on phrasing and lyricism. The etude is marked *allegro*, so it may be felt in one, but still should sing as it was designed to have the technical challenges of the Strauss stripped away. Lastly, as the *Second Concerto* is for horn in Eb, so too is this etude.

Example 33 – Richard Strauss; *Concerto No. 2, Rondo*

Allegro molto

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Example 34 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 9*

Allegro
In Eb

Don Quixote is reused in Etude No. 10, this time extrapolating a study from the second and fourth horn parts out of Variation VIII. This etude is in old notation, as is the notation in the Strauss. Old notation is the practice of writing bass clef horn parts an octave lower than they actually sound. Unlike the original excerpts, rests and pauses in momentum are nowhere to be found in this etude. In the Strauss, the horns work in tandem to keep the tempest raging.

Example 35 – Strauss; *Don Quixote*, Variation VIII, horn 2

This is because Strauss, due to his horn playing father, was well aware that breathing

and phrasing are especially problematic for the horn player working in the low range. However, this etude forces the player to face those challenges head on.

Example 36 - Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 10*

X

Andante
(old notation as in D.Q.)

The eleventh etude is inspired by the *Alpine Symphony*. This is the only etude that does not, at some point, directly quote a passage from the Strauss. This etude focuses on the three to one ratio of the dotted eighth – sixteenth and dotted quarter – eighth rhythmic figures that dominate the *Alpine Symphony* (ex. 37 and 38). The obvious challenge in this etude is to keep that rhythmic ratio consistent, avoiding compression of the rhythmic figure. In keeping with a common theme throughout this book of rapid changes in tessitura, this etude climaxes on a high C# in measure 19, then drops three and a half octaves in three measures. From the pedal F# in

measure 20, the etude proceeds back up to a high Bb in measure 38 and a high C in measure 41. This etude is designed to build both mental and physical durability. The ability to maintain structured and musical phrasing in an exercise of this type is paramount.

Example 37 – Strauss; *Alpine Symphony*, before circle 25



Example 38 – Strauss; *Alpine Symphony*, circle 92



Example 38 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 11*



Ein Heldenleben receives a second treatment in Etude No. 12. Here, the opening seven notes in the first horn line of the Strauss tone poem are the single focus. A smooth ascension over two octaves is the key to success with this excerpt. Therefore, in the etude the hornist is asked to ascend and descend in a multitude of keys, keeping most of the original intervals true. All ascending seven notes in the excerpt are slurred, which is also reflected in the articulation patterns in the etude. The final Strauss etude also deals with an aspect of this opening theme, as it is such a challenge to perform and perfect. Due to this inherent difficulty, it seemed extremely important to focus on only one complex figure from the excerpt at a time. This is not

only to achieve focus on one specific technique, but also to maintain musical clarity in the concert etude. Once again, mastery of this etude should directly correlate to a more proficient performance of the original excerpt.

Example 39 – Strauss; *Ein Heldenleben*, mm. 1-2
Lebhaft bewegt.



Example 40 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 12*
Allegro

The penultimate etude in this book was written in homage to my undergraduate horn professor, William Slocum. He had a penchant for having the entire studio class split the final section of *Death and Transfiguration* into all four horn parts and wail away as a choir. In such a manner, this passage always seemed to go on forever, but at the same time had an ethereal and uplifting spirit that made those

in the class feel as though we had just taken an amazing spiritual journey together. The genius of Strauss was revealed!

This etude is completely lyrical in nature. It is soaring and lengthy like the Strauss, and hopefully at the end, as in the Strauss, the horn player will feel like he has completed an enlightening pilgrimage. However, because it is so long, it is designed to be very beneficial to building endurance. Especially difficult is maintaining pitch and tone on the final three notes of the study while ending so softly when one is so tired.

Example 41 – Strauss; *Death and Transfiguration*, 11 before Y

Example 42 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 13*

As previously mentioned, the final etude in the book is focused on *Ein*

Heldenleben. This time the six notes from measure three to the downbeat of measure four in the Strauss are utilized, as are the sixteenth passages derived from these six notes in measures, ten, twelve, fifteen and sixteen. Moving through these passages cleanly, quickly and with clarity is of utmost importance in this excerpt. Moving from the C down to the G in the third bar and ending a fourth down on the D in the fourth measure is extremely difficult. The six notes that Strauss develops as the motif in this passage inspired their usage in sequences to develop my etude. By moving through identical intervals in different keys, the horn player should develop a true sense for the intervals while expanding upon the already difficult finger combinations. Of course, the thematic development leads to direct quotes of the above mentioned passages in the Strauss.

Example 43 – Strauss; *Ein Heldenleben*, Intro mm. 1-16

Lebhaft bewegt.

Example 44 – Miller; *Strauss Etude No. 14*

Allegro XIV

Chapter 3

16 Concert Studies on the Themes of Gustav Mahler

The symphonic works of Gustav Mahler are central to the study of horn performance. It is unfathomable to think of an audition repertoire list that does not include Mahler symphonies. Mahler's writing for horn is big, bold, difficult and always prominent throughout his nine symphonies. Most importantly, his works are a joy to perform. Therefore, it made complete sense to mine his symphonies for themes and excerpts that would translate into great etudes. The set of etudes that resulted is *Sixteen Concert Studies on the Themes of Mahler*.

The first etude stems from Mahler's *Symphony No. 1*. Used here is the lively scherzo theme of the second movement from measures 32 to 42 as the basis for the etude. The etude bounces along in a lively one, alternating dynamics from soft to loud. Control is pivotal in repeatedly centering the octave leaps in the midst of extreme dynamic contrast. The Mahler scherzo cannot drag and the etude forces the horn player to drive the musical line forward, not allowing for a letdown in tempo. It made sense to use the line at section 15 in the Mahler for inspiration as the etude drives to a conclusion, demanding the horn player produce four high B's as Mahler asks for the same. However, the etude is written so that the high B's are sustained, not clipped off as the written eighths in the Mahler. Any proud horn player does not want to fizzle out on this line and therefore the etude is designed to provide a sense of proper pacing so that disaster on the high B's in the symphony can be avoided. Overall, the fireworks in this first etude provide a solid and exciting introduction to the Mahler studies and would work as a great unaccompanied showpiece for solo horn.

Example 45 – Mahler; Symphony No. 1, Second movement, mm. 32-42



Example 46 – Mahler; Symphony No. 1, Second movement, 15



Example 47 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 1*

In One

Horn in F

The second Mahler etude is derived from the opening horn solo in the first movement of *Symphony No. 4*. This theme reoccurs throughout the movement and never fails to prove difficult in articulation and fingering, particularly so when the triplet figure alternates between E and F# after section 8. Generally, these two pitches are played with the same fingering, thumb and two, but reliance on a semi-lip trill to differentiate between these two notes in the midst of this passage often finds the hornist failing to sound clean. Also, the three eighths following the triplet figure are often attacked poorly, with the first eighth often dropped and the second two undifferentiated from the first. Therefore, the etude contains various permutations of

this passage, plus accentuating the technical demand by stringing together the triplet figurations in bars 7, 13, 17, and 22-23.

Example 48 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, Opening horn solo



Example 49 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, after 8



Example 50 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 2*

The third etude returns to Mahler's *First Symphony* for source material, this time utilizing the lavishly lyrical horn solo from the first movement. Both variations of the solo line are used in this lyrical, yet bold etude. Proper pacing is again required in this etude to ensure a successful high C, four measures from the end. However, the predominant goal of the etude is to explore lyricism and line with the first lush tones of Mahler's collective symphonic horn passages. This study is also an effective practice tool for smooth, clean slurs.

Example 51 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 1*, First movement, Opening horn solo

Example 52 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 3*

Etude No. 4 is based on the passage before section 9 in the first movement of Mahler's *Fifth Symphony*. This excerpt climaxes on a fortissimo high C. Not only is that note perilous, but the run up to it is often rushed or otherwise sacrificed by a single-minded focus on reaching the high C. Furthermore, the G quarter downbeat four before section 9 is often rushed on the way to the high C, as the ascending passage preceding that bar utilizes the quarter-triplet figure. Therefore, this is a 6/8 etude that climaxes on a high C in bar 50, again for pacing purposes, as well as an etude that focuses on correctly weighting the quarter-notes coming out of the ascending passage. Of course, the three eighth notes to the dotted quarter note mathematically outweigh the relationship of triplet-quarter to quarter in the Mahler; however, this places the proper emphasis on not rushing the two quarter notes. The repeated ascending passages in this etude are intertwined with allusions to the third

movement of the *Fifth Symphony* (etude mm. 14-17 and 36-39) as well as the two very technically challenging passages from measures 18-25 and 40-47 of the etude.

Example 53 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, First movement, Passage preceding 9

mf *yessu ppe.* *molto cresc.* *ff* *offen.* *precipitato*
f *Pesante.* **9** *a Tempo* **5** *p*

Example 54 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 4*

Moderato

f
p *p* *f*
p *ff* *fff*

The fifth Mahler etude is derived from the first movement of Mahler's *Third Symphony*, specifically the triple *forte* passage from sections 29 to 31. This passage is not technically demanding; however, it is very sonorous and presents a strenuous endurance challenge. The etude is not designed to be constantly bombastic and allows the horn player the ability to find a musical means of passage through the unending bravado of the Mahler. Above all, this etude focuses on lyricism and tone color.

Example 55 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 3, First movement, 29-31*

Mit höchster Kraft
 29 a tempo
 ff
 Rubato
 Nicht breit
 30
 sempre ff
 mit aufgehob. Schalltr.
 31
 vocal.
 a tempo
 mf
 dimp.
 p

Example 56 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 5*

Moderato
 f
 6
 p
 12
 f
 17
 pp
 ff
 23
 mf
 29
 f
 25
 ff
 fp
 f

The sixth etude also uses material from Mahler's *Third Symphony*, this time from the third movement scherzo. In this etude are two relatively short passages, combined into one very energetic, technically demanding etude. Articulation and accuracy are the focal pedagogical factors in this etude. Finding the center of the notes is the key to achieving a clean, exciting concert etude.

Example 57 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 3, Third movement 4-5*

Example 58 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 3, Third movement 24-26*

Example 59 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 6*

The second and fourth horn parts to the third movement of Mahler's *First Symphony* are the basis for the seventh Mahler etude. This particular excerpt is on almost every audition repertoire list for second and fourth horn. This excerpt is in what can be considered the pedal tone range on the horn, often very perilous territory. Since these excerpts are so commonly asked on auditions and since low register playing can often be a challenge, it was necessary to devote an etude to the art of low register playing. The etude reflects the rhythmic devices utilized in the Mahler but pushes past the low range of the excerpt to a pedal F. The last two measures of the etude are the most treacherous, so it seemed prudent that the etude begin by focusing on them. Proper breathing and pacing are the two most important factors in performing both etude and excerpt.

Example 60 - Mahler; *Symphony No. 1*, Third movement, second horn

Example 61 - Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 7*

Along with the second Mahler etude, the eighth etude also comes from the first movement of Mahler's *Fourth Symphony*. In this study, the section five bars after 4 and the section seven after 21 serve as the thematic basis. This delicate motif seemed to lend itself exceptionally well to a metamorphosis into a 5/8 rhythmic feel. The delicate, staccato nature of the excerpt enhances the transformation into a smoothly flowing, rhythmic five feel. Therefore, in this instance, the thematic material lends itself more to the study of the meter than a practical device to develop the etude. However, keeping a lot of front on the articulation in the style of Mahler is paramount. The first and last sections of the etude also reflect the alteration of key between A Major and D Major in the Mahler, which leads to some tricky finger combinations as a result of a more frequent use of the third valve. The middle section of the etude slows the rhythmic motion of the excerpt after section 21 in the Mahler and is transposed up a minor third from the original. It is important to include this section of quarter/quarter-eighth contrast as this type of rhythmic activity in a 5/8 feel is often played inaccurately. The mind is forced to focus intently on proper note duration relationships, which is further challenged by the running eighth feel of the preceding and antecedent sections. The wide interval slurs at the ends of the first and third sections are derived from the two bar passage found seven bars after section 23. Thus, they offer the conclusion of each section a strong Mahler sound and style.

Example 62 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, six after 4



Example 63 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, seven after 21



Example 64 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, seven after 23



Example 65 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 8*

Moderato

p

f

p

f

mp

mf

f

sub. p

f

ff

Etude No. 9 combines a number of passages from the second movement of Mahler's *Fourth Symphony*. Mahler's second movement begins with a horn solo that is marked *In gemachlicher Bewegung. Ohne Has.*, or roughly translated, "leisurely moving without haste". So, the horn player has a solo line that must be performed calmly, placidly, while not slowing down or depriving the excerpt of energy. The last note of the solo, a G, is to be played hand-stopped, which often presents an intonation challenge. Therefore, in this etude it seemed worthwhile to include the solo line completely stopped and ending on an open G immediately after the statement of the original solo line to ensure that all stopped tones are pitched accurately. The remainder of the etude emphasizes the unyielding, driving 3/8 feel of the scherzo, to be performed "leisurely moving without haste." Introduced under the guise of this leisurely feel is high tessitura, fortissimo playing that is not found in this particular section of the Mahler. This rapid transition from leisure to intensity occurs in

measures 42-45 and again from measures 81-84. This excerpt is included on most audition repertoire lists, so again, pushing the hornist beyond the original technical boundaries of the symphony, but relating directly back to the Mahler, provides an excellent alternative to the repetitive practice of the excerpt alone.

Example 66 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, Second movement, horn 1, various excerpts

In gemächlicher Bewegung. Ohne Hast.

SOLO. 16

SOLO. pp

p

offen SOLO. f

Lustig. 2 f

Example 67 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 9*

7 Allegretto

8

16

24

32

40

48

56 gestopft

64 open

72

80

Mahler's *Fourth Symphony* is also the genesis for the tenth etude. In this etude, the melodic material is derived from two passages in the *poco adagio* third movement. The passages at sections 3 and 6 provide a wonderful backdrop for yet another singing, lyrical etude. However, this etude features unusual intervals and uneven phrases, designed to force the horn player to form his or her own solid musical foundation. The original Mahler features some of the same unusual intervals,

but is quite solid musically. So, this etude is a deconstruction of the original, asking the horn player to seek out a unique musical idea among the colliding phrases.

Example 68 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, Third movement, 3



Example 69 - Mahler; *Symphony No. 4*, Third movement, 6



Example 70 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 10*



Etude No. 11 is a technical workout based on three passages at sections 16, 21, and 32 in the horn obligato to the third movement of Mahler's *Fifth Symphony*.

The obligato third movement is one of the most important and challenging of all orchestral passages for horn in the whole of orchestral literature. For all intents and purposes, it is a solo within a symphony. Therefore, the obligato demands an etude of its own, pushing its boundaries to achieve ultimate mastery. The passages at sections 16 and 21 are made difficult by their rapid pace, wide intervals and slurred articulation. This etude transposes those passages both by leap and by sequence, demanding intervallic facility in all twelve chromatic keys over a three octave range. Remaining accurate throughout this etude will greatly enhance the horn player's ability to perform the Mahler without cracking or sliding into notes. It makes sense to end the etude with the same material as the obligato, but again asking more from the hornist. The obligato ends with the fiery octave slur, but the etude pushes the envelope, ending with an octave plus a fifth. This etude should prove to be especially beneficial in building endurance.

Example 71 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, Third movement, horn obligato, 16



Example 72 - Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, Third movement, horn obligato, 21



Example 73 - Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, Third movement, horn obligato, 32



Example 74 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 11*

The musical score for Example 74, Mahler Etude No. 11, is presented in a single system of ten staves. The piece is in 3/4 time and begins with the tempo marking "Allegro". The first staff starts with a dynamic marking of *mf*. The second staff has a *p* marking. The third staff has *f* and *mp* markings. The fourth staff has a *f* marking. The fifth staff has a *f* marking. The sixth staff has a *mp* marking. The seventh staff has a *sub. p* marking. The eighth staff has *rit.* and *ff* markings. The ninth staff has a *ff* marking. The tenth staff has *fp* and *ff* markings. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings throughout.

The second movement of Mahler’s *Fifth Symphony* provides the thematic material for the twelfth etude, specifically the lyrical, yet powerful section at 21. I adapted the cut time feel of the Mahler into a singing 6/8 etude. As with the other lyrical Mahler etudes, this study blends Mahler’s unique chromaticism over broad phrases with a great deal of dynamic interplay. The etude contains mild tempo fluctuations intended to enhance the overall “concert appeal” of the etude. This also allows the hornist the ability to make his own musical choices. This etude strives to

show the connection between power and finesse in performing not only this particular passage, but all of Mahler's symphonic works.

Example 76 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, Second movement, section at 21

Example 77 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 12*

The thirteenth Mahler etude combines two passages from the second movement of Mahler's *Seventh Symphony*. The opening nine bars of the Mahler provide the introductory and conclusive thematic materials for the etude. This material was used as a lyrical foil to the more technically demanding middle section, which is more like a Kopprasch technical etude than a Strauss concert study. The middle section is derived from the triplet section at the end of the movement. Each beat is doubled up from that of the Mahler so that each individual triplet figure can be offered in the original note sequence of the Mahler, combined with an alternate note sequence often directly before or after, although sometimes separated by one to two beats. Accuracy is pivotal in performing the Mahler and the direct and immediate alternation of each triplet sequence will lead to greater precision in the actual excerpt,

as the horn player will learn to center each note after practicing approaches from a variety of intervals. After mastering this study, the Mahler excerpt should also seem only half as hard as the etude. However, it did not seem worthwhile to alter the interval sequence of the passage five bars after 109. Not only does it make more musical sense to stay consistent with the Mahler here, but even as written this particular intervallic sequence is difficult to play accurately. Therefore, leaving the triplet as written will serve to strengthen the horn player's accuracy in performing the descending octave G's.

Example 78 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 7*, Second movement, introduction



Example 79 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 7*, Second movement, concluding horn passage



Example 80 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 13*



Example 81 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 14*

The musical score for Example 81, Miller's *Mahler Etude No. 14*, is presented in ten staves. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The piece begins with a *mf* dynamic. The first staff (measures 1-5) includes a *mf* dynamic. The second staff (measures 6-10) includes a *f* dynamic. The third staff (measures 11-15) includes a *sub. p* dynamic. The fourth staff (measures 16-20) includes a *f* dynamic. The fifth staff (measures 21-25) includes a *ff* dynamic. The sixth staff (measures 26-30) includes a *f* dynamic. The seventh staff (measures 31-35) includes a *ff* dynamic. The eighth staff (measures 36-40) includes a *f* dynamic. The ninth staff (measures 41-45) includes a *f* dynamic. The tenth staff (measures 46-50) includes a *f* dynamic. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the tenth staff.

Etude No. 14 is derived from the passage beginning 29 bars after section 40 in the third movement of Mahler's *Ninth Symphony*. This material provides a wonderful backdrop for a fast and exciting etude focusing on wide interval leaps and clear, defined articulations. The etude also pushes the range and stamina of the horn player, three times repeating the measure in the Mahler that ascends to high B, interposed throughout the etude, as well as transposing it down a half step one further time. This passage is certainly not the most difficult that could have been chosen from Mahler's *Ninth*, but it was very easy to adapt into an etude that focuses on technique, yet maintains the intended "concert appeal" and musical relativity of these etudes.

Example 82 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 9, Third movement, passage after 40*

Symphony No. 7 returns as a thematic backdrop for the fifteenth Mahler etude. Here, the *fortissimo, allegro* passage at number 6 in the first movement is morphed into an *adagio*, dynamically varied, lyrical concert study. This is the sixth and final Mahler etude devoted, in whole or part, to lyricism. Of all of the etudes, this is the most centralized to the mid-range of the horn with two peaks in measures 12 and 20 as only high A's, concert D's. The main theme of the Mahler excerpt is repeated three times, *forte* at the top, *piano* at measure 15, and *fortissimo* at measure 28.

Example 83 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 7, First movement, section 6*

Example 84 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 15*

The final Mahler etude is based on two passages from the fifth movement of Mahler's *Fifth Symphony*. Combined in this etude are the passages at sections 10 and 23 into an *allegro molto* etude focusing on rapid articulation. The intent here is to have the etude performed by single-tonguing, not double-tonguing. The practical aspect of this etude is to ensure that the eighth notes embedded within the Mahler are played cleanly and not dragged, particularly in the fifth full measure of the passage after section 23. Overall, both passages require solid, clean articulation with a great deal of front on the notes. Of course, the etude could not end without mimicking the passage that ascends to the high B after section 24. As with the other fifteen etudes, "concert appeal" is not intended to be sacrificed for the sake of technique.

Example 85 – Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, Fifth movement, section 10



Example 86- Mahler; *Symphony No. 5*, Fifth movement, sections 23- 24



Example 87 – Miller; *Mahler Etude No. 16*

XVI

Allegro Molto

p

6 *f*

11 *p*

16 *ff* *p*

21 *ff*

26 *mp*

31 *f* *p*

36 *ff*

41

Chapter Four

15 Concert Studies on the Themes of Johannes Brahms

With only four symphonies, five short of Beethoven and Mahler, Johannes Brahms managed to contribute mightily to the world of the orchestral horn player. Combined with several of his overtures, two piano concertos, one serenade and his only solo work for horn, it was quite easy to extract a multitude of motifs and other materials that have been transformed into fifteen concert etudes. Molding Brahms' horn excerpts into etudes did provide more of a challenge than the previous thirty studies, as his themes are not as open ended as those of Strauss and especially those of Mahler. Brahms' themes end uniformly and expectedly, making it quite difficult to draw each out into an etude of substantial length. Although, the resulting etudes prove their worth from both pedagogical and performance aspects, and are in fact, this author's favorites. Especially noteworthy in the Brahms etudes is that each, like their symphonic parent, requires transposition. Unlike Mahler and Strauss, Brahms was still writing his works specifically for the natural horn, even though the valved horn had existed for some fifty years before he finished his First Symphony. However, these etudes are designed specifically for the valved horn and the further development of solid transposition as related to the present day performance practice of Brahms' symphonic works.

The first etude is comprised of both the first and third horn parts from the first movement of Brahms' *Fourth Symphony*. As is often the case for many composers writing for natural horn, horns 1 and 2 are in different keys than horns 3 and 4, allowing for a greater chromatic range of horn part writing. In this symphony, horn 1 is in the key of E, while horn 3 is in C. Therefore, this etude switches between E and C as both horn parts deal with the same thematic material in their respective keys, a major third apart. Aside from transposition, the technical focus of the etude is on the proper rhythmic relationship between the quarter triplet figure and the dotted-quarter, double sixteenth note rhythm that precedes it. The sixteenths need to be cleanly articulated and precisely placed after the dotted quarter, while not allowing the momentum they generate to affect the evenness and necessary emphasis of the quarter triplet. The etude is built on a compilation of measures throughout the first movement, in both first and third parts, that deal with this thematic material. Finally, this etude is big and bold, alluding to the fact that a horn player need not be shy when performing the works of Brahms.

Example 88 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, first horn, mm.92-120

The musical score for Example 88 is presented in three staves. The first staff (measures 92-102) begins with a 'Solo' marking and includes dynamics 'dim.', 'mf', and 'dolce'. It features a quarter triplet figure and a dotted-quarter, double sixteenth note rhythm. The second staff (measures 102-112) starts with 'p più dolce' and 'pp', followed by 'pp ma ben maro.' and a key signature change to E major (marked with a box containing 'E'). The third staff (measures 112-120) includes 'Solo', 'pp', 'cresc.', and 'f'. The score contains various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 89 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, third horn, mm. 72-79

Musical score for Example 89, Brahms *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, third horn, mm. 72-79. The score consists of two staves. The first staff (measures 72-78) features a melodic line with dynamic markings *f marc.*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, *sf*, and *sf*. The second staff (measures 79) continues the melodic line with a dynamic marking of *sf*. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Example 90 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, third horn, mm. 200-218

Musical score for Example 90, Brahms *Symphony No. 4*, First movement, third horn, mm. 200-218. The score consists of two staves. The first staff (measures 200-217) features a melodic line with dynamic markings *p*, *ff*, and *f molto marc.*. The second staff (measures 218) continues the melodic line. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Example 91 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 1*

Musical score for Example 91, Miller *Brahms Etude No. 1*. The score is for Horn and consists of eight staves. The tempo is marked **Allegro** and the key signature is **In C**. The score includes dynamic markings *f*, *mf*, *ff*, *pp*, *f*, *f*, *mp*, and *ff*. The score includes trills and triplets. The key signature changes to **In E** at measures 13 and 35. The score ends with a double bar line at measure 40.

The second etude stems from a tricky, technical eight-bar passage in the third horn part of the *Academic Festival Overture*. This passage moves very quickly and is often overlooked by horn players. The intent of this etude is to ensure that this passage receives proper attention. As the slur two - tongue one articulation can often drag at this tempo, this etude serves to build articulation endurance in order to prevent slowing of the actual excerpt. Also, the etude will enhance the horn player's ability to transpose rapidly in the key of E.

Example 92 – Brahms; *Academic Festival Overture*, horn 3, mm. 181-188

Example 93 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 2*

Brahms' *Concerto for Piano No. 2* provides the thematic material for the third etude. The first to second and fourth to fifth bars of the Brahms are compressed into two 6/4 bars to create the material from which the rest of the etude stems. This compression was created to remove the dotted-halves at the end of the Brahms passages in order to create an etude with a smooth, continuous flow. However, the dotted-halves are alluded to in measures 12 and 19 to round out their respective phrases in the style of Brahms. This etude is designed to focus on lyricism, and at first glance can seem shockingly stratospheric in range. However, like the concerto, the etude is in Bb Basso, requiring that the hornist transpose down a perfect fifth to perform the etude. Even so, the etude does top out on a high Bb, or concert Eb, pushing the horn near the top of its lyrical range. The main technical aspect is to correctly articulate the eighth note triplet figures with a controlled legato tongue. Also, the etude should heighten the horn player's ability to perform smooth, even slurs.

Example 94 - Brahms; *Concerto for Piano No. 2*, First movement, horn 1 mm. 1-5

Allegro non troppo (M.M. ♩ = 92)
(Solo) Solo

Example 95 - Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 3*

Andante In Bb basso

Brahms' *Piano Concerto No. 2* reappears as the thematic foundation for the fourth etude. However, in this study the passage comes from the second movement, third horn part, which is horn in D. Again, to allow for more chromatic possibilities the first horn is still in Bb basso for this movement, which explains why this very challenging, very exposed passage is in the third horn. The etude has two main focuses - transposition and rhythmic accuracy. As with the Brahms, this etude is to be performed with a "one" feel. The rapid pace adds a great deal of difficulty to the horn in D transposition. Therefore, the etude includes all that Brahms has written as well as new material built on Brahms' themes to develop a solid D horn foundation that will translate into a confident, accurate performance of the Brahms. Rhythmic accuracy in the bars circled in example 96 is also pivotal to a successful rendition of this excerpt. The final eighth note in each of these bars needs to be accurately placed and must be performed with the feel that it is leading into the downbeat of the following measure, while being performed with an overemphasis that requires that it be played longer than one might feel is natural. Therefore, it is essential that this etude contain rhythmically literal and articulately accurate translations of these circled bars.

Example 96 – Brahms; *Concerto for Piano No. 2, Movement 2, horn 3 mm. 165-237*

The image displays a musical score for Example 96, consisting of five staves of music. The first staff (measures 165-174) is marked 'Tutti' and 'ff'. The second staff (measures 176-185) is marked '(Solo) largamento' and 'f > ben marc.'. The third staff (measures 188-200) is marked 'Solo' and 'ff'. The fourth staff (measures 201-210) is marked 'Solo' and 'ff'. The fifth staff (measures 214-218) is marked 'Solo' and 'ppp'. The score includes various performance markings such as 'Tutti', 'Solo', 'ff', 'ppp', 'largamento', and 'ben marc.'. Several bars are circled, indicating specific rhythmic or articulation points. The page number '142' is visible at the bottom center.

Example 97 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 4*

Presto
in D

IV

9

18

27

36

45

54

63

Each of the etude books has at least one etude that focuses on 5/8 meter and the fifth Brahms etude uses the *Scherzo* of Brahms' *Serenade No. 1* to do so. Brahms' motifs bounce along in a lively three-four, pulsed in one, in the *Scherzo*. Shortening the half to a dotted-quarter in the trio provided a solid foundation to jump into the five feel of this etude. The Brahms' excerpt itself is not particularly challenging, so as with previous 5/8 etudes the thematic material is utilized to develop the particular skill of playing in 5/8. The slur two - tongue one - slur two articulation pattern is consistent throughout the etude. This pattern leads to a relaxed, jaunty 5/8 feel, rather than the almost robotic, hard charging Strauss and Mahler 5/8 etudes.

Example 98 – Brahms; *Serenade No. 1*, Scherzo, mm. 35-91

Example 99 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 5*

Brahms' *Serenade No. 1* is also the focus of the sixth Brahms etude. The horn excerpt that begins in measure 177 of the *Rondo* provides the thematic material for this etude. As with the fifth etude, this etude is for horn in D as is the Brahms upon which it is based. The Brahms excerpt is really no more than four bars with a pickup note, as the last two bars are repeated. This excerpt is in duple meter with an eighth note-triplet rhythmic sequence. The etude differs from the Brahms with the use of 6/8 meter and in its articulation. The Brahms bounds along with a slur two – tongue one articulation, whereas it seemed the etude would better enable the student to develop rhythmic integrity and accuracy by articulating every note. Articulating each note should ensure that each grouping of three is played evenly so that the student

will be more able to identify rhythmic compression of the slurred notes in the Brahms. As with previous etudes featuring wide interval leaps, constant articulation will force the student to immediately find the center of each tone, rather than sliding into the center with a slur. The etude is marked *Allegretto*, as while it should be performed at a lively pace, the *Allegro* marking of the Brahms should not translate into a heavy handed approach in the etude.

Example 100 – Brahms; *Serenade No. 1, Rondo, mm. 177-183*

Example 101 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 6*

The next and perhaps most controversial of the etudes focuses on the famous “alhorn” solo from the fourth movement of Brahms’ *Symphony No. 1*. This etude could be considered controversial as several schools of thought exist on the proper performance of this etude. The approach that is adopted as the approach of this etude, is one of unhurried and austere beauty; calm, yet bold. Specifically, one should not play this excerpt too loudly and the sixteenth note/dotted-eighth motifs in the first,

twenty-third and twenty-fifth bars should be played as if they were instead written as triplet eighth/quarter figures. To reinforce these ideas, this is a lyrically composed etude that is dynamically centered on *mezzo-forte* and is in 12/8 meter. The use of the 12/8 meter allows the elongated sixteenth note feel to be accurately, metrically realized. Continued utilization of this quarter - eighth rhythm throughout the etude, often tying the eighth note to the previous beat, creates a syncopated feel.

Furthermore, Brahms' first nine bars of the solo comprise seven bars (plus one beat) of the etude. The rests are removed from the Brahms and in their place are newly composed lines that link Brahms' two bar units to each other. This is to reinforce the idea that each two bar phrase of the Brahms are not separate events, but rather that they comprise one continuous melodic idea that should be performed as one nine bar phrase. The etude, as is the solo, is for horn in C.

Example 102 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 1, Fourth movement, mm. 30-59*

Example 103 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 7*

The eighth Brahms etude examines material that occurs minutes after the “alhorn” in Brahms’ *Symphony No. 1*. This is a rapid-fire, two bar passage that occurs at measure 168 and is repeated at measure 172. The very brisk tempo at which this passage occurs poses a problematic articulation challenge. This passage must be single-tongued and therefore can get bogged down as the tongue tires. Therefore, the construction of this etude pushes this two bar passage to twenty-three bars. Played up to tempo, the etude will be quite beneficial for developing articulation stamina, while at the same time demanding a heightened ability to transpose C horn. The etude is built upon the second bar of the Brahms excerpt (ex. 104), written as composed in the symphony, and then transposed down a perfect fifth in the next bar. For musical variety, the third scale degree is raised from a half to whole step in this transposed restatement. This relationship between this theme and its repetition, both often slightly altered, on different scale degrees is present throughout the etude. For example, in bar seven this theme is sequenced up a half step, but transposed down only a major third. The ninth bar finds the motif up a tritone from the original and transposed down a tritone to the original scale degree. However, here the ascending second scale degree is not raised. It was important to have these slight alterations to the three note pattern throughout the etude to avoid transposition by ear, demanding transposition by sight. In measure twelve, the harmonic tempo doubles and then doubles again in measure sixteen, leading to the descending chromatic scale in measures eighteen and nineteen and the rapid conclusion of the etude.

Example 104 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 1*, Fourth movement, mm. 168-176

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The upper staff is for C horn, beginning with a circled 'G' and a 'y' above it, indicating a specific fingering or breath mark. It features a rapid sequence of eighth notes with accents and slurs, characteristic of the 'alhorn' passage. The lower staff is for piano, starting at measure 72, and mirrors the rhythmic pattern of the horn part with similar articulation. Both staves conclude with a double bar line and a measure rest or final note marked with a '1' or '2'.

Example 105 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 8*

Allegro
in C

The first movement of *Symphony No. 1* provides the source material for the ninth etude. This etude is based on the bold theme that begins in measure 450. This passage is marked *marcato* and *fortissimo*. As with the fourth movement excerpts from the Brahms, this excerpt and corresponding etude are for horn in C. The excerpt is built on leaps of a fourth, fifth and octave, both ascending and descending: leaps that are often mauled as an inexperienced horn player attempts to perform them at the marked dynamic. This etude is designed to prevent that from happening and, as with all the Brahms etudes, strengthen transposition abilities. The first eight bars of the etude are identical to the Brahms. The development of the motif begins in measure nine as both intervals and dynamics become altered throughout the etude. The chromatic passage from measures 21-25, composed in rhythmic diminution, comes from measures 394-400 in the Brahms. The last three bars of the etude are derived from measures 458 and 459.

Example 106 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 1*, First movement, mm. 448-465

Example 107 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 1*, First movement, mm. 394-400

Example 108 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 9*

An experience as a student horn player compelled the composition of the tenth Brahms etude. This occurred during the first rehearsal for Brahms' *Symphony No. 1* and the particular incident upon which this etude was conceived involved another of the horn students being mercilessly ridiculed by the conductor for not being prepared

to play his part. Therefore, it is in his honor that this etude has been composed. The excerpt identified is the very difficult, horn in B basso, third horn part that begins in measure 83 of the third movement. Horn in B basso requires that the horn player transpose down a tritone. This tritone transposition proves quite challenging for the first horn in the *adagio* solo passage in the second movement of this symphony, but unbelievably difficult for the *allegretto* third horn passage of the third movement. The student mentioned probably had not looked at his part before the first rehearsal and did not know that this perilous passage lay ahead. Even if he had, he most certainly would have memorized the passage, as most horn players do, not really bothering to learn B basso transposition. Therefore, it was very necessary to include in this project an etude that would ensure that this passage would not take a young hornist by surprise and at the same time, enable all horn players to gain a much stronger grasp of horn in B basso. In the etude from measures 19 to 24, the passage at measure 98 in the Brahms bleeds into the passage at 85. The theme is developed into a two bar tag on this passage for a further challenge. The section that begins at measure 29 is adapted from bars 19 to 24, but uses different scale degrees and different intervallic relationships to force the hornist to learn B basso rather than aurally guess what the notes should be. In the etude, the articulations, tempo and syncopated rhythms remain much the same as the Brahms symphony.

Example 109 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 1, Third movement, mm. 83-109, third horn*

The image shows a musical score for Horn in B basso, measures 83-109, from Brahms' Symphony No. 1, Third movement. The score is written on four staves. The first staff (measure 80) is marked 'Hbl.' and 'mf'. The second staff (measure 87) is marked 'mf', 'f', and 'cresc. sempre'. The third staff (measure 97) is marked 'f sempre'. The fourth staff (measure 103) is marked 'p' and 'f'. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 110 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 10*

Allegretto
In B

f *f*

p *f* *p*

f

p

f

The eleventh etude is based on the main thematic material of the first movement of Brahms' *Second Symphony*. The first horn states this theme as a solo in the second measure of the symphony. Variations on this theme recur throughout the movement, usually at a piano dynamic except for one fortissimo statement at measure 258, building up to the bold, climactic solo near the end of the movement. The basic motif is simple, yet quite beautiful and filled with emotion. The horn player must perform this line smoothly, with clean slurs and a controlled legato tongue. The horn player must make the rhythmic subdivisions clear and properly contrast strong and weak beats. The eighth note B section of the etude is derived from mm. 505-508 near the end of the movement. The *staccato* markings here in the Brahms suggest only clean articulations rather than the usual separated feel, so they are left out of the etude to reinforce a connected feel. In general, no notes should really sound short or separated in any of Brahms' works. The etude provides yet another lyrical outlet for the horn player, while at the same time reinforcing those afore mentioned qualities that will lead to a successful performance of the *Second Symphony*.

Example 111 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 2*, First movement, Opening horn solo

in D
Allegro non troppo
Solo
p



Example 112 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 2*, First movement, mm. 505-508



Example 113 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 11*

Allegro
in D
mp



The twelfth etude is much like the fifth Brahms etude. This study is also in 5/8 and should be played in the same lyrical, smooth and controlled Brahms style. The 5/8 meter of the etude was easily created by removing the quarter rest in the passages at measures 52 and 194 in the fourth movement of Brahms' *Symphony No. 3*. Both passages are bold, thematically important and to be performed in the usual

glossy, well-manicured manner of Brahms. Not only is the etude designed to reflect that style, but also to further develop 5/8 meter and transposition of horn in C. The passage that runs from measure 21 through 36 in the etude is a great deal more chromatic than anything one would ever encounter in a Brahms symphony and as with previous etudes, demands that the hornist play with his or her eyes, not ears.

Example 114 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 3, Fourth movement, mm. 52-58*

Musical score for Example 114, Brahms *Symphony No. 3, Fourth movement, mm. 52-58*. The score is in 5/8 time and features a chromatic passage with triplets and a dynamic marking of *f*.

Example 115 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 3, Fourth movement, mm. 194-200*

Musical score for Example 115, Brahms *Symphony No. 3, Fourth movement, mm. 194-200*. The score is in 5/8 time and features a chromatic passage with triplets and a dynamic marking of *f*.

Example 116 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 12*

Musical score for Example 116, Miller *Brahms Etude No. 12*. The score is in 3/8 time, marked *Allegro in C*, and features a chromatic passage with various dynamics including *mp*, *ff*, and *p*.

The thirteenth etude is an *allegro*, yet very lyrical etude based on the solo passage beginning at measure 95 in the first movement of Brahms' *Symphony No. 4*.

This passage is for horn in E, which requires the hornist to transpose down a half step. The solo is not extraordinarily difficult, merely requiring the usual Brahms stylistic elements previously discussed. The same can be said in regards to the etude.

Example 117 – Brahms; *Symphony No. 4, First movement, mm. 95-113*

Example 118 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 13*

The fourteenth Brahms etude returns to the *First Symphony*, capturing the spirit of the syncopated passage that leads up to the “alhorn” solo. It is very important for the hornist to internalize the strong, silent beats in this passage in order to achieve the correct syncopated feel. The etude is designed to deal specifically with this rhythmic pulse and is composed in a lyrical fashion that mimics the passage on

which it is based. The articulations in the etude are consistent with the Brahms, as are the crescendos which drive each phrase forward, providing momentum in lieu of articulated downbeats.

Example 119 – Brahms; *Symphony No.1, Fourth movement, mm. 23-28*

Musical score for Example 119, Brahms *Symphony No. 1, Fourth movement, mm. 23-28*. The score is in treble clef with a common time signature. It features a series of eighth-note patterns with dynamic markings *f*, *p*, and *p cresc.*. The piece concludes with a first ending bracket over the final notes.

Example 120 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 14*

Musical score for Example 120, Miller *Brahms Etude No. 14*. The score is in treble clef with a common time signature and is marked *Adagio* and *In C*. It consists of seven staves of music, each with dynamic markings such as *mf*, *f*, *mp*, *p*, and *pp*. The piece is characterized by long, flowing phrases with slurs and accents, typical of Brahms's style.

Brahms' only solo work for horn provided the source material for the fifteenth, and final, Brahms etude. The *Trio in Eb Major for Piano, Violin and Horn* is a staple of horn solo literature. It is an extremely taxing and demanding work and, like all of Brahms' orchestral literature, was written for natural horn. In contrast, the etude is used to develop the main theme of the fourth movement to create a technical concert etude well suited for the modern horn. One particularly difficult aspect of the Brahms is the two syncopated passages at measures 61 and 221. Wild tempo fluctuations between the three performers are commonplace in this passage. Each passage is rather lengthy and, without solid downbeats, often begins to be rushed or dragged by the second measure. In response to this phenomenon, linked together are nearly identical versions of both passages from measures 34-44 (ex. 124), to ratchet up the difficulty and extend the duration in which a stable pulse is required without the luxury of strong beats. This etude serves as a wonderfully exciting way to round out *15 Concert Studies on the Themes of Johannes Brahms*.

Example 121 – Brahms; *Trio*, Opus 40, Fourth movement, Main theme (excerpted)



Example 122 - Brahms; *Trio*, Opus 40, Fourth movement, mm. 61-67 (excerpted)



Example 123 - Brahms; *Trio*, Opus 40, Fourth movement, mm. 221-227 (excerpted)



Example 124 – Miller; *Brahms Etude No. 15*

10 **Allegro**
In Eb

The musical score consists of ten staves of music in 6/8 time, starting with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegro' and the mode is 'In Eb'. The piece features a variety of dynamic markings: *f* (forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), *ff* (fortissimo), and *p* (piano). The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together, and rests. Some measures contain slurs or phrasing marks. The piece concludes with a double bar line at measure 54.

f *mp*
f *mp*
f
ff *f*
p
f
p
p *mp*
f
mp *p* *ff*

Summary

Just as Franz Strauss must have surely felt, it is my sincere hope that these etudes will provide a new and very useful tool for horn pedagogy, specifically, as a manner in which to enhance musicality and technique while directly contributing to already well-established horn literature. Etudes derived from existing horn literature stand to have a much greater impact on the development of a horn player than etudes that try to compete with those designed for woodwinds, strings, or even percussion in terms of tessitura, technique or rhythmic complexity.

These etudes have been composed over a period of about four years. Each etude has been edited countless times, to ensure maximum playability and musicality. Dynamics, articulations, and phrasings have been carefully considered and placed. I estimate that I have spent around 500 hours play-testing these studies and have received the input of my advisor Gregory Miller, my horn playing father Larry Miller, and numerous professional and academic peers.

In the body of this dissertation, I have documented that these are not etudes written to focus on technique alone. While some of these etudes are quite challenging, well beyond the difficulty level of Kopprasch, they should not prove to be so difficult that they are damaging to the psyche. Furthermore, the brevity found in most of these etudes will prevent physical damage from occurring to the hornist.

These etudes are composed in a manner that attempts to maintain the specific style of each composer upon which they are based. The Brahms etudes stray only slightly in style in that they are more chromatic than the writing of Brahms due to the fact that the etudes are intended for modern valve-horn. In striving to keep my own compositional voice out of the etudes, each set should fully allow the horn player to practice in the style of Strauss, Mahler and Brahms, rather than Miller. Therefore, the student should not find 20th and 21st century compositional techniques slipping into etudes based on these 19th and 20th century Romantic period works.

Most importantly, the horn player will find these etudes very entertaining and a joy to play. These etudes are exciting and energetic and will keep the player's attention firmly focused on their execution. The player will therefore be interested in practicing, perfecting and performing these etudes. In the process, he or she will have gained many useful skills and abilities that will translate into the successful musical execution of the works upon which the etudes are based.

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