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## THE COMPETITION SOLOS OF J. B. ARBAN

BY DANIEL KELLY

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# THE COMPETITION SOLOS OF J. B. ARBAN

BY DANIEL KELLY

This article was reviewed and approved for publication by the ITG Editorial Committee.

Joseph Jean-Baptiste Laurent Arban (1825 – 1889) is arguably the most significant figure in the history of the cornet and its repertoire. His successes as a performer and teacher are legendary, and his *Grande méthode complète de cornet à pistons et de saxhorns* stands today as one of the most important pedagogical works for cornet and modern trumpet. Arban composed or adapted several works to showcase both his phenomenal abilities and the potential of the fairly new *cornet à pistons*. The understated lyricism and demanding technical displays found in these works still challenge advanced performers and delight audiences today.

In 1869 Arban, who by this time had become a celebrated soloist and conductor, was named professor of the newly established cornet class at the Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation in Paris. The Conservatoire was one of the most highly regarded centers of musical training in Europe. Graduation from the Conservatoire was achieved only by winning the *premier prix* at the annual *Concours de prix* (commonly referred to simply as the *concours*). It was customary at that time for the professor to compose the contest pieces (*morceaux de concours*) for his pupils



Jean-Baptiste Arban

and Arban wrote several new pieces for the contests as well as recycling some works that he had made famous during his performing career. Since the *concours* was the final test of the aspiring musician and the first place winner was deemed

worthy of immediate professional employment, the solos used for the contests were to be of the highest quality, both technically and aesthetically.

Despite the significant influence of Arban on the repertoire and pedagogy of the cornet and trumpet that continues to this day, little has been written about his *morceaux*. Gillian MacKay and Frank Romero have done the most work in this regard. Their studies provide excellent surveys of the *morceaux de concours* spanning several years; however, neither sought to examine the works of a single composer in great detail.<sup>1,2</sup>

This article will survey all of Arban's accompanied *morceaux de concours* in terms of their general form, musical characteristics, and technical requirements based in part on terminology established by MacKay (1996).<sup>3</sup> Since many of these works are no longer published, it is hoped that this article

will shed new light on previously unknown but nonetheless significant cornet repertoire.

## The Conservatoire and its *Concours*

The Conservatoire was established in 1795 by the merging of two government-sponsored schools of music: the École Royale du Chant (founded in 1783) and the École Gratuite de la Garde Nationale Parisienne, a division of the École pour la Musique de la Garde Nationale (founded in 1792).<sup>4</sup> The early Conservatoire owed much to its military roots, maintaining instrumentation similar to that of the military bands of the day. Of the sixty pupils in the inaugural class, thirty-two were wind players, while only six were string players, and the remaining twenty-two were admitted to the *solfège* class.<sup>5</sup>

In its early days, the mission of the Conservatoire was to train musicians for employment in the orchestras, opera houses, and military bands of France. By 1884 the French government established twenty-four regional music schools to spread musical training throughout France and to heighten the public's awareness of French music and culture.<sup>6</sup> The creation of these preparatory schools further elevated the status of the Conservatoire. The restructuring of this system in 1966 resulted in the addition of fourteen *Conservatoires régionaux* and the establishment of four divisions of musical instruction, the highest designated *Supérieur*. There are two such conservatories in France today: *Le Conservatoire Supérieur de Musique de Paris* and *Le Conservatoire Supérieur de Musique de Lyons*.<sup>7</sup>

Graduation from the Conservatoire is determined by the

annual *concours*. The format of the *concours* has changed very little since its inception in 1797.<sup>8</sup> Worthy students are selected by the applied professor to participate in a preliminary screening audition held in the spring. The winners are then admitted into the *concours*, which is held during the summer term. The *morceau* is announced only after the initial audition (approximately one month before the contest date) and is to be performed from memory.<sup>9</sup> A panel consisting of the director of the Conservatoire, the applied professor, and several members of the faculty or esteemed musicians from outside the Conservatoire rank the contestants to determine the placement. There are five possible rankings (*lauréats*): first place (*premier prix*), second place (*deuxième prix*), and three runners-up (*premier accessit*, *deuxième accessit*, *troisième accessit*). Ties for one or more of the prizes were not uncommon. Furthermore, the panel was not required to select a *premier prix* winner if no contestants were deemed worthy of the coveted prize. The *concours* fostered competition among the professors and acted as a type of peer review for faculty.

The Committee unanimously holds the view that annual competitions are an indispensable necessity, that they are the principal source of rivalry between professors and between students, that they are a means of accounting to the public and that without them there would be no School... only the drive of a

competition keeps students worthy of public presentation and ready to pass from the School into orchestras and the teaching profession.<sup>10</sup>

Upon winning the *premier prix*, the student was compelled to leave the Conservatoire, although further study in another discipline (composition, conducting, solfège, etc.) was permitted. It was not uncommon for a student to compete several times before winning first or second prize. Arban was awarded second place in the trumpet *concours* in 1844 and won the first place prize the following year. Arban's classmate Jules-Henri-Louis Cerclier, who would later teach the trumpet class at the Conservatoire from 1870 to 1894, was awarded first *premier accessit* in 1844, then went on to win the *deuxième prix* in 1845, and the *premier prix* in 1846.<sup>11</sup>

Since the *morceaux* were often composed by the professor, they tended to reflect both the latest developments of the instrument and the stylistic preferences of the professor.<sup>12</sup> This practice began to fade in the mid-nineteenth century as some professors began to use works from the standard solo repertoire or recycle previous *morceaux*. The guidelines of the *concours* stipulated that the contest piece be a concerto movement, opera aria, or other suitable work. The trumpet professor François-Georges-Auguste Dauverné, having no such solo repertoire at his disposal, composed every trumpet contest piece from 1835 (the first year the trumpet was included in the *concours* as a solo instrument) until his retirement in 1869.<sup>13</sup> His successor and former pupil, Cerclier, selected Dauverné's pieces for fifteen of the twenty-four *concours* during his tenure, using only eight of his own compositions and one by François Dubois (1837 – 1924). Perhaps indicative of the changing styles of trumpet playing, Cerclier's successor, Merri Franquin, used neither his own compositions nor those of Dauverné or Cerclier during his thirty-six years at the Conservatoire. Franquin opted to use works by contemporary French composers (many of whom were Conservatoire alumni or professors) such as Joseph Ropartz (1864 – 1955), Georges Enescu (1881 – 1955), and Emile Pessard (1843 – 1917).<sup>14</sup>

### Joseph Jean-Baptiste Laurent Arban

Joseph Jean-Baptiste Laurent Arban was born on February 28, 1825, in Lyons, France. Little is known of Arban prior to his acceptance into François-Georges-Auguste Dauverné's trumpet class at the Paris Conservatoire on September 29, 1841, at the age of sixteen. Within nine months he would be allowed to leave the Conservatoire "to put himself at the disposition of Monseigneur le Prince de Joinville" for a journey of six months.<sup>15</sup> The following year Arban and a colleague would again leave the Conservatoire for professional engagements (presumably in London), this time for three months (June 22 – October 1, 1843). In 1844 he again asked for a leave to go to London, a three-month engagement (April 20 – July 1) that caused him to miss the preliminary round of the *concours* (that was held on June 14). Regardless, Professor Dauverné allowed Arban into the *concours* that year and Arban won the *deuxième prix* (second prize) on December 9, 1844. The following year he again asked for and was granted a leave to travel to London (March 27 – July 1), winning the *premier prix* upon his return.<sup>16</sup> Arban's eagerness to perform abroad proved troublesome during his teaching career at the Conservatoire.

For the next ten years Arban's career included service in the military and various concert engagements, as evidenced by

reviews and advertisements in popular music publications such as *La France Musicale*. It is not clear exactly when he began playing the cornet, but by early 1846 his name was already appearing in conjunction with the instrument in concert reviews that extolled his beautiful lyricism and brilliant multiple-tonguing.<sup>17</sup> In 1848 he was promoting the new "compensator" cornet of Adolphe Sax.<sup>18</sup> Arban and Sax would maintain a long working relationship that would later result in his Cornet-Arban. It was also during this time that he began conducting salon and opera orchestras (including the "popular music orchestra" at the Cadet Casino and the orchestras of Valentino, Frascati, and even the Paris Opera) and composed various pieces for the cornet based on operatic and popular themes.<sup>19</sup>

On May 25, 1857, Arban was named Professor of Saxhorn at the École Militaire, the military annex of the Conservatoire, where he began working on his *Grande méthode complète de cornet à pistons et de saxhorns*, which would be published in 1864. He also continued consulting with instrument manufacturers (such as Sax, Halary, and Courtois) to improve the intonation and mechanics of the cornet.

### The Establishment of the First Cornet Class

In late 1868 Arban was still teaching saxhorn at the École Militaire. He was at the height of his fame when he petitioned the Conservatoire to establish a cornet class. The cornet was already recognized as a versatile solo instrument and quite popular with audiences. Consequently, there was no lack of music that included it either as a solo instrument or as an ensemble voice. However, the cornet was most often used as a secondary instrument by trumpeters, trombonists, or French horn players. Arban's goal was both to formalize the study of the cornet and to prevent the disappearance of the noble trumpet, whose use and popularity was waning.

Dauverné is generally credited for being the first to use the valved trumpet (*trompette moderne* or *trompette chromatique*) in public performance in 1827. While he lauded the instrument in theory, he was dissatisfied with its intonation and timbre when compared to the natural trumpet. Nonetheless, Conservatoire students were trained on both valved trumpet and natural trumpet (*trompette simple* or *trompette d'ordonnance*) beginning in 1826.<sup>20</sup> Reviews indicate that hand-stopping was used for the *concours* of 1836 and the slide trumpet was used in 1845; however, it is not clear whether these instruments were used with regularity or if these contests were isolated events.<sup>21</sup> Since Arban won *premier prix* in 1845 it is logical to assume that he received some training on the slide trumpet. Most of the *morceaux* used during Dauverné's tenure (1835 – 1869) were written for the natural trumpet (*trompette d'ordonnance*) and the two-valved trumpet in F.<sup>22</sup>

Around 1855, the valved trumpet in C was introduced in France. The C trumpet, smaller than its predecessors, was developed in response to the higher ranges required of contemporary orchestral trumpeters. By the end of the century the C and C/D trumpets were used commonly in French orchestras. The Conservatoire taught both the *trompette moderne* (in various keys) and *trompette simple* well into the twentieth century.

In spite of the advances being made in trumpet design, contemporary composers were beginning to write more often for the cornet than either the valved or natural trumpets. In November 1868 Arban wrote in a letter to the Director of the Conservatoire, Daniel-François-Esprit Auber, "It is a fact that

today hardly anybody plays the trumpet any more and that the provincial theaters—and even those in Paris—no longer have artists playing this instrument... it is generally known that one can be an excellent trumpeter and yet starve to death, whilst everybody can live comfortably by playing the cornet...”<sup>23</sup> Arban points out in this letter that the cornet is being pressed into service in virtually every genre as a melody instrument and often even as a replacement for the trumpet in older works. It was Arban’s belief that a combined class would require students to excel on both instruments and act as “an effective remedy in order to prevent the complete disappearance of this instrument [the trumpet] from the orchestras, if one wishes to hear it still in the performance of masterpieces from the past [the natural trumpet]—not to speak of the services it [the *moderne* trumpet] may render in the future!”<sup>24</sup>

In January 1869, the cornet class was installed at the Conservatoire, but not quite as Arban had intended. Instead of combining the trumpet and cornet classes, Auber decided to keep the classes separate. He named Arban the professor of the new cornet class and a former classmate of Arban’s, Jules Cercilier, as the new professor of the trumpet class, replacing their former teacher Dauverné, who had already decided to retire later that year.<sup>25</sup>

For the next four years (1869 – 1873), Arban tried to balance his duties at the Conservatoire with his performing and conducting careers. On at least three occasions during this period he was granted leaves of absence to conduct in St. Petersburg and Pölvösk. He suggested that Jaques-Hippolyte Maury, his replacement at the École Militaire and principal cornetist in the Paris Opera, teach the cornet class during his leave. Each time, his request was received with increasing acrimony from the Director and government officials, who finally in May 1873 warned Arban that he was not to be granted any more leaves.

In April 1874 Arban was again invited to conduct in St. Petersburg and requested another leave, which was denied. Arban reluctantly resigned his post at the Conservatoire, stating “[While] leaving my post as a teacher at the world’s most admirable institution, it is a consolation to me to think that I shall still be able to render great service to Musical Art by making our great French composers and incomparable virtuosi [himself and the musicians that accompanied him on tour] known in foreign countries.” Maury was nominated to take Arban’s responsibilities at the Conservatoire. Unfortunately, very little is known about Arban’s travels from the summer of 1874 to October 1880. At some point he was named *Officier d’Académie*, an honor awarded for special achievements in the fields of arts and sciences by the French government.<sup>26</sup>

By late 1880 Maury was severely ill and Arban wrote to the Director to offer himself as Maury’s replacement, “Today, having renounced my long concert tours as well as conducting and other musical activities that claimed so much of my time, I should be happy to be called to continue the career I had been forced to interrupt at the time.”<sup>27</sup> Arban was reinstated and began his second tenure at the Conservatoire, a period in which he devoted himself to his teaching and the improvement of the cornet.

### Arban’s *Morceaux de Concours*

Arban’s *morceaux de concours* resemble in many ways the type of music that made the cornet a fixture in Parisian musical life.

Since the 1830s, the cornet was featured as a solo voice in outdoor public concerts, in dance halls, and salons. Cornet soloists would entice the crowd with complicated flourishes and delicate phrases that were usually reserved for violinists, flutists, and vocalists. Although it was this association with “popular music” that later hindered its acceptance into the world of art music, the cornet quickly became an undeniable crowd favorite.

Arban’s *morceaux* reflect the cornet’s most common application and the one for which the cornetist could expect the most gainful employment: performing popular melodies, complicated fantasies, polkas, or theme and variations. Certainly these pieces do not compare to the great solo works of Tchaikovsky, Dvorák, or Saint-Saëns, but they do represent the type of music most often heard by the general public. In fact, it is entirely feasible that Arban himself performed some of these pieces before starting at the Conservatoire and selected these “proven” works for the *concours*.

### 1869: *Deuxième Grand Solo*

**Publisher: Alphonse Leduc**

*Deuxième Grand Solo* opens with a lyrical introduction (*Allegro moderato*, C major) presenting two melodies in ABA form. The first features realized turns and syncopation over a thin accompaniment consisting of *secco* blocked chords. The second melody is more static with minimal ornamentation. The original melody returns and leads to a short cadenza that ends the introduction. The florid, ornamental introduction featuring one or more cadenzas is a typical feature in all of Arban’s *morceaux*. The introduction to this piece is the shortest and simplest of the collection. The theme (*Alla breve*, *Allegretto*, F major) is fairly uncomplicated, carefree, and playful. The theme section is also in ABA form with a short cadenza before the return of the primary melody. The harmonic structure of the theme consists of alternating tonic and dominant chords.

The next section (marked as “1st Variation”) has no indicated tempo but is also notated in *alla breve*. This may be an indication by Arban that a quick single-tongue could be used, although the double-tongue (*staccato binaire*) technique was taught at the Conservatoire and its use would be expected in a contest piece.<sup>28</sup> In his *Grande méthode*, Arban suggested the soloist use double-tonguing freely, stating “this type of staccato effect is extremely useful for playing scales and arpeggios in duple rhythm.”<sup>29</sup> There is no direct representation of the theme in this variation; the solo line consists mainly of scales and arpeggios and is simply a decoration of the simple harmonic structure on which the theme was built.

An *Andante, con espressione* section in F minor follows. The lyric melody is set over an undulating arpeggiated accompaniment and ends with another short cadenza. The *Finale* is also without a tempo indication, but it was undoubtedly intended to demonstrate the soloist’s triple-tonguing. During his performing career, Arban was renowned for his extraordinary triple-tonguing and he employs the technique in all of his *morceaux* except *Fantasie sur Actéon*. MacKay distinguishes between the three distinct triple-tongue applications characteristic of the cornet style and all three are present in this movement.<sup>30</sup> The first is facility *staccato ternaire*, the use of triple-tongue to facilitate fast scale and arpeggio passages, and is seen in the first measure. The second is accompaniment *staccato ter-*

Example 1: *Deuxième Grand Solo (Finale, mm. 1 – 7)*  
 Examples of *staccato ternaire*: facility (m. 1), accompaniment (mm. 2, beats 3 – 4), decorative (mm. 3, beats 3 – 4)

*naire*, where the melody note is followed by the repetition of harmonically appropriate accompaniment notes, which appears in the second half of the second measure. The final application is the decorative *staccato ternaire*, used simply to ornament the melody by breaking the melody note into a series of shorter notes, and is seen in the second half of measure three. These triple-tongue techniques are a typical feature of the cornet style (Ex. 1).

Given the difficulty of this first *concours* selection and the fact that the contestants would have been studying with Arban for only six months prior to the contest, it is highly unlikely that Arban's students were unfamiliar with the advanced skills that it required. Based on the results of that first *concours*, it is more likely that the students of the first cornet class were already highly skilled cornetists. The *premier prix* winner, Jean-Joseph Mellet, would go on to teach the cornet class from 1890 – 1910.

*Lauréat*—1869<sup>31</sup>

Premier Prix	Jean-Joseph Mellet
Deuxième Prix	Albert Isidore Prevet
Premier Accessit	Fermin Adolphe Gatin
Deuxième Accessit	<i>none awarded</i>
Troisième Accessit	Gabriel Charles Julien Dossunet

### 1870: *Caprice et Variations*

**Publisher:** Alphonse Leduc (revised by Alexandre Petit, 1923)  
**Also included in the Carl Fischer edition of the *Complete Method***<sup>32</sup>

*Caprice et Variations* follows the traditional theme and variation format: slow introduction, the introduction of the theme, then a series of variations of increasing technical difficulty. Here, the *Andante* introduction is in 6/8 meter and offers only minor technical challenges in the form of running scale pas-

sages. The *Andante moderato* theme follows in common time. It is a simple *cantabile* melody with minimal embellishments. Although not indicated in the solo part of either the Leduc or Carl Fischer edition, the theme is actually in two parts. The second part, consisting of eight measures, is repeated to balance the first sixteen-measure section. The score indicates a repeat of measures 17 – 24, and this ABB form is consistent in all variations on both the score and solo part.

In the first variation, *Allegro moderato*, the melody is embellished by nearly constant triplets and syncopation resulting from the various articulation patterns used. In the second variation, Arban (or Petit) specifies the use of double-tonguing (*staccato binaire*). While no tempo is indicated, the use of double-tongue and the minimal drum-like accompaniment (short blocked chords on each beat) would imply a rather brisk tempo limited only by the soloist's technique.

MacKay also distinguishes between two types of double-tonguing typical of the cornet style.<sup>33</sup> The first type is facility *staccato binaire*, which, like its *staccato ternaire* counterpart, is used to facilitate the fast scale and arpeggio passages, and is used extensively in the *concours* after 1870. (This is the type of *staccato binaire* required in the second variation.) The second type, decorative *staccato binaire*, used simply to ornament the melody by breaking a melody note into a series of shorter notes, made its first appearance in the 1881 *concours* selection, *Fantasie sur Actéon*. There is a third type of double-tonguing that is not identified by MacKay but is used to great effect by Arban in his later works. Similar in function to accompaniment *staccato ternaire* (where the melody note is followed by the repetition of a harmonically appropriate accompaniment notes), this type would logically be called accompaniment *staccato binaire*. It will make its first appearance in *Air Varié sur un Air Suisse par Boehme* (1873), and be seen again in *Fantasie sur*

*Actéon* and *Fantaisie Brillante sur Zampa* (1882).

In the third variation, the type of articulation to be used is again specified and no tempo marking is provided. This movement is a triple-tonguing *tour de force*, exhibiting the three types of *staccato ternaire* with few opportunities for the performer to rest. The theme is stated in the accompaniment while the soloist occasionally punctuates the melody with accompaniment *staccato ternaire*, states the melody outright with decorative *staccato ternaire*, or embellishes it with rapid passages.

Lauréats—1870

Premier Prix	Gabriel Charles Julien Dossunet
Deuxième Prix	Henri Victor Albert Senée
Premier Accessit	Marstial Val
Deuxième Accessit	none awarded
Troisième Accessit	no troisième accessit were awarded after 1869.

### 1872: *Deuxième Fantaisie Brillante*

**Publisher:** Alphonse Leduc

*Deuxième Fantaisie Brillante* opens with an *Andante moderato* introduction in ABA form. The lyrical primary melody is in C major. The *Animato un poco* middle section in C minor is more restless, with rapid thirty-second notes in the solo line over drum-like chordal accompaniment. The soloist may choose to use double-tonguing to keep the articulation light and rapid. The primary melody returns, followed by a short cadenza to close the introduction. The theme (*Andante*) consists of a delightful *cantabile* melody that offers no significant challenges. Unlike the theme of *Deuxième Grand Solo*, this theme section is in ABB form with the B section marked *Reprise ad lib.* In both pieces, however, the second section of the theme offers little contrast to the first.

The next section (*Moderato*) is a variation that could provide opportunities to display facility *staccato binaire* or could be played slower with single-tonguing. The form follows that of the theme section (ABB). A new theme is used for the next section (*Adagio*) and allows the soloist to once again exhibit his musicality and phrasing skills.

The *Finale* is in triple meter with the marking *Tempo di Mazurka* (marked *Mouvement di Valse* on the piano score). The three forms of *staccato ternaire* are present here, but the technical requirements are considerably lower than those of the final section of *Deuxième Grand Solo*. The two pieces are similar in form and tonality, but the *Deuxième Fantaisie Brillante* is shorter and considerably less demanding.

Lauréat—1872

Premier Prix	Albert Isidore Prévot
Deuxième Prix	Joseph François Sicard
Premier Accessit	Alphonse Benjamin Rousselle
Deuxième Accessit	Joseph T'kint

### 1873: *Air Varié sur un Air Suisse par Bøhm*

**Publisher:** Aulagnier

Also included in the Carl Fischer edition of the *Complete Method* as *Air Varié on a Folk Song, The Little Swiss Boy*.

Theobald Bøhm (1794 – 1881) was a successful flutist, flute maker, composer, and acoustician.<sup>34</sup> Arban adapted three of Bøhm's pieces and in 1862 published them in a collection entitled *3 Airs Variés composés par Th. Bøhm* that is composed of *Air Suisse* (Bøhm's Op. 20), *Variations sur la Marche de*

*Moïse* (Bøhm's Op. 16), and *Air Varié sur un Air Tyrolien* (Bøhm's Op. 13, also included in the Carl Fischer edition of the *Complete Method* as *Variations on a Tyrolien Song* for B-flat cornet). In this collection, *Air Suisse* and *Air Tyrolien* are written for cornet in A, while *Variations sur la Marche* calls for cornet in C for the opening *Andante* and cornet in A for the remainder of the piece. Since all of the other Arban *concours* selections were published or reissued for B-flat cornet, it is possible that a B-flat version was published for the 1873 *concours*—as was the case for *Fantaisie sur Actéon* in 1881—but no such version was found.

*Air Suisse* is undoubtedly the most difficult of Arban's *morceaux*. In fact, it is this piece that Arban refers to in the preface to his *Complete Method*:

In 1848 I performed before a séance [meeting] of the "Société des Concerts du Conservatoire." I played the famous air for the flute composed by Bøhm on a Swiss theme, comprising, as is well known, an intentional combination of the most inextricable difficulties; from that day forth I may say that the cornet à pistons took its place among classic instruments. In the piece of music just alluded to, I performed the flute tonguing in double staccato [and] also treble [triple] staccato, which I am the first to have applied to the cornet à pistons.<sup>35</sup>

The *Andante* introduction begins as a *cantabile* melody with simple ornamentation, but it soon becomes a series of cadenzas with rapid scales, arpeggios, and complex diminution that reflect the work's flute origins. The theme is a folk-like diatonic melody in AABA form over a blocked chord accompaniment and offers no technical challenges. The first variation, however, immediately launches into a series of complex turns and articulation patterns. While no tempo is indicated here, the thin accompaniment and harmonic rhythm in this variation seem to call for a moderate eighth-note pulse that would require double-tonguing. Assuming this is the case, here is the first occurrence of what could be termed accompaniment *staccato binaire*.

The second variation features accompaniment *staccato ternaire* on the grandest scale. The melody is present in the accented pitches, accompanied by what is essentially a dominant pedal in rapid triplets. The middle section of this variation features a contrasting arpeggiated figure in a duple pattern that would probably have been performed with single-tonguing. The accompaniment *staccato ternaire* section returns to end the variation (Ex. 2).

The third variation is an *Adagio*, and its inclusion among faster variations is reminiscent of the *fantaisies* already discussed. As with the introduction melody, the *Adagio* begins simply but soon becomes a complex combination of ornaments and rapid scale passages. The final variation (*Allegro*) is a challenging mix of articulations, continuing the metric ambiguity of the previous variations while presenting some of the most difficult tonguing patterns in all of Arban's *morceaux*. While some passages are grouped to be played as triplets, others are in pairs, and still others seem to work well either way (Ex. 3, mm. 1 – 3). In such cases it is necessary to observe the accompaniment pattern, but even then the choice of phrasing may not be clear. Most of the variation is supported by blocked chords on the beat, allowing for either a duplet or triplet articulation, although the contour of some of these passages would

Example 2: *Air Varié sur un Air Suisse par Boehme* (2nd Variation, mm. 1 – 8)

make triple-tonguing very difficult (m. 5 – 7). Only in the final six measures does the accompaniment provide a triplet subdivision of the beat that seems to call for duplets from the soloist (m. 12 – 13). However, the solo line soon breaks from the 12/8 feel with an arpeggiation that works very well with facility *staccato ternaire* (m. 14 – 15).

*Lauréats*—1873

Premier Prix

Deuxième Prix

Premier Accessit

Deuxième Accessit

Charles Camille Silvestre

Henri Victor Albert Senée

Paul Ferdinand Albert Cuelenaere

*none awarded*

Casimir Jules César Jaussaud

1874: *Deuxième Grand Solo*

Publisher: Alphonse Leduc

*Deuxième Grand Solo* was the *morceau de concours* for 1869. In May 1874, only a couple of months before the *concours*, Arban resigned his post at the Conservatoire to perform and conduct in St. Petersburg. Either he decided to re-use this piece as a matter of convenience or Jacques-Hippolyte Maury, his replacement, selected it.<sup>36</sup> The deuxième accessit winner,

Merri Franquin, would place higher in the *concours* each of the following three years and become the Conservatoire's trumpet professor from 1894 – 1929, replacing Arban's friend and classmate Jules Cerclier.

*Lauréats*—1874

Premier Prix

Deuxième Prix

Premier Accessit

Deuxième Accessit

Jean Lachanaud

Simeon Noël Marsius Leroux<sup>37</sup>

Casimir Jules César Jaussaud

Merri Jean Baptiste Franquin

1881: *Fantaisie sur Actéon*

Publisher: Brandus et Cie

Also included in the Carl Fischer edition of the *Complete Method* as *Fantaisie and Variations on Actéon*.

Like *Air Suisse*, *Fantaisie sur Actéon* was originally a show-piece for flute. Jean-Louis Tulou (1786 – 1865) was a renowned flute virtuoso and professor at the Conservatoire from 1829 to 1856.<sup>38</sup> He composed this fantasy based on themes from the 1836 opera *Actéon* by Daniel Auber (1782 – 1871), a prominent opera composer and Director of the Conservatoire from 1842 to 1870.<sup>39</sup> (It was Auber who hired Arban and created the

(Separate excerpts)

(Separate excerpts)

Example 3: Air Varié sur un Air Suisse par Boehme (4th Variation)

Example 4: *Fantaisie sur Actéon (Finale, mm. 39 – 58)*

Examples of staccato *binaire*: facility (mm. 39 – 40 and 51 – 52), decorative (mm. 41 – 44), and accompaniment (mm. 53 – 56)

first cornet class in 1869.) Arban's arrangement was initially published in 1862 for cornet in A and later for cornet in B-flat in 1881. Arban may have performed the 1862 version himself and produced the B-flat version for the *concours*. The A cornet edition contains an *Andante* between the second variation and *Finale* which was omitted in the 1881 and Carl Fischer editions. Also, the final nine measures were changed in the later editions. The 1881 edition was used for the *concours* and will be discussed here.<sup>40</sup>

The *Andante* introduction begins with an E-flat major melody in the accompaniment, followed by the soloist's entrance on a new melody in the parallel minor. Similar to *Air Suisse*, the introductory melody is embellished extensively with turns and brief flourishes before a final cadenza. The challenge for the performer here is to manage the sinuous ornamentation and embellishments with the grace of a flutist by maintaining a light articulation, crisp movement between notes, and impeccable intonation. A sixteen-measure interlude (omitted completely in the Carl Fischer edition) based on the forthcoming theme follows.

The theme is a lighthearted melody in ABA form with a march-like accompaniment, a simple tonic-dominant harmonic structure, and a cadenza at its end. (The Carl Fischer edition contains an altered version of the cadenza that is significantly shorter than the original. This edition also omits the seventeen-measure interlude and the two-measure introduction that precedes the soloist's next entrance.)

The first variation, consisting of near-constant triplets over blocked chords on the beat (producing a 6/8 effect), does not clearly recall the theme but is constructed over its harmonic plan and march-like accompaniment. In the second variation, the theme is once again not discernable, but the martial quality of the accompaniment and its harmonic structure provide

continuity. This variation, consisting of double-dotted rhythms, rapid arpeggios, and scale passages in thirty-second notes, is more complex than the first and offers more of a challenge to the performer. As discussed earlier, *staccato ternaire* was a significant feature of the first four *morceaux*, usually reserved for the most complicated final sections or variations. In *Actéon* the use of the technique is greatly stunted in the second variation, consisting of only a few short flourishes of the decorative and facility types in the B section, an optional line of decorative *staccato ternaire* in the cadenza (the Carl Fischer edition replaces this cadenza with a simpler one containing no triple-tonguing), and another short scale passage at the end of the variation. The variation is followed by a twelve-measure interlude that anticipates the melody of the final section (an alternate interlude of seventeen measures recalling the original theme melody is used in the Carl Fischer edition).

The final section is not indicated as a variation in any edition. (The Carl Fischer edition identifies it as *Finale Allegro*, while the earlier editions use simply *Allegro*.) The use of a new interlude and the absence of the ABA form support the idea of a *finale*. The accompaniment has retained the martial character of the previous variations and helps to tie the movements together.

Rather than ending with the expected *staccato ternaire* finale, *Fantaisie sur Actéon* concludes with fairly complicated displays of *staccato binaire*. (Tulou's *Variations Brillantes sur un Thème de Mercadante*, which Arban adapted for the cornet and used in the 1883 *concours*, also ends with *staccato binaire* and avoids the complex use of *staccato ternaire* that Arban preferred.<sup>41</sup>) In the *Finale*, all three forms of double-tonguing are required: facility *staccato binaire*, decorative *staccato binaire*, and accompaniment *staccato binaire* (Ex. 4).

Lauréats—1881  
Premier Prix

Deuxième Prix  
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Deuxième Accessit

Charles Julien Nannick  
Émile Arthur Lerous  
Sylvain Petit  
José Marstin Diégo Gonzalez  
*none awarded*

**1882: Fantaisie Brillante sur Zampa**  
Publisher: E. Gérard et Cie

This *fantaisie* is based on themes from the 1831 comic opera *Zampa* by Ferdinand Hérold (1791 – 1833).<sup>42</sup> The introductory melody begins simply but is twice interrupted by short cadenzas. The tempo is reestablished with a new melody (a simple AB tune of eight measures) that launches into dramatic scales and ascending arpeggios marked *più mosso* (*staccato binaire* may be used). The next section (marked *Théma*) presents a playful tune in ABA form over a simple tonic-dominant harmonic plan. The sudden shift in the character of the accompaniment from that of the previous section, the cheerful quality of the melody (marked *avec élégance*), and the sudden outbursts with the piano recall the comic opera origins of the piece and should be carefully observed. The subsequent interlude, featuring trills and dotted rhythms, again provides a change in character (marked *animez*).

A variation follows, built upon the harmonic structure and form of the previous theme section. The A section of the variation requires excellent facility *staccato binaire* to negotiate the rapid arpeggios with grace. The B section provides the most extreme example of accompaniment *staccato binaire* found in any of Arban's *morceaux*. In earlier works the technique was used for no more than three consecutive units or to embellish a cadential pattern. The extended use of the accompaniment *staccato binaire* in this variation is unique to this work and will not again be used to such a degree in any Arban *morceaux* (Ex. 5).

The *Moderato* is built on a new theme and offers no significant technical challenges to the performer. The accompaniment retains the light texture and harmonic structure of the theme and variation sections. This section, marked *piano leggero*, can be considered a character study for the cornet: an opportunity for the soloist to exhibit the light, playful style

that was idiomatic of the instrument. Although not marked in the score, subtle variations in tempo, particularly at cadences, would be stylistically appropriate.

The *Finale* requires excellent *staccato ternaire* technique. The three forms of *staccato ternaire* are used and there are few opportunities for the soloist to rest. The general contour of the lines and lack of accents in the accompaniment *staccato ternaire* requires a more linear triple-tongue approach than that used in the final sections of *Deuxième Grand Solo*, *Caprice et Variations*, and *Air Varié sur un Air Suisse par Bœhme* (Ex. 6). The accompaniment is once again rather thin and does not recall any thematic material. The tempo is limited only by the soloist's ability.

Lauréats—1882

Premier Prix  
Deuxième Prix  
Premier Accessit  
Deuxième Accessit

Arthur Edme Guillier  
José Marstin Diégo Gonzalez  
Pierre Fauthoux  
Pierre Brousse

**1883: Variations Brillantes sur un Thème de Mercadante**  
Publisher: E. Gérard et Cie

Saverio Mercadante (1795 – 1870) was a prolific opera composer who worked in several of the leading opera houses of Europe, including those in Naples, Rome, Milan, and Vienna. Mercadante also lived in Paris for a short while where he composed *I Briganti* (1835), which turned out to be a commercial failure.<sup>43</sup> Tulou composed *Variations Brillantes sur un Thème de Mercadante* for the flute based on a melody by Mercadante, and Arban adapted it for use in the 1883 *concours* (like *Fantaisie sur Actéon*, it is entirely possible that Arban performed this work during his solo career).

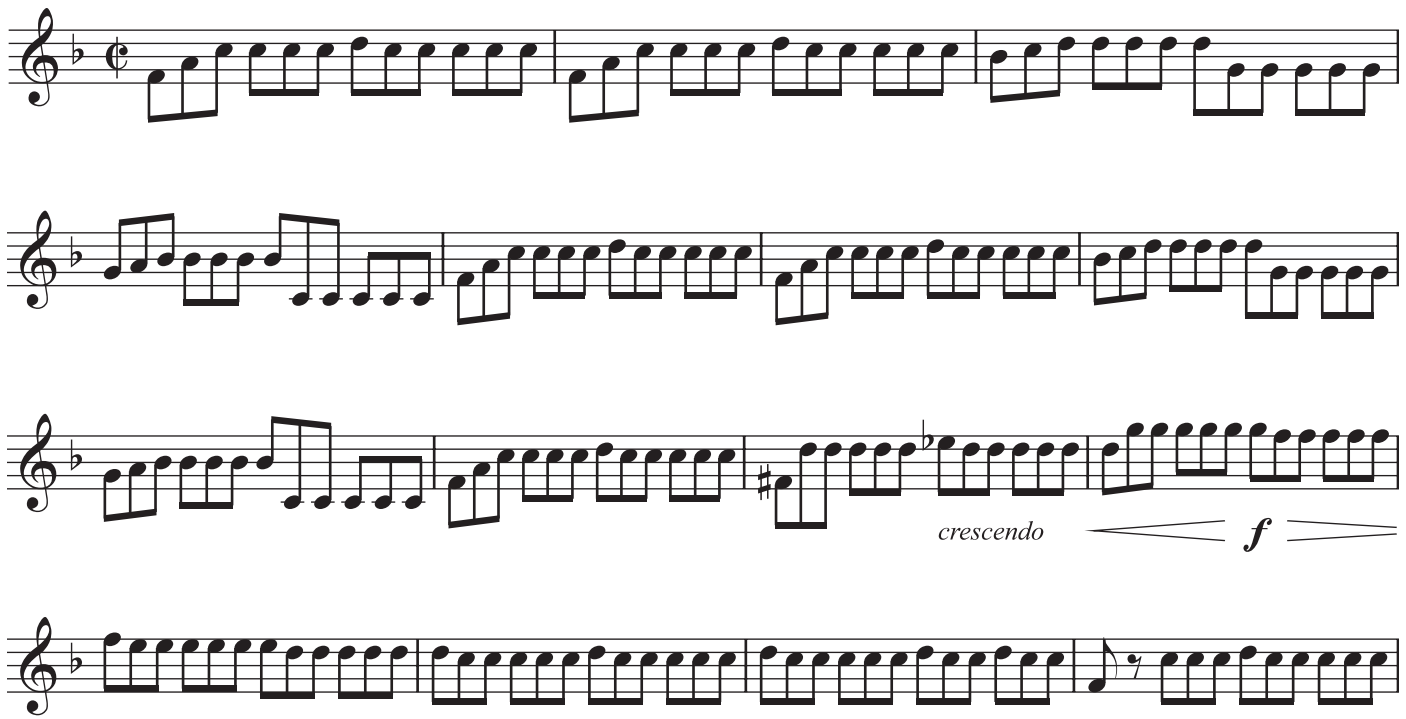
The melody of the *Introduction* is highly embellished from the outset with short cadenzas consisting of scales and turns frequently interrupting the tempo. Once again, the performer is expected to realize these challenges with the grace of a flutist. The *Introduction* segues directly into the *Thème*, an eighteen-measure melody in AABA form that poses no significant challenges.

Arban does not indicate a tempo or which articulation should be used in the first variation. However, the relatively

*dolce*



Example 5: *Fantaisie Brillante sur Zampa* (Variation, mm. 9 – 16)



Example 6: *Fantaisie Brillante sur Zampa (Finale, mm. 1 – 15)*

bare accompaniment suggests a slightly quicker tempo than that of the theme. This would then require facility *staccato binaire* (the only other opportunity for the soloist to display this technique will be in the last measures of the piece). Unlike the theme section, the second half of the variation is repeated, resulting in the overall form AABABA that recurs in the next variation, providing continuity.

The second variation again indicates no tempo or articulation instructions, but the accompaniment changes to a drum-like texture throughout, allowing the soloist to take this variation faster than the previous variation. As in his *Fantaisie sur Actéon*, Tulou did not include a complicated *staccato ternaire* variation to close the piece. However, opting for a quick tempo in this variation would offer the soloist an opportunity to exhibit the technique, although to a far lesser degree than in past *concours*.

In the last variation, *3rd variation et Finale*, Tulou again disregards the *staccato ternaire* in favor of *staccato binaire*. The A section features facility *staccato binaire* with rapid scales and arpeggios. There is no tempo indication and the accompaniment would permit a rather quick tempo. The B section displays decorative *staccato ternaire* throughout. After a brief

pause, the opening theme returns. Although marked *un poco ritardando*, the theme should be presented at its original tempo. This reprise is fleeting, interrupted by the *Finale (tempo primo)* that utilizes facility and accompaniment *staccato binaire* but presents no new challenges until the final few measures. Here the soloist is finally given a brief opportunity to display facility *staccato ternaire* (Ex. 7). The tempo of the final ten measures could be faster than the *a tempo* would suggest, limited only by the rapid triplets (measures 28 – 29) and the *staccato ternaire* (measures 30 – 31).

Lauréats—1883

Premier Prix

Deuxième Prix

Premier Accessit

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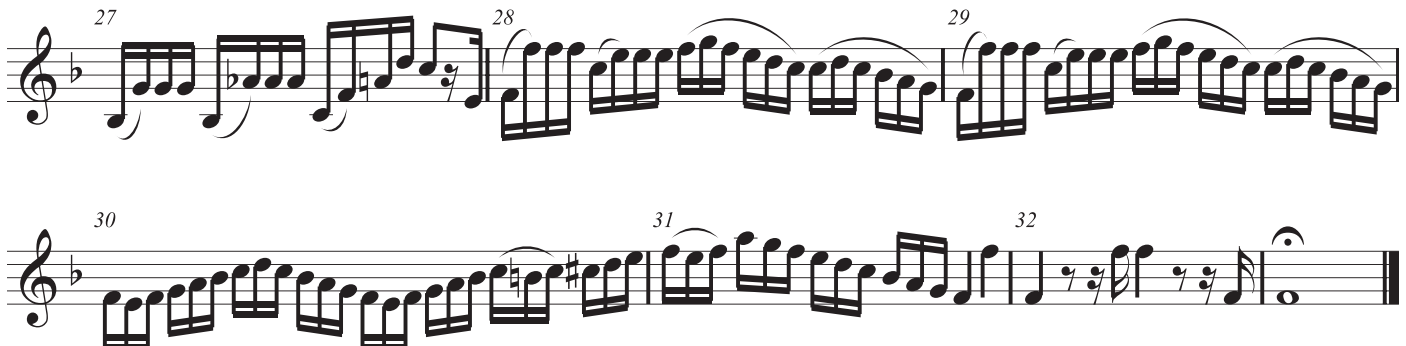
Pierre Fauthoux

none awarded

Nicolas Henri Valentine Sabathier

Jean Daulin

Arban's choices of *morceaux de concours* reflected his and the Conservatoire's desire to train young musicians for professional employment in the "real world." His selections were not merely teaching pieces but proven works written in popular styles requiring skills that the professional cornetist was expected to master. It is even conceivable that a *premier prix* winner,



Example 7: *Variations Brillante sur un Thème de Mercadante (3rd Variation et Finale, mm. 27 – 33)*

having just left the Conservatoire, would immediately be asked to perform the winning *morceau de concours* in a public concert or with salon orchestra. Arban's belief that his students deserved to be well prepared to earn a wage is reflected in his writings and compositions.

The *morceaux de concours* of 1884 – 1889 consisted of collections of études written by Arban specifically for the Cornet-Arban, an instrument that he developed in an effort to perfect the intonation and timbre of the cornet. While many of these études posed considerable challenges to the performer, none matched the technical or musical demands of his earlier *morceaux*. Due in part to the new technical demands of the Cornet-Arban and the general decline of the virtuoso-style cornet solo near the end of the nineteenth century, the cornet *morceaux de concours* would never again reach the level of difficulty seen in Arban's first seven *morceaux*.<sup>44</sup>

The example set by Jean-Baptiste Arban, both as performer and professor, established a standard of excellence that brass players strive for to this day. It is tempting to believe that Arban was an anomaly, a unique talent among relative mediocrity, and that the incredibly challenging pieces associated with him today (namely, those in the popular Carl Fischer edition of this *Grande méthode* and known to trumpet and cornet players around the world) were only performed by him. But as his *morceaux de concours* show, Arban produced players of a significantly high caliber year after year, a testament to his thorough and systematic pedagogy, his progressive thinking, and his devotion to the cornet.

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Kelly has been teaching professionally since 1992. In addition to maintaining a successful private studio, he has served on the faculty of Millikin University's Preparatory Department and the Illinois Summer Youth Music camps. He is a member of the Music Teachers National Association, College Music Society, International Trumpet Guild, and the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.

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Treasures of the Paris Conservatoire." *The Double Reed Journal Issue* 22.2 (1999): 89 – 92.

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- \_\_\_\_\_. *Variations sur la Marche de Moïse par Bœhme*. Paris: Aulagnier et Cie, 1862.

### Endnotes

- 1 Frank Romero's dissertation examines the trumpet and cornet *morceaux de concours* from 1835 to 1999 and refers to only one Arban work, *Caprice et Variations*, which is found in the Carl Fischer edition of the *Grand Method*. Gillian MacKay's document is more focused, examining the *morceaux de concours* for trumpet and cornet from 1835 to 1925. While this study treats Arban's works in greater detail, it falls short of a thorough examination of all of his *concour* pieces, using brief excerpts from *Caprice et Variations*, *Air Varié sur un Air Suisse*, *Fantaisie sur un Thème de Mercadante*, and *Deuxième Grand Solo* to illus-

- trate general characteristics of the cornet style.
- 2 Robert Olsen's thesis, "The Development of Modern Solo Trumpet Literature as Traced Through the Morceaux de Concours at the Paris Conservatoire," though undoubtedly helpful, has so far proven unavailable.
  - 3 Arban selected unaccompanied etudes for the *concours* of 1883 – 1889 to be played on the Cornet-Arban.
  - 4 Frances Jones, "Morceaux de Concours: Rediscovering the Treasures of the Paris Conservatoire," *The Double Reed Journal—Issue 22.2* (1999): 89.
  - 5 Gillian MacKay, "Trumpet and Cornet Concours Music at the Paris Conservatory, 1835 – 1925: The Development of Styles and Roles" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1996), 14.
  - 6 Frank Romero, "Morceaux de Concours pour Trompette et Cornet, Contest Pieces of the Paris Conservatory 1835 – 1999" (Ph.D. diss., University of Oklahoma, 2001), 15 – 16.
  - 7 Romero, 16.
  - 8 Romero, 22.
  - 9 MacKay, 11.
  - 10 Constant Pierre, ed. *Le Conservatoire National de Musique et de Déclamation: Documents Historiques et Administratifs Recueillis ou Constitués*. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1900); trans. Frances Jones, "Morceaux de Concours: Rediscovering the Treasures of the Paris Conservatoire," *The Double Reed Journal—Issue 22.2* (1999): 90.
  - 11 Pierre, 650.
  - 12 Tad Margelli, "The Paris Conservatoire Concours Oboe Solos: The Gillet Years (1882 – 1919)," *The International Double Reed Society Journal*, 24 (1996): 44.
  - 13 While the "natural" trumpet was certainly an indispensable member of the orchestra and military band, its harmonic limitations prevented it from being considered as a solo instrument during the early and mid-nineteenth century. A more complete treatment of this topic can be found in MacKay (1996) and Romero (2001).
  - 14 Romero, 107 – 116.
  - 15 Jean-Pierre Mathez, "Arban (1825 – 1889)," *Brass Bulletin* 9 (1974): 13.
  - 16 Mathez 9, 14.
  - 17 Jean-Pierre Mathez, "Arban (1825 – 1889)," *Brass Bulletin* 10 (1975): 12.
  - 18 Géry Dumoulin, "A Look at the Evolution of the Valved Cornet and Its Repertoire," *The Brass Bulletin* 119, III (2002): 39.
  - 19 Jean-Pierre Mathez, "Arban (1825-1889)," *Brass Bulletin* 11 (1975): 22.
  - 20 MacKay, 38.
  - 21 Romero, 27.
  - 22 Romero, 28.
  - 23 Mathez 11, 22.
  - 24 Mathez 11, 23.
  - 25 Mathez 11, 24.
  - 26 Jean-Pierre Mathez, "Arban (1825 – 1889)," *Brass Bulletin* 12 (1975): 16.
  - 27 Mathez 12, 17.
  - 28 MacKay, 119.
  - 29 Jean-Baptiste Laurent Arban, "Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet" (New York: Carl Fischer, 1982): 153.
  - 30 MacKay, 116.
  - 31 The *concours* results are found in Pierre (1900) and MacKay (1996).
  - 32 Of the seven accompanied *morceaux*, three have been reprinted in the Carl Fischer edition of the *Complete Method*. With few exceptions the solo parts are consistent between the original versions (or Petit revisions) and the Carl Fischer edition. However, significant differences are seen between the original accompaniments and those available from Carl Fischer (published separately as catalog number O20), particularly in the interludes. These inconsistencies are beyond the scope of this study and will be discussed only when the length or content of the solo parts differ. All examples containing piano scores are taken from the original or Petit editions unless indicated otherwise.
  - 33 MacKay, 119.
  - 34 Boehm, Theobald (9 Apr. 1794, Munich – 25 Nov. 1881, there). *The Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music* (2003). Retrieved 16 October 2004. Available from xreferplus (<http://www.xreferplus.com/entry/4369865>).
  - 35 Jean-Baptiste Laurent Arban, "Complete Conservatory Method for Trumpet" (New York: Carl Fischer, 1982): 353.
  - 36 MacKay, 48.
  - 37 MacKay indicates the spelling as "Lerous."
  - 38 MacKay, 53.
  - 39 Auber, Daniel-François-Esprit (29 Jan. 1782, Caen – 12 or 13 May 1871, Paris). *The Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music* (2003). Retrieved 16 October 2004. Available from xreferplus (<http://www.xreferplus.com/entry/4369632>).
  - 40 The cover page of the 1881 edition includes the subtitle "Morceau de Concours au Conservatoire, 1881."
  - 41 Arban claims to be the first to apply *staccato ternaire* to the cornet and it was a skill for which he became quite famous. All of his original compositions and his adaptation of Böhme's *Air Varié sur un Air Suisse* conclude with this technique.
  - 42 Elizabeth Forbes: 'Zampa', *Grove Music Online*, ed. L. Macy. Retrieved 20 October 2004 (<http://80-www.grovemusic.com.proxy2.library.uiuc.edu>).
  - 43 Mercadante, (Giuseppe) Saverio (Raffaele) (bapt. 17 Sept. 1795, Altamura, near Bari – 17 Dec. 1870, Naples). *The Harvard Biographical Dictionary of Music* (2003). Retrieved 22 October 2004. Available from xreferplus (<http://www.xreferplus.com/entry/4372575>).
  - 44 MacKay, 129.

