

Stylistic Etudes for **Trombone**

20 Original Etudes
in a Variety of Styles

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CARL FISCHER®

Preface

Stylistic Etudes for Trombone was written for intermediate to advanced level trombonists, seeking to meet the demands of the modern marketplace for performers. As I often tell my students, it's simply not enough to master a single style and fake the rest. To make a living as a performer, trombonists are expected to play many, many different styles authentically. Classical performers study hard and devote themselves to mastering the stylistic nuances of various eras, various composers, various forms; jazz musicians seek to accurately reflect the styles of everything from bar-room burlesque to Coltrane; horn bands in the funk, rock, ska and hip-hop idioms must reflect attention to the details of their influences even as they create new paths through popular music.

This etude collection is an attempt to help students and their teachers work on the details associated with mastering each of these various styles.

In order to perform with the correct feel, articulation and sound, trombonists must first get these concepts in their head through diligent listening and then disciplined practice playing in every single style. The same way orchestral players study the symphonic literature and excerpts, or the way a professional jazz musician might work on chord changes in excruciating detail, a well-rounded trombone player must master styles by listening to and playing with great recordings. Most of the etudes in this book are based on styles from specific orchestral literature, jazz standards and other styles such as New Orleans' funk music (*Meters*) or the music of James Brown and *Tower of Power*.

How these etudes were conceived, composed and transcribed:

1. The style or concept of the etude was thought out in my head and ear.
2. I then improvised in that style and concept on my trombone, recording my efforts until I was satisfied with the etude. All along, my goal was to play the range of the instrument while emphasizing certain articulations, rhythms, range and, fundamentally, the intended style of the etude.
3. The resulting etude was then transcribed by a terrific graduate student named Zach Bornheimer, who also works with many other classical and jazz composers as a copyist/arranger.

Tips for working on the etudes:

1. Seek out professional recordings that match the style of each etude to get a good idea of what the etude should sound like musically. My recording of each of these etudes is available for download and can be purchased online for a modest fee. Search for "Brantley Etudes" at either iTunes or CDBaby.
2. Practice each etude very slowly and in segments as needed, using a metronome. Record yourself and listen for good technique, musicianship and authenticity of style with your sound, feel and articulations. Compare your own efforts to the sounds you've heard on recordings. Would you fit in that ensemble or band?
3. If range is an issue, take certain notes or passages down or up an octave.
4. Work on your fundamentals every day, including the techniques and skills needed for these etudes. Be patient! Small improvements every day result in big success over time.
5. Always play with a wide dynamic range.
6. Always play with line and direction.
7. Always play with impeccable time as well as rhythm. Use a metronome to help with this.
8. Always play in tune. You can work on this with a tuner as well as with drones.
9. Play these for teachers, friends, peers and colleagues not only for their feedback but also for the experience of informal performance. An audience changes everything.
10. Make music, listen to music, record yourself, play in public and have fun!

One final note: some of these are hard. On purpose. These are not warm-ups that you can play through mindlessly to get your face going. These are "study pieces" in the old-fashioned sense. They are designed to challenge you as a player, to make you a little uncomfortable. Some are tougher than others, of course, but none of them are easy. If you can play through each of these well, with great musicianship and impeccable technique, you will be an incredibly versatile instrumentalist and be able to secure performance opportunities that are outside the comfort zone of many trombonists.

Thanks for buying this book. I hope you enjoy working through these, whether you're a teacher, student, performer, or weekend warrior. I learned a lot by putting these together and I hope you find them useful and helpful.

Best wishes,
—Tom Brantley

Practice this etude the same way you would a Melodious Etude from the Bordogni/Rochut books. With or without vibrato, but smooth and lyrical, as a vocalise.

Larghetto/Adagio (♩ = 54-66)

No. 1

mp

5

9

mf

13

f mf mf

17

21

3 f mf

25

mp

29

mf f mf

33

f

37

ff

This is a dirty, Delta blues. To capture this style and sound, you must listen to classic blues guitar players like the three Kings: Freddie, Albert and B.B. Take your time, do not rush and put your soul in this!

Swing $\text{♩} = 104$ ($\text{♪} = \text{♩}^{\text{3}}$)

No. 2

mp legato (sim.) (sim.)

5

9 *mf* 3

13 *mp* *mf* 3

17

21 *Straight* 3

25

29

33

37 *Straight* 3 3

41 *Straight* *Swing sim.*

45 *mf*

49

53 *Straight, Lay Back*

57

61

65

69 *f*

73 *fp* *< mf*

77

81 *slight rit.*

Think of this as a symphonic march.
 Use a metronome.
 Be very careful and accurate with rhythm!
 Focus on style, time and musicality.

No. 3 $\text{♩} = 96$

mf staccato *mp* *mp*

mf *f* *mf* *f* *f* *mf* *mf*

f *mf* *mf* *f* *mp* *f* *mf*

mp *mf*

stacc. sim.

mp *f* *mf*

mf *mp* *mf*

legato

mp *mf* *f*

mf *mf* *sim.*

29

29

32

mf *f*

35

staccato *mf* *piu mf*

38

f

42

f

46

(stacc. sim.)

52

52

56

rit. *a tempo* *mf* *mp* *p* *pp*

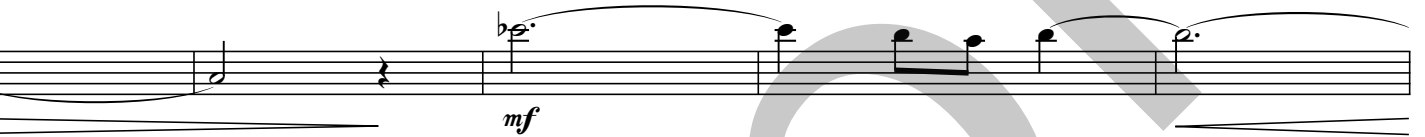
This is in the style of Ravel's famous piece *Bolero*.
Play this with great rhythm, clear articulation and beautiful phrasing.

Sustained (legato) ♩ = 104

No. 4  *mf*

5 

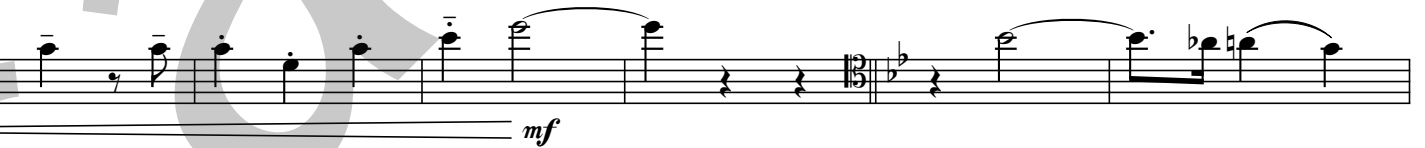
10 

15  *mf*

20 

26 

32 

38  *mf*

44 

51 

57

Musical staff 57: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes with accents (>) over the second and fourth measures. A fermata is placed over the final note.

62

Musical staff 62: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of eighth and quarter notes with a slur over the first three notes. A fermata is placed over the final note.

68

Musical staff 68: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a fermata over the first note. A double bar line with repeat dots is present, followed by a key signature change to one sharp (F#) and a sequence of quarter notes.

74

Musical staff 74: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a fermata over the second note. The staff ends with a double bar line.

79

Musical staff 79: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a slur over the first three notes and a fermata over the fourth note. A dynamic marking of *f* is present below the staff.

85

Musical staff 85: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a dynamic marking of *mf* at the beginning and *p più mf* at the end. A fermata is placed over the final note.

91

Musical staff 91: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a slur over the first three notes and a fermata over the fourth note. A double bar line with repeat dots is present.

97

Musical staff 97: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a fermata over the first note. A double bar line with repeat dots is present.

103

Musical staff 103: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. The staff contains a sequence of quarter notes with a dynamic marking of *p più mp* below the staff. A fermata is placed over the final note.

In this 3/4 time swing feel, think "All Blues" from the Miles Davis classic album *Kind of Blue*. It is all about rhythm, feel and sound with Miles. Soulful.

$\text{♩} = 120$

