

## User Friendly Bassoon Tunes

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(In a somewhat altered form, this material was offered as a handout at a session presented by the author at the 1996 IDRS Conference at Florida State University.)

Having grown weary of teaching the same pieces of easy to moderate difficulty many times, I decided that an investigation of alternatives was in order. Trevor Cramer, of TrevCo Music, was kind enough to send me a large shipment of music on approval. Pianist Jill Olson spent a considerable amount of time with me reading the pieces below, and many others that did not make the list. It is only with the assistance of these two people that this project has been possible.

Included in the list are some pieces which are very familiar. These have been included because they are good pieces, and to offer the reader a point of reference in applying the difficulty ratings. There is nothing on this list that I would not be happy teaching or be pleased to have my students perform. However, a number of the less familiar works stand out as being deserving of more frequent performances. These works include the Braun *Solos (1740)*, Goepfert 2 *Characterstücke*, Loewe *Scottish Scenes*, Milde *Concertino*, Faith *Suite*, Head *Three Fantastic Pieces*, Joubert *Cinq pièces faciles*, Longo *Suite, Op. 69*, and the collection *Sight-reading Pieces for Bassoon and Piano*.

Bassoon Difficulty: 1 = easy, playable by students within first year of study, 2 = expanded range, may include tenor clef, playable by good high school students, 3 = greater musical demands, playable by advanced high school students and university students.

Piano Difficulty: 1 = very easy, playable by a young pianist, 2 = can be played well by an accomplished high school pianist and very playable by an undergraduate pianist, 3 = quite playable by a freshman or sophomore piano major.

### Baroque

Besozzi, Jerome. *Sonata in B-flat Major* (Oxford University Press), \$12.00. Bsn=2+ Pno=2. Editing and realization by W. Waterhouse. Effective 3 movement sonata with modest range

requirements. Good keyboard realization. Rhythms in slow movement can be confusing due to small note values. It appears tht all slurs are Waterhouse's. No separate bassoon part.

Boismortier, Joseph Bodin de. *Suite of Pieces* (Shawnee Press), \$8.00. Bsn=2 Pno=2+. Edited by Robert Thompson, realization by Thomas Trobaugh. Six dance movements from Op. 40. Good, thinly realized keyboard part. Clear editing, showing all editorial additions and original. Every embellishment is shown written out in a cued staff above the ornament. A fine introduction to baroque style. No separate basso part.

Boismortier, Joseph Bodin de. *Sonatas, Op. 50, Nos. 1-2 and 4-5* (Musica Rara) Two volumes, each \$16.00. Bsn=3- Pno=2+. Edited by Kim Walker. These movements are larger than those in the *Suite of Pieces* and contain greater technical challenges, particularly if one is serious about ornamentation. Realization is thin in texture. Minimal editorial additions to Boismortier's original. Separate basso part.

Boismortier, Joseph Bodin de. *Sonata in D, Op. 26, No. 1* (Benjamin Productions, 2 Meadowlark Lane, North Oaks, MN 55127) \$7.00. Bsn=2+ pno=2. Edited by D. Durran, realization by June Miller. A four movement work of slightly smaller proportion than the Op. 50 sonatas. Thinly scored realization. Minimal editorial additions. This piece has a beautifully expressive slow movement. Separate bassoon part.

Bond, Capel. *Concerto No. 6 in B-flat* (Boosey & Hawkes) \$9.00. Bsn=2+ Pno=2. Reduction for bassoon and piano and the bassoon part edited by W. Waterhouse. An easy baroque concerto with limited range and, except for numerous trills, few technical demands. Many embellishments are cued above the ornaments. It appears that the string orchestra accompaniment is available for rental only.

Braun, Jean Daniel. *Solos (1740)* (Schott) \$18.00. Bsn=1+-3. Solo bassoon. Collection of individual movements. Many strong pieces that emphasize flexibility of register. While not grouped in any way, a few of these pieces performed as a suite can be effective. Some of these solos are contained in *30 Klassische Studien für Fagott* (Universal Edition).

Senaille, J.B. *Allegro Spiritoso* (Southern-Texas) \$5.00. Bsn=3- Pno=3-. Bassoon part revised by Vincent Pezzi. Limited range, but requires good velocity by the soloist. Opens with a short adagio introduction.

### Classical / Early Romantic

Danzi, Franz. *Concerto in F Major* (Leuckart) \$25.00. Bsn=3+ Pno=3-. One of five bassoon concerti by Danzi. Some florid writing for the soloist, but the keys and patterns are not difficult. Musically much easier than the Mozart *Concerto*. Thinly textured piano reduction.

Mozart, W.A. *Rondo* (Medici Music Press) \$3.50. Bsn=2 Pno=2. Translation and arrangement by R. Dishinger from *Rondo in F, K. 494*, a single movement work for piano. Good introduction to the classical style.

Mozart, W.A. *Sonata in B-flat* (for bassoon and piano after K. 292) (Barenreiter) \$13.50. Bsn=3+ Pno=3. Michael Topel has realized a wonderful piano part to this sonata that we know as the sonata for bassoon and cello. This edition, prepared from the Neue Mozart-Ausgabe, comes with a bassoon part, cello part (lower part), and the piano realization, allowing the piece to be played with bassoon and either or both of the other parts. You may need to look for this edition in the cello section of your store.

### Romantic

Fauconier, B.C. *Reverie, Op. 114, No.1* (B&D Publications, West 615 Cotta Ave., Spokane, WA 99204, (509) 747-7398) \$6.50. Bsn=2 Pno=2-. 49 measures of wonderfully lyrical music. The notes are easy, the challenge is making it beautiful.

Goepfert, Karl Eduard. *2 Charakterstücke, Op. 31* (Hofmeister) \$12.00?. Bsn=3 Pno=3. Although first published in the 1890s, these pieces, with their long lyrical phrases, are reminiscent of Mendelssohn. Effective use of the bassoon's range.

Klughart, August. *Romanze* (Jack Spratt Music Co.) \$3.00. Bsn=2 Pno=3-. Andante movement in A-flat. Good melody with enough rests for soloist. Originally for bassoon and strings.

Loewe, Carl. *Scottish Scenes* (McGinnis & Marx) \$6.00. Bsn=3- Pno=3+. 3 movements - Lady of the Lake, Wanderer at Bothwell Castle, Scottish Clan. Originally scored for clarinet or cello and piano. Attractive melodies that lay well on the bassoon. Piano part contains rapid arpeggios and figurations. Loewe is best known as a composer of lieder.

Milde, Ludwig. *Concertino* (Universal Edition) \$11.20. Bsn=3+ Pno=3-. Single movement work, sectionalized by contrasting material rather than

tempo. Contains lyrical material and also sections that recall Milde's scale and chord studies. Good facility is required for an effective performance.

Weissenborn, Julius. *Capriccio, Op. 15* (International) \$7.00. Bsn=2 Pno=2+. An allegro rondo movement with contrasting lyrical material, including an effective hemiola section. Skillfully composed transitions between sections.

Weissenborn, Julius. *Romance in E-flat, Op. 3* (International) \$4.00. Bsn=2+ Pno=2+. A lyrical andante movement with plenty of rests. Requires good tonal control in top octave. Good piece for working on attacks, releases, and shaping of phrases.

Weissenborn, Julius. *Arioso and Humoreske* (International) \$4.50. Bsn=1 Pno=2-. The very beautiful Arioso requires smooth response across the half-hole break. The Humoreske requires little facility, containing mostly easy arpeggio patterns.

### 20th Century

Damase, Jean-Michel. *Basson Junior* (Editions Henry Lemoine) \$6.50. Bsn=2- Pno=2+. Flowing waltz melody in one to the bar, attractively harmonized with diatonic pitch collections used in a non-functional manner.

Dubois, Pierre Max. *Tropical* (Editions Rideau Rouge) \$8.50. Bsn=1 Pno=1+. A 23 measure single movement andante with rhythmic accompaniment. Both parts have the opportunity to play the melody and to accompany.

Faith, Richard. *Suite* (Southern-Texas) \$6.00. Bsn=3 Pno=2+. 5 short movements in a very conservative contemporary style. Piano part is not densely written. Good mix of playing styles, character, and meters. Movement 5 presents the greatest technical and ensemble challenges. A very attractive piece.

Gliere, Reinhold. *Humoresque, Op. 35, No. 8* (International) \$5.00. Bsn=3- Pno=3-. A character piece requiring a well developed, but not fast, staccato and some schmaltz for an effective performance.

Gliere, Reinhold. *Impromptu, Op. 35, No. 9* (International) \$5.00. Bsn=2+ Pno=2+. Lyrical piece in compound meter. The arpeggiations in the piano create a rich sonority for the bassoon melody.

Head, Michael. *Three Fantastic Pieces* (Emerson Edition) \$11.00. Bsn=3 Pno=3-. "Clouds," "Haunted House" and "Happy Go-lucky." A real chamber music piece, requiring a wide range of dynamics and colors, and coordination through tempo changes. Effective programmatic music.

Jacob, Gordon. *Four Sketches* (Emerson Edition) \$10.00. Bsn=1+ Pno=1+. Short, charming pieces, including "L'Apres-midi d'un

Dinosaur." Limited range, but requires good projection of character and some staccato tonguing in the Polka.

Joubert, Claude-Henry. *Cinq pièces faciles* (Editions Robert Martin) \$10.75. Bsn=2. Solo bassoon. The one minute movements are -- Prelude, Petite fugue, Sarabande, Menuet, and Gigue. The work has limited technique and range demands, while retaining musical and rhythmic interest. The Prelude is particularly beautiful.

Longo, Alessandro. *Suite, Op. 69* (Bassoon Heritage Edition) \$11.00. Bsn=3. Pno=3. First published in 1915, the *Suite* is written in a conservative, tonal style. Movements are Andante with variations, Romanza, and Vivace. A chamber music piece with lots of interplay between the soloist and pianist. A fine quality reprint by BHE.

Phillips, Burrill. *Concert Piece* (Carl Fisher) \$7.00. Bsn=2+ Pno=3+. Single movement, fast-slow-fast work. Difficult piano part, but the accompaniment is not difficult when played in the original string orchestra version. String parts are available from the publisher, but not the orchestra score.

Vaughan Williams, Ralph. *A Winter's Willow* (Medici Music Press) \$3.00. Bsn=1 Pno=2-. 3 statements of this folksong with varying piano accompaniment. The piece is in F major, with very limited range.

Vaughan Williams, Ralph. *Six Studies in English Folksong* (Galaxy Music) \$12.00. Bsn=3 Pno=3-. Very attractive settings of these songs. Originally for cello and piano, Allan Hawkins has edited the bassoon part to eliminate double stops and adjust the range, however the solo part still covers the full range of the bassoon. The technical demands here are not great. The challenge is to "sing" all the tunes.

### Collections

*Bassoon Solos* (2 vols.) (Chester Music) \$16.00 each. Bsn=2-3 Pno=3-. Edited by W. Waterhouse. Each volume contains individual movements from original bassoon pieces, set for bassoon and piano, from a range of historical periods. Vol. 1 includes, in part, Milde's *Three Easy Pieces* and music by Merci, Corrette, Amon, and Mozart. Vol. 2 includes, in part, Jancourt's *Romanse sans Paroles* (Melodic Study #15) and music by Galliard, Jacobi, Devienne, and Mozart.

*Collection Panorama* (Billaudot) \$12.00. Bsn=2-3 Pno=2+-3+. Collection of 5 contemporary pieces ranging from conservative 20th century writing to works with non-traditional

notation. The music is not difficult in its demands of technique or range. Contains interesting music providing a good introduction to 20th century writing.

*Eight Bel Canto Songs* (Shawnee Press) \$10.00. Bsn=2 Pno=2. Compiled and edited by Harry Phillips. This is a collection of well known Italian art songs. Wonderful music! I find the long slurs supplied by the editor to be less effective than playing the articulations found in the original songs. Solo part and accompaniment must be ordered separately. For bassoon order Piano Accompaniment B.

*Das Fagott* (vol. 5) (Deutscher Verlag für Musik) \$35.00. Bsn=1-3+ Pno=1+-3+. Part of Werner Seltmann and Gunther Angerhofer's fine 6 volume bassoon tutor, this volume contains 28 works from all periods and levels of difficulty. Included, in part, is music by Pivonka, Bruns, Boismortier, Galliard, Bertoli, Miroshnikow, Amon, and Spohr.

*Fagottmuzika* (Editio Musica Budapest) \$15.00. Bsn=1+-3 Pno=2-3-. A collection of 22 pieces edited by Laszlo Hara, containing lieder, Italian songs, baroque dance movements and many more pieces that you will recognize. Composers represented include, in part, Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, and Schubert.

*Going Solo* (Faber Music) \$8.00. Bsn=1-2 Pno=2-3-. Arrangements by Graham Sheen of music by Farnaby, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Grieg, Bizet, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Bartok. Includes orchestral bassoon solos set in lower keys. All pieces are short.

*New Pieces for Bassoon* (2 vols.) (Associated Board of the Royal School of Music) \$9.50 each vol. Bsn=1-2+ Pno=2-3. Original works for bassoon commissioned by the Royal Schools. Composers represented include Gordon Jacob and Bryan Kelley. Vol. 2 contains the more difficult material. All works are single movements.

*Sight-reading Pieces for Bassoon and Piano* (Universal Edition) \$14.00. Bsn=2+-3 Pno=3-. These sight-reading exam pieces from the Paris Conservatory concours have been collected by W. Waterhouse. 9 short works by Bizet, Massenet, Barthe, Puget, Bourdeau and Gaubert. These brief works are of high musical quality. ♦

### About the Author ...

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