

DAVID COPE, 1970

for any brass instrument

for Tom Everett

BTRB

Performer (dressed rather shabbily in street clothes) is *thrown* onto a brightly lit stage.

Falls down. Gets up. Brushes himself.

Looks *very* confusedly around stage.

He sees BTRB at centerstage (surrounded at various distances by 4 mouthpieces:

BTRB¹, bassoon, clarinet and recorder).

Looks dubious. He looks off-stage for help.

He whispers something inaudible in that direction.

No answer. He looks back at BTRB.

Pause.

He *slowly* walks around it at a distance.

He looks off-stage questioningly.

Looks back at BTRB.

He *very slowly* moves closer with one arm outstretched. Just before touching he jerks away suddenly as if it were hot. He slowly looks around viewing mouthpieces. **Slowly** and carefully he picks up the BTRB mouthpiece.

Looks into it. Through it. Knocks it against the floor.

Looks at it again. Looks at BTRB.

Kneeling at arms length from the instrument he reaches out with mouthpiece

and gently taps the BTRB once.

Jerks away. **Slowly** does it again: *twice*.

¹When BTRB (Bass Trombone) is used referring to the mouthpiece, the mouthpiece of the instrument to be played should be substituted.

Smiles.

Stands up and brushes himself off. He puts the mouthpiece down (somewhere quite different from where he picked it up and somewhat distant from the other mouthpieces). *Bravely* and *proudly* moves to the BTRB.

He slowly reaches down and touches it. He starts to pull away again, but finally decides to pick it up (*by the bell*).

He peers into the bell. Shrugs shoulders.

Looks it *all* over. Looks off stage.

He whispers loudly (nonsense syllables). No answer.

Looks back at the BTRB.

He slowly feels the instrument all over. **Suddenly** yells

(he has pinched finger in one of the slides).

He puts instrument down hurriedly.

Stares at it for a time. Gives it a gentle kick

(as if it were alive and bitten him).

Moves to back of stage.

He sits against the back wall and broods awhile, always staring at the BTRB.

He finally gets up and moves back to centerstage. Looks at

BTRB. *Thinks*. Looks at mouthpieces. He finally goes,

picks up Bassoon double-reed mouthpiece and moves to

BTRB. Looks closely at mouthpiece.

Stares down at BTRB. Finally picks up BTRB by the bell.

Looks into bell. Looks at reed.

Puts reed (mouthpiece) into bell

and blows very hard: *SQUAK*. Again.

SQUAK.

He shakes his head and puts BTRB down. He looks at

mouthpiece. Blows it: *SQUAK*.

Looks incredulously at mouthpiece.

Looks at BTRB.

Lies down on floor and peers into small bore end of BTRB.

Sits up.

Tries mouthpiece again: *SQUAK*.

Finally puts mouthpiece into small bore end of BTRB. He blows into mouthpiece for a very long time (through instrument). *Four* long breaths.

Stops. Looks very proud.

Looks at the instrument for a very long time. Sees a sliding portion. Moves it. Stops. Looks very proud of himself.

He puts mouthpiece in small bore end of instrument. He picks up instrument in very non-traditional manner, blows and starts to move slide. Immediately he goes too far and the slide comes off. He stops.

Looks incredulously at the slide.

He struggles, but eventually gets it back on in its original manner. Starts again. He gets about half a breath going before slide falls off again.

He *stomps* foot *very* loudly.

He looks off-stage. He again whispers loudly. Again, no answer (this time he actually puts hand to ear as if to aid in hearing). He puts slide back in.

This time he *gingerly* blows while moving the slide very slowly (if instrument has valves, doodle a bit).

He plays for awhile. He stops. He puts down BTRB.

Looks at the bassoon mouthpiece. Grabs it and suddenly throws it off-stage. He whispers angrily to himself and goes to the back of the stage and sits dejectedly for awhile.

He finally gets up. He goes over to the BTRB and picks it up again. He looks it over. He looks at the remaining mouthpieces. Chooses the clarinet mouthpiece. Puts it onto the normal end of the BTRB. Blows and slides (moves valves as the case may be) for one breath.