

Divertimento in 3 movements

Composed for Wind Quintet (2 oboes, 2 horns, and bassoon) by Johann Baptist Vanhal (born 1739 in Bohemia - died 1813 in Vienna)

Arranged for brass quintet (clarinet quintet, saxophone quintet) by Klaus Bjerre (2003).

Cantabile

Menuetto

Allegro

This Divertimento, originally in C, was found while hunting for another work by Vanhal. Extremely well suited for its original instrumentation, it immediately presented itself as a great choice for brass quintet if the key was transposed down to Bb. After all brass quintets are not offered that much material from the gallant period around the lifetime of Wolfgang Gottlieb Mozart. With its playing time of around 7 minutes this work no way comes close to *Eine kleine Nachtmusik* neither in quality nor in extension, but it beautifully expresses its era, where the lesser geniuses were strongly attached to the conventional use of their period instruments.

These conventions, one of them the strictly pair-wise use of oboes and horns, were well known by the public of the era, whereas more modern ears sometimes are offended by the implications of such conventions. Vanhal could not employ both horns in bar #10 of the **Cantabile** because of the shortness in available notes on the natural horns, so he let both horns rest. The result comes out quite thinly in modern ears. Hence this arranger has added cue notes in the brass quintet horn part, which represent notes available on period horns. The choice whether to use the single original note or the added cue notes is left to the performers.

Some brass quintets want to spare their 1st trumpet player from as much work as possible. This arrangement accommodates this wish in the **Trio** of the **Menuetto**. Originally set for oboes and bassoon only, the harmonic texture allows the upper parts to be transposed down an octave, so that the bass-line only has to be transposed down on two single notes cued into the tuba part. Hence this arrangement allows for the trumpets either playing or resting through the Trio. However it would be strictly against the intentions of the composer to let the pair of trumpets as well as the pair of horn and trombone play simultaneously in the Trio. Furthermore the horn and trombone parts have been prepared for the option of presenting the horn as well as the trombone as soloists by means of an optional swapping of parts.

In the **Allegro** the first ending reflects the original setting. The second ending serves two potential options: either to strengthen the codal effect by letting horn and trombone join the high range fun, or to save a tired 1st trumpet from cracking the high notes at the very ending of the piece. Please remember: if the 1st trumpet tacet's on the cued notes, then the 2nd trumpet also should do so.

Aside from the standard brass quintet players coming from the British brass band tradition also can use this arrangement, as parts for diverse treble clef Eb and Bb instruments have been supplied. From there it only took a few additional steps to make this arrangement playable by clarinet and saxophone quintets (ensembles): a very few cue notes in the Eb tuba part and a Bb clarinet version of the horn part (in case that no Eb alto clarinet is available).

All this results in the following parts being made available:

1st Bb trumpet (cornet, clarinet, soprano saxophone) with a substitution part for Eb trumpet (cornet, clarinet)

2nd Bb trumpet (cornet, clarinet, soprano saxophone). The two Bb trumpet parts are printed on the same sheets to allow for part swapping from section to section of the music

Horn in F with substitution parts for horn in Eb (alto clarinet, alto saxophone) and for 3rd Bb clarinet

Trombone in bass clef concert with a substitution part for trombone in Bb treble clef (baritone, bass clarinet, tenor saxophone)

Tuba in bass clef concert with treble clef substitution parts for euphonium in Bb treble clef (bass clarinet) and Eb tuba (contralto clarinet, baritone saxophone)

Of course purists could, would, and should frown upon such a modular type of arrangement, but not all musicians live in larger towns, so more rural realities have to be faced.

This present version is the 2nd one issued a few hours after the first one. The missing score title for the Menuetto has been added, and a few inconsistencies in the articulations in the Trio have been corrected. No notes have been changed.

This edition can be used free of charge, but reports on readings and performances would be nice.

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