EUPHONIUM

Junior Euphonium: Audition Solo 1B, Moderato

This solo consists primarily of two-measure phrases, so all of the breaths should be on the barlines between them. Random breaths in the middle of the phrases would make it sound like the player is running out of air. If you have the capacity, measures 5-8 may be played in one breath. A breath on the barline after measure 10 may be helpful in setting up the cantabile style of the next phrase. Make sure the pitches are connected in measures 11 and 12.

The remaining challenges of this study are all the details with dynamics and articulations. The advantage will go to those players that communicate them. Record yourself in practice to make sure that the four listed dynamic levels are heard clearly. There is wisdom in the advice “play the louds louder and the softs softer.” Also make sure the slurs, tenuto markings and accents can be heard. Sometimes we will think we are doing something, but when we listen to a recording we find it does not sound exactly right. In ending b, measure 25 make sure to play a dotted-eighth / sixteenth and not a triplet on count three. The judge will be listening to see if this rhythm contrasts properly with the triplets in measure 27.

Clinic Euphonium: Audition Solo 2B, Allegretto con amina

The tempo markings here deserve a special look. Adjusting from 92 to 72 can be challenging. Practicing with a metronome and feeling the speed of these contrasting tempos will be essential. The change of subdivision from triple in the 6/8 to duple at the 4/4 will also challenge many players. Again, the metronome in practice is essential. There are no problems with phrasing: the melody is in four-measure phrases and all of the breaths should be on the barlines between them. Random breaths in the middle of the phrases would make it sound like the player is running out of air.

Do not be surprised by the sound of measure 27. The sixteenth note C-sharp going to B-flat is the “harmonic” form of the minor scale. In measure 43 the accents and articulation markings mean the normal 6/8 grouping of six eighth notes into two groups of three is changed to three groups of two. Make sure the tempo stays steady. Practice with a metronome and make sure that downbeat of measure 44 lines up with the click.

Senior Euphonium: Audition Solo 3B, Andantino

This solo features a meter change from 4/4 to 6/8 with the metronome marking remaining the same. The important thing is not so much whether you choose to play the piece at 72, or whether you decide that a slightly different tempo might work better for you. Once you select a tempo, simply keep it the same with the time signature change. The shift to 6/8 is
set up very nicely with the triplets in measure 5. These should sound exactly the same speed as the three eighth-note groupings starting in measure 9. In measures 5 and 6 make sure that the dotted-eighth sixteenth notes on beat three do not come off sounding like a triplet with the first two noted tied together. Make the long longer and the short shorter. Look carefully at the rhythmic shift in measures 13 and 14: the first half of measure 14 is different.

As with all auditions, the advantage goes to the players that observe all the details with dynamics and articulations. Record your practicing. Even the most experienced players sometimes think they are playing something the way they want, but the recording tells them it is not exactly right. Ending “b” has some very tricky rhythms, particularly in measure 33. Some players have trouble placing the first sixteenth note precisely on time, more often coming in slightly late. I would suggest that in practice you place an eighth-note F on the downbeat to clearly give the feel the beginning of the measure and how the next sixteenth-note fits after it. Once you are comfortable, replace the eighth rest and see if your rhythm feels more secure. If you are practicing with a metronome you can be fairly confident that you have it right if the C-sharp in measure 33 lands right on the click.

**TUBA**

**Junior Tuba: Audition Solo 1D, Moderato con spirito**

The phrasing is in two-measure groups, so place your breaths on the barlines between them. Do not let a random breath fall in the middle of the phrase. That makes it sound like you ran out of air at the wrong time. With the way these phrase endings are written there is a tendency for many players to make it sound like beginning of the next phrase comes in slightly early. This is caused by the player not making sure that the final note and rest in the previous measure are held full value. You will keep track of the beat by following this useful guideline: unless you are instructed to do differently, a note followed by a rest should release on the rest.

The quarter note on count three of measure 2 stops on beat four. The half note in measure 16 also releases on beat four. Many players will have a tendency to rush the after-beats in measure 15. Practice with a metronome until you get a sure feel for the beat on the eighth rests, and place the eighth notes securely after them.

As with all of the other audition pieces, there are many details with dynamics and articulations. The advantage goes to the players that observe them all.

**Clinic Tuba: Audition Solo 2C, Marziale**

This solo requires a good deal of technical facility. The running sixteenth notes are easier to play cleanly if you think of them as connected and keep the airflow moving through them. Playing them staccato makes them sound choppy and requires more effort to play.
However, the staccato eighth notes in measures 11 and 12 add character and bounce to the style, so do not ignore them. A very common error is for the beginning of the phrase in measure 11 to start slightly early. The cause is the player not holding the previous dotted-half note for its full value. The best solution for this problem is to adopt this very useful guideline: unless you are instructed to do differently, a note followed by a rest should release on the rest. This helps the player keep a feel for the steady beat.

As with all of the other audition pieces there are many details with dynamics and articulations. The advantage goes to the players that observe them all. Record your practicing and make sure you can hear the markings in the sound. Measure 23 with its pick-up beat has details that need to be heard. Practice it with a metronome slowly and get all the markings. Notice which notes in the bar are supposed to line up with a click and make sure they land there. The judge will be listening for the slur on the first two notes of beat two, and for the long slur on beats three and four. If you are having trouble playing the first note of measure 24 squarely on time you can correct this (in your practicing only) by replacing the eighth rest downbeat with an eighth note B-flat, and repeating it until the rhythm feels secure. Then put the rest back in and see if the accented rhythm is accurate. You can check the accuracy of measure 8 the same way.

**Senior Tuba: Audition Solo 3B, Grazioso**

Grazioso (with grace and elegance) and the tuba may sound like a contradiction. The composer knows it is not, but it is up to us, the players, to actually make it work. The approach must be easy and effortless.

Measures 1-12 should be smooth and connected. The tempo must be steady; many players will fall into the trap and start measures 5, 9 and 19 slightly early. The reason this happens is not making sure that the longer notes and rests are held full value in measures 4, 8 and 18. The guideline, unless you are instructed to do differently, is that a note followed by a rest should release on the rest. If you are counting in two beats per bar (which feels smoother than counting in six) then in measures 4, 8 and 18 simply release the dotted quarter on beat two, and place the first note of the following measure on the next strong beat. As you practice with your metronome listen and make certain these events line up right on the click.

Pay careful attention to the slur markings. In measures 1 and 2 only the first two notes are tongued and the rest are slurred. Follow all of the other articulation markings carefully as well. In measure 13 the first three notes may be smoother to slur if you finger the sixteenth note D “1-2” instead of “0”.

There is a curious rhythmic oddity that can happen going from measure 20 into measure 21. If the end of measure 20 is not held full value and the next downbeat eighth note is played even slightly early, the listener will sense it as a pick-up note and the accented
quarter note will sound like the downbeat. After that, the rhythmic accuracy feels off for the next two measures. Be absolutely sure to place the downbeat eighth note in measure 21 precisely on the strong beat. Even though it is not printed, I like to accent this note slightly to help remove any doubt for the listener. Just make sure the following quarter note gets a touch more emphasis.

Measure 32 can be tricky technically. Slow down the metronome and practice it until you can play it exactly as marked. The player should keep the airflow moving full and steady through the entire figure. If your habit is to use a little wind hitch to get through the first two sixteenth notes it will not sound as smooth. Play it slow, keep the airflow, and then bring the metronome up gradually to your performance tempo.