

Piano

# James M. Stephenson

## 3 IMPROMPTUS

for Solo French Horn

Unaccompanied or with Piano



Music for Brass  
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### **3 IMPROMPTUS**

*for Solo Trumpet or French Horn  
Unaccompanied or with Piano*

*Originally composed for Amy Handelman*

Program Notes by James Stephenson

Premiere performance: 1999 International Horn Society Convention, Amy Handelman, soloist  
Duration: ca. 4 ½ minutes

These three “Impromptus” were originally written as horn etudes for Amy Handelman while we were both performing with the Des Moines Metro Opera. Due to our close proximity of our individual housing (in dorm rooms!), I had the pleasant and often occurrence of hearing Amy practice. It was during one of these practice sessions that I became inspired to quickly compose an etude for her (Impromptu #1). I composed it from start to finish without stopping so that I might get the chance to hear it right away, and she did not let me down. To my delight, she liked it and immediately scheduled it for performance on an upcoming recital. Subsequently, she then asked me to compose some more “etudes” to be performed at the 1999 International Horn Society Convention, but under strict guidelines that I write them as I had the first - from start to finish without stopping. After their completion, I decided to add piano accompaniments, allowing future performers the choice to fit their performing situations.

The Music:

Impromptus #1 and #3 should be played as quickly as the player’s fingers and chops (and also the accompanist’s) will allow. I wrote them quickly, and that spirit should be carried into the performance. Impromptu #2 does pose a slight dilemma, with the quick mute (or stopped horn) changes. I shall leave these to the player’s discretion. I prefer the muted sound, but if it creates too many pauses in the music, it should then be avoided. If the mute is discarded all together, those sections should be played with an echo effect.

Jim Stephenson

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*Allegro Energico*

Horn in F

Piano

Musical score for Horn and Piano, measures 1-4. The Horn part (top staff) begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Piano part (bottom staves) also begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic and provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines.

5

Musical score for Horn and Piano, measures 5-8. The Horn part continues with its rhythmic eighth-note pattern, showing some chromatic movement. The Piano part maintains its accompaniment, with some changes in chord voicing.

10

Musical score for Horn and Piano, measures 9-12. The Horn part continues with its rhythmic eighth-note pattern, showing some chromatic movement. The Piano part maintains its accompaniment, with some changes in chord voicing.

Impromptu #1

16

Musical score for measures 16-20. The system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The music is in a key with one flat and a 3/4 time signature. Measure 16 starts with a half note chord. Measures 17-19 feature a melodic line in the treble staff with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a piano accompaniment in the grand staff. Measure 20 ends with a double bar line. Dynamics include *marc.* (marcato) and articulation marks like accents and slurs. A '2 7' fingering is indicated above the final note of measure 20.

21

Musical score for measures 21-26. The system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The music continues from the previous system. Measures 21-22 feature a melodic line with eighth notes and a piano accompaniment. Measures 23-26 show a more complex melodic line with sixteenth notes and a piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *mp* (mezzo-piano), *p* (piano), and *cresc.* (crescendo). Articulation marks like accents and slurs are present. Fingering numbers '2 7' and '4' are shown above notes in measures 21 and 23 respectively.

27

Musical score for measures 27-32. The system consists of three staves: a single treble clef staff at the top and a grand staff (treble and bass clefs) below. The music continues from the previous system. Measures 27-32 feature a melodic line with eighth notes and a piano accompaniment. Dynamics include *f* (forte). Articulation marks like accents and slurs are present.

# Impromptu #1

32

Musical score for measures 32-37. The score is written for a single melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The melodic line is in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present in measures 35 and 36. The piece concludes with a double bar line in measure 37.

38

Musical score for measures 38-43. The score is written for a single melodic line and a piano accompaniment. The melodic line is in treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 6/8. The music features a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. A dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo) is present in measures 39 and 40. The piece concludes with a double bar line in measure 43.

Horn and Piano

#II

**System 1 (Measures 1-3):**  
Horn: *RUBATO*, *mf*, *\* Mute mp*, *Open mf*, *Mute p*  
Piano: *mp*, *p*, *mp*

**System 2 (Measures 4-7):**  
Horn: *mf*, *Open*  
Piano: *pp*, *mf*

**System 3 (Measures 8-11):**  
Horn: *un poco agitato*, *as the beginning f*, *Rit...*, *Allargando pp*  
Piano: *f*, *Rit...*, *pp*

\* Muted or Stopped

Impromptu #2

13

*pp* *pp*  
L.H. #d. L.H. #d.  
*pp* *pp*

17

*pp* *pp*  
L.H. #d. L.H. #d.  
*pp* *pp*

21

*pp* *mf* *p*  
*ppp* *p*

# Impromptu #2

25

*mp* *mf* *mp* *f* *un poco piu mosso*

*mf* *f* *un poco piu mosso*

*mf* *f*

30

*piu f*

34

*Rit...* *ff* *ff*

*Rit...* *ff*

\*\*

\*\* (Denotes as Optional - at the player's discretion - if left out, pianist should tacet until measure 41.)

# Impromptu #2

39

*pp* *mp* *p* *mp*

as the beginning' Mute Open

43

Mute *p* *pp* *ppp*

Slowing Slowing

Horn and Piano

# III  
"Stuck"

Allegro

Horn

Piano

6

12

# Impromptu #3

17

*ff*

*f*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 17 through 22. The vocal line begins at measure 17 with a half note G4, followed by a quarter rest, and then a quarter note A4. The piano accompaniment starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The right hand plays chords, while the left hand has a melodic line. A forte (*f*) dynamic marking appears at measure 20.

23

Detailed description: This system covers measures 23 through 28. The vocal line continues with a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest, and then a quarter note C5. The piano accompaniment features a more active right hand with eighth notes and chords, and a left hand with a steady eighth-note accompaniment.

29

*pp*

*pp*

Detailed description: This system covers measures 29 through 34. The vocal line starts at measure 29 with a quarter note D5, followed by a quarter rest, and then a quarter note E5. The piano accompaniment features a pianissimo (*pp*) dynamic. The right hand has a complex texture with many beamed eighth notes, while the left hand has a melodic line with some grace notes.

# Impromptu #3

35

Measures 35-40 of the musical score. The right hand features a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *f* at the end. The left hand consists of a complex, rhythmic accompaniment with many beamed notes and rests. A dynamic marking of *f* is also present in the left hand.

41

Measures 41-46 of the musical score. The right hand continues with a melodic line. The left hand features a more active accompaniment with many beamed notes and rests. Dynamic markings of *f* are present in both hands.

47

Measures 47-52 of the musical score. The right hand continues with a melodic line. The left hand features a more active accompaniment with many beamed notes and rests. Dynamic markings of *f* are present in both hands.

# Impromptu #3

53

ff pp

f

Detailed description: This system contains measures 53 through 58. The top staff is a single melodic line with dynamics *ff* and *pp*. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The left hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in 3/4 time, while the right hand plays chords and rests. Measure 53 has a *ff* dynamic. Measure 54 has a *pp* dynamic. Measure 55 has a *f* dynamic. Measures 56-58 continue with the piano accompaniment.

59

ff sfz

f sfz

Detailed description: This system contains measures 59 through 64. The top staff features a melodic line with dynamics *ff* and *sfz*. The piano accompaniment has two staves. The left hand plays chords and eighth notes, while the right hand plays chords and rests. Measure 59 has a *ff* dynamic. Measure 60 has a *f* dynamic. Measure 61 has a *sfz* dynamic. Measure 62 has a *f* dynamic. Measure 63 has a *sfz* dynamic. Measure 64 has a *sfz* dynamic.