

TBZ Monthly

A new monthly content service from Brad Edwards
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Welcome!

Here is the next issue. Thank you to everyone who has subscribed so far. I'm always looking for ways to connect with trombonists and I love having the opportunity to share with people in a way I hope will provide benefit. If you are getting this pdf without having subscribed and would like to subscribe to future issues, simply [follow this link](#). This little digital publication will evolve over time. If there's something you'd like to see included, please reach out to me: brad.edwards6251@gmail.com. (IG: [@brad_edwards_trombone](#))

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Enjoy!

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Websites:

[Trombone Zone](#)
[Hornbone Press](#)
[Free Audition Solos](#)
[ASU Bones](#)

A Pretty Good Melody

These are designed to be played over drones.

G drone

A drone

The musical score consists of two systems, each with four staves of music in bass clef. The first system is for a G drone (one sharp, 4/4 time) and the second is for an A drone (two sharps, 4/4 time). Each system contains four staves of music. The first staff of each system is the drone, followed by three staves of melodic lines. Dynamics include *mp*, *mf*, *p*, and *f*, with *cresc.* markings. Triplet markings (3) are used throughout. The piece concludes with a final staff in each system.

B drone

mp *mf*

mp *cresc.* *f*

p *cresc.* *f*

mp

C drone

mp *mf*

mp *cresc.* *f*

p *cresc.* *f*

mp

NB - This melody has NOTHING to do with the movie Dune being released this month. Nothing!!

A Useful Lip Slur

This mixes some slide technique work with slurs.

a.

gliss

gliss

simile

Sequence: Down by Positions

gliss

b.

gliss

gliss

gliss

gliss

Sequence: Down by Positions

gliss

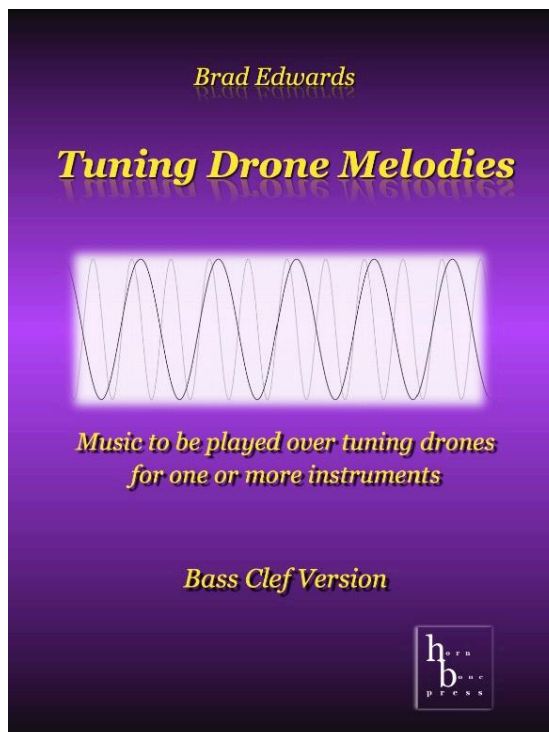
gliss

Free book sample: Tuning Drone Melodies Multiple Instruments and D Drone

This book is in two halves: (1) single instrument with drone and (2) multiple instruments with drone.

For this example, you'll see mostly duets to be played over a tuning drone but there are also some rounds that can be played by more than two people. I decided to include the entire multiple instrument section devoted to a D drone.

Enjoy!



[Tuning Drone Melodies](#)

D Drone

Perfect Intervals (4ths, 5ths, 8ves)

Musical score for Perfect Intervals (4ths, 5ths, 8ves) in D major, 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of two staves each. The first system starts with a *mf* dynamic. The second system features dynamics of *f*, *mp*, and *cresc.* with crescendo hairpins. The third system returns to a *mf* dynamic. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Color Notes (3rds, 6ths) (Drone unison/octaves only, no perfect fifths)

Musical score for Color Notes (3rds, 6ths) in D major, 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of two staves each. The first system includes dynamic markings of *f* and *mp*, and features a key signature change to D minor. The second system includes dynamic markings of *f* and *mp*, and features a key signature change back to D major. The instruction "swap parts on repeat" is written above the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Major and Minor Thirds

Musical score for "Major and Minor Thirds" in D major, 4/4 time. The score consists of two systems of two staves each. The first system features a melody in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The upper staff begins with a half note D4, followed by a quarter note E4, and a quarter note F#4, all beamed together. The lower staff begins with a half note D3, followed by a quarter note E3, and a quarter note F#3, all beamed together. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. The second system continues the melody and bass line, with dynamics including *cresc.* and *f*.

Duet in D Major

Musical score for "Duet in D Major" in D major, 3/4 time. The score consists of three systems of two staves each. The first system features a melody in the upper staff and a bass line in the lower staff. The upper staff begins with a quarter note D4, followed by a quarter note E4, and a quarter note F#4, all beamed together. The lower staff begins with a quarter note D3, followed by a quarter note E3, and a quarter note F#3, all beamed together. Dynamics include *mp* and *mf*. The second system continues the melody and bass line, with dynamics including *f* and *mf*. The third system continues the melody and bass line, with dynamics including *f* and *mf*.

Duet in D minor

Musical score for 'Duet in D minor' in 4/4 time, D minor. The score consists of two staves per system, with dynamics *mp* and *mf* indicated. The first system shows two staves with dynamics *mp* and *mf*. The second system shows two staves with dynamics *mp* and *mp*. The third system shows two staves with dynamics *mp* and *mp*. The fourth system shows two staves with dynamics *mp* and *mp*. The score ends with a double bar line.

Drone Rounds

The second part should enter when the leading part reaches the asterisk (*). The fermata in parentheses is the stopping point for the second voice (if only two voices are playing).

Simple Arpeggios - major (two or more voices)

Musical score for 'Simple Arpeggios - major' in 3/4 time, D major. The score consists of two staves. The first staff has an asterisk (*) above the second measure. The second staff has a fermata in parentheses (⌒) above the third measure and a question mark (?) above the final measure. The score ends with a double bar line.

Simple Arpeggios - minor (two or more voices)

Two staves of musical notation in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of B-flat. The first staff contains a sequence of eighth-note arpeggios: B-flat, D, F, B-flat; G, B-flat, D, F; A, C, E, G; F, A, C, E; D, F, A, C; B-flat, D, F, A; G, B-flat, D, F; E, G, B-flat, D. An asterisk (*) is placed above the first measure. The second staff continues the sequence: F, A, C, E; D, F, A, C; B-flat, D, F, A; G, B-flat, D, F; E, G, B-flat, D; C, E, G, B-flat; A, C, E, G; F, A, C, E. A circled smiley face (:) is above the eighth measure, and a question mark (?) is above the final measure. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Plagal Cadence Round (two or more voices; drone unison/octaves only, no perfect fifth)

Three staves of musical notation in bass clef, 3/4 time, key of D major. The first staff contains a sequence of eighth-note arpeggios: D, F#, A, D; E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. An asterisk (*) is placed above the eighth measure. The second staff continues the sequence: E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. An asterisk (*) is placed above the eighth measure. The third staff continues the sequence: E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. An asterisk (*) is placed above the eighth measure. A question mark (?) is above the final measure. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Round Dance (two voices)

Four staves of musical notation in bass clef, 6/8 time, key of D major. The first staff contains a sequence of eighth-note arpeggios: D, F#, A, D; E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. An asterisk (*) is placed above the eighth measure. The second staff continues the sequence: E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. The third staff continues the sequence: E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. The fourth staff continues the sequence: E, G, B, D; C, E, G, C; B, D, F#, B; A, C, E, A; G, B, D, G; F#, A, C, F#. A circled smiley face (:) is above the eighth measure, and a question mark (?) is above the final measure. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

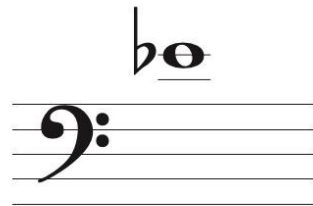
Concert Duet (D Drone)

Leisurely

The musical score is written for two bass staves in 3/4 time, with a key signature of two sharps (D major). The tempo is marked "Leisurely". The score consists of six systems of two staves each. The first system begins with a dynamic of *mp* and features a triplet of eighth notes in the upper staff. The second system continues with *mf* dynamics and includes a triplet in the lower staff. The third system features *mp* dynamics and a triplet in the upper staff. The fourth system has *mf* dynamics and a triplet in the lower staff. The fifth system includes *mf* dynamics and a *cresc.* marking. The sixth system concludes with *f* and *mp* dynamics and multiple triplet markings in both staves.

Playing Tip: Slow Glisses

Our valve cousins, the euphoniums, live in a world of lipping notes up or down. When presented with this note...

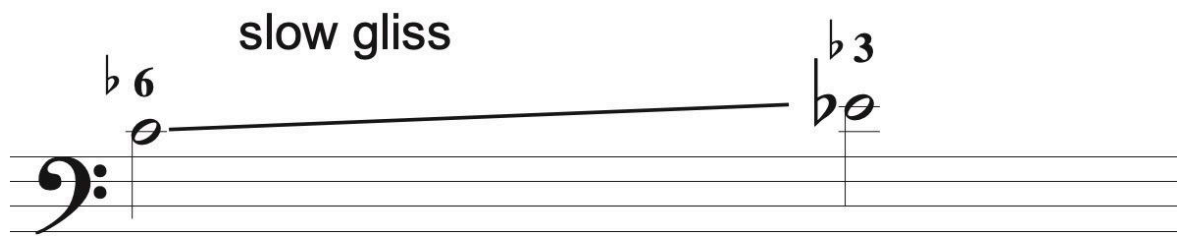


...they will need to lip down that sharp partial to get it in tune. Of course, we trombone players know (?) that we can get that note in tune by simply moving the slide out a bit. Do we always do this? Well, that's a story for another day (sigh).

Here's the thing: trombone players, whether or not they know it, are *also* lipping notes up and down. I see it all the time. We don't need to lip (most of the time) but we do it. The result is a tone that seems a bit dull and less vibrant.



There's a great exercise for this problem: slow glisses with full tone. If you play this gliss...



...and if you focus on a full, resonant sound, it is a lot less likely that you'll also be lipping the note. Just move your slide slowly, listening intently to your pitch. Stop the slide when the note sounds right to your ear. Check it against a tuner without lipping.

Then, as they say, "Wash, Rinse, Repeat"

Your ear will get better and so should your tone. The goal is to blow straight into the resonant middle of the note with no lipping.

When I hear really great players, I believe that one of the reasons for their magnificent tone is a **complete** agreement between:

- What they hear
- Where the slide is placed
- What pitch the lips are trying to buzz

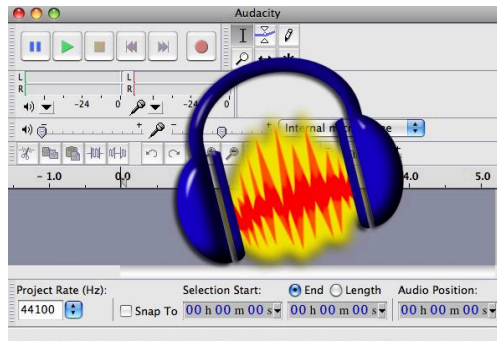
Align these three factors and you'll go a long way to a ringing, centered tone.



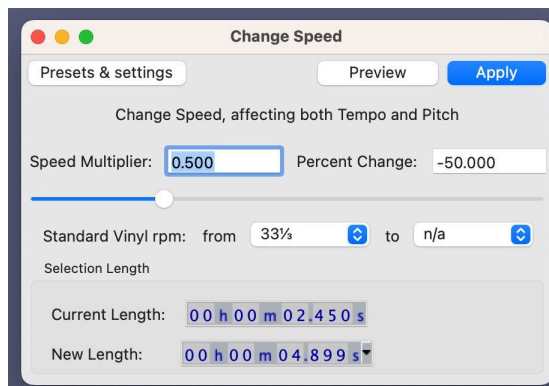
On Teaching and Playing: Slow Mo

No, I'm not talking about practicing things slowly (although that's useful, too!). I'm talking about playing back recordings slowed down.

My favorite tool for this is Audacity, the free recording program that works on both Windows and Mac (but, sadly, not iOS or Android).



In this app, under the “effects” menu, you have two options: change speed and change tempo. If you use “change speed” it will alter the pitch of the recording. I usually go with half speed so the recording sounds down an octave (thus sounding a bit like a tuba).



Older readers will notice this is like those old reel-to-reel recorders which could also be played at half speed. The effect is quite similar. Hearing that “pristine” rendition at half speed will reveal all sorts of little problems such as:

- the slide leaving a note too early (causing small glisses)
- uncertainty in the attacks (causing roughness or wah)
- one note unintentionally weaker (less resonant) than the others (see the playing tip!).

The “change tempo” option keeps the pitch unchanged, using an algorithm to “stretch” the notes.



Even with “high quality stretching” turned on, the playback tone will be, well, weird. While I wouldn’t use this to evaluate tone quality, it can usually catch inaccurate slide work and is often quite useful to detect out-of-tune notes in a running passage.

Speaking of running, last summer I had a stride analysis done. Basically I ran on a treadmill while they took video from the side and the back. At the time, I was intent on starting to run longer distances and didn’t want to get injured. The report that came back was quite thorough. Here’s a sample:

GAIT FINDINGS: CONTACT PHASE			RECOMMENDATIONS	
	LEFT	RIGHT	ECCENTRIC STRENGTHENING	
CONTACT PHASE			LEFT	RIGHT
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tibialis Anterior • Gastroc/soleus • Quadriceps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tibialis Anterior • Gastroc/soleus • Quadriceps
ANGLE OF FOOT AT INITIAL CONTACT	15°	15°	CONCENTRIC STRENGTHENING	
			LEFT	RIGHT
			N/A	N/A
KNEE FLEXION			RANGE-OF-MOTION IMPROVEMENT	
			LEFT	RIGHT
			N/A	N/A
ANKLE DORSIFLEXION			GAIT RE-TRAINING	
			LEFT	RIGHT
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Left Knee Flexion From 6° To 15° Degrees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Right Knee Flexion From 6° To 15° Degrees
HIP FLEXION			OTHER:	
			• decrease angle of lateral foot contact	
INCREASED LOAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anterior Knee • Tibia • Lateral Foot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anterior Knee • Tibia • Lateral Foot 		
INJURY RISK				

As a result, I made some changes in my stride and stretching exercises. As I watched that slow motion video of my running, it made me think of slow motion video of trombone slide technique. You can record your slide movement using a phone or iPad and, using an app, watch the recording in slow motion. This can reveal a lot (and is very humbling)!

My go-to on this is an iPad. I'll admit to having some frustration at the moment finding the best app for this. Some slow the video down a ridiculous amount. Others do a good job but want me to pay a monthly fee for continued use. No thank you.

If you happen to know of a good, free (or inexpensive), iPad app that does the job well, please reach out! This slow motion video can have more impact than slowed-down audio. Some students are visual learners. Seeing the slide action being somewhat mis-timed with the resultant glisses can have a powerful impact!

One warning, however: in an effort to correct sloppy slide technique, some students will start to jerk the slide violently from spot to spot, shaking the horn and harming the tone quality. It may seem counterintuitive but here's one of my sayings,

*Move the slide as slowly as you can get away with.
The problem is, you can't get away with much!*

The Good Stuff - Trombone Pedagogy: Fred Fox, Essentials of Brass Playing

This is an interesting small book by a [gentleman](#) who, among other things, taught at UCLA and was Solo Horn of the National Symphony Orchestra. In an addendum section, he writes:

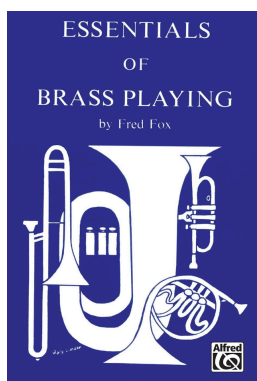
THE LIPS IN THE CONSTANT SLUR POSITION

Over the years a player builds up an unconscious reflex, that is, whenever the air is stopped the lips automatically relax. On a series of staccato eighth notes the lips tend to relax a bit between each note. When playing that same series notes slurred, there is no momentary relaxing of the lips between each note. Conclusion: if you tell your lips that it is not their concern if the air starts or stops, but that they must remain in total slur position at all times, then, whether you tongue or slur a passage, the result should be equally as sure. You have eliminated the minute excess motion that could contribute to uncertainty when tonguing a passage. Fox, Fred. Essentials of Brass Playing. Volkwein Brothers, 1976. p. 78

This sentiment, also expressed at other points in the book, is especially significant given that it comes from someone who played principal horn! They live in a world where the partials are so much closer together than our trombone world. It isn't surprising, then, that they tend to be quite focused on consistency in the embouchure.

We see similar thoughts coming from Julie Landsman's excellent [YouTube videos](#) and also from Philip Farkas' *The Art of Brass Playing*.

We don't want to think of extremely flexed embouchure corners. We don't need "6-pack abs" at the corners of our mouths. However, thinking of those corners in a gently firm, slightly frowned position without excessive activity between attacks can be really helpful. I also really like the term "calm corners."



A Random Thought: Virtual?

During that horrible Covid lock-down some of us were quite taken with the notion of virtual backgrounds. Many Zoom meetings had someone standing in front of an ocean beach. Some academic music studios created standard logos which would appear behind people.



I experimented briefly with backgrounds but I was strangely drawn to images of abandoned warehouses and the like. Times felt dark and I thought my background shouldn't be a form of denial. However, this didn't last long (like half of one Zoom meeting). I decided that the best choice was to simply show the room I was sitting in. The whole fake background thing bothered me for some reason.

During that lockdown time, we invested a lot of time and effort into creating virtual ensembles. People wearing headphones trying to play in sync with click tracks. The final result seemed pretty clever and they certainly taught us to follow a metronome click! Some poor soul had to work to assemble the whole darn thing and try to make it sound good. I, too, tried my hand at this with the ASU Trombone Choir. It David Wilborn's Excursions.

Here's a link for the [third movement](#). Man, putting that one together damn near killed me. People had all manner of different cameras and microphones. One person even submitted their video without any sound. I had to carefully watch his slide to figure out how to make things line up!



For videos of the [first movement](#) and [second movement](#) (my favorite), I didn't even try to line up the video with audio. I just went with still images and slow-motion video. Well, I learned a lot and I suppose it was somewhat satisfying to see the final product. But, what was the experience for the individual performers? It was *nothing* like a live performance.

As we finally went back to in-person rehearsals and performances I recall a colleague saying with confidence that, once acquired, we wouldn't let our video-editing and green-screen skills fade away. The little voice in my head was right: nope, once we're back in person, this stuff is going away.

I don't know about you but, when I see one of these overdub videos online, I experience a mild PTSD. No matter how much love and work went into the creation of those kinds of videos, I just don't want to go there.

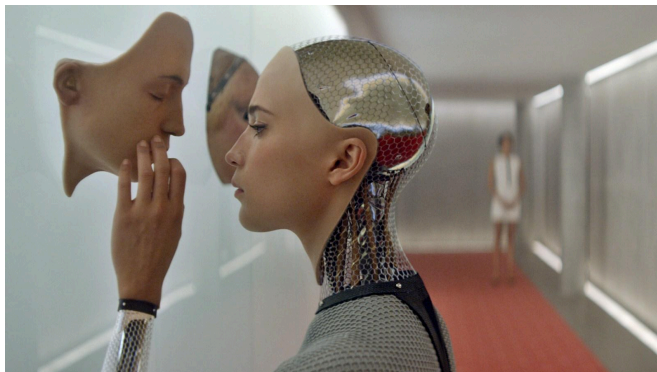
What did we learn from all this forced experimentation? Well, we learned to follow a click track. When students knew they had to submit a recording for their lessons, they were forced to listen back and hear mistakes (and possibly correct them if there was time). I guess we struggled to find a way to adapt and do the best we could. But those virtual ensembles were no match for being in a room *together*, making music *together*.

As the AI wave rolls into our world, I am hopeful that we humans are feeling a craving for actual human performances. Watching actual humans, in the same room as us, actually striving to achieve imperfect artistry right in front of our eyes in real time.

People aren't going to fill auditoriums to see synthetic performers. Movies? Will we soon have Oscars being awarded to AI replicas of human actors? Maybe in a newly-created category but I think the Best Actress award will still go to a human.

Virtual backgrounds. Virtual performances. Virtual intelligence.

It has a place with us but should not **REplace** us.



Addendum: A Glimpse Under the Hood

Selected quotes from student lesson tickets

In the ASU trombone studio, I ask my students to write a "lesson ticket" for their lessons. Without identifying individuals, I like to grab and compile some quotes. It is interesting to see their thoughts:

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These past few days I spent quite a while fixing some of the things we discussed in our lesson last week. For Ride I spent time playing at half tempo, focusing on centering notes, then when I felt comfortable with that I played it at 2/3 tempo, with an emphasis on centering, and then added an effort to broaden notes. I feel like this helped - especially with accuracy at the faster tempo. In Tuba Mirum I spent some time playing the opening in a very very stuffy practice mute with the hopes that the opening would get that gusto it has been lacking. I also spent a bit of time with a metronome and trying to get each of the phrases to be as smooth as possible.

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This week, practice went great! Worked a great deal on fitting into the new horn (and the solo, of course). In tomorrow's lesson, let's work on the Defaye/Schumann. And that concludes this week's lesson ticket! I look forward to working with you tomorrow in my lesson.
Have a great night

==

Practicing went well this past week. In addition to this week's assignments, I spent the better part of the first half of the week working on trills. One appears in one of my quartet pieces, and I believe two appear in Still's "Romance" which I anticipate playing for the February studio recital. I had lessons with [TA] on Friday and Monday, so I had him pass some tips on how to trill. I've grasped the concept and now I'm consistently working on them and finding what works for me. Of course, it's still rather crude right now, but the "trill fairy" has, in fact, visited me a few times.

==

Practice this week was good. The overarching theme of my practice this week is “rely more on your air”. The lip slurs that I was struggling with last week are going much better. Still not perfect, but I am getting up to the high F almost every day now and I can get all the way through my lip slur melody. The patterns and snippets took a while for me to adjust to. I realized that I practice my major arpeggios MUCH more than my minor arpeggios, so this assignment was really good for me this week.

==

Practicing has been good this week. got about 2 hours in just today. I have been more hard on myself on not moving on from a section till I get it right a certain amount of times

==

I went back and listened to our lesson from two weeks ago and a big takeaway was making phrases more drastic so they are actually discernible, as well as confident entrances with good sound.

==

Last week I did a graded run of Lohengrin and it was bad. We did some work on it and it improved significantly. Although I didn't see it when we were doing it in the lesson I realized after the fact that you just had me do a self 1 self 2 exercise. I feel like I've been Mr. Miyagi'd.

==

I had a good week or practicing. I focused on making my phrases more melodic, specifically in the Sachse(I feel better with with 1st valve action in the majority of the piece, but in some instances 2nd Valve speaks better). I've been playing through my program building my mental concentration, physical stamina. Practiced all the new breathe marks. Just need to be consistent with executions'.

==

My practicing was pretty equal between each instrument. This was one of the first weeks in a while where each instrument had adequate time spent on them. With that being said, I am more hopeful about time management this semester.

==

Playing the etude duets taught me some interesting things. My leg kept shaking and it was interfering with my playing. I wasn't nervous either. I will practice performing for more people because it was very frustrating.

Willow Willow is going alright. It's mainly keeping the ending connected (especially the high D)

==

air! (wow who would've guessed), support feels static, finding the balance/sweet spot for air/pressure on high notes

==

Last week we worked on playing as softly as possible to get better response. I think this adversity training has helped a ton in my practice this week. After playing or buzzing as softly as I can for a few minutes, I immediately feel more in control without having to work as hard. I love it

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