



itg journal, jr.

"a trumpet newsletter for the young and the young at heart"

Vol. 3, No. 2

Kristin Mortenson, Editor

June 2005

From the Editor...

By Kristin Mortenson

Welcome to Summer! By the time you read this, many ITG members will be making final preparations for their trip to the ITG Conference in Bangkok, Thailand. But even if you aren't able to take advantage of that wonderful travel and learning opportunity, there's plenty for you right here.

This issue of *itg journal, jr.* features a wonderful article by Chase Sanborn on how to keep your playing chops up during the summer months without sacrificing the fun of the season. Sanborn is a well-known jazz player from Canada who also is the author of *Brass Tactics* and *Jazz Tactics* (find out more at <http://www.chasesanborn.com>). Brent Flinchbaugh, a recent graduate of the Peabody Conservatory and former student of Elisa Koehler, Edward Hoffman, Andrew Balio, and Chris Gekker, contributed an excellent article on how to survive auditions. Amanda Collins, a student of Judith Saxton at Wichita State

University, gives great tips on how to balance music with extracurricular activities. Finally, Mike Kaupa, a music teacher and freelance trumpeter from New York, introduces us to another rising young trumpet star, Felix Rossy from Spain.

Collins' article was especially appropriate for me as I complete my third volume season as Editor of *itg journal, jr.* In order to continue my other teaching, playing, and ITG commitments, I have decided to step down as Editor of *itg journal, jr.* I am very pleased to announce that Douglas Wilson, who has been serving as the "Ask the Teacher" moderator for the ITG Youth Website, has agreed to take over as *itg journal, jr.* Editor beginning with the January 2006 issue. He may be contacted by EMail at junior@trumpetguild.org with your article submissions, ideas, and comments.



Summer Vacation

By Chase Sanborn, Toronto, Canada

Many students wonder how to keep their chops up during the summer. They no longer have the school bands and music programs to keep them focused, summer jobs rob practice time, and the lure of the beach is (for some) ever-present. September is often a rude awakening as you struggle to regain your chops. Here are a few suggestions for staying in shape at a time of year when there are places you'd rather be than in the practice room.

Practice First

Practice early in the day, before you get distracted by other activities. You are probably most alert in the morning anyway, so this is a good time to accomplish something. Put in an hour or two, then go enjoy the day!

Adopt A Different Practice Schedule

To attract you to the practice room, set some different goals for the summer months. Perhaps you want to focus on jazz playing

or increasing your range. Look at the two or three months as a time to seriously concentrate on these goals and construct a program to accomplish them. If you have not studied with a teacher during the year, seek out some lessons during the summer months. If you have been studying, consider taking some lessons with somebody else in the summer to get a different approach, maybe even on a different instrument. I always have new students who appear during the summer months. Just as well, too, since I also have a lot who disappear.

Find A Summer Gig

For music students this is the Holy Grail: a gig for the summer (the same might be said for professionals). You might find a job playing at a summer resort, working at a music camp, or playing for a community theatre or band. Busking on the street is also a way to play and get paid (hopefully), and you could meet some interesting people!

Get A Practice Mute

For practicing in cottages, hotels, or even tents, a practice mute is essential. An excellent choice is the Silent Brass system from Yamaha, but there are other less-expensive variations as well. Just getting the horn on the face a little bit each day will help a lot, come September.

ITG members are encouraged to submit articles appropriate for students or comeback players, for publication in *itg journal, jr.* Please forward submissions to the editor at junior@trumpetguild.org

Continues on Page 4

Auditions Don't Have to be Scary

By Brent Flinchbaugh, Baltimore, Maryland

How many of you have experienced the following situation: Standing aside the stage door, you look around at the others waiting with you, fellow trumpeters reviewing pieces or orchestral excerpts that must be played. Everyone looks mad at the next person for some reason or another. Until this point, you have felt calm and collected. Nothing could steer your course astray this time, not after all of the work you put into practicing. Then suddenly your name is called, and you have no more time to think. It is time to *do*; suddenly you are not sure of anything, including how to relax.

It is no wonder that we musicians get so nervous when placed in an audition environment. Anyone put in the same situation would be. If one broke down the events of a student or professional audition into a basic chronology, it might go something like this: first you receive the audition list or required piece in the mail, spend hour after hour preparing the repertoire requested, listen to all required recordings of the repertoire, drive or fly to the city in which the audition will take place, sit in a room for

two hours with sixty other people that all think that they are better than you, and when your name is finally called, you walk into another room where behind a table sit the judges who seem to be looking at you as if you are an empty Pepsi can on the sidewalk. You are nothing to anyone in this room, and you know it. Then begins the hard part, because this is the time when you must pick up your instrument and prove to the judges, who have already heard twenty-three auditions of the same six excerpts or solo piece, that you can play them better than anyone else on the planet, and you must make them wonder how they have survived without you for so long. Oh, and this all must be accomplished during a four-minute audition. Seems impossible, doesn't it?

Ok, calm down. It's not as bad as it seems. The first thing to remember is that judges are not hoping you play your worst, they are hoping you play your best. It may be a shock, but think about how awful it would be to judge a competition where everyone played poorly. It would be like American Idol with only the horrible auditions. Chances are that you won't be in a huge holding room to warm up with sixty other people. In fact, most auditions are run in a smooth, relaxing way, the personnel doing their best to make sure everyone is comfortable. There are, however, nerve-racking situations that present themselves, and we, as aspiring students at one level or another, must be prepared to deal with them. So here are some techniques that can really help when the going gets tough.

The first way to control nervousness and succeed in an audition is simple: breathe. Sounds too easy, right? Wrong. The simplest way to control your body's reaction to the threat of an audition is by stopping all activity and thought to observe your breath. While you are sitting in the waiting room, observing all of those unfriendly, condescending faces, your brain interprets your surroundings as a physical threat to your body and reacts by making us nervous through the "fight or flight" method. To make matters worse, as we notice these nervous reactions in our own bodies, we subconsciously tell ourselves to go into "over-drive," producing even stronger responses and making ourselves more and more nervous. It is a vicious cycle, and obviously, not

a beneficial one to the musician ready to perform. Your brain is thinking, "fight, fight, fight" while you are thinking, "don't forget the C-sharps, don't forget to play musically, *don't mess up!!!*" Who will win this argument? Well, if you first remember to breathe, you will increase your chances tremendously. Opening up your airways, and breathing slower and deeper puts more oxygen into your bloodstream, which calms the body, and slows or stops nervousness. By doing the preceding, we can actually learn to change our own body's reactions to stress; after all, people who practice yoga have been doing it for centuries.

Sometimes the best way to combat the nervousness experienced during an audition occurs in the practice room the weeks prior to the audition. I know many musicians, some in high school and some in college, who "practice to practice" and "perform to perform." This will never result in a positive audition experience or performance in general because the two mindsets are conditioned to be completely different. To practice performing and perform while practicing is the only way this can be accomplished. Only

"Opening up your airways... puts more oxygen into your bloodstream, which calms the body, and slows or stops nervousness."

when these two techniques are thoroughly intertwined will the end result be natural, fun, and easy. Push yourself hard while practicing, and do not accept anything but perfection. If you are working on Ravel's *Piano Concerto in G*, and you play it flawlessly, make that wonderful performance the benchmark from which you will now build upon. If you continue to raise the quality of "bad" in a practice situation, your bad will far surpass other players' "good." Further, when you think that the piece or excerpts that you are preparing for the audition are as good as they can be, find a friend who can sit near you while you play through the pieces. This will inevitably cause you to be a bit nervous and make some mistakes. Always perform, even if you are the only person who can hear you. Pretend Phil Smith or Bud Herseth was sitting in the next room. How would you like to sound in front of these great artists? Sound like that all of the time.

Finally, a simple trick that I've used with great success for many auditions, from getting into district band in high school to auditioning for conservatories, to playing on stage at the Kennedy Center or Avery Fischer Hall: write the name of your favorite trumpet player at the top of the page of music, and pretend that you are that person. This of course requires that you listen to many different trumpeters to figure out which ones are your favorite, but once you find him or her, pretend that you are that person. I always wrote "Bud Herseth" at the top of my district band solo music in high school to inspire me to play like Bud. To this day I write names like Bud, Phil Smith, Paul Merkelo, Chris Martin, and Mark Gould on my music to inspire me. Try it; it just might work for you too!

No matter what kind of audition you are taking, whether it is for the middle school concert band or the New York Philharmonic, nerves will inevitably creep into the equation of whether or not we play to the best of our ability. The test of an audition is not only to find out what you can do on the trumpet, but also how well you can handle stress. With this in mind, and with careful consideration of the techniques described above, your next audition experience is guaranteed to be much more positive. Have fun and keep practicing... or should I say, start performing!



Music and Extracurriculars: A Balancing Act

By Amanda Collins, Wichita, Kansas

Each day consists of twenty four hours. Crunching the numbers quickly reveals one hundred sixty eight hours per week and fifty two weeks per year. Imagine how precious your time is! Your life is like a pizza that you can slice into sections. If you want to make half of your pizza cheese (sports), and half pepperoni (music), then go for it! The following thoughts may help you balance your busy life of music and schoolwork along with extracurricular activities. There is so much to do in a short time!

Sometimes we do extracurricular activities because they connect us with people. Whether sports, music, academic, or service related, activities put us in touch with people who are motivated, determined to make a difference, and passionate about what they do. Surrounded by these people, we begin to explore our possibilities and recognize dreams not yet discovered. In my Senior year of high school I eagerly anticipated graduation. I thought that I would miss my extracurricular activities more than anything else that I was leaving behind. I soon discovered that I missed my high school trumpet teacher, my tennis coach, my English teacher, and my pep band friends much more than I missed pep band, playing tennis, and actually “doing” extracurricular activities.

Sports are a healthy addition for trumpet players, but it is difficult to balance sports with music. If you are nodding your head vigorously right now, rest assured that you are not alone! I remember playing a marching band dress rehearsal in my tennis skirt one time because I did not have time to change after the tennis match!

So how are you going to keep track of all this stuff? Keep a detailed planner that provides ample space for rallying schoolwork, music, and extracurricular activities. Carefully consult your planner before making commitments. Write on your hand, use “post-it-notes,” or make lists. On especially busy days, try making a survival guide that lists times of events, priorities, and all the “stuff” you need to bring. I like plain paper planners because I can scribble pictures and words in quickly as reminders for later. Just find what works for you and hold on to it. If you do lose your planner, send out a search party immediately!

When conflicts arise, be organized yet flexible. Directors like working with students who are responsible and who communicate scheduling conflicts well in advance. Perhaps you can creatively arrange to participate in both activities. For example, play the first half of that soccer match so that you can make the downbeat of the band dress rehearsal. If you must choose, remember that performances take precedence, followed closely by dress rehearsals. In any music ensemble, you have a responsibility to be present, playing your part. If you will be absent, make sure that your part is somehow covered. If band at your school occupies a class period, you *will* be graded on your participation and performance. Know the expectations and follow your band handbook.

Of course it is okay to kindly say “no thanks” sometimes. Avoid compromising your health, schoolwork, responsibilities to family, or your own freedom to choose.

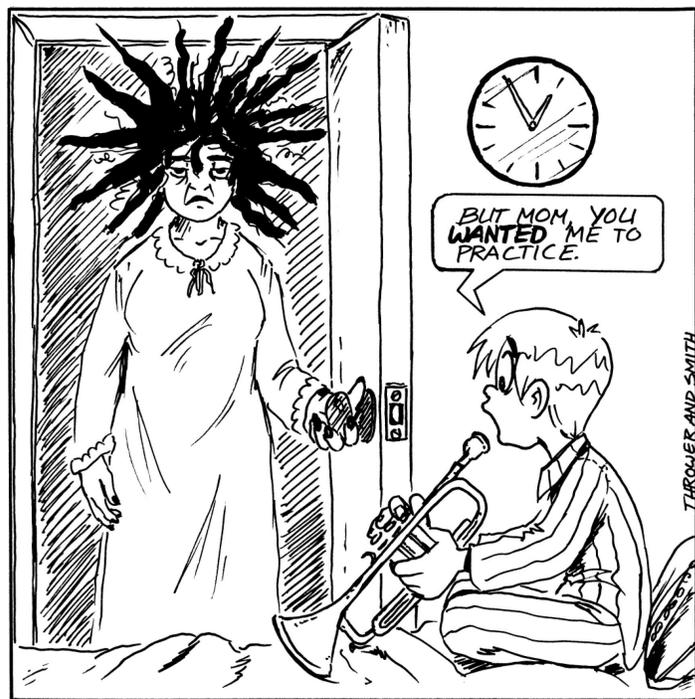
As a music student, you will want to schedule time every day to practice. My sister, Emily says that “life without music is like dinner without dessert!” I’ll share another tasty example to help illustrate. Making a really good pizza requires a variety of ingredients. Pizza sauce is crucial, peppers make it interesting, and oregano adds flavor. These ingredients are like the skills that you practice on your trumpet. Having a variety of skills makes playing more fun. Toppings are also like extracurricular activities in

that some toppings work well together, and some do not.

Even ten focused minutes with your instrument are better than zero. Your mouthpiece can travel with you, even on vacations. It is small, portable, and can help keep your chops in shape when you cannot have your trumpet along. Avoid dropping your mouthpiece and consider keeping an identical spare for traveling purposes. Mental practicing can also help in a pinch. Reading through rhythms, clapping, singing, doing fingerings, and marking tricky places for future “trumpet” time can improve efficiency in practice at all levels. Even teachers still practice!

Staying “in tune” with your school music programs, can be incredibly rewarding and fulfilling. Your music programs need you! They need your energy and leadership, your helping hands, and your beautiful trumpet sound. Help out by playing your best each time you pick up your horn. Play like it is the last time you ever get to play. Find your own expressive voice, but also be a cooperative team player who ultimately acknowledges the needs of other people. Keep educating yourself, be curious, and keep your eyes and ears open. You just might discover the one experience that turns your life around, changes the way you think, or teaches you something that you could learn nowhere else.

Extracurricular activities enhance our understanding of other people and ourselves, thus playing a crucial role in our development as musicians. What a gift it is to be able to move people with our music. It is humbling that our hard work in band, lessons, and performance results in a chance to touch another person’s life. Compare your life to the pizza mentioned earlier. Toppings, like extracurricular activities, are great. Sometimes though, there are so many toppings that some of them fall off when we try to pick our pizza up. Choose never to let music be one of the things that “falls off.” Even if you feel discouraged, stick with it. If you strive to keep music in your life using the hints above, I promise that you will always have a friend, you will never stop learning, and you will experience a slice of life better than any pizza you have ever tasted!



Felix, the “Jazz Cat”

By Mike Kaupa, Rochester, New York

Ten year old Felix Rossy lives in Begues, a town just outside of Barcelona, Spain. He has been playing trumpet for eight years. He began at two and a half and was improvising at three and a half! He was so small when he began, that he was barely able to reach the valves with his right hand. With his left hand, he held the bell section near the mouthpiece. Asked why he chose the trumpet, Felix replies, “me gusto el sonido” (“I liked the sound”).

At first, his only teacher was his father, Jorge. Jorge plays trumpet and piano and is currently the drummer with the internationally acclaimed jazz group, The Brad Mehldau Trio. Felix has had the opportunity to hear members of this group, as well as other great jazz musicians, playing and rehearsing in the family garage that his father converted into a recording studio.

Felix’s trumpet is almost always out of its case. In between doing any of his activities of the day, he often picks up his horn to play a jazz tune he knows or work out a tough lick he’s been learning. Most of the jazz tunes he plays, he has learned by ear, usually from his dad who sings him the tunes using note names (and sometimes fingerings) for the melody. Felix also has recordings to listen to of the pieces he’s learning. At this point, he improvises by ear. He has taken jazz lessons with Jordy Benett and recently began classical trumpet lessons with Mireia Farres, a member of the trumpet section of the Barcelona Symphony

Orchestra. Felix has played the Eugene Bozza *Badinage* and he played the James Hook *1st Sonata* in the finals of a young people’s trumpet competition in Spain

Some of the first songs he learned were Beatles tunes. At eight years of age, he knew enough of these to sit in with his dad at a local restaurant in Barcelona. Jorge was playing piano in a jazz trio on Friday nights when he was not on tour. After a while, Felix was a permanent member of the group. At eight years old, Felix had a steady jazz gig!

Unfortunately, the public schools in Spain do not have band programs. For that reason, Felix’s parents have enrolled him in a school that does have an excellent band program. It is the local German school, for children from Germany who live in Spain. Of course,

he’ll need to learn German. (That will be his third language!) People in this part of Spain, including Felix, speak Spanish and Catalan, the local language of Catalonia. Some historians have guessed that Christopher Columbus was Catalan because many of his writings are in that language.

In July 2004, Felix was a student at the “24th International Jazz Seminar” of the “Taller de Musics” school of Barcelona. A CD of Beatles music that he recorded two years ago will be released soon. Felix’s favourite jazz trumpet players are Miles Davis, Freddie Hubbard, Chet Baker, and Lee Morgan. Perhaps one day the name of Felix Rossy will also be a household name!



Felix Rossy playing *Ca-lee-So* by Lee Morgan, with his father Jorge Rossy at the piano



Summer Vacation *Continued from Page 1*

Practice In A Canoe

As a teenager, I spent my summers hanging out at Lake George in the Adirondack mountains of New York. I would paddle my canoe out to the middle of the lake and practice. In one memorable incident, a friend swooped by in a sailboat to say hello, and snagged my anchor line with his bow as he pulled away. The canoe started rocking back and forth, shipping water over each side and threatening to capsize entirely. I stood in the partially submerged boat, holding my trumpet and case over my head until help arrived. Later that day, sunbathers were amused to see pieces of music weighted with rocks drying all over the dock.

Sitting Under A Tree Is Good For Your Playing, Too (Arnold Jacobs)

Arnold Jacobs makes the point that it takes more than hours of practice to be a complete musician; you must be a complete person as well, with interests and experiences outside of music. During the fall, winter and spring months, I stay pretty busy, and generally don’t have enough hours in the day to do everything I want to do. I look at summer as a time to relax and refresh my spirit, and even as I float around the lake I figure I’m doing my soul, and therefore my playing, some good.



itg journal, jr. staff:

Kristin Mortenson, Editor junior@trumpetguild.org
Gary Mortenson, Advisor editor@trumpetguild.org
Joseph Walters, Layout ads@trumpetguild.org
More youth information: www.trumpetguild.org/itgyouth

WANT MORE TRUMPET?

Consider becoming a member of the International Trumpet Guild!
Membership applications are available in the *ITG Journal* or online at <http://www.trumpetguild.org/join/join.htm>
Student/Senior memberships are only \$25/year!