

Dedicated to Thomas A. Brown

Baroque For Marimba

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CONTENTS

TITLE	PAGE
Performance Notes	2
Invention No. 8 In F - Johann Sebastian Bach	3
Concerto For Oboe And Strings - John Barbirolli	4
Overture To Samson (Minuet) - George Frederic Handel	6
Rondeau - Jean-Joseph Mouret	7
Sonata In A Minor (II. Spirituoso) - George Philipp Telemann	8
Sonata In A Minor (III. Andante Amabile) - George Philipp Telemann	9
Sonata In A Minor (IV. Vivace) - George Philipp Telemann	10
Overture To Samson (Allegro) - George Frederic Handel	11
Presto From Concerto No. 3, BWV 974 - Johann Sebastian Bach	12
Caro Mio Ben - Giuseppe Giordani	14
Selections From Sonata No. 2 For Oboe And Piano (Mvt. II) - George Frederic Handel	16
Selections From Sonata No. 2 For Oboe And Piano (Mvt. IV) - George Frederic Handel	17
Gigue - George Frederic Handel	18
Prelude No. 6 - Johann Sebastian Bach	20
Sebben, Crudele - Antonio Calara	22
About The Arrangers	24

FOREWORD

This is a collection of a wide variety of pieces in the Baroque style, adapted as 2, 3, and 4 mallet marimba solos. Each piece contains its own technical and musical challenges, as well as opportunities for creative expression.

It is recommended that players listen to recordings of the original compositions before learning the arranged versions in order to more fully understand the musical intent and phrasing possibilities. Attention to and understanding good sticking is key in being able to play these pieces well and with fluidity.

Sticking Guidelines for 2 Mallet Pieces:

- Begin by alternating sticking for each phrase, and decide which hand to lead with, based on the smoothest motion. Write in the lead hands.
- When mallets cross too much using alternating strokes, use a double stroke on a weak beat (ex. RLRR or LRLR).
- Use no more than two rights or lefts in a row.
- For 6/8 and 12/8, double-sticking within the groupings of three eighth notes will be common and helpful (ex. RRL, LLR, RLL, LRR).
- Trills – “tr” means to trill to the note above the written pitch.

Thanks to Victoria Valente for her contributions to the musical and technical notes.

Performance Notes

Invention No. 8 In F – This well-known two-part invention has been re-written as a single line with implied counterpoint. Observe the slight dynamic differences between mezzo forte and forte.

Concerto For Oboe And Strings

Allemande – Use a full stroke to pull the sound out of the bars; create a slight marcato on the eighth notes. Practice with a metronome to avoid rushing.

Gigue – In contrast with the *Allemande*, this movement is a moderate tempo dance style that should be played smoothly. See sticking guidelines for 6/8 meter in the foreword.

Overture to Samson (Minuet) – This 2 mallet solo involves playing harmonies through double-stops. Be careful not to play “flams,” but have the notes land exactly together. For a double-stop with a trill, strike the double-stop first and then quickly move to the trill.

Rondeau – This piece may be played with 3 or 4 mallets. If it is played with 3, two mallets should be placed in the left hand and one in the right hand in order to bring out the melody. Double-stops should be played with the inner two mallets. If using 4 mallets, the player may move between adjacent chords easily by shifting from mallets 1-2-3 to mallets 2-3-4, or vice versa.

Sonata in A Minor

II. Spirituoso – Utilize an agogic (natural) accent on the downbeats in measures 2 and 6 (main theme) as a part of imitating the original phrasing of the oboe line.

III. Andante Amabile – The challenges of this movement are creating a true legato through a smooth and even roll, and being able to change roll speeds to shape the phrases (unmeasured roll). Players should be able to begin and end rolls with either hand equally well. Non-rolled notes should be struck gently in order to blend in to the texture.

IV. Vivace – Rolls in this movement may be played detached (non-tied).

Overture To Samson (Allegro) – Players should look beyond the technical aspects of striking a series of sixteenth notes to the musical lines that can be created. Listening to recordings will help with this. Use “large vision” to see the entire keyboard in order to correctly strike the downward leaps.

Presto From Concerto No. 3, BWV 974 – Although the performance tempo is fast (felt in 1), it is important to practice this piece slowly and accurately first, and then transition gradually to a smooth presto.

Caro Mio Ben – Originally a classic Italian art song, *Caro Mio Ben* is arranged here as a 4 mallet rolled piece. Pieces of this type are most effectively practiced in the following four steps: (1) strike the chords in time with a metronome; (2) pulse the chords (unison striking with both hands simultaneously in 16th note beat divisions); (3) play using measured rolls; and (4) play using unmeasured rolls. For each step, use a metronome to maintain melodic and harmonic integrity.

Selections From Sonata No. 2 For Oboe And Piano

Mvt. II - When rolling quarter notes, attack each one separately. Using a “T” mallet position will help to navigate the 16th note arpeggios smoothly. In general, use alternate sticking.

Mvt. IV - The approach for this movement should be one of creating a legato flow – using sticking guidelines for 12/8 meter in the foreword will assist with this.

Gigue – In order to help this piece flow in a dance style, it is important to feel the 12/8 time signature in 4, with slight agogic accents on the downbeats. See sticking guidelines for 6/8 meter in the foreword.

Prelude No. 6 - This is a challenging 2 mallet solo that is highly chromatic. Double sticking within the three-note groups will be essential for speed and avoidance of mallet-crossing (see 12/8 sticking guidelines in the foreword). The end goal would be to memorize this piece for performance.

Sebben, Crudele – Originally an Italian art song, this 4 mallet arrangement is challenging, and calls for a high level of musicianship in phrasing, which should be reminiscent of the voice and piano accompaniment in tandem.

Invention No. 8 In F

by Johann Sebastian Bach
arranged by David McGuire

Andante moderato ♩ = 92 - 116

mf

5

7

f

9

13

mf

17

21

22

f

24

27

f

30

31

mf

33

poco rit.