The versatile trombonist: a curriculum based model for improving audiation skills for the 21st century trombonist

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THE VERSATILE TROMBONIST: A CURRICULUM BASED MODEL FOR IMPROVING AUDIATION SKILLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY TROMBONIST

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in Music in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

August 2019

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I dedicate this paper to my loving wife Katie Seybert and my dear son J.J. Seybert
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the support of the University of Iowa and I am thankful to all who have been supportive of my musical and professional goals here in the school of music. I am grateful for the friendship and guidance that my committee members have shown me throughout my time at the University of Iowa. To Professor John Manning, Dr. Amy Schendel, Professor Jeffrey Agrell, and Dr. Mary Cohen, thank you for serving on my committee and supporting this project. To my past and present trombone instructors, thank you for all the teaching and sacrifices you made for me. Harry Watters, thank you for instilling a strong work ethic in myself; to Jim Pugh, thank you for molding my musicianship into what it is today; to Amanda Stewart, thank you for your generosity and kindness; to Dr. David Gier, thank you for believing in me; and to Dr. Jonathan Allen, thank you for showing me what it takes to be a great trombone educator and family man.

To my parents, thank you for supporting my path as an artist and educator. I would like to also thank my father and mother in-law Phil and Nancy Ferber for their unbelievable support in my development and well-being. Without you two, I would surely not be here today and certainly may never have started the beautiful family God has blessed me with. To my loving and supportive wife, Katie, thank you for taking this journey of life with me. You and our son J.J. provide me unending inspiration and bring out the best in me as a father, husband, teacher, and musician.
The original focus of this research paper was to ask the question, “Why are there so few versatile trombonists?” The research suggested that there were curriculum problems in higher education associated with the general lack of performance versatility amongst trombonists. In 2014 the Task Force for the Undergraduate Music Major (TFUMM) determined that the undergraduate curriculum was lacking improvisation and creativity. One of the core musical skills that is essential in improvising is audiation. After determining that audiation is one of the keys to performance versatility, I researched jazz pedagogy and how this area of higher education includes and utilizes audiation and improvisation in its curriculum. I concluded that traditional conservatory-style pedagogy is lacking improvisation and audiation in its curriculum because of the bias towards the European music tradition and the institutional treatment of jazz as a legitimate art form that is not equal to the European music tradition.

To address the issue of performance versatility amongst trombonists, I created the “Modern Trombonist Curriculum” in 2016. This was my first attempt to address undergraduate curriculum by exposing students to a three-studio model, literature versatility, and utilizing audiation as the foundation of their learning. I sent out this curriculum to ten educators and performers for critique and to provide their thoughts on the current landscape of performance versatility, audiation, and my curriculum. After the interviews and the insight of my dissertation committee, I created a new curriculum titled “The Versatile Trombonist” to address the constraints of time, colleague involvement, student engagement, mental health, fiscal concerns, and other issues that I did not originally consider. Although I plan to continually modify and adjust this curriculum, this current version can be used as a benchmark for future educators that
desire to include audiation and performance versatility in their current or future trombone studios.
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PREFACE

My academic and professional background as a musician has led me to perform and teach many different styles of music such as orchestras, big bands, chamber ensembles, small jazz ensembles, wedding and cover bands, and salsa groups. My academic background is equally rooted in classical performance, jazz performance, and music education. It is because of these many artistic performing opportunities that I identify both as a classical and jazz musician. My approach to this dissertation is to answer the question: Why are there so few versatile trombonists? In this case, versatile meaning more than one proficient area of performing musical expertise. It has been my experience as a student and educator that my fellow instrumental colleagues and teachers in higher education tend to gravitate towards either specializing as a classical/orchestral musician or as a jazz/commercial musician.

To fully understand what I perceive to be a significant current problem, I recalled as much as I could from when I started to play and grow musically to my current development as a musician with the intent to compare my experiences with research into the undergraduate music curriculum. My earliest significant memory of utilizing musical reasoning was listening to the praise band at our local church. I was six or seven years old and can remember myself humming the bass lines to what I would now refer to as a “vi-IV-I-V” progression. The next week, I would hear the same progression, hum along, and realize the lyrics were different. At this point in my life, I started to recognize tonal patterns aurally and express them orally but had no idea what I was learning. Edwin Gordon refers to this process as discrimination learning and it is the process of aurally/orally learning something that you do not fully understand.\(^1\) By the time I entered

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fourth grade, I started learning the recorder. My elementary general music teacher required us to sing and sign our fingerings before we played anything.\(^2\) This is a memory that I will never forget because it was the first time I can remember singing something and thinking about a fingering (or later, slide positions).

When I started playing trombone in the 5\(^{th}\) grade and throughout middle school, I continued to use the learning strategy my elementary music teacher taught us on recorders and applied it to the trombone. I would learn my scales by ear and sing them which helped me create an aural relationship with my instrument before notation was introduced. Throughout high school, I continued to learn music and scales by ear. During my sophomore year of high school, I began to actively transcribe recordings for a cover band that I started with some classmates. I transcribed the chord progressions, form, horn lines, and sang the lead voice while playing piano. Although I was not a jazz improvisor in high school, beginning to actively transcribe was the start of developing an improvisation skill-set. Learning the melody, bass lines, and harmonic progressions by ear helped me develop a sense of how melodies and harmonic progressions come together to create harmony.

Before enrolling in college, I had little private lesson guidance and was an average trombonist. However, through my middle and high school years, I developed a skillset that I now know was essential to my development as a versatile musician in both the classical and jazz idioms. Singing, recognizing tonal patterns, and transcribing helped me develop my strongest musical skill of audiation. Edwin Gordon refers to audiation as “the primary factor in determining how easily one can learn music and at its core is the foundation for all musical

\(^2\) This refers to fingering along the notated music while singing the appropriate pitch that is associated with each fingering.
When I began college I quickly realized that my colleagues and teachers around me did not share my audiation practice. On the contrary, my approach was discouraged and was not accepted by many of those around me, peers and teachers alike. When I was introduced to jazz improvisation study in college, I found a musical art form that utilized these skills. It was the only area available to me in which I could integrate all my developed musical skill sets. When comparing my learning experiences to the current landscape of the undergraduate music curriculum in higher education, my experiences were different from those who received a traditional education. I began to research why my experiences were so different from those around me and was introduced to the book, *Redefining Music Studies in an Age of Change: Creativity, Diversity, and Integration*.

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CHAPTER 1: THE UNDERGRADUATE MUSIC CURRICULUM AND THE PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH A BIAS TOWARDS THE EUROPEAN MUSIC TRADITION

In 2014, the College Music Society appointed a national task force to determine what it means to be an educated musician in the twenty-first century and how that compares to the current model of preparing future generations of music educators and performers. The Task Force on the Undergraduate Music Major (TFUMM) recognizes the world of music has been rapidly changing for the last few decades in the following ways: increased knowledge and availability of cultural influences, crossover genre styles, advances in technology in social and digital media, and the growing real-world creative impulses from improvisatory and compositional initiatives.\(^5\) Secondly, TFUMM acknowledges that the academy, which is referring to the current classical model of undergraduate study, has educationally isolated itself from the outside music world, has been resistant to change, and has been increasingly regressive.\(^6\) It is important to look back and see when and why this division of creativity and improvisation from music learning transpired.

Throughout the history of western art music, improvisation and creativity was a foundational skill for music making and achievement. For example, early Gregorian chant and polyphony was largely performed through improvisation and neither utilized notation at all or merely used it as a guide.\(^7\) Through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, accompaniment in operas and chamber music was generally improvised over figured bass which grew into a

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\(^6\) Sarath and Myers and Campbell, *Redefining Music Studies*, 54.

sophisticated form of improvised counterpoint. The Baroque era saw the rise of ornamentations into arias, cantatas, concertos, solo vocal pieces, and even instrumental sonatas. To be a musician in the Baroque era meant you were always aware of improvisation as the foundation for all the melodic and harmonic fabrics of music. To decorate, embellish, and improvise was an accepted part of being a performing musician. Music improvisation has a long tradition in every culture around the world. However, the decline of improvisation in the European music tradition decreased the educational tools to teach concepts of music theory, composition, and performance. In any period of western art music, you can find individuals historically essential to the development of music who exhibited these diverse skill sets. However, we currently live in a time where the performer, composer, conductor, and theorist are all separate people. In the past, this was not the case. Bach, Mozart, and Beethoven were master performers, composers, and improvisors. Improvisation played a vital role in their everyday lives as working musicians. However, they are not recognized today as great improvisors, but rather as composers and performers. Regardless, the TFUMM report recognizes that the European tradition is grounded in creative processes that include improvisation, composition, and performance. It is these collections of skills that TFUMM believes needed to navigate today’s diverse music world.

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The power dynamic between the composer, conductor, and score led to a decrease in individual expression in large ensemble interpretative performance. The result of this led to a decrease in improvisational opportunities and through centuries of European art music development began to slowly eliminate improvisation as a core musical skill set. Although improvisation is a vital part of music history, it is missing from many of today’s core music curricula in higher education. What do musicians today learn when going to an institution for undergraduate study? American higher music education has historically focused on the European music art tradition which values notation and large group performance over anything else. Because musical training in most American colleges and universities has historically been focused on the European music tradition, improvisation is relegated to periphery status or neglected all together by current music faculty. Jeffrey Agrell, Associate Professor of Horn at the University of Iowa and author of many texts on improvisation and creativity is a supporter of including improvisation in music curricula. His book The Creative Hornist: Essays, Rants, and Odes for the Classical Horn Player on Creative Music Making states his opinion on the current landscape of notation-based learning:

Ink transmits through the eyes. Ink is a visual experience. Ink is a skeleton that suggests possibilities of re-creation. Ink is the finger pointing at the moon, not the moon itself. We’ve come to revere the ink as the be-all, end-all for so long that we even have to ask the question: if not ink, what? The “what” is simply what music is: an aural experience.

During the same year the College Music Society released the TFUMM report (2014), the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) released a new set of standards for all levels

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of music education in the public-school systems. These new standards were created to address the lack of creativity and improvisation in the public-school curriculum and were calling for more creative music making in the classroom.\textsuperscript{20} While I applaud the effort to improve what I consider a core foundational music skill, I do not believe this change in the national standards at the public-school level will effect lasting change. Rather, higher education must change their curricula to help mold future music faculty and teacher candidates how to incorporate improvisation and creativity into their future teaching. The TFUMM report states that higher education does not teach these music skills effectively. How does a music teacher then teach improvisation at the public-school level if they very little experience performing in this capacity as a training teacher? In his article, “Beginning the Dialogue: Teachers Respond to the National Standards in Music,” Cindy L. Bell explains the difficulty of incorporating improvisation into a teacher’s music curriculum by referring to self-efficacy theory.\textsuperscript{21} Self-efficacy theory states that since music teachers have not successfully modeled improvisation into their teaching, their self-efficacy level for improvisation is low. With a low efficacy level, the teachers may be unable or unwilling to include these standards into their own teaching because of the risk of a negative outcome versus a positive experience.\textsuperscript{22}

The TFUMM report recognizes what many of these music educators have experienced in the modern model of undergraduate curricula. TFUMM seeks to restore improvisation as a foundational skillset for all music study to mold creative and highly-skilled musicians.\textsuperscript{23} In a survey that gathered information from three hundred and twenty-one instructors of forty-five

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\textsuperscript{22} Bell, \textit{Beginning the Dialogue}, 31-42.
\end{flushright}
undergraduate instrumental methods courses, participants were asked to rate the nine National Association of Music Education standards and how they included them into their curricula. Of all the standards, the two lowest rated were improvisation and singing.24

This recent publication suggests that the standards set by NAfME in 2014 do not reflect an increase in improvisation skills among graduating music education majors. Professionals and advocates of music education fully believe improvisation and creativity are important for the developing student and future musicians. However, improvisation instruction has been largely absent from instrumental education even though it has been proven to be beneficial to young and older students. As previously discussed in this chapter, music education faculty and researchers have been actively calling for change in higher education curricula, but with little evidence to suggest that the change has yet to occur. I believe this to be largely attributable to music education faculty and researchers being relegated to periphery status compared to applied teachers and their focus of notation and large ensemble heavy training.

I hold the belief that these problems are directly related and continue the cycle of applied teachers advocating for a notation and large ensemble focus with little to no creative options for students to begin to improvise. While many music educators have called for improvisation to be a central part of our curriculum, I believe there are two pedagogical and ideological hurdles we as educators must traverse to make lasting change for the better in undergraduate music curriculum. The first is identifying what skill sets are missing from a notation and large ensemble heavy curriculum, and the second is incorporating those skill sets into the undergraduate music curriculum in a manner that values the European music tradition and the new skill-sets equally.

I feel the problem with music curriculum at the undergraduate level is not simply the European music tradition. The problem is that a small part of the European music tradition is now currently dominating most music pedagogy from that musical lineage. This lineage is tied to the emphasis European art music places on reading notation and large ensemble performance practice. These practices produce music educators who largely fail to consistently promote aural understanding and learning within their classrooms and applied lessons, which at its core, is no fault of their own. While many music educators and scholars have called for improvisation to be central part of their programs, this is simply not a value shared by all music faculty in higher education.

I feel applied classical teachers in higher education are, in most cases going to teach what validates their training as a performer which is the large classical ensemble. This doesn’t necessarily mean that applied teachers are not open to the benefits of improvisation and creativity. However, many applied teachers treat improvisation as worthwhile only if it assists the final goal of accurate notation reading and performance of notated music.

To begin evenly allocating music skill sets away from a heavy notation and large ensemble focus, we will have to identify the core skills that we need as musicians to begin to be creative and improvise. One of the world leaders in musical creativity and improvisation research is Christopher Azzara who is on faculty at the Eastman School of Music. Azzara states that

improvisation involves specific guidelines that provide a framework for the performer. He states that tonality, harmonic progressions, and meter have roles in the improvisation process. Challenging these restrictions by playing inside and outside of the guidelines results in music improvisation. According to Azzara, one of the abilities needed to begin to improvise is to begin learning repertoire by ear. Audiation develops from the process of playing and transcribing by ear. Founded to honor Edwin Gordon, the Gordon Institute for Musical Learning states that audiation is the musical equivalent of learning to think, retain, and predict patterns in spoken language. Depending on the individual’s familiarity with tonal and rhythmic conventions there are several types and stages of audiation that can be developed. There are eight types of audiation (See Figure 1).

Figure 1: Eight Types of Audiation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Type of Music</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 1</td>
<td>Listening to</td>
<td>Familiar or unfamiliar music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 2</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Familiar or unfamiliar music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Familiar or unfamiliar music from dictation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4</td>
<td>Recalling and Performing</td>
<td>Familiar music from memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 5</td>
<td>Recalling and Writing</td>
<td>Familiar music from memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6</td>
<td>Creating and Improvising</td>
<td>Unfamiliar music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 7</td>
<td>Creating and Improvising</td>
<td>Unfamiliar music while reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 8</td>
<td>Creating and Improvising</td>
<td>Unfamiliar music while writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like the eight types of audiation, there are six stages associated with each type of audiation learning that every individual will experience while learning this skill. Although each audiation type targets specific tasks such as dictation and listening, all audiation exercises will go through these basic stages (See Figure 2).

Figure 2: Six Stages of Audiation Learning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Momentary Retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stage 2</td>
<td>Initiating and audiating tonal patterns and recognizing and identifying a tonal center in macrobeats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 3</td>
<td>Establishing subjective or objective tonality and meter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>Consciously retaining in audiation tonal patterns and rhythm patterns that we have organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 5</td>
<td>Consciously recalling patterns organized and audiated in other pieces of music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage 6</td>
<td>Conscious prediction of patterns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Because audiation has many different types and stages of learning, there are many musical benefits that musicians can utilize. Listening, performing, composing, dictating, and other areas of music can be positively influenced through audiation. Thus, looking at audiation as a core foundational skill is essential to changing the undergraduate curriculum into a creative and improvisatory environment. My belief that audiation is a core foundational skill is referenced by Edwin Gordon with his music learning theory. This theory states that music is learned in two distinct ways which is discrimination and inference learning in which audiation serves a role in inference learning. Gordon states:

> We learn in two general ways: discrimination and by inference. Discrimination learning is consciously learning information that you do not fully understand or why. For example, learning music by rote is discrimination learning because it is learning to discriminate between pitches and durations in a given piece. Rote learning is crucial to

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discrimination learning, and is fundamental to the later generalization and abstraction that occurs in audiation during inference learning. Inference learning, on the other hand, occurs when students are conscious of what they are learning, because they are teaching themselves to understand what is unfamiliar through their comprehension of what is familiar. Thus, discrimination learning is fundamental because it provides us with the necessary readiness for inference learning, which is the more conceptual of the two.\textsuperscript{35}

While discrimination learning is needed to prepare individuals for inference learning, inference learning is vital to learning unfamiliar material through audiation. If incorporating audiation and improvisation into current music curricula occurs, I believe we also need to examine where in the undergraduate music curriculum audiation currently is being utilized and how we can use those experiences to help shape a curriculum that reaches all music students. However, this is easier said than done. With the lack of progressive policies in the overall state of the conservatory model of teaching, it has become hard to push for change. In his book, \textit{Redefining Music Studies in an Age of Change: Creativity, Diversity, and Integration}, Ed Sarath writes about the state of the undergraduate music curriculum and the efforts of the College Music Society’s TFUMM report. Sarath states:

> In light of this long line of reform efforts, why the need for yet another initiative? The answer is simple: despite these past efforts, change has been confined largely to surface adjustments—what might be best characterized as “curricular tinkering”—at the expense of the systemic, foundational overhaul that is necessary…to acknowledge that these and other additive attempts at change have left the conventional curricular and cultural core largely intact, and left newer areas on the periphery.\textsuperscript{36}

I feel performers and educators in higher education need to consider that other areas of study that are pedagogically distant from the European music tradition can be helpful and, in many instances, transformative. I believe that teaching improvisation to all musicians will result in more individuals who can audiate at a high level which will, in my opinion, create more


versatile musicians. We need to actively seek music in higher education that utilizes improvisation in its’ pedagogy. In the case of finding teaching that actively includes audiation, the most active area of undergraduate music learning that utilizes creativity and improvisation into their teaching is in jazz education. There are a host of reasons why the European music tradition has never truly adopted or modeled the improvisation or audiation skills of jazz pedagogy. However, most of these reasons have nothing to do with the music itself.

CHAPTER 2: IMPROVISATION AND AUDIATION: THE PEDAGOGICAL ROLE IT SERVES IN JAZZ PEDAGOGY, BRASS PEDAGOGY, AND MAY SERVE IN FUTURE MUSIC CURRICULA

One of the most interesting complexities in the lack of emphasis on improvisation and creativity in the undergraduate music model is that improvisation is the most widely practiced musical activity in the world.\(^\text{38}\) What is even more perplexing is that it is the least acknowledged and understood musical skill in higher education.\(^\text{39}\) Jazz developed in America at the turn of the twentieth century and is one of the musicals genre in America that has its roots outside of the European tradition. While David Baker refers to American music “genuflecting” the European music tradition, history tells us that American music was heavily influenced by the European music tradition.\(^\text{40}\)

The main issue with jazz during the early twentieth century was that jazz was directly associated with black culture.\(^\text{41}\) In his book *Improvisation, Creativity, and Consciousness: Jazz as a Template for Music, Education, and Society*, Sarath speaks on the marginalized state of jazz and improvised music:

In order to understand how materialist or self-confining third-person tendencies have taken hold in jazz study, it is first essential to acknowledge how the marginalized status of the idiom in musical academe, at least in, contributed to them. Jazz not only brought to the academy a vastly different and expanded process spectrum that departed from the norm, it also introduced Afrological musicultural features to which the prevailing Eurological culture was not receptive.\(^\text{42}\)

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As previously established in Chapter One, improvisation was not only an accepted part of the European music tradition, it was celebrated and used as a tool to teach the fundamentals of basic musicianship skills. Even though improvisation was a fundamental skill in early music in the European tradition, academic culture has been focused on the object-mediated aesthetic rather than the central skills in musical reality.\textsuperscript{43} The “object-mediated aesthetic” in my opinion refers to the emphasis of the large ensemble. I feel the focus that schools of music and conservatories put on preparing to win large ensemble auditions is simply outdated. In my opinion, training our future music students to be creative will help them develop more versatile skills as twenty-first century musicians which will, in turn, create more opportunities for them to thrive and be successful.

Even though jazz has long been associated with being a “sub-species of composition,” it is marginalized in academia as “less-evolved.”\textsuperscript{44} It is also not surprising that throughout its history, jazz was even forbidden in many music university departments through the 1970s.\textsuperscript{45} Despite the National Association for Music Education’s (NAFME) changes to the national standards for music educators in 2014, music education majors still are required to take very few, if any, jazz classes or ensembles to complete their degree program.\textsuperscript{46} Baker’s findings are corroborated by Ed Sarath in his book, \textit{Improvisation, Creativity, and Consciousness: Jazz as a Template for Music, Education, and Society}. Sarath writes:

Most notable is the fact that, despite the idiom’s rich foundational skills, jazz remains largely excluded from academe’s core curriculum…Because music curricula tend to be filled to the brim with conventional requirements, leaving little time, space, or energy for electives, the result is that the majority of music majors--for whom interpretative

\textsuperscript{44} Sarath, \textit{Improvisation}, 7.
\textsuperscript{45} Sarath, \textit{Improvisation}, 151.
performance and analysis of European classic repertory is the focus—continue to graduate with little or no hands-on engagement with jazz.47

Sarath also suggests that besides the lack of jazz curriculum in higher education, there is also a lack of articles advocacy for jazz education in prominent music journals and that the hiring of jazz educators and performers in higher education is disproportionately smaller compared to the classical faculty.48

Despite the historical issues of minimizing jazz education in higher education, jazz has and will continue to flourish.49 What are some of the reasons for this? Why would any musical genre that struggles to gain an academic foothold in higher education curriculum still flourish? Regardless of the reasons behind the continued success of jazz education in higher education, one issue is very clear: the European music tradition is largely centered around interpretative performance of notation and anything outside of that will be relegated to periphery status as being “of less importance.”50

The likely answer behind jazz’s ability to still be a growing artform is that jazz is inherently aural. Jazz musicians for the past eighty years have been learning their craft by listening to recordings and imitating what they hear.51 The craft of improvising as a musician means that you are thinking in music and performing music simultaneously.52 David Baker had this to say about jazz improvisation and how we begin to effectively improvise in the jazz idiom:

While no intelligent musician would deny the necessity for emotional involvement in jazz music, the point is that jazz requires some basic fundamental skills and a grasp of the language. Without understanding of syntax and grammar of jazz music and styles, one is

48 Sarath, Improvisation, 151.
50 Sarath, Improvisation, 291.
51 Baker, Jazz Pedagogy, vi.
reduced to non-volitional choices. Almost anything that an artist does that cannot be reproduced on command is of virtually zero value.\textsuperscript{53}

Learning to improvise requires the ability to audiate, but it also requires the individual to imitate and learn the specific nuances of the music that you are imitating. There are many authors, educators, and researchers that suggest musical improvisation is learned the same way we learn language we learn to speak. Daniel Levitin describes improvisation and the process of learning relative pitch this way:

The notion of relative pitch values is seen readily in the way that we speak. When you ask someone a question, your voice naturally rises in intonation at the end of a sentence, signaling that you are asking. But you do not try to make the rise in your voice match a specific pitch. It is enough that you end the sentence somewhat higher in pitch than you started it. This is the convention in many languages and is known as a prosodic cue. The same can be found in western art music. All of us possess the capacity to learn the linguistic and musical distinctions we grew up learning and listening to. Therefore, to improvise effectively we should utilize this knowledge to teach improvisation to our music students.\textsuperscript{54}

Levitin suggests the same cues that we pickup in learning language such as the rise and fall of pitch in our voices, the speed of our words, and the space between words can also be interpreted and understood in musical improvisation. Details such as tunes, progressions, vocabulary, and patterns—what could be described as “music math”—are features that can be learned. Jeffrey Agrell refers to improvisation as “learning a whole new language.” He argues that learning improvisation and the language behind it will result in a greater understanding of the music and a greater enjoyment that comes from music making.\textsuperscript{55}


The level of communication that comes with learning to improvise will help create a more genuine and deeper contact with the outside world of music. After listening and score study, I will take entire pieces of classical solo literature and improvise over the harmonic progression of the piece. Additionally, I will sing the melodic line I would normally play on the trombone. I find that the more nuance of form and structure that I know, the more inherently connected I am to musical decisions within and interpretation of any given piece. Conversely, in his own teaching, Agrell has observed students who take rudimentary tasks and music and play them with little sense of being connected to the potential music they could be playing. Agrell expounds on this issue with his experiences on scale juries. Agrell writes:

It’s the end of the semester and I just sat through several days of brass juries, where many of the students had to demonstrate “proficiency” in their scales and arpeggios. Some of them zipped right through them, but too many more struggled, got lost, or made the kind of errors that made it clear that they were simply trying to parrot a sequence of ascending and descending pitches, learned too lately and not wisely. Although I don’t blame them entirely, given the system they have been brought up in, nevertheless, they played the pitches mindlessly, without any deeper understanding of music, music theory, or the instrument.

Like Agrell, I do not blame students who blindly play through scales due to today’s music model of higher education. They are simply following what the pedagogical norm is in many performing applied teachers’ studios. More times than not, today’s music students do not relate the foundational structures of music such as scales, harmony, form, and style as necessary tasks that need to be understood more than as a sequence of notes. The inherent value of foundational musical structures is that they provide the performer large scale components to audiate melody and harmony. For example, consider the first eight measures of Georg Philipp

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56 Agrell, The Creative Hornist, 3.
Telemann’s “Concerto in f minor” which is a common first year solo in the trombone literature (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Concerto in f minor by Georg Phillip Telemann

Students can use the harmonic and scalar structures associated with this solo and practice audiating the melody over it. Not only will it help students gain another level of understanding and clarity for the piece that they are working on, but it will give a lesson on form and how the harmonic movements correlate with the form itself. Students can utilize these changes to practice the sounds that are associated with them and learn the melodic content rather than reading notation verbatim from a sheet of paper. Furthermore, the closely related keys of f minor and A flat major are great ways to introduce relative keys and their dominant seventh relationships that are also involved in this eight-measure figure. You could also associate the f minor and C dominant seventh sonorities to one parent scale such as f harmonic minor and associate the A flat major and E flat dominant seventh sonorities to A flat Ionian. This is the beginning of transforming basic foundational music structures into positive and relevant pieces of information for the music student beginning to learn a piece of solo literature and music theory.
Taking these sounds and learning to improvise around them can also assist the individual to learn pieces of music that exhibit similar sonorities. In his article, “Integrated Music Learning’ and Improvisation: Teaching Musicianship Theory through ‘Menus, Maps, and Models,” Steve Larson describes why it is important to know both physical theory and the aural recognition together to understand music more effectively. Larson explains:

Someone may know intellectually that the fourth and seventh scale degrees are active tones that (in the right context) tend to resolve, respectively, to the third and eighth scale degrees. And the same person may have heard the resolution enough times to recognize it aurally as a familiar tonal event. But until that person associates that knowing-with-the-mind with that knowing-with-the-ears, he or she hasn’t integrated the learning of that resolution in a way that would allow him or her to identify that resolution. Learning is thus a kind of association.\(^{58}\)

It is not enough to simply know the music math behind counterpoint, harmony, and form. Without understanding the aural aspect, one cannot associate sound and sight together which gives the performer a great advantage to learn efficiently and audiate effectively. In his article, “An Aural Approach to Improvisation,” Christopher Azzara likens learning improvisation to learning a language. Azzara explains:

While memory plays a part in learning, the objective is to know the music in the same way that one has ownership of language when speaking…The more music a student knows, the easier it becomes for him or her to learn new music by ear and to make up original tunes.\(^{59}\)

The more reading and listening one does, the more that individual can assimilate those words and sentences into an acquired personal vocabulary applicable to daily conversations. The same holds true in musical language. The more you listen and imitate different sounds, the more likely your acquired vocabulary will be assimilated into your active music making. Azzara lists some basic tasks that are not necessarily tied to jazz syntax and language specifically, however,


these tasks will help the improvisation process such as learning to sing the bass lines, tonal and rhythm patterns to learn the harmonic progressions and their relationships to melody. He also suggests using ones’ ear, embellishing melodies, and not relying on notation. By practicing these techniques, the aspiring improvisor experiences multiple avenues of learning which will help broaden their music vocabulary by listening and learning music by ear.60

While it is important to highlight audiation and improvisation and their inherent relationship with jazz education, I sought to find evidence of this same importance in the classical realm. The brass pedagogue Arnold Jacobs is a great example to help make the case that audiation is the foundation of his teaching concept “Song and Wind.” I believe that highlighting Arnold Jacobs as a model for incorporating audiation in both his musical upbringing and his teaching of others will help applied performance faculty in higher education come to see these skill sets as valuable for the future of our music students.

Jacobs was the principal tubist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Although the bulk of his performance career was spent in an orchestral setting, Jacobs was renowned for his reputation as both a master performer and teacher. He taught tuba at Northwestern University in Chicago during most of his tenure with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and had a private studio of brass, woodwind, and voice students.61 Much of his talent as a performer and educator he attributed to his mother. At the age of ten, Jacobs began to play the bugle. His mother was a piano player who would play bugles calls on the piano which Jacobs would attempt to imitate. Clearly from an early age he was actively building his audiation skills on an instrument. After working on the bugle, Jacobs eventually upgraded to a Wurlitzer trumpet. He did not, however, receive an instruction book or any formal lessons on the trumpet, so he began to figure out valve

combinations while his mother played individual pitches on the piano. He would imitate those pitches and write them in his notebook.  

When his mother would bring home piano music to play, Jacobs would attempt to play the melodies by ear. Jacobs was utilizing this skillset from a very early age by playing everything on the trumpet by ear. There is even evidence that he even mimicked physicality as well. Throughout his childhood, he had a picture of Saul Caston, Principal Trumpet of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and would try to copy his embouchure in the mirror.  While this is not audiation, the imagery of mimicking an embouchure further shows that Jacobs did not initially learn in a way that was dominated by notation or technique. In his own words, Jacobs describes the influential impact of his mother and how she inspired his entire career as an educator and performer. Jacobs said:

I knew a great deal about music from my mother who was a fine, master musician. She taught me a great deal and accompanied me. I was having a ball playing, while I did not have proper teaching as a brass musician, I was challenged to interpret music at a very early age.

When he started college at the Curtis Institute of Music, Jacobs became obsessed with learning solfege. He repeated the course every single year and was known for recommending aural skills classes to other brass players as the best study a brass musician could undertake. One of the turning points during his time at the Curtis Institute of Music was during a class on musical phrasing. Jacobs hardly played tuba parts during this class, but instead played many different melodic and rhythmic parts in a wide variety of music and styles. Jacobs also liked to double on trumpet and trombone during his time at Curtis because it allowed him to experience

and play many different styles. Eventually, Jacobs’ teacher suggested that he needed to specialize, which he interpreted as playing any style on the tuba. Jacobs spoke on his decision to specialize on tuba and where his performing career started. Jacobs explained:

I played Wagner and Brahms by day, and Tiger Rag by night. It was a very rewarding experience for me. Eventually I chose to pick up string bass as a doubling instrument outside of brass because the microphone technology had improved. I took lessons from a teacher at Curtis, and began to play with a group called Three Blue Blazers where we played variety shows on radio stations.67

Jacobs was eventually appointed as Principal Tubist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony, and was hired as the full-time tubist of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. Yet even while he was serving as a tubist by day, Jacobs was still gigging at night in Indianapolis and Philadelphia clubs on upright bass. During the Pittsburgh Symphony off-season, Jacobs appeared in clubs, dances, cocktail lounges, and hotels in Chicago. By a stroke of luck, Jacobs was hired as an emergency tubist for a CBS Chicago broadcast which led to CBS adding him to the staff once they learned he could double on tuba and upright bass. Before choosing tuba as his main instrument, Jacobs was offered many full-time jobs including on tuba and upright bass.68

Arnold Jacobs’ background, from learning the bugle through his time at the Curtis Institute of Music, suggests that the early non-notation and aural learning he experienced greatly influenced his musical ability. What is even more interesting is that he was a good enough upright bassist to gig around in smaller “jazz-esque” and commercial ensembles where he was, in my opinion, likely engaging in some improvisatory musical practices on those upright bass gigs. His experience as a tubist and upright bassist who played many different styles is most likely emerged from the audiation skills he developed in his childhood. His referenced

68 Frederiksen and Taylor, Arnold Jacobs, 8.
philosophy of “Song and Wind” is well-known among many instrumentalists, but most notably brass players. When asked “What do you think when you play?” Jacobs’ response was:

I sing in my head what has to go out of the horn. It is like a relationship between a player-piano roll and the keyboard. I am always on the player-piano roll and never at the keyboard. I don’t care how the lip feels. I don’t care how I feel. The psycho-motor aspect of playing is a message from one part of the brain that is fed to the lip through the seventh cranial nerve. It goes through a computer activity that you have in the brain, but you are always conceiving the message, just as though you had vocal chords, but had them on your lips. So my whole concentration is not on what I feel or what I sound like, but what I want the audience to hear, It’s like telling a story, but instead of words you tell it with concepts of sound.69

The physicality of technique and the emphasis of notation that students experience in today’s music schools are different than the concepts Arnold Jacobs taught and utilized in his own playing. He connected a reliance on reading, rather than thinking, notes to the tendency to miss the first note of a phrase. Jacobs explained:

Another common problem with students is missing the first note of a phrase. They do not hear the note in their minds and consequently miss the note. The study of pitch recall, the ability to hear a note before its being sounded, is commonly called by musicians the “inner ear” and has nothing to do with the “inner ear” that maintains balance.70

My belief is that Jacobs’ reference to the “inner ear” is the same process as audiation; to hear a pitch in your head before it is sounded. With Arnold Jacobs’ background in audiation and his “Song and Wind” pedagogy, I believe that it is not a coincidence that one of the most influential brass pedagogues of all time was also a very versatile musician himself.

There are also other well-known brass pedagogues that utilize similar concepts in their teaching. Emory Remington was a trombonist and educator at the Eastman School of Music and is well known for his “singing style” when teaching other trombonists.71 There are many

70 Frederiksen and Taylor, Arnold Jacobs, 140.
accounts of Remington singing during lessons to imitate the sound he would want his students to emulate. William “Bill” Adams was a trumpet pedagogue that spoke on the values of simplifying brass playing with a fast airstream to define the embouchure and a mind to imagine the sound. In his 1975 Clinic Address at the International Trumpet Guild, Adams discusses the power that the mind has on influencing the physical and mental aspects of trumpet playing. Adams states:

The mind is the creator of concepts and attitudes that produce the physical activity necessary for proper trumpet playing. Wrong concepts can also make playing more difficult. We are capable of one thing at a time with considerable ease. When we have to be concerned with two things at a time, playing becomes more difficult, and when we are confronted with three things, it just literally becomes impossible. If we keep our minds on a beautiful sound, on accelerating the air through the sound, on not forcing the sound, and forget the embouchure, many problems will disappear.

While there is no direct reference to audiation in Remington’s or Adams’ pedagogical concepts, I believe their focus on the mind to create a singing style or a beautiful sound is related to audiation and the relationships that is formed between the mind and instrument. I feel much of these brass pedagogues’ views on brass teaching represents the idea that hearing or imitating sound to produce or improve sound is closely related to audiation.

The skill set of audiation, improvisation, and creativity are essential building blocks of a musician’s fundamental toolkit. The TFUMM report states that the lack of these skills in our undergraduate curriculum is directly responsible for our outdated learning environments.

College and university music programs are currently at a critical moment in its development. It is imperative that we take measures to improve a system that has not seen

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many major changes since the inception of conservatory-style schools in higher education. However, there is evidence that major universities are changing their music curricula to address these very issues. The University of Miami’s Frost School of Music has made changes to their music curriculum to reflect the skills needed in the twenty-first century. Shelly Berg currently serves as the Dean of the Frost School of Music and describes the curriculum and pedagogy at the University as “The Frost Method.” Berg states:

The world isn’t so much about everybody having the same skill set and going to work in in some big organization. The world is more and more about people curating their own unique careers and lives. We have this very broad school that trains people not only broadly but in a way that they can sort of curate themselves. So the Frost school begins with taking people out of lecture demonstrations, putting them into very small project groups where they learn to do things, not just learning about things. They learn to compose, arrange, improvise, and hear at a high level.75

Like the Frost School of Music, the Berklee School of Music’s Ear Training Department has specifically hired professors that are working professional musicians that utilize ear skills and audiation in real time. The chair of the Ear Training Department is Allen Chase and he describes the goals of his department and how it is used to serve the students. Chase states that one of his biggest priorities is to have faculty in the ear training department that are active performing musicians, so they can model this skill set for their students.76

As discussed in Chapter One, improvisation is an aspect of music that had an early influence on the European music tradition. Despite this, many classical musicians fear improvisation which can lead to a lower level of audiation skill development in music students. Although these skills are absent from many music curricula in higher education, jazz education actively supports these skills. Furthermore, if we can take the audiation and improvisation skills

and apply them to all our students, we can create an environment that allows performers to take more ownership during music performance.

The next issue is that, while many music education faculty have been advocating the increased use of improvisation and audiation in music education for years, the absence of improvisation in classical music points to a lack of encouragement from applied music faculty to utilize these skills, and contributes greatly to this fear of improvising.\textsuperscript{77} Increasingly, studies suggest that improvisation provides many benefits to performance and solidifying theoretical concepts. It is apparent that the more one improvises, the more one can raise all aspects of their musical ability. Increasing all aspects of a musician’s ability can even lead to composition opportunities, improvising in pop or period ensembles, and as discussed earlier in this chapter, elevate the level of chamber and solo repertoire.\textsuperscript{78} However, music competitions, grades, and technique in higher education has made it difficult to study musicianship outside of these values.\textsuperscript{79} I believe that musicians who actively learn the skill sets most frequently taught in jazz education will have a better chance to become an active working musician in the twenty-first century.

My experiences as a trombonist in the twenty-first century has shown a path that is simply not sustainable long term. More and more musicians are having to pick up performance opportunities that are outside of their academic training. The system in which trombonists learn their craft is at its core biased towards the European music tradition and does not address pertinent issues of performing in the twenty-first century. My solution was to create the first dedicated curriculum that simultaneously teaches undergraduate trombonists orchestral/classical

\textsuperscript{78} Hedquist, \textit{Eliminating Fear}, 40.
and jazz/commercial pedagogy through a traditional four-year course of study. Second, the curriculum infuses audiation skills into the core of the curriculum to better prepare students to become creative and responsive musicians. After creating this curriculum, I then sent it to ten educators and performers across the United States to critique the project and provide insight into their backgrounds with audiation, trombone pedagogy, and teaching undergraduate trombonists.

After an extensive search for projects relating to my own, I was unable to find research similar to this project. While there are a multitude of books and dissertations on trombone pedagogy that are theoretical and qualitative in nature, I did not find any that reference audiation as a core principle and only one advocates for the inclusion of jazz pedagogy in the traditional classical studio. The dissertation “The Incorporation of Jazz Pedagogy in the Traditional Trombone Studio” by Mark Sheridan-Rabideau discusses the inclusion of jazz pedagogy and interviews four educators: Buddy Baker, Steve Wiest, Tom Ervin, and David Sporny. While this dissertation is well-documented, it does not suggest an equal setting in the studio relationship between classical/orchestral and jazz/commercial pedagogy. It proposes that a simple inclusion of jazz is sufficient, while I support a more equal representation of both systems in my curriculum. The inclusion of jazz literature into the classical applied lessons and studio is his proposed method of incorporating jazz into trombone pedagogy and curriculum.80

I feel that textbooks and étude books only perpetuate the notion of non-improvised and non-aural based learning. More specifically, textbooks and etude books do not address specific nuance in styles in any genre, classical or jazz alike. In my opinion, stylistic nuance can only be attained by actively listening to others who are performing in the style you are trying to emulate.

Furthermore, I believe trombone educators who improvise will create a pedagogical advantage over their peers in higher education. While there are improvisation classes outside of applied lessons, nothing can replace the ability to imitate a teacher during one-on-one instruction time. Although I find Sheridan-Rabideau’s dissertation to represent progress in thought, I feel it is another academic example of jazz existing in curriculum from a marginal and peripheral standpoint. It is not implemented in a way that is inherently equal to the traditional approach.

The goal of creating this curriculum is to create opportunities for undergraduate trombonists to perform competently in a multitude of styles and learn core musical skills that are critical in becoming a performing musician in the twenty-first century. In his article, “Toward Convergence,” Evan Tobias discusses the need to stop interpreting existing bodies of music in rehearsal and performance. He argues that the exact processes jazz musicians use to re-contextualize and transform works are an integral part of the creative process in music.81 Furthermore, Tobias suggests the collaborative and participatory culture that arises from these processes is exactly the standard that music education should emulate. I believe if we equally merge the European music tradition with the skill sets of jazz education into one curriculum, we can make significant progress towards preparing our music students to become versatile and active performing musicians in the twenty-first century.

CHAPTER 3: PARTICIPANT HISTORY AND CRITIQUE ON AUDIATION, PERFORMANCE VERSATILITY, AND CURRENT MUSIC CURRICULUM

Research suggests that that higher education curriculum is biased against genres of music that utilize audiation and improvisation as core skill-sets, even though the research suggests the inherent advantages of including these skill-sets in all music instruction. Yet in some ways, we are beholden to the past efforts of music teaching in higher education and treating teaching like an exact science. The ability to include audiation in a curriculum that helps mold more versatile musicians is very important to me as an educator. We have a responsibility to inform our students of the real-world challenges it takes to make a living in music.\textsuperscript{82} Doing this ensures we teach music that is relevant to becoming a versatile twenty-first century musician.\textsuperscript{83}

To address these issues, I created a curriculum that incorporates performance literature and pedagogy in both the orchestral/classical and jazz/commercial genres while infusing audiation as a core foundational skill. This curriculum covers such topics as my ideal trombone studio model, suggested literature for each year of study for the typical bachelor’s degree, audiation-based exercises around scale and tune learning, recordings, and suggested readings. After creating the curriculum, I sent it to ten performers and educators throughout the United States (Alex Iles, Amanda Stewart, Brad Edwards, Chris Buckholz, Harry Watters, Jon Whitaker, Keith Jackson, Paul Compton, Tom Brantley, and Tony Baker) to critique and provide insight into their personal experiences on teaching trombone, improvisation, and audiation.\textsuperscript{84} All

\textsuperscript{84} These ten educators and performers were selected for a variety of reasons; performance versatility, higher education experience, conservatory training, administrative experience, and publishing experience. These are the qualities I felt that would strengthen my curriculum critique.
of these individuals are highly regarded as educators and versatile performers and were also chosen because of their familiarity with conservatory training, administrative experience, and publishing trombone literature. I sent all participants six questions to learn about their development as musicians and trombonists, their views and experiences with students in higher education, their opinions on trombone educators, and their critique and insight to the trombone curriculum I created. The six questions are as follows:

1. How did you learn trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

2. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

3. Do you feel that current students are well equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

4. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are equally well versed in classical/orchestral and jazz/commercial pedagogy, specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?

5. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

6. Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added to this that you feel is missing and anything you feel is unnecessary and should be removed?

These questions helped me understand everyone’s background, what path they chose professionally and academically, and ultimately if the case could be made that a correlation between those who participated in active aural exercises and those who didn’t were more likely to be active improvisors. I will address the first four questions before introducing the curriculum.
The answers to the first question, “How did you learn trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student,” were quite interesting, not only to hear everyone’s perspective on their time learning the instrument, but also to observe how they either actively developed aural skills or didn’t participate in them. Out of the ten interviewees, eight said they started to learn the trombone in the public-school system around the fifth to seventh grades. Many of the individuals cited using a beginning band book such as Tony Baker referring to the “Belwin Band Builder” specifically. Others referred to meeting in group class experiences with little individual instruction. However, three individuals started playing either earlier than the average or did not learn in a classroom setting at first. Amanda Stewart, Associate Principal Trombonist of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, describes the early years of when she started to play the trombone:

I was six years and nine months, so I figured out how many months it was….My learning process was maybe different than usual in that I would say I can't recall any kind of audiation practice… And so in starting really young, my teacher was not a trombonist, he was a baritone player. That was his main instrument. But his profession was the elementary school music teacher in my town, so he obviously had a knowledge of all the instruments. His basic approach was we just worked through a beginner band book and he began giving me some of the easier things out of the Arban's book. And then the other main thing that he did was he had written out all of the known hymns for church music and probably every lesson, I had to prepare one. So it was very church organized you could say. And we both went to the same denomination, so there was some level of ... Like that was totally normal especially for that area. For the small rural town in Maryland. So I guess in that way, learning tunes was kind of how I learned playing the trombone.

In contrast to Stewart’s experience with learning hymns, Harry Watters, retired trombonist of the United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, turned to a different genre when learning the trombone. Watters shares:

[85 Tony Baker (Professor of Trombone, University of North Texas) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
86 Amanda Stewart (Associate Principal Trombonist, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.]
It was playing by ear, playing along with the Beatles. The Beatles White Album. I went tune by tune and just learned the melodies, every tune off of that: “Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da,” “Back in the USSR,” “Dear Prudence,” and just sat in my room and learned that and then went out to expand that further. Went to Chicago, and even not necessarily jazz, but just music that I liked, melodies that I liked and that grew into Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald interpretation. I'm not really a great sight reader to begin with because I'm dyslexic, severely actually, so playing by ear was a tremendous release for me. Again, just a lot of ear training in the room, figuring out what the keys were, what the starting notes were, the form, if it's an AAB tune, what is the melody starting note? What is the starting note once we get to the bridge? Just making mental notes to myself and learning how to sing through the horn.\(^7\)

The learning experience of Tom Brantley, Professor of Trombone at the University of South Florida, was shaped by growing up in a household where both his parents were also public-school educators. Brantley says:

Well, my learning was both formal and informal because I grew up in a musical household, both parents being band directors and they were actually in college very young, so I went to music classes with them and grew up in a band room. My first instruments were drums and a bugle. I don't know if serious is the word for it, but I was listening to everything from Maynard Ferguson recordings, Chuck Mangione recordings, things like that from the 70s, and Buddy Rich on drums. So, I was imitating those trumpet players, and sounds, and melodies, and improvisations on a bugle, and then eventually a cornet, and then was just playing drums on anything I could find. My parents were dragging me to band camps and also drum and bugle corps.\(^8\)

Others spoke of aural training early in their development as well. Alex Iles, freelance and studio musician in Los Angeles, had a traditional group experience learning to play the trombone which he describes as “written music to be able to play the band part.”\(^9\) He later describes in junior and high school listening to music and learning melodies by ear and transcribing in late high school which eventually led to his development as a professional trombonist. Paul

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\(^7\) Harry Watters (Trombonist, United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, retired) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\(^8\) Tom Brantley (Professor of Trombone, University of South Florida) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\(^9\) Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Compton, Associate Professor of Trombone at Oklahoma State University, describes the lengths to which he utilized aural learning in his early development as a trombonist.

I learned trombone in the traditional public school system starting in the sixth grade. It was not ideal. We had basically our principal actually at the time in my elementary school. Our principal was a former horn player and he was the beginning band director. We did twice a week for I think it was just 30 minutes. Twice a week after school we did group brass, beginning brass instruction. So he had the entire beginning brass together twice a week, all the woodwinds together twice a week. I think percussion might've been on its own, just one day a week or something like that. Nowadays most of those beginning methods are coming with a CD or play along, something. But at the time there really wasn't any. He didn't really require us to sing much. That was actually kind of a big hole I think, in probably my first three years. There wasn't much of that. My middle school experience was kind of on the weak side and it wasn't really until I got into high school that my high school band director, when I expressed an interest in improvisation, he said, well, all I do is I turn on the radio and I try to play along.\(^\text{90}\)

Like Compton, Tony Baker had a similar experience with beginning to learn how to improvise. Baker says:

Okay, you know what I did a lot of was I listened to jazz. In my hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas, we had of all things, a full-time jazz radio station. At that point, I started to fall in love with jazz and I had started recording things that I liked on my cassette player straight from the radio, we're talking old school here, and one of my favorite things was to play along with what I was hearing. At that point I didn't really even know the difference between what was the head and what was the improvisation, I just tried to catch everything that I could, and of course like any radio station, they repeated things, so each time I heard something over again, I would catch a little bit more of it. That was really, I think between hearing my band director play, and copying him, and imitating what I was hearing on that jazz radio station, that was probably the best aural start I could've gotten to learning the instrument.\(^\text{91}\)

Not unlike Alex Iles, Tony Baker, Paul Compton, and Harry Watters, Chris Buckholz, Associate Professor of Trombone at the University of New Mexico, was also greatly influenced by audiation in his early music experience. Specifically, Buckholz speaks about the time he

\(^{90}\) Paul Compton (Professor of Trombone, Oklahoma State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\(^{91}\) Tony Baker (Professor of Trombone, University of North Texas) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
realized he could interpret what he was hearing in his head into fingerings and slide positions.

Buckholz shares:

I started out as a euphonium player in sixth grade. In seventh grade I was serious enough about it that my parents were considering getting me an instrument, but I wanted to play in jazz band and so instead of getting me a euphonium, they were advised to get me a valve trombone and so I started playing valve trombone... so then in eighth grade I got a slide trombone... I was in a French class in what was that, like eighth grade I want to say, seventh grade, eighth grade, not long after I had started playing valve trombone and there was this tune that came on with the beginning of these French films that they would show us, these short films in French. I can still remember the tune. I remember fingerling along with this tune. Valve combinations on the valve trombone and I went to go to band after that and I tried it and all the valve combinations were correct, so I was able to aurally process without an instrument and know what those notes were. I always did a lot of improvising from seventh grade on and a lot of playing by ear. In fact, I probably did too much playing by ear and not enough playing off music and doing what I was assigned to do, but because I was really interested in improvising. I was very interested in just playing things that I heard and imitating people off of recordings. A lot of what I did when I was young was "audiation." It wasn't told to me to do that, that's just what I did. 92

While eight of the ten interviewees started to learn trombone in the public-school band, seven of them reported early examples of learning aurally to either supplement their sound concept or to learn how to improvise, but only one had these aural tasks assigned specifically by a teacher. Brad Edwards, Associate Professor of Trombone at Arizona State University, Jon Whitaker, Associate Professor of Trombone at the University of Alabama, and Keith Jackson, former Professor of Trombone and current Dean of the College of Creative Arts at West Virginia University, reported they did not experience many instances of aural learning in their early musical upbringing although Keith Jackson reported that he did on occasion “cop by ear” or “learn whole lines by ear” playing in various cover and garage bands. 93

92 Chris Buckholz (Professor of Trombone, University of New Mexico) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
93 Keith Jackson (former Professor of Trombone, current Dean of College of Creative Arts, West Virginia University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Jon Whitaker expressed how everything changed for him when he attended Murray State and studied with Ray Conklin, largely due to Conklin’s use of vocalization and audiation.

Whitaker recalls:

A lot of that teaching is done by “hey, listen to me. Do it like this.” And I tell them, "This is not necessarily the best way to do it, but it's a way and it's better than yours at this point." At least with the undergrads, it's better than yours, so just copy this. There's an element of this I want you to copy. But he never did that. He did a lot of singing. Tons and tons and tons of singing and lessons. He would sing at us and with us, so it reminds me of listening to old recordings of the Remington trombone choir where he's just—you can hear him singing over the top of the group, which is pretty cool to listen to actually.

Replies to him, I ask:

Yeah. It sounds like he was planting the seed for a little bit more of a "all experience" in your lessons; would you agree?

Whitaker replies:

Yeah, absolutely. And he would make us sing a lot of the time…. Buzzing was a big part of it too… We may have buzzed more than we sang in lessons. It's been a long time ago, but that was a big part of it, too.94

Many of these very successful individuals are trombone performers and educators who have had experiences with learning music by ear either to improve the tone or technique on the instrument, or to begin to learn how to improvise. I do not believe that is mere coincidence that nine out of the ten interviewees reported experiences of aural learning. Edwin Gordon believes that audiation forms the foundations for all types of music aptitudes and for all musical achievement.95 Certainly, many of these educators and performers have been successful, not only because of their hard work and determination, but also because they either purposefully or intuitively developed their ability to audiate. Playing by ear serves a vital role in developing

94 Jonathan Whitaker (Associate Professor of Trombone, University of Alabama) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
independent musicianship. Independence from our professional instructors and teachers will lead to more opportunities to function musically without assistance. When comparing Amanda Stewart, Harry Watters, and Tom Brantley, these three individuals have very different career paths where one is in a symphony orchestra, a premiere military jazz band, and an university educator, but all three experienced learning melodies by ear whether they were directed to do so or used it to function with a learning disorder. Iles, Baker, Compton, and Buckholz experienced learning songs and melodies from the radio or tv programs and I believe became essential in their development as future jazz improvisors and educators.

This leads to the second interview question, “What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?” All the interview participants agree that audiation should play a role in the traditional student model, although they share differing experiences. Paul Compton utilizes audiation and other skills he advocates in his studio at Oklahoma State University. In answering question two, Compton explains:

I think it’s extremely important and I do think that most students coming in are, that is a weakness for them. I also think that it’s a little tricky. It’s a little tricky by then to get them on the right path toward doing that better. But I think it’s important, because I really feel like the act of actually playing the trombone, moving the slide, making a sound on the instrument, is a fairly simple idea. Especially putting air into the instrument; if you whittle it down to all you’re doing is blowing through a piece of tubing. Playing, actually manipulating the instrument itself is a fairly simple concept, if you have everything right in your head and in your ears… I’ve done some experimentation with students where before I allow them to play a note of a solo, I have them sight singing it, playing some at the piano, analyzing the intervals, listening to recording, and developing a very clear concept before they play a note of it. I feel like that has been pretty successful at times. The same thing sort of similar in terms of memorization, because I have my students do a lot of memorization. Often I feel like students approach memorization as a separate idea from learning a piece, and I try to encourage that memorization is basically the result of learning something correctly. On many different levels, you learn it right and then you've

got it. You've got it memorized. That's something I think that in the jazz world is more successfully done pedagogically, and a little less so I think in the classical. ⁹⁷

Compton speaks about the role of playing a trombone and what he believes to be a simple process of audiation or what he refers to as “everything right in your head and your ears.” He observes that instruction circumnavigates audiation-based learning with more muscle memory-oriented teaching taking place. Singing is one of the strongest skills that translates to developing audiation. ⁹⁸ It is in my experience as a trombone educator that trombone students that sing well, play well. Furthermore, instructing students to go to the piano and learn the intervals and sing is one of the best things you can do to learn how to improvise in the future. ⁹⁹

Chris Buckholz’s experiences of modeling sound from his teachers has led to him modeling sound for his own students. He describes his own teaching as including audiation as a modeling mechanism, but also utilizes it in improvisation lessons with his students. Buckholz explains:

Well I guess it depends on what your definition of audiation is. I guess one of the reasons why universities like to hire people who play the instrument well is so they can model for their students. If you define audiation as being able to hear the way something is played—sound, articulation, intonation, all that kind of stuff—and then being able to imitate, incorporate that into your own playing, then I would say that there's probably a fair amount of audiation if the professor plays… If the they can hear it, generally they do pretty well. It depends on the student but I would say the majority, the vast majority of students that I've taught, if I use that kind of audiation in lessons, they respond very positively. If you're talking about me playing something and having them play it back, I do that quite a bit with improvising. ¹⁰⁰

Buckholz describes playing by ear and modeling as a way for his students to have an instantaneous model for them emulate, which he finds to be successful with most of his students.

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⁹⁷ Paul Compton (Professor of Trombone, Oklahoma State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
¹⁰⁰ Chris Buckholz (Professor of Trombone, University of New Mexico) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
My experiences have led me to believe that students that learn to emulate sound, articulation, etc in their applied trombone lessons have a higher probability of being able to learn how to improvise in the future. I have found that developing a student’s ability to hear pitch is only part of the equation. A student that learns how to emulate articulation, tone quality, and expression can eventually learn improvisatory language.

Jon Whitaker shares the importance of audiation in his studio and his lessons with Michael Mulcahy, the Second Trombonist in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Whitaker states:

What I find in my own teaching and things that frustrate me with undergrad students as it regards to—like let's take scales, for example, or patterns or just something like that. I may play an arpeggio pattern at them, and then play it again but play again a different order. And a lot of them having the ability to hear what ... A lot of times I would play it once, they'd play it back to me and get it right. Then I'd play it again and alter one pitch and skip interval or something and then have them play it back to me, and they'd play it the same way they played it the first time. Just like their mind and their focus and concentration is on something completely different instead of listen to exactly what you hear and copy exactly what you hear. Obviously, from a music theory standpoint, that's important. But one of my big pedagogical heroes and somebody that I really look up to is Michael Mulcahy. And every time I've had a lesson with him, regardless if it was back when I was in school or as recently as last December, a year ago December, just the insistence on "I want you to copy exactly what you hear, every aspect of it: the tone, the volume, the tempo, the attack, the sustain, the release. Basically, I want to brainwash you into trying to sound like this." And so, I think in that regard I think it has an unbelievable place in the studio in terms of the learning to make a sound on the instrument… I don't think there's enough emphasis on it. I think in a classical… we're really a slave to the page, I think, in a lot of respects.¹⁰¹

As mentioned in Chapter Two, Jon Whitaker discusses his experience of utilizing playing by ear in lessons and where many undergraduate students will lose concentration when listening to different scalar or arpeggio patterns. His time taking lessons with Michael Mulcahy speaks on the detail and diligence that he expects from his students in sound concept, attack, pitch, sustain,

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¹⁰¹ Jonathan Whitaker (Associate Professor of Trombone, University of Alabama) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
etc. Whitaker also acknowledges that musicians that are from the traditional classical settings are “slaves to the page” which corroborates earlier findings in Chapter One of a notation and large ensemble heavy undergraduate curriculum. We become so focused on interpretative performance that technical facility and sound production is valued more than developing audiation skills. I believe that if a student develops the ability to audiate, that their ability to learn efficiently and effectively grows exponentially in all music related skill sets.

Offering a different perspective, Amanda Stewart, who attended the Juilliard School of Music, speaks on her lack experiences of audiation and the conservatory’s focus on winning large ensemble auditions. Stewart says:

My feeling is that a lot of classical players probably lack to some extent because it’s not formally focused on, in my opinion. From my training, from being at a conservatory, there's zero. Other than, if you look at from the general sense of mimicking what your teacher does in regards to timbre or sound concept and those things, those are present, but I think the jazz approach to it with your instrument in your hand is—it would be interesting to try to introduce that from a jazz medium to a classical studio several times a year to have that knowledge, to have that experience, to open up their ears and their mind to that. That would be really helpful. Or if there's a way to integrate that in a classical sense. Just to create some kind of formal template to say this is the classical version of this and this is how it can help a trombonist become better, classically. In essence you want—I always feel like you want to become a well-rounded musician and I know definitely where my weaknesses lie and the entire jazz medium is a big weakness and a lot of that was I didn't seek it out at Juilliard. Obviously, I could have sought it out more because there were people there that teach just that, but the intermingling of the studios was very minimal and it was also not encouraged. I feel like it was just very one track. If you studied classical performance there, you were expected to give it everything you had. I was even told not to do homework for other classes unrelated to my trombone practicing. I was told just get a C. Doesn't matter. That's not why you're here. You're here to win a job.\(^\text{102}\)

Stewart’s experience in a conservatory involve mimicking sound concepts much like the other interview candidates. Yet, in general, she felt her experiences were “very one track” and was even encouraged to not do homework or participate in anything outside of her classical

\(^{102}\) Amanda Stewart (Associate Principal Trombonist, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
performance major. The final goal to “win a job” is a first-hand experience that supports the emphasis on notation and large ensemble performance as described in Chapter Two. While I absolutely value the large ensemble and the artistic opportunities it presents, the amount of opportunities to win a full-time job versus the amount of students studying to win them, are in my opinion, out of balance.

In his own teaching, Harry Watters sees audiation as playing an important role in his students’ development. He believes it is “absolutely crucial” that students are able to hear the note before they play it. When conversing about the development of absolute pitch through audiation exercises, Watters shares the process he uses with his students to develop pitch recognition. Watters explains:

I really encourage this with my students to just develop a sense of tonal recognition like you're memorizing dates on a history test. You can hear that B-flat. You can relate that to everything else. If you can just hear that B-flat and be able to pick it out of the air at any point, but then, my students also play the note game with me. Okay. That's a G. Find that on your horn. Play that note on the piano. They'll team up in groups and a partner will play a note on the piano, in the middle range, and then as quickly as possible, their colleague needs to be able to find it on the horn and play it. Boom. It gets faster and faster and it is neat. Their sense of tonal awareness is heightened within a few minutes and they can keep developing that. I do that all the time and just encourage my students to play the note game. My brother and I did that when we were kids. We had a piano near the dinner table and we would bet each other peas and carrots what a particular note was. I don't have perfect pitch and neither does my brother, but we have a very strong sense of relative pitch.

This concept of absolute pitch and the relationship with your instrument is corroborated by Alex Iles. During our interview, we exchanged experiences of developing pitch recognition and the process of utilizing audiation in learning. Iles shares:

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103 Some Improvising jazz musicians refer to the term “absolute pitch” to describe their ability to sing and hear pitch and be able to replicate it on their instrument. Many recognize absolute pitch as the pinnacle of relative pitch. This is not to be confused with “perfect pitch” which is associated with recognizing pitch as it compares to A=440.

104 Harry Watters (Trombonist, United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, retired) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
One of the things I’ve found is that I hear better when I’m holding my instrument… I can hear pitch much better. Not just intonation, but my actual pitch. My absolute pitch is better when I’m holding my instrument. I totally relate to that 'cause when I’m—like in lessons, if I’m sitting there, and I want them to play something, if I start to sing it to them, I’m sometimes off by a fourth. I'm not even close, but as soon as I have my horn in my hand, I can sing what I want them to play a lot better, or a lot more consistently. I’d say it’s about 50% better at least. It's still off, but I mean I can hear the pitches in my head much better with my instrument there. That’s kind of an interesting phenomenon to me that we audiate based on this outside stimulus.

I reply:

It's interesting you say that 'cause I always tell my students that I want them to create a personal relationship with their instruments. Whenever we're working on a Rochut, and a student is struggling, we’ll sing through, but I’ll also have them hold their instrument and I want them to sign me the positions at the same time. So they can be kinesthetically aware with their slide, and their bell they can be aurally aware. I’m not sure what it is, but there's some kind of magic that happens right there. I’ve noticed that whenever I sing—if I’m singing Rochut number 13, or (singing)—my hand right now, as I’m going through all those positions.

Iles relates:

Yeah, right, right. That's why so many more students that listen a lot and have a sense of the music in their ear, even if it's not absolute pitch wise the same, but at least the general flow of the music and the idea they're trying to get across. If they spend time listening, which is not time on the face, but it's listening, it's such a huge advantage over the students that don't do listening at all and have no context. They're just playing Pin the Tail on the Donkey a lot of the time.

Iles’ metaphor of students who do not have music in their ear are playing “Pin the Tail on the Donkey” is representative of my belief that many traditional classical students are essentially making educated physical guesses when playing their instrument. I have always believed that we as teachers and learners need to incorporate aural, visual, and kinesthetic learning into one sensation to become efficient instrumental performers.

105 The “I want them to sign” comment refers to my three-step process to teach students to associate pitch with their instrument to strengthen their ability to audiate. The first step is to “sing it” with out holding the instrument. The second step is to “sing and sign it” where you sing and mime the positions at the same time. The final step is to play it on the instrument.

106 Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Tony Baker agrees that audiation should play a role in the traditional trombone studio and that students generally lack the ability to hear pitch. He explains:

I think it has a huge role. One of the things that I find so much in my teaching, is just a lack of strength of ear. Being able to hear it and play it, being able to not just hear in terms of conceptualize it and play it, but hear it just in terms of imitating it and repeating it. I think that it has a huge role, and I think it's important for any instrumentalist, but especially us trombone players, our ears and our aural strength needs to just be so strong and in general, our students come in without the strongest ability to hear and to produce simply what it is they're hearing. It's all so instrument focused rather than hear it, produce it on the instrument.107

Similar to Baker’s position on audiation in the trombone studio, Brad Edwards says, “it plays a more important role than they realize and the majority of them lack.”108 Keith Jackson, who has experience as both a trombone educator and administrator in higher education, supports audiation as a music department-wide initiative. Jackson proposes:

One, I definitely think it's something we need to be bringing to the forefront more. With time, I would say the aural skills in audiation are actually, especially early in the development, more important than the written skills, as far as theory goes… But also as far as developing really versatile comprehensive musicians, if they don't have their whole skills they can't switch styles, plain and simple… without the aural skills because if nothing else they can't pick up nuances that make those styles really happen… In general, I would say most students lack the skills. Those students who have the skills, normally in my experience have come from non-traditional… And when I say non-traditional, the kids who do have it, either through coming up as singers or some kind of church background, where part of their background is a non-academic setting.109

Jackson emphasizes that without the aural skills present, students do not have the ability to traverse multiple styles of music effectively. Furthermore, he also corroborates that in his experience, most individuals who have these skills come from non-traditional backgrounds.

Through my research, I believe the emphasis towards the European music tradition in higher

107 Tony Baker (Professor of Trombone, University of North Texas) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
108 Brad Edwards (Professor of Trombone, Arizona State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
109 Keith Jackson (former Professor of Trombone, current Dean of College of Creative Arts, West Virginia University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
education and the exclusion of skill-sets that are formally taught in jazz education are the primary reasons for this.

Tom Brantley suggests in his interview that audiation-based skills need to be taught to students at a younger age because it gives them an advantage in learning stylistically diverse music. This leads into the third question, “Do you feel that current students are well equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?”

There is a consensus amongst the interviewed participants that there is a problem with undergraduate trombonists’ ability to play multiple styles of music and the participants express a variety of opinions related to the causes and effects of this issue. Tom Brantley examines brass pedagogy and students who come from this background and finds they are generally behind other musicians including woodwinds, strings, and singers. Brantley explains:

Again, in my opinion it's a little bit scary. For one thing, they're so focused, perhaps, on orchestral playing that even with that, they haven't studied that music enough much less the different styles that they need to make a living in the twenty-first century in an orchestra much less if they don't win an orchestra job. I mean, in my opinion, it's a real serious problem in the world, certainly in Europe and the States, if not worldwide, but more so in the States, I would argue than my limited experience in Europe. I think we're very stubborn here in the American brass world with how we're training our students, brass players especially. It's not a knock on our current superstars because obviously they—I don't think we have a problem in teaching them how to play the trombone, meaning they can play the trombone, it's the level is higher than I would've ever imagined in my lifetime, my short lifetime. But in terms of style, oh, in my opinion, we're woefully behind singers, and string players, and even woodwind players. I think the brass players, we're doing ourselves a huge disservice by not exposing them to more styles, making them less and more and be better musicians rather than just technicians. So I think that's a real serious problem overall.110

Tony Baker agrees with Brantley and believes there is a systematic issue with higher education allowing students to explore their options. Baker states:

110 Tom Brantley (Professor of Trombone, University of South Florida) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
I don't think that the typical undergraduate trombonist is equipped to handle all styles of music, and there's a number of reasons for this. One, in most programs, it's not necessarily strongly encouraged that the student branch out into styles of which they're not familiar or in which they're not interested. We [University of North Texas] probably do a better job than most schools at really encouraging students to really be as broad and versatile as possible. So, we strongly encourage our classical students to play in Lab Band, and we strongly encourage our jazz students to participate in concert ensembles. We've got a Latin ensemble, new music ensemble, and we have chamber ensemble, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. We encourage our students to participate in all of it, but I think that in most programs, if the student is not interested in one area or another, they're allowed to stay uninterested if that makes any sense. That's not such a huge problem if the student is going to be going into the public schools. I still think it's a problem, but for those students who have said they want to play for a living, I think it's a real problem if you say you want to play for a living, if you're a classical player, and you can't play big band style. I think it's a real problem if you're a jazz player who says he wants to play for a living, but you can't sit in a brass quintet and sound like you know what you're doing. So, yeah, I would have to say no, students aren't as versatile stylistically as they need to be, and I do consider it something that needs to change.\footnote{Tony Baker (Professor of Trombone, University of North Texas) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.}

While he states higher education as a contributing factor as to why trombonists are generally not capable of playing multiple styles, he also says that programs generally will allow uninterested students to stay uninterested when it comes to students participating in differing stylistic ensembles. I have observed through my experiences in academia as a student and educator that music schools will allow students to traverse entire degrees without experiencing a classical or jazz ensemble. As discussed in Chapter Two, many music programs throughout the United States do not require jazz classes or ensembles to finish traditional degrees such as the music education and performance degrees. Baker also suggests that if you want to play for a living and cannot play multiple styles, you are going to have problems effectively supporting yourself playing only one general style of music.
With her experience in learning in a true conservatory model, Amanda Stewart speaks to her time at the Julliard School of Music, and the lack of diversity in preparation for a career in music. Stewart says of experience with genres and techniques outside the classical tradition:

I would say at a conservatory, no… I would venture to say that of the people I know who have studied trombone at a university as an undergraduate, there is definitely a difference. They definitely are exposed to other styles of music and also required to play in those other styles of music. So there's definitely a broader understanding of more styles of music, for sure.\textsuperscript{112}

In comparison to the experiences of Tony Baker, Stewart experienced even fewer opportunities than most public university trombone students. This is not to say that attending a conservatory is bad in any way. She is simply stating that while she has successful career in music as a professional orchestral trombonist, she did not receive any instruction outside of that realm.

Even beyond the strategies employed in the conservatories, Jon Whitaker believes that the lack of audiation and improvisation instruction at the public-school level is prohibiting a wider audience of students developing interest in multiple performing opportunities. Whitaker explains:

I think in general with the students that I get, your run-of-the-mill, basic middle-tier B-flat trombone players that come in, lack this a lot. And I think it has a lot to do with just what is made important in the band room in public school. And that's not necessarily saying that everything that happens in public school is negative. It's just—not a lot of it prepares someone for a focus study of an instrument like what they get when they get to school… I have a couple of other grads that are about to graduate that are remarkable talents. Unbelievable players but have their blinders on big time in this orchestral path. It's just the way they've gone… I try to encourage them to do improvise a little bit. But they are leaving here—I don't know that they're equipped to handle—if they would get called the last minute to go sit in with a big band, if they'd be able to hang, you know what I'm saying?\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{112} Amanda Stewart (Associate Principal Trombonist, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
\textsuperscript{113} Jonathan Whitaker (Associate Professor of Trombone, University of Alabama) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Whitaker’s image of trombone students who have their “blinders” on and often choose the orchestral path rather than explore other styles of music, is a compelling description of the issue at the center of this study. I feel that many students who choose a very specific path are academically funneled towards that goal and the actual student has very few contrasting musical experiences to make an informed decision on their future. This idea corresponds to Tony Baker’s thoughts on schools allowing uninterested students to stay uninterested in stylistic versatility.

Although Alex Iles generally agrees that trombonists are not prepared to handle multiple styles of music after undergraduate study, he does not think it is feasible or necessary to do so. Iles argues:

Well, I'd say no. And I'm not sure the goal should necessarily be that. This is probably another part of your question. I'll answer the first part. I don't think so because I think there are so many—in order to be professional musician, whatever that loose term is, it's too early to tell what kind of direction you're gonna be in as an undergrad because the world changes so quickly for each player, and each player makes their own path. It's not like one complete job description for a trombonist, the way a lot of people like to think of it where they have a goal at the end of their school time, and they think “this is what I'm gonna do, this is the direction I’m gonna go.” I think there's so many primary directions people might have, but in the meantime there's a lot of other directions they might have that could involve music and might not even. It might be something related to the arts, like maybe some form of concert promotion or arts administration, or working a record label. Those are all things I've done, where they're sort of music related, and you might a musical ... Your musical background will help you in those situations, but you're not necessarily just playing the trombone. I don't think there's a lot of ways that undergrad careers—they can introduce you to the idea, but I don't think the person's actually gonna be ready to do those things at the end of an undergrad. I think they're gonna be maybe more aware of the options that they have open to them, and they hopefully learn how to learn a few of those things so that they can repeat the process away from school. 114

Alex Iles says that while undergraduate programs can possibly introduce you to new ideas and musical opportunities, it is being open to those options that are great and most advantageous when you can repeat the process away from school. While I agree that students

114 Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
who explore different musical styles outside of an academic environment can be very beneficial, I do not believe students will behave in this way unless their undergraduate music experience is academically diverse as well. I feel that students who do experience a wide array of musical styles are more likely to pursue them after undergraduate study.

Harry Watters agrees with Iles’ assessment of students not being fully prepared for careers upon graduation, Watters says that curriculum and modern technology as the reasons for that lack of preparation. Watters explains:

I think probably the problem is the curriculum, and you identified that pretty well in your proposal. I also just think that undergraduates are, they have too much on their plates. They're expected to—National Association of Schools and Music, they keep adding requirements and their students are playing in way too many ensembles and all these extra activities, but also, with digital media and smartphones, they're also distracted.\(^{115}\)

Watters’ opinion on the oversaturation of course requirements and Edwards’ opinion that the lack of versatile undergraduate trombonists is because of a lack of opportunity, is in my opinion, related.\(^{116}\) I interpret a lack of opportunity as a symptom of coursework overload with not enough time to pursue other artistic paths in a music school. While Watters and Edwards point to a lack of opportunity and increasing curriculum requirements, Keith Jackson suggests that the biggest reason undergraduate trombonists are not prepared to perform in multiple styles after graduation is because students are not being taught or encouraged to listen which leads to fear playing by ear. Jackson states:

I would say they're definitely not. And actually, it's obvious in this conversation when we say "all" we're talking about all the art music, whether it be jazz or classical, and of course all the contemporary styles of pop. So when you say, explain that's what "all" means, because in the academy sometimes people think "all" means jazz and classical, that's it. But since I don't think most of them are coming out, and I think it's one, that they've not been taught how to listen. And then not been encouraged to actually spend

\(^{115}\) Harry Watters (Trombonist, United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, retired) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\(^{116}\) Brad Edwards (Professor of Trombone, Arizona State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
time on applying those listening skills. So I would say the number of students that have been told to transcribe anything, or play anything by ear, is very small. And even working with adult students, which I still get to do occasionally, and say, "Okay, play ‘Somewhere Over the Rainbow’," or "Play anything. Pick a Beatles tune and ask them to play it by ear," they basically freak out. Even if they're experienced teachers. Especially if they've been teaching instrumental music at the high school level. If they've been teaching elementary it's different. But if they've been teaching high school instrumental music, they're not comfortable doing things by ear and playing by ear. And I think that's the sign of an ongoing problem that's still not been addressed. I don't believe people are learning how to listen and then how to play it on their instruments.\textsuperscript{117}

Chris Buckholz cites several factors that determine if undergraduate trombonists are prepared to handle multiple styles of music after graduation or not. Buckholz shares:

Well, I would say the average, boy that's a really tough question. It really depends on the institution and it depends on the teacher and it depends on what the student wants to do. I would say probably most undergraduates across the board unless they're going to school at Julliard are not prepared for a professional career and at most universities where the students are doing multiple styles of playing, they are at least familiar with them, they may not play them at a high professional level, but they're at least playing them in a way that's generally good and I’d say in addition to the just kind of stylistic stuff that is not up to a professional level, there are technical things as well. I guess across the board the way our curricula are structured is solely around classical music for the most part. Very few people incorporate jazz or any other styles really into what they do unless there's maybe something that's quasi-jazzy in a written out typical trombone literature thing.\textsuperscript{118}

Although Buckholz’s thoughts on students who attend conservatories are corroborated by Amanda Stewart, he also alludes to the fact that most music curricula are structured around music that is derivative of the European music tradition. Jackson made the point that students are not utilizing listening and improvisation in their daily practice and skill development which is a direct corroboration of the TFUMM report as it pertains to the lack of creativity and improvisation in traditional music curricula. These core issues are what I believe are directly

\textsuperscript{117} Keith Jackson (former Professor of Trombone, current Dean of College of Creative Arts, West Virginia University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
\textsuperscript{118} Chris Buckholz (Professor of Trombone, University of New Mexico) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
affecting graduating undergraduate trombonists who are solely focused on the European music tradition.

In responding to question three, Paul Compton cites his experiences in teaching and how he adds the skills of listening, aural skills, and improvisation into his studio at Oklahoma State University. Compton states:

In some of the more specialized institutions, the larger schools of music and the conservatories, they often try to keep the path of study pretty independent and exclusive, and require students to choose a direction, either classical or jazz. But I personally feel like I try to guide my students to study everything, and with only a few exceptions. I'd say all my students over the years since I've been teaching at the college level have played in all style of ensemble and have at least done some focused work on improvisation. Whether or not they were planning to make jazz a major part of their future or not. Definitely they've explored improvisation at least on an introductory level and certainly listened quite a bit. I try to encourage my students to listen as much as possible. Earlier this year I actually brought into a studio class I think it was 12 recordings, and I did a little test. A little drop the needle kind of blindfold test. I had 12 different trombone players. Tenor trombone and bass trombone, classical and jazz players playing today, and some players that are from the past that are no longer with us. A pretty wide range of things. I played them for my whole studio and asked them to see if they could identify who the players were. Many of them actually struggled quite a bit with it. I figured that some would be kind of obvious and some would be difficult to identify. There were a few that got more than half, but there were several that only got one or two. So I put all those recordings, and it was like Carl Fontana, J.J., Christian Lindberg, Joe Alessi. You know, mostly fairly well known. Some of the bigger names in our world. And a couple of slightly more lesser known, like I can't remember if I put a Steve Davis. I know I had Michael Dease in there, I think. Then we talked about that a little bit and I put all of those in the drop box, and I said I want you to listen to these a bunch, and we're going to go back at the beginning of next semester and listen again to the same players. Same players, different recordings, and see if your ears have—your ability to recognize vocabulary and style and nuance and inflection and sound and timbre. See if you identify them more. And I encourage you to listen to these recordings and other recordings more, and I gave them a long list of names.¹¹⁹

While some educators, like Compton, are comfortable with including skillsets such as improvisation into their applied studio teaching, it has been my observation that many traditional trombone educators do not teach improvisation in their applied trombone studio teaching which

¹¹⁹ Paul Compton (Professor of Trombone, Oklahoma State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
reflects teaching efficacy when referring to improvisation. This leads us to the fourth question, “What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are equally well versed in classical/orchestral and jazz/commercial pedagogy, specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?” Paul Compton believes that for trombone educators, this is generally improving. He explains:

I think it's changing a little bit, I think. Maybe it should be changing more, but I feel like there are more players and teachers out there now that are versatile. It's still a smaller number I think than it should be, but I feel like often, speaking of college teachers specifically, it's been my experience now that I've been on the search committee aspect of—because for a few years, many years ago I was on the applicant hunt and submitting from that perspective. Now being in my fifteenth year, fourteenth year at OSU, fifteenth year of full time college teaching, I've been on a lot of search committees to hire people now. A lot of people on the faculty are 100 percent interested in hiring the best classical person. Some of them treat it very much like it's an orchestral audition and they're looking specifically for the absolute best classical player that they can find. I think sometimes missing out a little bit on versatility, finding applicants that are versatile, then it winds up kind of creating an atmosphere that is a little bit more one dimensional in the teaching aspect, too. But I think it's changing a little bit. I think that it should be, because I think that, at least in my opinion, training exclusively to play the symphonic repertoire in an orchestra that's existed for several hundred years is not the way to advance. That's always a wonderful component of the music world and a wonderful thing that I like to do also, but I feel like we need to be creating new things, new music, new performing opportunities, more chamber music, more variety, more originality to keep an audience.

Much like Compton, Harry Watters believes that the number of trombone educators who are well versed in bebop improvisation and nuance is improving. Watters states:

I think that's improving overall because I think it has to be. It needs to improve at a faster rate, but Buddy Baker sure was, he provided the template for that. He showed us all how to make that happen and Tony Baker at North Texas. He's one of these guys that's committed to both and of course, Jim Pugh, so I think there are plenty of models out there and I've been hired at Towson as the classical trombone professor. That's my gig. You know how I feel about both sides. There's definitely a movement towards enlightenment.

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120 Paul Compton (Professor of Trombone, Oklahoma State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
121 Harry Watters (Trombonist, United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, retired) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
While Watters talks about an increase of trombone educators who are versed in bebop language and style as a “movement towards enlightenment,” Chris Buckholz feels that it may or may not be necessary for trombone educators to be versed in bebop improvisation and nuance.

Buckholz says:

I'm not particularly offended that there aren't a lot of people that are strong classical teachers and strong bebop players combined. I think that if students are really interested in that they can go to different people and get that. I think it's helpful, I think it's helpful if the teacher can teach that and they don't have to go to multiple different sources. It's also helpful for the classical player to also be a jazz player, because you can think, if you're a good teacher, better articulate what the differences are. What the differences in sound are. What the differences are in articulation, what the differences are in the technical demands, because you know it. You've done it and I don't think there is a tremendous appreciation among classical players for what jazz players do. I don't think there's a tremendous appreciation per se among jazz players for what classical players do. It's nice if a player can do both, but if you're really serious about it and you want to learn both you can go to different specialists if you want. I do think it's good to get your feet wet in both and I also believe that if you're a straight up jazz player it's good to be able to play with a classical sound and play with a classical articulation and a classical style, because you'll get called to do some of that stuff. If you get called you're going to want to fit in and if not you're not going to get called again, so yes, yes.122

Tom Brantley agrees with Buckholz that it would be beneficial if trombone educators were able to effectively teach both classical and jazz pedagogy to their students. Brantley states:

So I think my opinion on that is if a teacher is responsible for—if the teacher's at a university and they're responsible, the goal of their students, of many of their students, is to become a well-rounded player, then it would behoove that teacher to be informed and equipped to do that on all styles. So I think in that scenario, at a university, you would want somebody who is capable of providing that.123

Tom Brantley thinks it is beneficial for a university trombone educator to be equipped to teach all styles but Amanda Stewart’s experiences in a conservatory-style setting suggest it may not be necessary in that specific environment. Stewart explains:

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122 Chris Buckholz (Professor of Trombone, University of New Mexico) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
123 Tom Brantley (Professor of Trombone, University of South Florida) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
At a conservatory, or maybe at a university that's more focused towards one particular area of performance, I think that bringing in somebody, whether permanently or periodically, to supplement their education would be wise. So I think in that instance, if you're teaching trombone performance at Curtis, or something, I don't think it's of high importance that you are really well versed as a jazz player if you're going to be there solely teaching them how to be an orchestral player because they're coming to that school to study with a person who does that, specifically, and that really well. But at the same time, I think it would be good to introduce those students to other styles and I think that in that case, you have to supplement their education somehow, by bringing in someone who has mastered it, or has mastered that style or those styles that they're not focusing on. 

Alex Iles believes that it is the experiences from many different settings such as diverse freelance work that are largely missing from applied faculty. Iles argues:

I think a lot of undergrad teachers, maybe aside from some of the names you mentioned, guys like Paul, and John, and Jim Pugh, and people like that, who they themselves have not had too much experience in a real thriving, freelance, academic setting where there's a lot of different music going on, I think they're at a disadvantage. I think people who get a doctorate and have only exposed themselves to certain kinds of music, obviously are not gonna have the experience. I think part of that is where they live, I think that effects it. I think players who spend any kind of time in New York, or Boston, Los Angeles, or even places like Atlanta or Seattle, where there's a thriving freelancing with players of all different kinds coming together to do gigs, I think they're at a disadvantage when they teach.

While I do share some of these concerns that Alex Iles states, I do not hold the same views as it pertains to freelance players having a disadvantage when teaching. I do agree with him that some trombone educators can spend too much time in an academic setting and therefore spend very little time outside of what is musically comfortable to them. On the contrary, I believe that trombonists that spend more time as freelance musicians will gain more skills that can be taught to students then those who remain in academia exclusively. Certainly, there is a balance that needs to be created.

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124 Amanda Stewart (Associate Principal Trombonist, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017

125 Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Keith Jackson generally believes that the number of trombone educators who are well versed in both classical and jazz is improving but believes there is a lack of self-awareness among many trombone educators. Jackson states:

I think trombone has done better at this than many instruments… but the percentage of teachers who are comfortable teaching both is small. And even worse, I think there are some who say they are who really aren't. So the lines of, and I'm sure you've heard it "Oh yeah, I'll make sure they understand what all it is to cover the third book in a big band." Well, that means you're basically acknowledging they're not going to improvise… you're thinking the big band is the core of the music as opposed to improvisation is the core of the music. So I think it does go back to listening again, and knowing history and respecting it because I doubt the majority of teachers, trombone or otherwise, could give you a lineage of any kind and say, "Listen to X, Y, Z leading up to bebop." And then go back to bebop. I don't think most teachers could give you that lineage of those players. And because they can't do it, it makes it intimidating for the student who's being given patterns but no way to understand how the patterns fit into the improvisations. So if somebody can't draw the line from Lester Young to Miles Davis in the sixties, and they can't come up with five to six players to connect them, they can't guide their students. And because they can't guide their students, then they can only address patterns and teaching bebop, which is like not addressing nuance at all. And they're probably not really doing it. You're listening, they're doing digital. So I know people whose bop students—and I think Aebersolds are fine. I'm not mocking that at all—but based on the scale pattern approach, and yet they don't hear scale patterns. And sometimes they can teach students fairly well that way, but at some point it breaks down and then you realize the students who are being taught don't actually hear the language, they're just replicating.126

Jackson’s reference to “third trombone big band style” and its implications that trombone educators are equating large ensemble big band style as the core competency of jazz rather than improvisation, is an important observation. Furthermore, he points to historical factors such as tracking the lineage of influential jazz improvisors and how that influences trombone educators to only resort to teaching patterns and bebop. Because the nuance of understanding the historical lineage from an aural understanding, teachers and students simply replicate and do not actually hear the language they are playing. I share these same concerns when it comes to equating large

126 Keith Jackson (former Professor of Trombone, current Dean of College of Creative Arts, West Virginia University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
ensembles in jazz to being the core competency of musical understanding. I feel that jazz
improvisation is nuanced and specific enough that to truly understand style that you must be able
to proficiently improvise the syntax and language of jazz improvisation. Tom Brantley also sees
a lack self-awareness in their skills as jazz musicians and improvisors as an issue for some
trombone educators. Brantley explains:

It's just you have to practice twice as much, that's what I tell my students, when you're
having to learn both, be a strong orchestral player as well as be able to learn the language
of bebop. And so because of that, I might occasionally run into some orchestral players
that might talk kind of a good game or maybe think that they're good enough or know
enough and can do it, and then I hear them play and it's like, "Gosh, my God. They don't
really." That's usually the case, and in the orchestra world, that's one of the things that I
am really, really, really painfully disappointed in when I play pops gigs and sit in with
them because, oh, if they would only study that style as much as they study the orchestral
or the western European, if they would only study American jazz as hard and as detailed
as they study the really good orchestral players, then the orchestra should be a lot
healthier. So, no. It's yeah, you have to work a lot harder to do it, but man, how much
better would the music be, period, especially twenty-first century compositions and even
a lot of twentieth century compositions, and Lord knows, the trombone literature, the solo
literature, et cetera, those things, those would be so much better if these players knew that
language, and they just don't even know it on the surface, much less the inner workings
of the language of bebop.127

Brad Edwards echoes Brantley’s concerns about the amount of time it takes to truly
become versatile when sharing his experiences through his undergraduate and master’s
programs. Edwards recalls:

What I mean by that is there are only so many hours in a day and you have to make a
living. If I follow what I did, I can't really point to many times when I was not busy. Just
putting out fires, keeping the plate spinning. So for a very long time in the back of mind I
thought, well, I really should become a better improvisor, devote time to that, but each
day comes and goes and there's the list of things that you really, really have to do and the
things that you might get to and then becoming a better jazz improvisor was always on
the “might get to” list and the days start and finish and I'm like “well, didn't get to it
today and didn't get to the things I really urgently need to do,” and that's been true. You
know I did a lot of gigs as an undergraduate and a fair number of gigs for a master’s and
you did what the gig demanded of you and you were just busy all the time and the time
wasn't devoted to that. I was at Hartt School of Music and I played lead trombone in their

127 Tom Brantley (Professor of Trombone, University of South Florida) in telephone interview with the author,
jazz band and I played in the early music ensemble and the modern music ensemble and the orchestra and I was working brass quintet, carrying over 20 credits every semester. In the jazz bands I saw these guys that came in as freshmen and were already miles and miles ahead of me as improvisors, like just living on a different plane and I saw them walking around all day with headphones on just completely immersed in that language and the sense I developed from that was to be good takes an unwavering, almost total commitment and really the majority of your day has to be spent listening, listening, listening and my thought was well how the heck and I'm going to do that because if I make more time for that, I'm going to make less time for something else so what's going to go? What's going to fall away from the list?\footnote{128}

One of the original reasons I created this curriculum was to address issues such as those that Brad Edwards brought up. Students are involved in curriculum that is skewed towards classical music and curriculum in higher education is not designed to be inclusive with other styles outside of the European music tradition, creating a major problem. Jon Whitaker speaks on this issue and the dominance of the orchestral path in traditional trombone pedagogy. Whitaker states:

This certainly was the opinion of a lot of the people that I went to school with and came up with. I don't know if it's this way now or not, but it seems like this: There's this opinion that the ultimate end goal of all of this and why we practice or whatever is to get a job in an orchestra. That's every trombone player at some point thinks that this is—that's it. And I'm not poo-pooing that at all. I'm not saying that because I didn't ever get in one. I mean, it's—I get the opportunity to play with a lot of really great orchestras, and it's unbelievable. It's great. But so much is focused on—I think a lot of times it's focused on trying to play that way and to get into one of those orchestras to where then people that study and/or get that their life's goal, they, like we talked about earlier, they put on the blinders and they don't ... When they're young, they don't ... They're not exposed to and/or work on any of the commercial or jazz stuff. Same way on the flip side. You have some high school kids or some kids in certain studios that all of them are just playing with the improvisers and play classically or whatever or play—they’re good all-around players, and they play commercial and jazz stuff really well, but if you ask them to play any basic fundamental passage four times in a row the same way, they couldn't do it. I think a lot of it is driven by the individual teacher, the individual culture. That's not to say either one of those is wrong. It's just that it's—that’s what it is.\footnote{129}

\footnote{128} Brad Edwards (Professor of Trombone, Arizona State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\footnote{129} Jonathan Whitaker (Associate Professor of Trombone, University of Alabama) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Jon Whitaker points out what I have experienced with my time in academia: many trombone students in traditional trombone studios view orchestral playing and winning a major orchestral audition as the peak of musical performance and artistry. I also share Jon Whitaker’s opinion that many jazz trombone students in higher education, while they are studying improvisation and utilizing audiation skill sets, they generally do not consistently study the fundamentals of the instrument on a level that is proficient compared to the traditional trombone studio. Paul Compton and Keith Jackson both cited their belief that they generally believe that trombone educators are increasingly being able to teach multiple areas and styles, but it continues to be a pedagogical issue. Chris Buckholz believes while it would be beneficial if a teacher can teach both classical and jazz pedagogy, he does not believe it is necessary and Amanda Stewart shares the same belief from her experiences in a conservatory. Corroborated by Keith Jackson and Tom Brantley, I believe there is a big lack of self-awareness amongst trombone educators who believe that they can “hang by playing the third book in a big band” or worse “I can improvise jazz” without any ability to convincingly repeat or audiate language and syntax of jazz improvisation. This and a host of other reasons such as time and curriculum issues, bias towards orchestral study, and the importance of preparing students for the twenty-first century is why I created a curriculum that equally teaches orchestral/classical and jazz/commercial pedagogy with audiation as a foundational skill set.
Before creating a trombone curriculum that balances orchestral/classical and jazz/commercial pedagogy, I knew I wanted to address issues of time management, audiation, and literature. Understandably, music majors have increasing requirements that require many students to take eighteen-plus hours each semester or take an additional year of study to complete their course work. I understand that individuals who major in music education, classical performance, jazz performance, music theory, and other majors will all have different requirements and time commitments that may reduce the amount of individual time students can dedicate to individual practice. So, I created a three-studio class model that is designed to be mostly free-flowing with little extra work involved. The three studios are named: General Trombone Studio, Classical Trombone Studio, and Jazz Trombone Studio. I detailed the requirements of each studio and the responsibilities and topics covered in my curriculum. I then included my tunes list and scale permutation spreadsheet that are designed to build audiation skills by playing by ear, exploring intervallic relationships, and singing. The last part of the curriculum is flexible outline of a four-year course of study of literature with orchestral/classical and jazz/commercial equally taught side-by-side in individual lessons and in the studio. After sharing the curriculum (Appendix A) with the study participants, the ten interviewees offered their critiques of and insight into the curriculum through my fifth and sixth interview questions. The fifth question of the interview was, “What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?” Their responses provided incredible feedback and additional insight into their positions on trombone studio education.
Paul Compton’s response includes his view that curriculum was very organized, and the incorporation of the tunes list was excellent. He also provides insight regarding student time constraints in my curriculum model, and shares his own experiences with the value we as educators can bring to our students. Compton states:

I like it a lot actually, and I’ve done a fair number of these dissertation projects over the years. I actually really, really like what you’ve presented. I actually have learned some things and there’s some things that I want to incorporate into my playing and teaching based on just reading over this a couple of times now. It's very well organized and the materials listed are great. The inclusion of recommended recordings I think is really fantastic. That's something I fairly often don't see. Like I said, just giving them names of albums and names of players points them in the right direction. If they start to listen to these recommended recordings then I think that'll lead them to many additional recordings. That was my experience. I think incorporating tunes and having them learn in the multiple keys is excellent… I personally, my feeling is that demanding a lot of their time but providing them a whole lot of value for that time, I think is a great thing. I personally, sometimes my students come in and they're like “oh man, you're really asking a lot of us.” I'm like “well, but you want to succeed in this business, you want to have a job in this business, you want to be able to follow your specific dream. You've got to put in a lot of time.” I think it's good. I think it's a good thing, a valuable thing.\footnote{Paul Compton (Professor of Trombone, Oklahoma State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.}

Chris Buckholz shares his concern for how I am going to implement some of the facets of the curriculum. More specifically, he is concerned with who is going to listen to all the extra potential juries but expresses his approval for addressing the reality of the music world in the curriculum. Buckholz observes:

Well, obviously the positive from my biased opinion is that you're doing both. I mean that is the positive for sure and it's not just, well we're going drill classical music and that's the end of it. I think that's a tremendous plus, particularly because 99 percent of these students who think they're going to go out and have an orchestral career are not going to have an orchestral career or maybe they'll have an orchestral career, but that means playing in something like the New Mexico Philharmonic for 4000 dollars a year. There are a lot of people fighting, grasping for these 4000-a-year jobs now and I just, personally I don't understand it, but they've been drilled that that is really the only thing that is meaningful and has value in our society and therefore that's what they're going to do. I think that the fact that you're addressing the realities of the musical world and getting them to be involved with both styles is the positive. The drawback to me having taught for a long time now is just time. When I had fewer students when I first got to
UNM, I gave people jazz lessons. Anybody who was interested, we got together for a separate jazz lesson and I was able to tailor things to them and how to transcribe things on their level and work on tunes on their level and work on scales on their level and do playing back and forth and it was great, but the more your time gets chewed up, the more burned out you get and the less time you have to do that stuff. Now I've got eleven students and I really don't have time to give jazz lessons to everybody, and so you're trying to adjust it in having separate jazz in there, which I think is great. I really do. I think that you know this is one of the things that you're not going to get rewarded for. Having the students play a separate jazz jury could be a really positive thing. The problem is that all your colleagues are going to expect their students to play classical jury. You kind of have to do both and if you're at a smaller program, that can be difficult, because they're already doing a billion things, because there's not bodies to cover everything… I wouldn't discourage you from pursuing this, but it is something to be aware of, that you're going to hit a wall with time and you kind of have to be judicious about it and not everybody is going to support your idea of having jazz jury, who are they going to play for? I have my students play for the other jazz faculty and that works out really well, but the jazz faculty may not be into that. They might be like I don't want to listen to these extra students. Hopefully, they'll be supportive but you know you just don't know.¹³¹

Buckholz’s concern with the curriculum is the amount of time it will take as a student and as a teacher, particularly with the potential to add more workload to other brass and jazz colleagues because they may not have the time. This is a concern I did not address in the model, nor did I elaborate on. Harry Watters also expresses concerns with the three-studio model and the potential to have scheduling issues with an institution; however, he also shares his interest in including parts of this curriculum in his own teaching. Watters states:

Overall, I'm very, very impressed with this. That's why I would like to include some of it in my curriculum, my syllabus as well, and I would of course give you credit for that. I'll list you as a source. I really like the tune list, man. I think you picked some good ones and making sure that they can play these tunes in any key is absolutely essential, being able to start at any note and finish the melody, I mean, that's going to really make them one with their instrument and essentially making their instrument an extension of their body. That's what you want. That's what Watrous did. He wasn't playing the trombone. He was singing through the instrument. That's awesome. That's awesome. I think in the real world, it's going to be much more doable to have one studio class, which is what we all have at Towson. We have 11:00 on Thursdays. That's our studio class and it's one hour. I was just able to get a trombone choir or trombone ensemble hour added to this and

¹³¹ Chris Buckholz (Professor of Trombone, University of New Mexico) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
we meet, it's going to be TBA, or to be determined, but that's all I can do in addition to the regular lessons. You might get some blow back. I'm just telling you.\textsuperscript{132}

Watters speaks on the tunes list and how he believes it to be “absolutely crucial” for a student to be able make an instrument an extension of their body. He also provides insight that having a three-studio model could create some administration and student blowback when it comes to scheduling and time commitment. To be very open about my thought process concerning time management in this curriculum, I only considered time a factor as it compared to the students participating, not how it would affect faculty and the administration.

Alex Iles appreciates the curriculum and the inclusive nature of the literature and learning but is concerned with how many undergraduates will actually be interested and how many actually need it. Iles observes:

I like it. I really, really like the fact that it's comprehensive and all inclusive. I think the idea of being inclusive of other things, and exposing people who are of one particular perspective, and giving them exposure to others is so important. If not for their own application as a professional, but as someone who appreciates and knows what these things mean. I think it's really, really a great thing. As far as—know I'm just looking at it on practical terms. Sometimes I think, it's pretty comprehensive in that its strength is also—my one thing that I might be a little critical of is that sometimes I wonder if, in a practical way, how many kids would really get the most out of all those categories, and all the stuff that you've included, which I would include them all myself… I don't think you have to teach everybody everything while they're in school. Maybe not to the extent that some people put a syllabus together that has this huge list.\textsuperscript{133}

Iles states his opinion that sometimes it is not as important to practice all the materials you were assigned academically but to gain the musicianship skills necessary to thrive as a future working musician. Alex Iles also provides input on the tunes list and scale permutation handouts I provided with the curriculum:

\textsuperscript{132} Harry Watters (Trombonist, United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, retired) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\textsuperscript{133} Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Great. Awesome, awesome. I think both those things are great. I'm sort of—with tunes, it's so great to do that, just hammer that into people. Whether it's that tune, or other tunes that they come up with. If they want to come up with a better tune that they learned in every key, then I would probably let them do it… but I think giving people lots of things to play by ear and do learn in different keys, is a great. I think that's a huge service for a player to be doing, regardless of what kind of music they're playing too. Ear play is such a—it's becoming a bigger and bigger part of my teaching deal. You've summarized it better than I ever could, of how that plays into playing music.134

While I have a tunes list and I assigned them to accordingly to level one to level four, I feel I need to give my students more artistic choices when it comes learning sounds by ears. I originally organized them by harmonic and melodic complexity and now I see that there was a missed opportunity here to expand my tune learning philosophy. Similar to the opinion of Harry Watters, Alex Iles provides insight into his view that developing the ear to begin to hear what is in your ear is very important. He also says that ear training in his private lessons are becoming a larger part of his teaching and it does a huge service for the student to learn in this way.

Much like other interviewees, Tony Baker appreciates the curriculum but has his concerns about if the traditional classical student would really get the most out of this curriculum. Baker states:

There's a certain point below which, if you're not teaching it to that level, the student's not really learning it, you know? That was the only thing I wondered about, was how helpful the improvisation would be in a general sense. It's kind of the sort of thing that I've found that you're either really teaching it, having the student do transcriptions and learn tunes, and really do a lot of harmonic work, or it's best not to get into it if the student's not going to be working on it at that serious a level. That being said, I've also done this long enough to know that there's more than one right way to teach it, and my own feeling is that when you do get a job, and you're going to get a job probably, give it a shot. Give the teaching plan that you have mapped out a shot. It could be revolutionary. It could work. I just know from my own experience, when I've tried to, with a classical player, sometimes for improvisation, it usually wasn't enough to really help them see any real improvement. In order for them to see real improvement, it would take more time away from their classical studies than I wanted to take. That being said, again, it's worth trying what you've mapped out. You've obviously given it a ton of thought, a great deal of thought, and you definitely have given it more thought at this point in your career than I did when I was at

134 Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
your point, you know? I think it's worth giving it a shot. I liked it. In general, I really liked it.\textsuperscript{135}

Tony Baker expresses his experiences on teaching traditional classical students’ improvisational skills and that he didn’t see a huge improvement in students who studied improvisation who identified as classical students. I believe the concerns he brings up is exactly why I stated this project. I have been morally concerned about teaching trombone students in higher education who studying such a specific musical path and how that oath relates to the amount of job opportunities beyond academia. This in my opinion applies both to the traditional classical trombone student and the jazz trombone student in higher education.

Coming from the conservatory model, Amanda Stewart appreciates the curriculum but expresses concern that students leaving this model may experience. She also provides suggestions to make excerpts more of a focus in private lessons and not just the studio model. Stewart shares:

I thought it was great. I actually really liked it because I felt like how you were approaching it, it was going to be very—you were covering all your bases. And I feel like you're creating a well-rounded student in that case, with that curriculum. Now playing solos is different to some extent, so I think if that is instilled in the students from this curriculum while approaching classical excerpts and that concept of, these are the tools you have to have, so when they go audition at a conservatory, they're able to present those excerpts in a way that speaks to that teacher or that panel of teachers who are sitting there at that school, and says to them, okay, this person has a knowledge of what—maybe it's not polished like they will be if they went to school here and studied here for two to four years, or whatever, but there's a grasp of the techniques and the fundamental aspects of playing this instrument. And I guess that would be my one amendment or something, to saying I think the curriculum does work, but I think that has to be present.\textsuperscript{136}

This is an issue that I absolutely believe I need to address in a more serious way for classical performance majors specifically. Being two years removed from creating this curriculum and conducting these interviews, I can better see the value of Amanda Stewart’s

\textsuperscript{135} Tony Baker (Professor of Trombone, University of North Texas) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

\textsuperscript{136} Amanda Stewart (Associate Principal Trombonist, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
comments. I have always believed that students at the undergraduate level should have a wide array of musical experiences to truly find what their personal artistic passion. However, for classical performance majors getting ready for graduate auditions at major conservatories where many students will focus heavily on the orchestral repertoire, I will need to do a better job of prepping those students to take those auditions. Similarly, Jon Whitaker expresses concern with the need to have a curriculum that is very descriptive and not necessarily able to address individual issues. Whitaker observes:

Well, if every person played everything and checked all this stuff off and got an A, by the end of the semester they got it all checked off, they'll be a better player. But there's no room for and/or discussion of pedagogy or changing the individual student. And what I found so early on is that there's no way for me possible to script a curriculum that every student I get is going to fit into. For example, if I get an undergrad that has studied with me two-and-a-half years in high school and they're well ahead of the game or has studied for two or three years and come in, and then I get another undergrad at the same time that comes in and maybe they're a music therapy major or a music theory composition major but play well enough to get in the studio but never had a trombone lesson, it's really hard to fit those two people into the same mold. And I found that every time that I tried to adhere to you've got to play this, you've got to play this, you've got to play this, and these are the things, it was difficult to do that. So my materials, I don't even know the last time that I had a student look at any of that stuff, you know what I mean?

While I understand Whitaker’s concern about having little room to change the curriculum and pedagogy to meet every individual student need, the curriculum I created is simply a guide and a reference as discussed earlier in Chapter Three. I would never intend students to follow a narrow path of literature study and students will always produce a need for differentiated instruction and each student will receive a customized lesson plan according to their specific needs. I believe this flexibility will prevent the potential issues Whitaker points out.

Tom Brantley’s comments relate to the diversity of the listening list. Brantley suggests:

But I would love it if you maybe made your listening list just a little bit more diverse. If I remember correctly—I don't have it in front of me—but for instance, you have Joe Alessi

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137 Jonathan Whitaker (Associate Professor of Trombone, University of Alabama) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
on there a number of times, which of course, they got to check out Joe, but it might be hip. I can't remember if you had any, for instance Christian Lindberg, or Jorgen Van Rijen or someone… Yeah, and maybe more, maybe some Ray Anderson or Albert Mangelsdorff or somebody like that, and Jay … and I know you probably have J.J on there somewhere too… So, I mean, obviously, you can't, and the thing I have here, I'm looking at my notes, it's like comprehensive with an explanation point, which is fantastic, I love it, but it is time consuming, and I see that you're trying to be mindful of that with the different majors.\textsuperscript{138}

While Tom Brantley wants to see more names on the recommended listening list, he feels the curriculum is very comprehensive and suggests it will be time consuming. However, I feel he understands the balance I tried to place into the project with the studio model and the roles that music education, classical performance, and jazz performance majors will have in the three-studio model and curriculum. Keith Jackson also understands the balance in my three-studio model and the implications of the time used for all the students involved. Jackson observes:

It's funny, when I first skimmed it before I read it, it took me a second to see you do say, "For the three studio classes a week." You do say, "Here's who it's required for. But all are welcome." So when I first skimmed it and I didn't see that, I thought, "Oh man, this is a humongous problem of time for credit hours." But once I saw that, I was like, "Okay, this is in balance." And if I remember correct—I'm going to pull it up in front of me—I think it was three studios a week and music ed can pick? And music ed goes to which one, give me a second ... So that was thing, when I first read, I thought, "Oh, too much time." I thought, "Oh, I like this." Because it should build, should, build a studio where it's one community, it's not three different communities within a trombone studio. So it should work. One thought was that perhaps a certain number of those could be required. So maybe freshman year, if it's a classical major, maybe their freshman year X number of the jazz ones are required.\textsuperscript{139}

Keith Jackson also provides feedback on the plausibility of the number of tunes from the early years of an undergraduate trombonist’s study. Jackson suggests:

I thought the 12, I think it was for the scale? It must have been tunes. Each one, 12 keys, every semester. I thought that's probably aggressive for the freshmen. So I could even see the freshmen six, sophomores eight, juniors twelve, so that way actually they learn how to. So I can see, and you're from Washington High School in West Virginia, I could see

\textsuperscript{138} Tom Brantley (Professor of Trombone, University of South Florida) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
\textsuperscript{139} Keith Jackson (former Professor of Trombone, current Dean of College of Creative Arts, West Virginia University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
many of our freshmen coming in, if I said, "Okay. You're going to learn Amazing Grace and four other tunes in all 12 keys in this semester, plus your scales." That could take both semesters, just on those. That first semester, because they don't know how to practice efficiently yet. Because I was going, "Man, I like this." Because to be honest there were some things of it, like your tune list for example, I've already thought, "I've done this off the top of my head but never actually had a, here's a sample for four years. Going back to the trombone curriculum, I actually like the fact that you have different recommended reading throughout, and the fact that some of them are not music-based but they relate to the profession.  

Keith Jackson provides his experiences as a teacher and states that freshman and even sophomores have not developed efficient practice techniques yet so requiring fewer then the third or fourth year students and even a tiered system based on year of study would be beneficial. He also said he liked the recommended reading section and the fact I included texts that were not only music related but others that were not music based but relate to the profession itself.

In his answer, Brad Edwards says that I will most likely be able to walk into any trombone job and use this curriculum with minimal changes to fit the university standards and music department vision. Edwards states:

I had it up here. It's clear. I would call that a positive. You could most likely walk into a job and hand this to your students and as long as you adapt it a little bit to the whatever legal language the university requires you to put in a syllabus, I think you'd be in okay shape. The negatives which I think I mentioned in my written comments, it's a very optimistic thing. You are a highly motivated individual and your assumption will be, when you get to that first playing job, that the students are also highly motivated and this is a syllabus designed for highly motivated people... The best students I've had, they're just, they're often running and they don't need to be told what to do. 

Although every interviewee had opinions on specifics of the curriculum, all the interviewees valued the curriculum as being comprehensive and generally approved of the model and pedagogy with minimal concerns. I understand now that I absolutely need to continually

140 Jackson, telephone interview, 2017.
141 Brad Edwards (Professor of Trombone, Arizona State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
address time management and the implementation of the tunes list, scale permutations, and the
time I would be asking from potential fellow colleagues.

The sixth and final question was, “Anything in this curriculum you would like to see
added to this that you feel is missing and anything you feel is unnecessary and should be
removed?” Tony Baker connects his analysis of my curriculum with how he runs curriculum in
his studio teaching. Baker says:

You know, I guess the short answer to that is no. That's not to say that there isn't anything
that could be added, but I've figured out over the years that a curriculum is such a fluid
sort of thing. When people ask me what my curriculum is, I tell them it depends on the
student, you know? I can't say that I have one curriculum. I have very general areas that I
want to make sure that I address, but how I address those general areas with each student
is very different. So the short answer is no, there's nothing that I would say you must add
or you must take out, but I would also say that you'll probably figure out what needs to be
added and what needs to be removed on a student-by-student sort of basis. I think it's
good to have something to start with. I do usually have some idea of where I want to start
an incoming freshman, where I want to start an incoming master's student, where I want
to start a doctoral student, and then from there, it's pretty fluid and flexible depending on
what the student's first and foremost needs are, and second, what the student's interests
are.¹⁴²

Chris Buckholz’s sees the curriculum as a great start to addressing versatility in the
undergraduate trombonist. Buckholz states:

No, I think it's a great start. I mean I think you've done really great work and for me it's
nice to see that it's actually being addressed. People are starting to think about this now,
because for most of my career it's been you do one or the other. You don't do both and
there's no reason to worry about it, because you don't do both. You're either on a jazz
track, you're on a classical track and that's it, so it's nice to see that addressed. You've
done excellent work. You're very organized. I think over your career it's just going to be a
question of how do you balance these things? Because at most schools the students have
probably more to do than they really have time for and how do you address that and it's a
continuing problem.¹⁴³

¹⁴² Tony Baker (Professor of Trombone, University of North Texas) in telephone interview with the author, January
2017.
¹⁴³ Chris Buckholz (Professor of Trombone, University of New Mexico) in telephone interview with the author,
Buckholz goes on to share that over the length of my career, I will constantly be addressing time and balance and that it could be a continuing problem of which to be aware.

Harry Watters agrees with this opinion citing his own situation as the Professor of Trombone at Towson University. Watters states:

Any concerning negatives? I don't really have any negatives to say. I will say this. It's extremely challenging and if this is going to be enforced the way it's written, there's going to be some blow back from students and from faculty as well just because I know what's involved, just being at Towson and knowing what is possible with scheduling. My students, they're all music ed majors and like I said before, they're slammed with all these extra activities, you know, woodwind techniques, percussion techniques, all these other survey classes and being able to physically schedule three different trombone studio classes, I don't see how that's possible. General, classical, and jazz, I mean, I would love to be able to have three separate hours to be able to isolate, but getting that into the class handbook, if you can pull it off, more power to you. I don't think I would be able to do this.¹⁴⁴

While I understand Watters’ concern, I feel that the three-studio model as currently built in my curriculum is not overbearing from a schedule standpoint. Music education majors are only required to attend general trombone studio, and classical and jazz performance majors are required to go to either classical or jazz trombone studio, respectively. To put it into perspective, many trombone students take orchestral repertoire classes and jazz improvisation classes outside of the traditional studio model (although students often receive academic credit for these courses). With this being said, I realize now that enough experienced educators in academia see some logistical issues and I need to reconsider the setup of my studio model.

Amanda Stewart’s feedback focuses on having more awareness into mental health and overall self-awareness as a student in the curriculum. Stewart comments:

No. I think the little detour I went on about performance practice, taking care of your body, stuff like that, I would always love to see that addressed at some point during a person's education. Maybe once a year or something where there's some out in the open discussion about injury, about mental health even, how to approach performance anxiety.

¹⁴⁴ Harry Watters (Trombonist, United States Army Blues and Army Brass Quintet, retired) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
Because I feel like a lot of times what happens, these topics aren't discussed because they're things that people want to hide, so I think it's really helpful to students to bring them out in the open and to take some of it. Because I feel like there's a—especially in the brass row—if you in any way say "I have a weakness" in any area, you're looked at as less than. So I feel like any time you have the ability as a teacher to bring these things out, like once a year or something, just so that it's an open topic, so nobody feels afraid to bring it up in a classroom. Nobody feels shame or fear related to the topic so that it's right out in the open and this is a safe place. We can talk about this issue. Because if anybody continues on as a performer, they will confront all of those issues. So being able to confront them in a healthy, safe way, I think is huge on how they'll handle it later.145

During my third year of adjunct teaching in higher education, I had my first experience with an applied student who experienced a major mental breakdown. I was not only unprepared to deal with those issues, I was also unable as an authority figure and educator to effectively refer them to the appropriate channels to get help. As Amanda Stewart stated, mental and body health issues need to have a place in curriculum even if there are simply one or two presentations a semester from qualified individuals on these topics. This would also provide opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration between different departments at a university.

Brad Edwards’ suggestions focus on addressing the lack of chamber ensemble experience and literature. During the course of our conversation I ask: “So you generally feel that I need to put more of an emphasis on chamber music, quartet, quintets, that sort of thing?”

Edwards replies:

Well, let's say this. If someone has a lot of trombone quartet experience, they're learning a lot of the same skills they will need to use in an orchestral trombone section. They're learning to tune, they're learning to balance. There's a difference in that they're not learning how to follow a conductor in sync with the brass section, but how do you train them on that? That's just you've to get in front of a conductor and compare what you see with what you hear around you. But when I got in Air Force band, the other trombone players in the section were largely guys from either UT Austin or Michigan State. That's just how it shook out and they both had a wealth of trombone quartet experience under their belt and I had zero, and I immediately struggled.146

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145 Amanda Stewart (Associate Principal Trombonist, St. Louis Symphony Orchestra) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.

146 Brad Edwards (Professor of Trombone, Arizona State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
I do not address in the syllabus or the curriculum model the importance of chamber music except in the classical studio description in the three-studio model. I may value trombone chamber music higher than I represent it in the curriculum, so it is a definite issue I would like to address in the future.

Paul Compton feels the curriculum is very comprehensive and students who want to truly exhibit skills as a modern trombonist could use this curriculum. Compton states:

I don't think there's much missing. I really feel like there's much more here very, very well presented and very well planned than most teachers that I've seen… I don't see any need to, certainly no need to remove anything. I think what you have here makes great sense and covers pretty much all the bases. Definitely, I don't, just after reviewing it a couple of times, I don't see anything necessarily either that's missing.147

Compton’s view is shared by Alex Iles who shares not only his feedback of the curriculum, but also his philosophy of teaching and learning. Alex Iles states:

And I think that your outline is the most comprehensive version of that I've seen. It's really—I think it's a very good model—I think it will be a very good model for people who are interested in expanding their own studio, maybe thinking about some different things, and developing an appreciation for stuff that—maybe giving their students an opportunity to hear and see some different kinds of music that the usual curriculum kind of ignores in a lot of ways.148

Alex Iles is very supportive of my curriculum and says it was the most comprehensive he has ever seen. Furthermore, he also discusses a problem in education where school serves as a function to acquire a goal, rather than to learn skill sets to necessarily be successful as a working musician and educator. Iles also states that this curriculum would not only be successful by itself, it could also be a great resource for traditional studios to expand their curriculum to include

147 Paul Compton (Professor of Trombone, Oklahoma State University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
148 Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
different musical experiences and skill sets such as audiation and improvisation.\textsuperscript{149} The interview process and the responses and critiques by the participants were not only helpful to see what was pedagogically helpful and relevant, but it also helped me find out the areas that I either did not address very clearly, need to update, or were missing altogether. The original curriculum was written in 2016 but I feel I need to make an updated version to reflect my growth as an educator since then and to implement many of the suggestions made by my interview participants.

\textsuperscript{149} Alex Iles (freelance and studio musician, Greenhoe Trombone Artist) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

During the process of writing this document, I have made the case that the undergraduate music curriculum in higher education needs to change to better prepare students to become versatile musicians. In the history of European music tradition, the inclusion of improvisation was largely phased out in favor of large ensemble performance. The birth of jazz in the early twentieth century brought musical improvisation back as a primary skill but was generally rejected by supporters of the European music tradition. Compared to traditional pedagogy taught by brass pedagogues and performers, I concluded that it was possible for a classical musician to experience the audiation and improvisation skills taught in jazz pedagogy. Furthermore, there are many schools of higher education advocating and including audiation and improvisation style learning in their core music curriculum such as the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. The idea is that we want students to associate sound with notation, not notation with sound. After making the connection between the TFUMM report, the history of the European music tradition, jazz pedagogy, and the brass pedagogues mentioned, I felt it was imperative that undergraduate trombonists experience audiation as a core foundational skill. Thus, I created a curriculum that equally teaches orchestral/classical and jazz/commercial pedagogy and literature to better prepare them for the twenty-first century. Keith Jackson says:

None of us are balanced. We might be like, "Oh, you know, it's problematic because of X at just a fundamental." And the fundamental being audiation… but every curriculum outside the studio includes some level or aural training. And that means we must think it's important on some level. So why not include in the studio?  

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151 Keith Jackson (former Professor of Trombone, current Dean of College of Creative Arts, West Virginia University) in telephone interview with the author, January 2017.
I believe it is imperative, regardless of whether a student is interested in classical or jazz performance, that all students should be learning audiation. This is precisely the reason why I created the Modern Trombonist Curriculum (Appendix A) as my first attempt to address this issue. After I created the Modern Trombonist Curriculum, I sent the curriculum to ten world-class educators and performers who provided expert critique and insight on the curriculum. They also shared their opinions on their experience with trombone pedagogy, audiation, and performance versatility. After considering the suggestions and concerns of all my interview participants as well as my dissertation committee, I decided that I needed to address these concerns by creating a new curriculum to reflect these changes.

I felt I needed to address several issues that were associated with time management, colleague involvement, assessment, cost of literature, addressing mental health, and pedagogical diversification. Although I understand that this curriculum model may not be feasible at some institutions, I am planning on utilizing this three-studio class model until I personally experience if it is possible or not as a full-time trombone professor at an university. I changed the name of the curriculum to “The Versatile Trombonist: A Curriculum Model for Improving Audiation Skills” to reflect that this curriculum is designed to mold versatile trombonists that learn audiation as a core foundational skill (See Appendix B). In the original 2016 version, I designed the curriculum prior to feedback from my dissertation committee and interview participants. I did not consider the potential amount of work that any of my fellow colleagues could be subjected to such as the tunes list juries, scale permutation juries, and even events inside of the jazz and classical trombone studios. I decided to amend the original commitments to juries in the classical and jazz studios, tunes list, scale permutations, and only subject students to the normal amount of summative assessment that music students receive at the end of each semester.
I adjusted the grading breakdown for the syllabus to help students understand their expectations more clearly. In the 2016 curriculum I broke down the grade into several categories that included several opportunities for testing. In the 2019 curriculum, I made the attendance for applied lessons and studio class 60% of the grade, while the tunes list and scale permutations were 20% and the final jury was 20%. Another area of consideration, which was suggested by Amanda Stewart, was addressing all students understand their options and resources pertaining to mental health. I added a section addressing this and will do so in more detail depending on the institution where I am teaching. During my dissertation defense, the idea of allowing my students to choose what tune on the tunes list to learn in all twelve keys was discussed. I originally organized the tunes into categories ranging from level one through four in order of melodic and harmonic difficulty. Instead, I decided to create lists that gave my students the choice to pick from or the ability to choose their own songs they want to learn. I believe this was an excellent suggestion particularly because it creates another layer of collaboration between myself and the students. To minimize the cost to my students, I also revised the pedagogical material that I used in my recommended books, recordings, and literature sections of my syllabus. After the suggestions from my doctoral committee were made I decided to prioritize what literature my students “needed” or what was simply “suggested”. I cut the average yearly cost to students from $250 to $120 per year.

After the completion of this project, I have ideas on how to continue this path to improving performance versatility and audiation skills in higher education. The first is a project my close friend Benjamin Carrasquillo and I have started called “The Creative Listener.” This project will focus on the inclusion of audiation, improvisation, and creativity as a relevant and needed skill set in private and applied lessons in higher education. Currently, we are working on
our first publication of creating improvisation content around traditional classical trombone literature in the form of a duet book. This book will also include access to our website, www.thecreativelistener.com, and will have supplementary materials such as demonstrations, recordings, and educational content on improving audiation and improvisation. We will then be expanding to develop other materials for other applied music studios in higher education and will be writing our first major text on classical improvisation in the summer of 2019. The second idea is to create a program to upload famous classical scores and solo literature for improvisational study. Improvising the harmonic changes of a solo piece of literature helps improve audiation and can even improve your ability to sight read because you start to associate sound with notation.\textsuperscript{152}

Before starting this project, I had very little understanding of how this subject resonated with educators. Even though I obtained an undergraduate music education degree, I was never aware of an emphasis on audiation and improvisation by music educators. With the changes in the NAFME standards in 2014, this has become an increasingly popular subject among K-12 music educators. However, it is not a topic that is gaining much traction with applied performance faculty at the higher education level but is improving with several recent publications in the past five years. In a dissertation titled “Relationships among Auditory Representations and overall Musicianship of Classical and Non-Classical Students”, Majorie Yankeelov researched the ability of classical and non-classical students to recognize pitch and key centers based on their backgrounds. Her findings suggested that students with non-classical backgrounds had stronger tonic centrality abilities compared to classical students and concluded that that inclusion of improvisation and playing by ear were very beneficial to all musicians and

musical styles. Supervised by Dr. Christopher Azzara, Jungeyun Grace Choi wrote her dissertation on the inclusion of improvisation in group piano classes. Her dissertation titled, “Improvisation in Collegiate Class Piano” concluded that students that experienced improvisation achieved higher musical achievement scores and enhanced appreciation of the undergraduate curriculum. In her dissertation titled, “The use of Improvisation in Undergraduate String Methods and Techniques Courses”, Nancy Conley concludes that most music educators value improvisation included in music curriculum but most were not utilizing it in their own teaching. Furthermore, most new music educators want to include improvisation into their future teaching but are not well prepared to do so.

Jordan Vanhemert’s thesis, “A Jazz Inspired Approach to Applied Saxophone Study,” addresses the disadvantages of a traditional applied saxophone study, and how adding jazz-inspired content can lead to a more artistic experience with musical performance. Vanhemert closing remarks on applied study echoes my beliefs and thoughts. Vanhemert writes:

Repeated calls for curricular change have yielded much discourse from Sarath and others, and while applied instrument study has been relatively absent from such discourse, this study has made it evident that applied lessons are flexible enough to accommodate a more integral vision of applied instrument study. Even as students continue to work in the realm of the interpretive performance paradigm and perform in ensembles, this research has shown that studies in the composer-improviser-performer paradigm enhance the technical and expressive literature-based goals of interpretive performance.

Vanhemert asserts, improvisation can engage students to unlock their creative voice and I believe it will also create a path forward to developing audiation as a core music skill. I believe

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that performance versatility and teaching audiation as a primary musical foundation will continue
to be my core competent as an educator and performer. If we can better prepare undergraduate
music students for careers in the twenty-first century. More importantly, music students who
experience many different forms of music genres and skills can make an informed decision on
how they will contribute to music as an outlet for artful expression.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A: The Modern Trombonist Curriculum (Original 2016 Version)

The Modern Trombonist:
A Versatile Curriculum Model

I believe that teaching the modern undergraduate trombonist requires cultivating a wide array of teaching environments grounded in audiation. According to Edwin Gordon, the author of “Preparatory Audiation, Audiation, and Music Learning Theory: A Handbook of a Comprehensive Music Learning Sequence”, audiation is the ability to hear and understand music for which the sound is not physically present or may never have been physically present. This is the foundation of my curriculum; to help my students sing and audiate what they see, hear, and feel into one combined sensation. I call this developing “a personal” relationship with your instrument. Edwin Gordon refers to this simply “conversational language” between you and your amplified medium. Thus, I have developed what I believe to be a comprehensive curriculum that addresses these issues. Below is a description of my ideal trombone studio..

A weekly triangle of trombone specific studio classes will be taught; General Trombone Studio, Classical Trombone Studio, Jazz Trombone Studio. The foundation of each studio class will include audiation as a core learning component. In each studio class, there will be separate issues pertaining to the trombone that are taught and presented while also maintaining a routine for continued growth. Below are the three studio models and their perceived goals. I will also provide a complete mock syllabus for applied trombone study that will include the three studio model, who is required to attend, what will be taught, and a detailed four year curriculum of study. Below is a brief description of each.

General Trombone Studio: This studio class will be required by all majors, minors, and non-majors in applied trombone study. In this class, general trombone issues will be discussed and taught including audiation, sound production, technique, and other general areas of study. I will also organize one “Life Skills” studio class a semester and bring in guests to discuss social media, branding, technology, and other important business ventures. This one hour class will meet once a week and will be in conjunction with the applied studio syllabus.

Classical Trombone Studio: This studio class will be required by all classical performance majors and is encouraged for all majors to attend. In this class, specific trombone issues pertaining to orchestral and chamber performance are addressed. Historical study into the composer, composition, performance practice, and excerpt(s) of study will be discussed weekly. I will limit the prepared excerpts to two a week, depending on the difficulty and stylistic likeness between the proposed excerpts (For example, Brahms 2 would only be assigned considering the difficulty and tuning while Lohengrin would be assigned with another excerpt). Students will rotate regularly into different sections every two weeks and will be required to perform 3-5 excerpts on the music department’s recital hour studio time. Students will be expected
occasionally to form trombone quartets to address difficult chamber literature, as well as to prepare trombone excerpts from standard brass quintet literature. Additionally, students will be required to play on two mock auditions, a separate jury, and will have to perform three excerpts from memory as a grouped section during that jury. It is worth noting that although labeled Classical Trombone Studio, I would gladly welcome a change in name to Classical Low Brass Studio in conjunction with a Tuba Professor. This would help in the facilitation of the studio, additional feedback on the excerpts, and a home for Tubists and Trombonists to practice regularly with their brass colleagues. This one hour class will meet once a week and will be in conjunction with the applied studio syllabus.

**Jazz Trombone Studio:** This studio class will be required by all jazz performance majors and is encouraged for all majors to attend. In this class, specific trombone issues pertaining to jazz and commercial performance, jazz improvisation, and stylistic nuance are addressed. The last class of each month will host a special interests class. Every single student will be able to perform and present specific topics on improvisation during this time. Large ensemble excerpts, solo excerpts, transcriptions, and jazz standards will be assigned every week. Additionally, a week to week improvisation curriculum will be taught. This will be a streamlined yearly teaching model that will start with audiation, parent/chord scale relationships, scale permutations, interval relationships, chromaticism, chromatic shapes, etc. Other more complex improvisation topics such as modes of melodic minor, upper structure harmonies, and Coltrane matrices can be discussed or presented during the special interest studio dates. This one hour class will meet once a week and will be in conjunction with the applied studio syllabus.

**Advanced and Intermediate Students:** While this curriculum serves as a great resource for me to organize my trombone studio, I do not intend it to be a fixed template for all students. It is merely an expected benchmark that is aimed towards the average student level. Undoubtedly, I will be dealing with undergraduate students who are behind and ahead of the average trombonist. Students that are behind to lack of instruction, illness, embouchure change, and etc will be afforded the appropriate level of instruction that they can personally handle. However, my expectation is for those students to eventually catch up to their colleagues during their time of study. Likewise, students that are beyond the level of my recommended literature and instruction will also be taught at a different level. To me, it is all about the perspective of the student and what they need to continue their personal growth as a musician, trombonist, and person. I will make sure that every student is given these opportunities while also maintaining a supportive environment.
Course Objectives: The goal of this class is to increase your musicianship and technique as it pertains to the trombone. You will be graded on your performance and preparation for your weekly applied lessons, and a weekly triangle of trombone specific studio classes will be taught; General Trombone Studio, Classical Trombone Studio, and Jazz Trombone Studio. Depending on your major, you will be required to go to several trombone based sessions such as studio classes, trombone ensembles, and recitals. The foundation of your lessons and each studio class will include audiation as a core learning component.

Expectations: Every student is expected to...

- PRACTICE! A practice expectation is detailed below
- Attend all lessons, appropriate studios, and recitals
- Come to lessons prepared with correct materials/recordings
- Complete your weekly lesson log journal entries
- Make formal progress in your Tunes List and Tunes List Jury
- Make formal progress in your Scale Permutations spreadsheet

Practice Goals:

Non-Major and Minors 30 - 60 minutes daily
Music Education Majors 1½ - 2 hours daily
Performance Majors 3+ hours daily

*A safe way to ensure that you are efficient is to spread out your practice schedule. Also, consider this a rule of thumb: For however many hours you practice, rest for an equal amount of hours afterwards. Stay diligent and journey oriented. The goals will come in time!

Dress Code: Every student is expected to dress up professionally for each lesson, studio, and recital date. Part of being a professional is showing up to your engagements dressed for the occasion. Males should wear a collared shirt, jeans/pants with no holes/tears, and nice shoes. No hats, athletic attire, or t-shirts. Females should wear appropriate business attire (jeans/dress slacks, long dresses, or long skirts). No hats, athletic shorts attire, or t-shirts.

Final grades: Final grades will be based on your Lesson and Studio Attendance, Lesson and Studio Preparation, Weekly Lesson Logs Journal, Tunes List Jury, Scale Permutation
Spreadsheet, and your final Solo Jury. Below is an academic breakdown of the course with descriptions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson and Studio Attendance</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson and Studio Preparation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Lesson Logs/Notebook</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunes List Jury</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scale Permutation Spreadsheet:</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Solo Jury</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lesson and Studio Attendance:** Attendance is crucial for the continued development of your craft as an aspiring musician. Lessons will occur weekly and will be 50-55 total minutes. If you know you are going to miss a lesson, please let me know 24 hours in advance. All absences should either be approved by me or covered by an excused absence (Please refer to your student handbook for this). All lessons that are missed need to be made up. I will have a weekly sheet outside my office to show my available makeup lesson times. First come first serve. Regular lesson times will be decided at the beginning of the semester and are set till the final jury has been completed. Studio and recital attendances are also graded and is explained in more detail later in this syllabus.

**Lesson and Studio Preparation:** Every lesson I will could assign the Warm-up Packet, Vocalises, Etudes, Technique and Flexibility Exercises, Scale Permutations, Tune Lists, and specific passages on your solo literature, etc. It is up to you to make sure you are prepared. I will give you a warm-up packet that will include your daily routine. Your daily routine should take 30-45 minutes depending on how fast or slow we have marked your exercises. We will always go through this packet for 15-20 minutes of every lesson to mark your progress or struggles. Every lesson I will keep a folder with your progress from lesson to lesson and mark down what you are to have prepared on your weekly log. I will then email you immediately after the lesson a scanned pdf of your current lesson log.

**Weekly Lesson Log Journal:** Every lesson I will expect you to write about your success and struggles in your previous lesson on your Weekly Log sheet that I email you. You should talk about specific issues that you had and how ways to solve the problems. Sometimes the most effective way to help teach yourself is to write about it. All music logs are due within two days of your last lesson. Please scan me a copy and email it to me. Late entries will be cataloged, but not counted towards your final grade. That being said, this is a valuable tool to help you make formal progress on the instrument both physically and mentally. Included with this syllabus is the Weekly Log template. Please bring a copy to every lesson and keep an up to date notebook of your weekly logs, scale permutation spreadsheet, tunes list, transcription project(s), and solo literature.

**Tunes List Jury:** This is an essential component of your audiation development. Every semester I will have a Tunes List Jury (usually a month before your final jury), and on this jury you will
be expected to play selected melodies from a list of level appropriate tunes in all 12 keys. The type of melodies listed are from nursery rhymes, spirituals, orchestral melodies/excerpts, hymns, the American Songbook, etc. Students will be expected to practice 6-8 melodies over the course of the semester. The goal is to develop the inner ear and the ability to “see what you hear” and to “hear what you see”. The Tunes List will be covered in your lessons and in Trombone Studio as well. A level based breakdown of the Tunes List is attached to this syllabus.

**Scale Permutations Spreadsheet**: This spreadsheet is designed to develop not only a working knowledge of scalar sounds, but also to interpret intervallic relationships between each diatonic pitch. Understanding these patterns can help develop the ability to audiate, create challenging interval exercises, and even creates some material for those that are studying improvisation and composition. Two scale juries will be held a semester and each student has to pass two entire scale permutations a semester to receive full credit. A maximum of 8 scale permutations can be passed in any given semester. To pass a scale jury you have to play your scales horizontally, vertically, in thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and sevenths. It is possible to pass parts of your scale jury and to fail others, which is why you will get two opportunities to pass. The spreadsheet will catalog where you stand. To get a full credit, you will have to pass at least one entire scale permutation each scale jury. The scale permutation spreadsheet is attached to this syllabus.

**Final Solo Jury**: The final jury will consist of a chosen classical solo and/or 2-3 jazz standards, a technical etude, and any other specific exercises we choose during your lessons for you to prepare. Every music major is expected to play at least one movement of their solo or a single jazz standard memorized. These will be worked on during your lessons and treated like a transcription project. A jury is a semester worth of progress that is being showcased for your applied teacher and joining faculty. If you put in the work, this should be no problem whatsoever. You will be graded on how you perform, much like a real world audition.

**Recital Attendance**: At the first Trombone Studio I will hand out all of the required recitals for the semester. Required dates will include Faculty Brass recitals, Guest Artist Brass Recitals, Student Trombone recitals, and other brass specific events. Jazz majors will be required to go to jazz related events as well. Going to recitals are essential for your development as a musician. I will have a spreadsheet 15 minutes before every event for everyone to sign-in and sign-out. If I am not able to attend, then I will appoint a fellow professor or graduate trombone student to administer the sign-in and sign-out process.

**Academic Dishonesty**: Any form of cheating (cheating on recital attendance, plagiarism in transcriptions, and etc) will result in an automatic failing grade for that specific assignment and will be reflected in your final grade. Any repeat offenses can be subject to an automatic “F” in your applied lessons with a possible trombone studio ban. Refer to your student handbook for more information or come talk me if you have any questions.
## Tunes List

Pick 6-8 Melodies a semester that you want to work on. Start with the Level one melodies and work your way to the right. Learn these melodies in all 12 keys. Remember the relative and parallel major/minor relationships when learning these melodies as well as the common secondary dominant movements. Have fun and remember to sing first!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level One</th>
<th>Level Two</th>
<th>Level Three</th>
<th>Level Four</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amazing Grace</td>
<td>All of Me</td>
<td>All the Things You Are</td>
<td>Days &amp; Wine and Roses</td>
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<td>America the Beautiful</td>
<td>Autumn Leaves</td>
<td>Fly Me to the Moon</td>
<td>Giant Steps</td>
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<td>Frere Jacques</td>
<td>Finlandia</td>
<td>Holst Suite in Eb</td>
<td>Holst Suite in F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Go Down Moses</td>
<td>Meet the Flintstones</td>
<td>Lohengrin</td>
<td>Hungarian March</td>
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<tr>
<td>Happy Birthday</td>
<td>Hymnsong/Philip Bliss</td>
<td>Minuet in G (Bach)</td>
<td>La Gazza Ladra</td>
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<tr>
<td>New World Theme</td>
<td>My Country Tis</td>
<td>Simple Gifts</td>
<td>Over the Rainbow</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ode to Joy</td>
<td>September in the Rain</td>
<td>Star Spangled Banner</td>
<td>Rolling Thunder (Sousa)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Row, Row Your Boat</td>
<td>Swing Low</td>
<td>Tuba Mirum</td>
<td>Take Me Out/Ball Game</td>
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<tr>
<td>This Old Man</td>
<td>Saint-Saen Sym. #3</td>
<td>Alone Together</td>
<td>There is No Greater Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twinkle Twinkle</td>
<td>Tannhauser</td>
<td>Summertime</td>
<td>Wayfaring Stranger</td>
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Below is a list of scales and their permutations. Practice at least one for every upcoming scale jury. See the Scale jury details on your syllabus for more information. There are plenty of extra slots to explore different scales if all of these get completed during your course of study. Now go practice!

<table>
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<th>Horizontal</th>
<th>Vertical</th>
<th>3rds</th>
<th>4ths</th>
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Weekly Log

Date______________________________________________

Lesson Review:

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Next Lesson Assignments:
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Trombone Curriculum

Freshman Year:

Recommended Reading:

*How to Make Friends and to Influence People* by Dale Carnegie  
*Preparatory Audiation, Audition, and Music Learning Theory* by Edwin Gordon  
*Song and Wind* by Brian Frederickson

Recommended Recordings:

- Slide Area - Joe Alessi  
- Versatility - Chris Buckholz  
- American Showcase - Ron Barron  
- On Base - James Markey  
- Kind of Blue - Miles Davis  
- Soul Station - Hank Mobley  
- Blue Train - John Coltrane  
- The Opener - Curtis Fuller

Required Method Books:

- Warm-Up Packet - Austin Seybert  
- *The Jazz Improvisation Triangle: Math, Language, and Transcription* - by Austin Seybert  
- Voicings for Jazz Piano - by Frank Mantooth  
- *Bordogni Complete Vocalises for Trombone – Annotated and Edited* by Michael Mulcahy  
- Arbans, Complete Method for Trombone and Euphonium - by Joe Alessi and Brian Bowman  
- Lip Slur Melodies - by Brad Edwards  
- Introductory Studies in Tenor and Alto Clef - by Brad Edwards

Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composers</th>
<th>Works</th>
<th>Artists</th>
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<td>Barat</td>
<td>Andante et Allegro</td>
<td>John Coltrane</td>
<td>Impressions</td>
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<td>Galliand</td>
<td>Sonatas</td>
<td>Sarah Vaughan</td>
<td>All of Me</td>
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<td>Guilment</td>
<td>Morceau Symphonique</td>
<td>Miles Davis</td>
<td>Autumn Leaves</td>
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<td>Jorgenson</td>
<td>Romance</td>
<td>Clark Terry</td>
<td>Bye Bye BlackBird</td>
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<tr>
<td>McCarty</td>
<td>Sonata (Bass)</td>
<td>JJ Johnson</td>
<td>Satin Doll</td>
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<td>Rimsky Korsakov</td>
<td>Concerto for Trombone</td>
<td>Sonny Stitt</td>
<td>Tenor Madness</td>
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<td>Saint-Saens</td>
<td>Cavatine</td>
<td>Sonny Side Up</td>
<td>On the Sunny Side of the Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spillman</td>
<td>Two Songs (Bass)</td>
<td>Charlie Parker</td>
<td>Billie’s Bounce</td>
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</table>
Sophomore Year:

Recommended Reading:

*The Art of Brass Playing* by Philip Farkas
*Effortless Mastery* by Kenny Werner

Recommended Recordings:

- **First Look** - Toby Oft
- **Beyond the End of the Century** - Joe Alessi
- **Pugh/Taylor Project** - Jim Pugh and David Taylor
- **Listening** - Denson Paul Pollard
- **The Trombone Master** - JJ Johnson
- **The Great Kai and J.J.** - JJ and Kai
- **Fond Memories** - Frank Rosalino
- **The Great Fontana** - Carl Fontana

Required Method Books:

- *The Blume 36 Studies for Trombone with F Attachment* - Arranged and Edited by Reginald Fink
- *40 Progressive Studies for Trombone* - H. W. Tyrell
- *Sixty Selected Studies for Trombone* - by C. Kopprasch
- *Doodle Studies and Etudes* - by Bob McChesney

Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grondahl</th>
<th>Concerto</th>
<th>Frank Rosalino</th>
<th>All The Things You Are</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hindemith</td>
<td>Sonata</td>
<td>Andy Martin</td>
<td>Doxy</td>
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<td>Koetsier</td>
<td>Allegro Maestoso (Bass)</td>
<td>JJ Johnson</td>
<td>Blue Bossa</td>
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<td>Larsson</td>
<td>Concertino</td>
<td>Andy Martin</td>
<td>East of the Sun</td>
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<td>Lebedev</td>
<td>Concerto in One Mvt (Bass)</td>
<td>Harry Watters</td>
<td>In a Mellow Tone</td>
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<td>Sonata</td>
<td>Fontana/Rosalino</td>
<td>Just Friends</td>
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<td>Telemann</td>
<td>Sonata in F minor</td>
<td>Joe Henderson</td>
<td>Recordame</td>
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<td>Weber</td>
<td>Romance</td>
<td>Curtis Fuller</td>
<td>What is This Thing</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Called Love</td>
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</table>
**Junior Year:**

**Recommended Reading:**

*Miles: The Autobiography*

*Highly Effective Networking* by Orville Pierson

**Recommended Recordings:**

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<tr>
<th>New York Legends - Joe Alessi</th>
<th>HeavyWeights - Carl Fontana and Bobby Shew</th>
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<tr>
<td>Trombonastics - Joe Alessi</td>
<td>E’nJ “Legend and Lion” - Pugh and Nakagawa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charles Vernon: Bass Trombone - Charles Vernon</td>
<td>Oscar Peterson Trio +1 with Clark Terry</td>
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<td>Barn Burner - Randall Hawes</td>
<td>Coming Home - Michael Dease</td>
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**Required Method Books:**

*Telemann, Twelve Fantasies for Trombone* - Transcribed and Edited by Alan Raph

*The One Hundred* - by Megumi Kanda

**Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:**

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Senior Year:

Recommended Reading:

*Everything We Needed to Know About Business We Learned Playing Music* by Craig Cortello
*Baroque Music Today: Music as Speech. Ways to a New Understanding of Music* by Nikolaus Harnoncourt

Recommended Recordings:

- **X-Over Trombone** - Jim Pugh
- **Windpower** - Christian Lindberg
- **Illuminations** - Joe Alessi
- **Psychedelia** - James Markey
- **Sound Stories** - Marshall Gilkes
- **Tales of the Hudson** - Michael Brecker
- **Two Sides: One Story** - Mason Brothers Quintet
- **Giant Steps** - John Coltrane

Required Method Books:

*Complete Suites for Unaccompanied Cello* - by Bach
*13 Capriccio Studies for Trombone* - by E. Bozza

Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:

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The Versatile Trombonist:

A Curriculum Model for Improving Audiation Skills

I believe that teaching the undergraduate trombonist requires cultivating a wide array of teaching environments grounded in audiation. According to Edwin Gordon, the author of “Preparatory Audiation, Audiation, and Music Learning Theory: A Handbook of a Comprehensive Music Learning Sequence”, audiation is the ability to hear and understand music for which the sound is not physically present or may never have been physically present. This is the foundation of my curriculum; to help my students sing and audiate what they see, hear, and feel into one combined sensation. I call this developing “a personal” relationship with your instrument. Edwin Gordon refers to this simply “conversational language” between you and your amplified medium. Thus, I have developed what I believe to be a comprehensive curriculum that addresses these issues. Below is a description of my ideal trombone studio..

A weekly triangle of trombone specific studio classes will be taught; General Trombone Studio, Classical Trombone Studio, Jazz Trombone Studio. The foundation of each studio class will include audiation as a core learning component. In each studio class, there will be separate issues pertaining to the trombone that are taught and presented while also maintaining a routine for continued growth. Below are the three studio models and their perceived goals. I will also provide a complete mock syllabus for applied trombone study that will include the three studio model, who is required to attend, what will be taught, and a detailed four year curriculum of study. Below is a brief description of each.

**General Trombone Studio:** This studio class will be required by all majors, minors, and non-majors in applied trombone study. In this class, general trombone issues will be discussed and taught including audiation, sound production, technique, and other general areas of study. I will also organize one “Life Skills” studio class a semester and bring in guests to discuss social media, branding, technology, and other important business ventures. This one hour class will meet once a week and will be in conjunction with the applied studio syllabus.

**Classical Trombone Studio:** This studio class will be required by all classical performance majors and is encouraged for all majors to attend. In this class, specific trombone issues pertaining to orchestral and chamber performance are addressed. Historical study into the composer, composition, performance practice, and excerpt(s) of study will be discussed weekly. I will limit the prepared excerpts to two a week, depending on the difficulty and stylistic likeness between the proposed excerpts (For example, Brahms 2 would only be assigned considering the
difficulty and tuning while Lohengrin would be assigned with another excerpt). Students will rotate regularly into different sections every two weeks and will be required to perform 2-4 excerpts on the music department’s recital hour studio time. Students will be expected occasionally to form trombone quartets to address difficult chamber literature, as well as to prepare trombone excerpts from standard brass quintet literature. It is worth noting that although labeled Classical Trombone Studio, I would gladly welcome a change in name to Classical Low Brass Studio in conjunction with a Tuba Professor. This would help in the facilitation of the studio, additional feedback on the excerpts, and a home for Tubists and Trombonists to practice regularly with their brass colleagues. This one hour class will meet once a week and will be in conjunction with the applied studio syllabus.

Jazz Trombone Studio: This studio class will be required by all jazz performance majors and is encouraged for all majors to attend. In this class, specific trombone issues pertaining to jazz and commercial performance, jazz improvisation, and stylistic nuance are addressed. The last class of each month will host a special interests class. If desired, students will be able to perform and present specific topics on improvisation during this time. Large ensemble excerpts, solo excerpts, transcriptions, and jazz standards will be assigned every week. Additionally, a week to week improvisation curriculum will be taught. This will be a streamlined yearly teaching model that will start with audiation, parent/chord scale relationships, scale permutations, interval relationships, chromaticism, chromatic shapes, etc. Other more complex improvisation topics such as modes of melodic minor, upper structure harmonies, and Coltrane matrices can be discussed or presented during the special interest studio dates. This one hour class will meet once a week and will be in conjunction with the applied studio syllabus.

Advanced and Intermediate Students: While this curriculum serves as a great resource for me to organize my trombone studio, I do not intend it to be a fixed template for all students. It is merely an expected benchmark that is aimed towards the average student level. Undoubtedly, I will be dealing with undergraduate students who are behind and ahead of the average trombonist. Students that are behind to lack of instruction, illness, embouchure change, and etc will be afforded the appropriate level of instruction that they can personally handle. However, my expectation is for those students to eventually catch up to their colleagues during their time of study. Likewise, students that are beyond the level of my recommended literature and instruction will also be taught at a different level. To me, it is all about the perspective of the student and what they need to continue their personal growth as a musician, trombonist, and person. I will make sure that every student is given these opportunities while also maintaining a supportive environment.
Generic Department of Music  
Applied Trombone Syllabus  
Spring 2019

Music Hall  
Dr Seybert: Office 001  
Email: austinseybert@gmail.com  
Office Hours: See Schedule Outside Office Door

**Course Objectives:** The goal of this class is to increase your musicianship and technique as it pertains to the trombone. You will be graded on your performance and preparation for your weekly applied lessons, and a weekly triangle of trombone specific studio classes will be taught; General Trombone Studio, Classical Trombone Studio, and Jazz Trombone Studio. Depending on your major, you will be required to go to several trombone-based sessions such as studio classes, trombone ensembles, and recitals. The foundation of your lessons and each studio class will include audiation as a core learning component.

**Expectations:** Every student is expected to...

- PRACTICE! A practice expectation is detailed below  
- Attend all lessons, appropriate studios, and recitals  
- Come to lessons prepared with required materials, suggested materials preferred as well.  
- Complete your weekly lesson log journal entries  
- Make formal progress in your Tunes List  
- Make formal progress in your Scale Permutations spreadsheet

**Practice Goals:**

Non-Major and Minors  
30 - 60 minutes daily

Music Education Majors  
1½ - 2 hours daily

Performance Majors  
2 - 3 hours daily

*A safe way to ensure that you are efficient is to spread out your practice schedule. Also, consider this a rule of thumb: For however many hours you practice, rest for an equal number of hours afterwards. Stay diligent and journey oriented. The goals will come in time!

**Dress Code:** Business casual is the minimum expectation. Email me if you have any concerns.

**Final grades:** Final grades will be based on your Lesson and Studio Attendance, Lesson and Studio Preparation, Weekly Lesson Logs Journal, Tunes List, Scale Permutation Spreadsheet, and your final Solo Jury. Below is an academic breakdown of the course with descriptions.
Lesson and Studio Attendance: Attendance is crucial for the continued development of your craft as an aspiring musician. Lessons will occur weekly and will be 50-55 total minutes. If you know you are going to miss a lesson, please let me know 24 hours in advance. All absences should either be approved by me or covered by an excused absence (Please refer to your student handbook for this). All lessons that are missed need to be made up. I will have a weekly sheet outside my office to show my available makeup lesson times. First come first serve. Regular lesson times will be decided at the beginning of the semester and are set till the final jury has been completed. Studio and recital attendances are also graded and is explained in more detail later in this syllabus.

Every lesson I will/could assign the Warm-up Packet, Vocalises, Etudes, Technique and Flexibility Exercises, Scale Permutations, Tune Lists, and specific passages on your solo literature, etc. It is up to you to make sure you are prepared. I will give you a warm-up packet that will include your daily routine. Your daily routine should take 30-45 minutes depending on how fast or slow we have marked your exercises. We will always go through this packet for 15-20 minutes of every lesson to mark your progress or struggles. Every lesson I will keep a folder with your progress from lesson to lesson and mark down what you are to have prepared on your weekly log. I will then email you immediately after the lesson a scanned pdf of your current lesson log.

Weekly Lesson Log Journal: Every lesson I will expect you to write about your success and struggles in your previous lesson on your Weekly Log sheet that I email you. You should talk about specific issues that you had and how to solve the problems. All music logs are due within two days of your last lesson. Please scan a copy and email it to me. Late entries will be cataloged, but not counted towards your final grade. That being said, this is a valuable tool to help you make formal progress on the instrument both physically and mentally. Included with this syllabus is the Weekly Log template. Please bring a copy to every lesson and keep an up to date notebook of your weekly logs, scale permutation spreadsheet, tunes list, transcription project(s), and solo literature.

Tunes List and Scale Permutations: This is an essential component of your audiation development. Every semester I will have a Tunes List and you will be expected to play selected melodies in all 12 keys. The type of melodies listed are from nursery rhymes, spirituals, orchestral melodies/excerpts, hymns, the American Songbook, etc. Students will be expected to practice depending on level 2-6 melodies over the course of the semester. The goal is to develop the inner ear and the ability to “see what you hear” and to “hear what you see”. The Tunes List will be covered in your lessons and in General Trombone Studio as well. Several lists of tunes are attached for you to choose from.
The scale permutation spreadsheet is designed to develop not only a working knowledge of scalar sounds, but also to interpret intervallic relationships between each diatonic pitch. Understanding these patterns can help develop the ability to audiate, create challenging interval exercises, and even creates some material for those that are studying improvisation and composition. Scale permutations will be covered in your lessons and in General Trombone Studio as well. You have to play your scales horizontally, vertically, in thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, and sevenths. It is possible to pass parts of your scale jury and to fail other. The spreadsheet will catalog where you stand. The scale permutation spreadsheet is attached to this syllabus.

**Final Solo Jury:** The final jury will consist of a chosen classical solo and/or 2-3 jazz standards, a technical etude, and any other specific exercises we choose during your lessons for you to prepare. Every music major is expected to play at least one movement of their solo or a single jazz standard memorized. These will be worked on during your lessons and treated like a transcription project. A jury is a semester worth of progress that is being showcased for your applied teacher and joining faculty. If you put in the work, this should be no problem whatsoever. You will be graded on how you perform, much like a real world audition.

**Recital Attendance:** At the first Trombone Studio I will hand out all of the anticipated recitals for the semester. Dates will include Faculty Brass recitals, Guest Artist Brass Recitals, Student Trombone recitals, and other brass specific events. Going to recitals are essential for your development as a musician and all student trombone recitals are required events for all trombone students participating in the trombone studio. Although I am not requiring it, I highly encourage you to attend other recital events as well. Trombone recitals will be added as they are scheduled. Plan accordingly.

**Mental Health:** More important than anything in music or your chosen area of study is your personal health both physically and mentally. During your time of study, you may experience a wide array of challenges such as anxiety, lack of motivation, difficulty concentrating, and substance abuse. No matter the level or type of issue, explore talking with a licensed counselor here on campus. If you get overwhelmed with issues outside of school such as a death in the family, etc, there are options to be excused from school to a definite leave of absence. There are many services on campus such as the student affairs department and 24/7 assistance through the campus hotline as well. If you need, I am willing to have a confidential conversation if you choose. When in doubt, be happy and take care of yourself. Trombone and academics can wait.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any form of cheating (cheating on recital attendance, plagiarism in transcriptions, and etc) will result in an automatic failing grade for that specific assignment and will be reflected in your final grade. Any repeat offenses can be subject to an automatic “F” in your applied lessons with a possible trombone studio ban.
Tunes Lists

Decide on 2-6 Melodies a semester that you want to work on from either these lists of tunes or approved by me. Learn these melodies in all 12 keys. Remember the relative and parallel major/minor relationships when learning these melodies as well as the common secondary dominant movements. Have fun and remember to sing first! Also, pick any from these lists and we will cross them out as you finish them. Feel free to suggest other melodies that you feel speaks to you and you want to learn. Those melodies will be written under “Performer’s Choice”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nursery Rhymes:</th>
<th>Patriotic/Folksong:</th>
<th>Spirituals:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twinkle Twinkle Little Star</td>
<td>My Country Tis of Thee</td>
<td>Go Down Moses</td>
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<tr>
<td>This Old Man</td>
<td>Star Spangled Banner</td>
<td>Swing Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frere Jacques</td>
<td>Simple Gifts</td>
<td>Wade in the Water</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy Birthday</td>
<td>Take Me out to the Ball Game</td>
<td>Swing Low</td>
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<td>Three Blind Mice</td>
<td>America</td>
<td>Down by the Riverside</td>
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<tr>
<td>Row, Row, Row Your Boat</td>
<td>God Bless AMerica</td>
<td>Deep River</td>
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<tr>
<td>A’Tisket A’Tasket</td>
<td>Eternal Father</td>
<td>Roll, Jordan, Roll</td>
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<td>Hot Cross Buns</td>
<td>Yankee Doodle</td>
<td>Mary Don’t You Weep</td>
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<thead>
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<th>Classical:</th>
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<td>New World Theme</td>
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<td>Ode to Joy</td>
<td>All of Me</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finlandia</td>
<td>September in the Rain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tannhauser</td>
<td>Giant Steps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lohengrin</td>
<td>Day and Wine and Roses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuba Mirum</td>
<td>There is No Greater Love</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saint Saens #3</td>
<td>Summertime</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holst Suite in F or Eb</td>
<td>My Romance</td>
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Below is a list of scales and their permutations. See the Scale permutation details on your syllabus for more information. There are plenty of extra slots to explore different scales if all of these get completed during your course of study. Now go practice!

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<th></th>
<th>Horizontal</th>
<th>Vertical</th>
<th>3rds</th>
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<td>Whole Tone</td>
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<td>Dorian b5</td>
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Weekly Log

Date__________________________________________

Lesson Review:

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Next Lesson Assignments:
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-
**Trombone Curriculum**

**Freshman Year:**

**Suggested Reading (bold is required):**

*How to Make Friends and to Influence People* by Dale Carnegie  
*Preparatory Audiation, Audition, and Music Learning Theory* by Edwin Gordon  
*Song and Wind* by Brian Frederickson

**Suggested Recordings:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Slide Area</em></td>
<td>Joe Alessi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Versatilit</em></td>
<td>Chris Buckholz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Breaking Ground</em></td>
<td>Natalie Mannix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>On Base</em></td>
<td>James Markey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track</th>
<th>Artist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Kind of Blue</em></td>
<td>Miles Davis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Soul Station</em></td>
<td>Hank Moby</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Blue Train</em></td>
<td>John Coltrane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Opener</em></td>
<td>Curtis Fuller</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Suggested Method Books (bold are required):**

*Warm-Up Packet* - Austin Seybert  
*Voicings for Jazz Piano* - by Frank Mantooth  
*Bordogni Complete Vocalises for Trombone – Annotated and Edited by Michael Mulcahy*  
*Arbans, Complete Method for Trombone and Euphonium* - by Joe Alessi and Brian Bowman  
*Lip Slur Melodies - by Brad Edwards*  
*Tuning Drone Melodies, Bass Clef (with some tenor clef)* - by Brad Edwards  
*Introductory Studies in Tenor and Alto Clef* - by Brad Edwards  
*Ear Training for Trombone* - by David Vining

**Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer/Artist</th>
<th>Piece Title</th>
<th>Composer/Artist</th>
<th>Piece Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barat</td>
<td><em>Andante et Allegro</em></td>
<td>John Coltrane</td>
<td><em>Impressions</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galliard</td>
<td><em>Sonatas</em></td>
<td>Sarah Vaughan</td>
<td><em>All of Me</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guilmant</td>
<td><em>Morceau Symphonique</em></td>
<td>Miles Davis</td>
<td><em>Autumn Leaves</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jorgenson</td>
<td><em>Romance</em></td>
<td>Clark Terry</td>
<td><em>Bye Bye BlackBird</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarty</td>
<td><em>Sonata (Bass)</em></td>
<td>JJ Johnson</td>
<td><em>Satin Doll</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rimsky Korsakov</td>
<td><em>Concerto for Trombone</em></td>
<td>Sonny Stitt</td>
<td><em>Tenor Madness</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint-Saens</td>
<td><em>Cavatine</em></td>
<td>Sonny Side Up</td>
<td><em>On the Sunny Side of the Street</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spillman</td>
<td><em>Two Songs (Bass)</em></td>
<td>Charlie Parker</td>
<td><em>Billie’s</em></td>
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<td></td>
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<td><em>Bounce</em></td>
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</table>
Sophomore Year:

Recommended Reading (bold is required):

_The Art of Brass Playing_ by Philip Farkas  
_Effortless Mastery_ by Kenny Werner

Recommended Recordings:

*First Look* - Toby Oft  
*Sonatas, Songs, and Spirituals* - Kenneth Thompkins  
*Pugh/Taylor Project* - Jim Pugh and David Taylor  
*Listening* - Denson Paul Pollard

*The Trombone Master* - JJ Johnson  
*The Great Kai and J.J.* - JJ and Kai  
*Fond Memories* - Frank Rosalino  
*The Great Fontana* - Carl Fontana

Required Method Books (bold is required):

_The Blume 36 Studies for Trombone with F Attachment_ - Arranged and Edited by Reginald Fink  
_40 Progressive Studies for Trombone_ - H. W. Tyrell  
_Sixty Selected Studies for Trombone_ - by C. Kopprasch  
_Doodle Studies and Etudes_ - by Bob McChesney

Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:

- **Grondahl**  
  - *Concerto*  
- **Hindemith**  
  - *Sonata*  
- **Koetsier**  
  - *Allegro Maestoso (Bass)*  
- **Larsson**  
  - *Concertino*  
- **Lebedev**  
  - *Concerto in One Mvt (Bass)*  
- **Sulek**  
  - *Sonata*  
- **Telemann**  
  - *Sonata in F Minor*  
- **Weber**  
  - *Romance*  
- **Frank Rosalino**  
  - *All The Things You Are*  
  - *Doxy*  
  - *Blue Bossa*  
  - *East of the Sun*  
  - *In a Mellow Tone*  
  - *Just Friends*  
  - *Recordame*  
  - *What is This Thing Called Love*  
- **Andy Martin**  
  - *JJ Johnson*  
  - *Harry Watters*  
  - *Fontana/Rosalino*  
  - *Joe Henderson*  
  - *Curtis Fuller*
### Junior Year:

**Recommended Reading (bold is required):**

*Highly Effective Networking* by Orville Pierson

**Recommended Recordings:**

- *New York Legends* - Joe Alessi
- *Psychedelia* - James Markey
- *Charles Vernon: Bass Trombone* - Charles Vernon
- *Barn Burner* - Randall Hawes
- *HeavyWeights* - Carl Fontana and Bobby Shew
- *E’nJ “Legend and Lion”* - Pugh and Nakagawa
- *Oscar Peterson Trio +1 with Clark Terry* - Pugh and Nakagawa
- *Coming Home* - Michael Dease

**Required Method Books:**

- *Telemann, Twelve Fantasies for Trombone* - Transcribed and Edited by Alan Raph
- *The One Hundred* - by Megumi Kanda and/or Doug Yeo

**Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:**

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Senior Year:

Recommended Reading (bold is required):

*Everything We Needed to Know About Business We Learned Playing Music* by Craig Cortello

Recommended Recordings:

- *X-Over Trombone* - Jim Pugh
- *Windpower* - Christian Lindberg
- *Up from Below* - Denson Paul Pollard
- *Perspectives* - Jeremy Wilson

- *Sound Stories* - Marshall Gilkes
- *Tales of the Hudson* - Michael Brecker
- *Two Sides: One Story* - Mason Brothers Quintet
- *Giant Steps* - John Coltrane

Required Method Books (bold is required):

- *Complete Suites for Unaccompanied Cello* - by Bach
- *13 Capriccio Studies for Trombone* - by E. Bozza

Solo Literature/Jazz Standards:

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February 22, 2019

TO: Austin Seybert, DMA
    John Manning, MFA

FROM: Janet Williams, PhD, RN, FAAN
IRB Chair

RE: Not Human Subjects Research Determination

I have reviewed the information submitted with your project titled “The Modern Trombonist: A Curriculum Based Model for Improving Audiation Skills for the 21st Century Trombonist (IRB# 201901760). I have determined that the project described in the application does not meet the regulatory definition of human subjects research and does not require review by the IRB, because this is not a systematic investigation designed to create generalizable knowledge involving human subjects.

We appreciate your care in submitting this application to the IRB for review. If the parameters outlined within this Human Subjects Research application request change, re review and/or subsequent IRB review may be required.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. The Human Subjects Office can be reached via phone (319)-335-6564 or email irb@uiowa.edu.
APPENDIX D: Interview with Alex Iles (edited)

Austin Seybert: So I guess we'll just get started. So question number one, how did you learn the trombone, and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Alex Iles: Well, I learned in a group class when I was in fourth grade. We had a teacher that came around to our elementary school once a week, and he worked with a group of us. I think there were five or six of us in a room, and we ... And then we also, when we got enough of that training to be able to get through ... Be able to put together a few notes, we were put in the junior band, which was all the fourth and fifth graders, were in a junior band and we played really simple music there.

Alex Iles: My early experience, for the first three years was all this group class experience. It wasn't really ... I didn't have any private lessons really to speak of. Then I just picked it up on my own a little bit more. But everything was in terms of playing in the band. That was what all the training was about. It was really not much individual work, like the sort of things I got into later, playing by ear, and doing all those sorts of things. It was all connected to written music, and getting to the point where you could play the parts in the band, so that ... In a way it ...

Alex Iles: The other stuff that I was doing a little bit on my own, but then by the time I got into junior high, I started listening ... It was maybe three or four years later I was starting to listen to jazz and things like that. I had a director who was into that, and was starting to play stuff. We had a little jazz band in middle school, and I started ... That's when I started getting a little more interested in doing that stuff. I came at it ... Relative to how long I'd been playing, it'd been a little bit later doing things aurally like that.

Alex Iles: Really, that whole thing of what I like to call playing by ear and learning, getting into transcribing, all that kind of stuff even in its simplest form, didn't happen for me until later when I was in high school. That's when we started doing more trying to figure songs out by ear, and doing all that kind of stuff. And starting to learn more about playing things that I heard on recordings. It was sort of a gradual process.
Alex Iles: Then it really took off, and by the time I was in college I was really starting to do more of that, and it was clear to me that I really wish I'd started earlier. It was one of those things that I should have been doing all this time is really getting into this. Once I started being ... As a professional player, I realized being around other musicians that had grown up in a very strong aural base music, in their home with their parents, everybody singing and playing music together by ear. I realized I really didn't have that experience, so I had to play a lot of catch up.

Alex Iles: I noticed that when I played casuals, and people could play tunes they've never really played before, but they've heard, and they could just do it really fast. I was like, "Oh, boy. That's hard for me." That took time for me to develop a functional level in that skill, so I had to really reverse engineer that for myself. It was a gradual thing. I would say that aural part of it, which we've talked about before, that for me came later. It was more of a ... In a way, it was too late, but it really helped me. As I've gotten into other parts of my playing, I've been able to incorporate it, maybe I appreciate it more as a result, but that's when I start ... That's actually how I learn a lot of music now, even written music sometimes I'll work on it from an aural perspective, rather than the paper.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. That's interesting 'cause very recently ... I have a couple DMA recitals coming up, and very recently I decided I wasn't gonna ... I decided to just stay away from the notation, and I started to learn the Bozza from memory. It was a very different experience 'cause I had usually only done that in a jazz setting.

Alex Iles: Right.

Austin Seybert: I played it a lot better.

Alex Iles: Yeah, I did that ... I had to play the Tomasi with orchestra out here, and I did it all by ear. I hardly looked at the music at all. There was a couple things I checked, just to check that I was in the right direction, but it was more of a reference. I guess that's how Christian Lindberg plays too. I think somebody told me that he is pretty much in the mindset of memorizing the piece when he first starts learning it. He already knows he wants to learn it, so he's got a photographic memory I think too. But he definitely is
off the music very soon in the process, so it's already going in his ear very early, rather than the way a lot of people like, "Use the paper, use the paper." Then they decide to memorize it, that can be really difficult because you train yourself to rely on the written music so much. There's nothing really wrong with that, but if you do decide you want to do it from memory it makes it challenging.

Alex Iles:

I find it was easier ... Your experience learning the Bozza sounds a lot like the way I learned the Tomasi. It was very similar. I always find playing that way, it is kind of liberating. When you play trombone especially, having music in front of you when you're playing a solo, it's really a drag. I don't like having ... I swear, I'm always afraid I'm gonna smack my slide on the music stand. You can't really play it in a good position, especially when you have two or three pages up on a stand, you're looking off to the side, it's really awkward, and it can sort of pull the horn away from your chops. But when you're just playing from memory, you don't have to worry about any of that stuff, it's just play. It's really nice. You can be in a good playing position, you can be in a much more productive playing position too when you play from memory. Anyway, that's what I found.

Alex Iles:

It is interesting that ... Like I said, I still have a regret in a way that I didn't have that situation or environment where somebody formed a band, and here's some parts, you gotta learn these parts. The one experience I had, in high school we had a little Chicago sound alike band. We all transcribed our parts from records there, so that's what kind of opened the door for me to develop that skill. We were playing Chicago tunes, so there was little bit of that. It was a very humble little experience, but I think those little things like that can be the things that teach you the most actually. When you have a little group, and you're trying to accomplish one little thing, you can actually develop a skill that lasts.

Austin Seybert:

Cool. Actually, it's interesting you said that because whenever I was ... My first transcribing experience personally was when I was in high school, and my friends and I started a little cover band, and I was playing ... I wasn't playing trombone, I was playing piano and doing vocals. I was transcribing Beatles tunes, and Eagles, and Chicago, and a bunch of the ... Learning how to transcribe
chords, and writing out parts for the horn line, improvisation, but it was me ripping things off the-

Alex Iles: It's a skill set.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, there was a skill set involved that really helped me I think. And when I got to college and started learning that improvisation, that really set me up really well.

Alex Iles: Yeah. I think when people have been listening carefully, that's really when I think the theory pays off 'cause then all of a sudden the stuff that you've been hearing has a name and you can summarize it quickly. It really helps ... Which a lot of people, they expect the theory to be the thing that teaches them how to hear better, and I don't ... That might work for some people, but I think it's better when you hear something, and then when you're introduced to it in a class setting or whatever, and you go ... It's an aha moment, rather than an oh moment. It's has much more meaning when you actually hear something. Oh, that's what that thing is.

Alex Iles: That's why I found it was great when I ... In a similar experience ... I'm not ... I'm a terrible keyboarder. I've had no piano lessons or anything, but I play around a little bit, and I got to the point where I can comp pretty well for myself. I can learn tunes now a little bit on the piano, and it helps a lot. But the thing that really helped me was Mark Levine's jazz piano book. I found that very helpful, and one of the things that was great is that for me, that book was full of aha moments because he would sh-

Are you familiar with that book? Do you Mark Levine?

Austin Seybert: Yeah, actually that's a book that I worked out of. Another book that I worked out of actually is the Frank Mantooth chord voicing book.

Alex Iles: Yeah, those are the voice ... A voicing for the keyboard, yeah. What I found with the Levine thing is he would give a progression or a tune, like four bars of a standard, and he would give different ways different players would voice the left hand especially, and I just thought, "Whoa." This is the way Erroll Garner would play it, this is the way Herbie would play it, this is the way ... It was like suddenly I'm sitting there going, "Oh, that's the thing I been hearing." It's just so great to have somebody put it together, and
suddenly you're playing those things that you hear ... For me, that I heard, but I hadn't really sussed out yet, and he just shows these great ideas. That really helped me jump start me into understanding harmony a little bit better. But it had to have an aural connection to me. I appreciated it so much more.

Alex Iles:
When I was introduced to harmony, and things like that ... There were a lot of books or things that I was reading earlier to try to get answers to these things that I didn't have any clue about. It gave all these theoretical possibilities, and none of them really connected. I was like, "That doesn't really sound like the stuff I'm hearing. I don't understand." It was a disconnect between some of these jazz theory books, and what I was actually hearing musicians play. I couldn't describe what that difference was, but this Mark Levine book did the exact opposite. Suddenly went, this is why these guys ... So is this. I just thought that was yet again another example of having it in your ears seemed like a much more vital way of experiencing the music and learning about it.

Austin Seybert:
Yeah, all right cool. Well, I'm gonna go on to the next question. So what role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio, and do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Alex Iles:
I think it's really important. I think it's really important. I still don't do enough. Now, by audiation, do you mean just playing things by ear?

Austin Seybert:
Being able to ... It could be ... It's that, but also audiation in the sense of being able to think, and hear, and feel pitch, like using all of your senses.

Alex Iles:
Oh, okay. Yeah, not having a really good ... You have a definite sense of that better than I do probably in terms of an academic way of explaining it. A more thorough ... And I don't mean that in a slight ... But in a more comprehensive way, but I can work from my own perspective on it. I talk with students sometimes about ... I don't know if this relates to what your question is, but one of the things I've found is that I hear better when I'm holding my instrument, and I think ... I don't know if that's related to this question.
Alex Iles: Yeah, I can hear pitch much better. Not just intonation, but my actual pitch. My absolute pitch is better when I'm holding my instrument. It's just a weird thing. I remember that ... You probably read that story that Doug Yeo tells. Have you heard that story?

Austin Seybert: Yeah. That's funny 'cause Jim Pugh ... And he just came to University of Illinois and did a Master class with Jim Pugh, and I think I've heard the story. Go ahead and tell it again though.

Alex Iles: Yeah, he said he was taking an ear training ... He had to take an ear training test 'cause he had some conflicts with the final or something, so he had to take it one-on-one with the teacher I guess. Or maybe he had to retake it? I forget, but he said when he started taking the test he was really having trouble, and he asked the professor I guess at some point, maybe when he retook the test, and he said, "Listen, can I just hold my horn and can we do this test again. I won't play it.", and the teacher let him do it and he aced it. I thought that was really ...

Alex Iles: I totally relate to that 'cause when I'm ... Like in lessons, if I'm sitting there, and I want them to play something, if I start to sing it to them, I'm sometimes off by a fourth. I'm not even close, but as soon as I have my horn in my hand, I can sing what I want them to play a lot better, or a lot more consistently. I'd say it's about 50% better at least. It's still off, but I mean I can hear the pitches in my head much better with my instrument there. That's kind of an interesting phenomenon to me that we audiate based on this outside stimulus. It's really-

Austin Seybert: It's interesting you say that 'cause I always told my students that I want them to create a personal relationship with their instruments. Whenever we're working on a Rochut, and a student is struggling, we'll sing through, but I'll also have them hold their instrument and I want them to sign me the positions at the same time.

Alex Iles: Yeah, that's great.

Austin Seybert: So they can be kinesthetically aware with their slide, and their bell they can be aurally aware. I'm not sure what it is, but there's some kind of magic that happens right there. I've noticed that whenever I sing ... If I'm singing Rochut
number 13, or (singing) ... My hand right now, as I'm going through all those positions-

Alex Iles: Yeah, right, right.

Austin Seybert: If I sing (singing), I'm singing minor 2/5 in F minor, and my hand is automatically moving. I'm thinking of trombone, and I can't do that with the piano very well, which is funny.

Alex Iles: Yeah, that's interesting, that's interesting. It's like knowing the language and thinking in terms of that language or vocabulary of that instrument. That's interesting. I remember, when I was on the road one time, we were sitting around in one of the guy's rooms. We were watching TV or some football game or something. I don't know ... Do you know Dave Mann? He's a saxophone player in New York.

Austin Seybert: I do not.

Alex Iles: Great dude. He's a really great underrated burning sax player. He's really good. He was lying down ... It was his room I think, he was lying down in his bed, we were watching this football game, and I saw he had his hands on his chest, and I saw his fingers moving, and we were watching this football game. I just immediately looked down and said, "What are you playing right now?", and he's all, "Bridge to Cherokee". I said, "How long you been doing it?", and he's all, "About 10 minutes." He was just fingering through it. I said, "Are you hearing what you're playing right now in your head?", and he's like, "Oh, yeah. I'm hearing it." He said, "I wouldn't be able to unless I was doing it. I really only hear it when I'm doing the fingering."
It's very similar to what you were just saying. He was almost ... He was doing at this really subconscious level, and that's ... You'd hear him play Bridge to Cherokee, and it was really easy for him.

Alex Iles: It's that whole idea too, that people are practicing when they're not practicing. People with really good ears, sometimes they say, "I don't really practice that much." It's like they might not take out their horn, put it together, and play for an hour through a bunch of exercises, but when you have that kind of ear sometimes you can be working on stuff exactly the way you're saying it, where you're doing
the fingerings, you're doing the musicality. You're hearing it so clearly in your head that when you sit down with your instrument you're at a huge advantage. It's not the same as face time exactly, but there's certain things especially in terms of jazz players, that there's an improvising.

Alex Iles: There's a real ... There is practice when you're away from your instrument. Even non-jazz players, I think, can benefit from that experience, but they're just very often not funneled that way. They're funneled to here's your music, here's your assignments, here's your etudes, here's your stuff. Unless you have that stuff in front of you, you don't think of it as practice. Your teachers will tell you, don't sit in a practice room and screw around. Only practice when you have your horn up to your face, and that's not a bad suggestion for a lot of students 'cause they do screw around a lot and waste time. But you can also make non-playing time, I think, productive by doing the better you. Like you said, audiate that stuff that you're practicing, especially if it's a pitch. It's a very similar experience in a lot of ways and overlaps with the actual playing. There's a lot to playing that has nothing to do with the instrument up to your face specifically.

Alex Iles: That's why so many more students that listen a lot, and have a sense of the music in their ear, even if it's not absolute pitch wise the same, but at least the general flow of the music and the idea they're trying to get across. If they spend time listening, which is not time on the face, but it's listening, it's such a huge advantage over the students that don't do listening at all and have no context. They're just playing Pin the Tail on the Donkey a lot of the time.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, I think that you hit the nail on the head. That's an excellent analogy with Pin the Tail on the Donkey. When I started my doctorate I was involved in the classical trombone studio for a short time, and I just was dumbfounded. I went from working with students of Harry Waters and Jim Pugh, who are just ... Jim Pugh students are jazz trombonists, but they're also way more than that. Students of John Whitaker, students of Tom Brantley, students of Paul Compton, they're really well-rounded classical/jazz players. So I just was not prepared when I walked into a classical trombone studio only, to find students not be able to sing a major third, or not be able to play through, recite read. Very simple diatonic
relationships, and it really bothered me. You've got students-

Alex Iles: It sounds like-

Austin Seybert: Trying to prepare Ride or Hungarian March, and they're fumbling through it because they can't hear the relationship between ... The Hungarian is in D minor, and the second part is F Major, and there's just small little phrases, and they can't hear it so they can't play it. They're literally just guessing, and that really bothered me. That's why this whole project started for me.

Alex Iles: Yeah, and I think a lot of people that go to certain music conservatories, they can sluff off in a lot of their course work, which would help them so much in their playing they don't even realize it. They think if I'm gonna play, I gotta just play and focus on the repertoire that I need for the audition, and work up these solo pieces and stuff. I don't think there's anything necessarily wrong with that, but there's other stuff that would actually even help them do that better.

Alex Iles: It's funny 'cause one of the things that impressed me about ... Somebody like Ralph Sauer, a couple times when I played with him when he was still at the Philharmonic. We were doing a Scheherazade at a [inaudible 00:21:36], and I was just subbing on a couple rehearsals. He had his practice music, and he was playing the whole scores than went by. He was playing all the little solos. He was playing the bassoon solos, he's playing all this stuff. He was just noodling while we were sitting around on tacet movements, real quiet. He wasn't bothering anybody, but I could hear him playing it. It was like he knew everybody's part, and he knew it all by ear. And he hadn't actually put the effort into learning it. It just was there because he sat in an orchestra or 30 years, and he'd heard it enough, and his ears are that good that he could just ... Heard it.

Alex Iles: That to me revealed a lot. You find classical musicians that have those kinds of ears, they're out there, but they don't necessarily have a place to utilize it like improvisors do. But he had ... He just never really got into improvising, he just never cared to do that. But all the basic skills, a jazz musician would be envious of the kind of natural hearing skills, or developed hearing skills that he has. I think that
you run across musicians like that. I've also run across jazz musicians that have had ... They don't have those sort of ears. They don't have that kind of natural hearing ability, and they play well despite that sometimes. I don't think it's a rule, but it'll create a ... That you have to have that in order to play well, but you're struggling in ways in all types of music if you haven't spent time practicing the things that were away from your instrument as well.

Alex Iles: I think that's true even ... Just like music theory, and things like that. It really helps to have some sort of nomenclature, and some sort of a musical short hand, for being able to understand what it is you're doing when ... Being able to understand what a composer's done to create a piece of music. As a player, it's really helpful to know those things, and understand the flow of a composition, and appreciate what the composer was hearing. To me, that informs my playing. So it's like not even just what you hear, but appreciating what other people hear.

Alex Iles: I think that the whole idea of hearing is ... It's so funny we're in a hearing thing, an art that deals with sound and everything, but sometimes I think we underestimate that hearing process. And maybe a lot of the music that is very visual in the way it's created, especially a lot of modern compositions are more theoretical, hypothetical, almost mathematical in the way that they're created. They're not necessarily created based on an aural response. It's some other combination that the person doesn't necessarily hear, but they thought of, because it's different than what everybody else is doing. But that music very often lacks authenticity to me, but modern composition, and modern improvisational styles that still have that ... You can tell the person's hearing what they're doing, that's to me even more remarkable is that they've developed their ears.

Alex Iles: That's what Charlie Parker, he was hearing the extensions. It wasn't that he was just suddenly finding himself mathematically up in the upper chord extensions. He was hearing, that became his basis for his melodic material was the extensions. He was hearing those sounds and was able to do it in a convincing way that created a whole way for everybody else to hear differently too. It wasn't just math, and I think the academic world doesn't quite ... We weren't there, it's not as easy to see that what's going on in 1940 Minton's, and 52nd Street. All that stuff that people ... It
was world leading, not because he came up with this cool math problem, but because it sounded really amazing and different, and kind of classic.

Alex Iles:

I really feel like so much of the musical direction people take compositionally and improvisationally, is sometimes based on math or some sort of pattern that's in their head or on paper, rather than really something that's auditory, but that's just my own sort philosophical whim. I don't really have a ... You know when you hear a player who really hears what they're playing, even thought they might be playing alto pentatonics and all the really cool stuff that people like to play, but you can tell the difference between somebody whose thinking it, and somebody who's really hearing it. I can't describe exactly what that is, you probably could do that better than I can, but I just feel like that's such an important element that a lot of jazz education is still cracking that nut. How do you get people to hear the things they're playing. You can tell them what to play. You can say what they did on this solo, and this is what was cool about it. And people might go, "Yeah, that's cool. I like that because it's different.", but for them to actually really hear it and have it be inside them as easy as Mary Had A Little Lamb, that's really ... How do you get to that point?

Alex Iles:

I remember talking to Bob McChesney once about his practice routine, which is sort of like the practice routine you hear about Coltrane, where he would take one thing, and really shed it for weeks, very deliberately, very slowly. He would just take ... He showed me how he worked up flat 6th pentatonics, so he would just play it over and over, every day, just up and down. And then, doing every other note, then every little combination. And he said, "All I'm doing is breaking it apart. I'm not doing anything with it. I'm not thinking of it improvisationally, even necessarily. I'm just getting the sound in my head in every possibility.", and then he says after about a week ... And this is one key. He would not even move from that one key for a day or two.

Austin Seybert: Wow, that's interesting.

Alex Iles: And he would say, "I would just stay in a key until I absolutely becomes mastered. I would master it." And he said, "At that point I would start ... I was already thinking a
little bit at that point about, whether I'm consciously or not, it's starting to get into my blood a little bit as a sound that I tap into." And then he says, "Then I would start improvising ideas. I might write a couple out, I might come up with other things. If I hear somebody else using it, I'd do that." But he's thinking in terms of that one scale choice, and that one key sometimes for a few days.

Alex Iles:

Then he'd say, "Then I sort of feel like it's in my blood, then I'll go to the next key." I hear the stories like that about Coltrane, and the way the elevens would practice voicings was that way too, I guess. So I asked him at what point do you find yourself ... The whole idea when I was younger, I'd learn a 2/5, and throw on the Aebersold, and I'd play it in every key, and then I'd try and put it on every time that 2/5 would come up on any tune that I was blowing on. It's the typical thing you do. You just stick a lick in there just to see how it works. And a lot of the time, it never goes right because it goes against your ... Right, left brain kind of have a battle 'cause your left brain's going stick this lick, and you're right brain's going I'm not feeling it. You're kind of in this corner.

Alex Iles:

What Bob said, is he said that's why he stopped trying to do that. He said, "I would let the stuff seep into my playing. It would never be right away, it would always be ..." I said, "Well how long will that be?", and he said, "I'm noticing a six month cycle." I said, "So this ... If you're doing F minor pentatonic, it's another six months before you really feel like it's in your solos?" He said, "Yeah. It's weird, and you'll notice after the fact. It's like it goes in your subconscious and churns around." It was really an interesting conversation. He's one of the few trombone players I really run into out here with that kind of mindset as an improvisor, where he's really pushing himself that way, in that focused way.

Alex Iles:

I would trust him. I think he knows his ... His mind is pretty deep as far as any sort of harmonic idea, chord structure. He has complete ... He's almost restricted himself in certain ways because of what he considers his standards of what sounds right. What he plays on a B7 ... People would say, "Well here's chord scale relationships, and here's some stuff that somebody would do on a B7." He said, "That has told me nothing. What's the function of the B7? Is it a four chord, is a five chord, is it part of the bridge of the tune?
How far is it from the key center of the tune." Those all inform his choices of what he's gonna play.

Alex Iles:

I thought that really interesting. That's a very ... Man, I'm just happy to make sure I play a D sharp and an A. I'm doing fine if I can just get those notes out. I appreciate that kind of thinking, and it is based on what he's hearing. It's not just in his mind, it's definitely based on the sound that he's trying to go for. It's just, I don't know. That I think is ... There's so many different ways of thinking about improvisation, but I really ... I think the bottom line for me is, if I'm listening to somebody I can usually tell when they're thinking more than they're hearing usually. And I can tell when I'm doing that, exactly. I'll hear myself play, and I'll go oh yeah, I was thinking too much about that. You can tell. That's always my big criticism of myself when I hear solos back. I'm like oh, man I can hear my thinking. I can hear the cogs spinning around.

Austin Seybert:

Yeah. All right cool. I'll move on to the next question then. Do you feel that the typical undergraduate trombonist is equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Alex Iles:

Well, I'd say no. And I'm not sure the goal should necessarily be that. This is probably another part of your question. I'll answer the first part. I don't think so because I think there are so many ... In order to be professional musician, whatever that loose term is, it's too early to tell what kind of direction you're gonna be in as an undergrad because the world changes so quickly for each player, and each player makes their own path. It's not like one complete job description for a trombonist, the way a lot of people like to think of it where they have a goal at the end of their school time, and they think this is what I'm gonna do, this is the direction I'm gonna go.

Alex Iles:

I think there's so many primary directions people might have, but in the mean time there's a lot of other directions they might have that could involve music and might not even. It might be something related to the arts, like maybe some form of concert promotion or arts administration, or working a record label. Those are all things I've done, where they're sort of music related, and you might a musical ... Your musical background will help you in those situations, but you're not necessarily just playing the
trombone. I don't think there's a lot of ways that undergrad careers ... They can introduce you to the idea, but I don't think the person's actually gonna be ready to do those things at the end of an undergrad. I think they're gonna be maybe more aware of the options that they have open to them, and they hopefully learn how to learn a few of those things so that they can repeat the process away from school.

Alex Iles:

I think that that's to me ... Which gets back to the second part of thinking about that question is that I think the best thing for people in undergrad is to develop their relationship skills, so that they are the best ... They have musicianship skills that they can apply as the needs arise. I think the ability to hear what you play, the ability to transcribe, the ability to arrange, the ability to compose, understanding the composition, appreciation for those things. I think those are the things that schools are good at teaching, and I think those are still the things that are good for people to be learning coming out of undergrad especially.

Alex Iles:

And the understanding of performance, understanding what that feels like to do a recital, what it feels like to play in a group that has to rehearse and play some difficult repertoire. Being exposed to different kinds of music, understanding what rhythms are about, understanding how harmony works. Those things to me, the good musicians ... Style becomes more relevant later, and it takes a while for a person to actually find their voice in terms of style. That might be partly a professional career path thing too because for what I do ...

Alex Iles:

I think the bulk of my education really came ... Oh man, I would say I was close to thirty before I really started to get what I felt was sort of fermenting my abilities to be a professional musician. I had some things that I was ... I had some really good exposure to being able to meet musical challenges and be able to get by in certain areas. But my thing that I ended up doing really didn't take shape for me until much later. It's a long process. I think that there's ... But I think that the best use of time for an undergrad is to develop a good strong ... If they're a performer, is to develop a really good, strong, working relationship always, not just necessarily focusing on one style, that's healthy.
Alex Iles: But maybe, in a way, one of the best ways to eventually in the long run accommodate different types of music, is to maybe focus ... This might be contradictory, but the idea of focusing on one for that four year time that you're an undergrad, might be the way for you to then apply that to other things later, so that you can prove that you can focus on one thing, so that when the next thing comes up you know how to focus. So it's the focusing, not the thing, is the skill. Being able to focus on one thing might be the way a lot of people learn how to do more things later. I still think that in order to accomplish that, I think having strong musicianship skills is really the best thing I can see about getting through the undergrad period. And beyond that, then you can focus more on elements of your horn repetatur, different genres of music, and maybe from an academic point of view, too. I don't know if that sort of answers your question.

Austin Seybert: It does. It does, thank you. All right, I'll go ahead and go to the next question. What is your opinion on the general lack of trombone performers and educators that are well versed in classical/orchestral, and jazz/commercial pedagogy, specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?

Alex Iles: Interesting. I think a lot of undergrad teachers, maybe aside from some of the names you mentioned, guys like Paul, and John, and Jim Pugh, and people like that, who they themselves have not had too much experience in a real thriving, freelance, academic setting where there's a lot of different music going on, I think they're at a disadvantage. I think people who get a doctorate and have only exposed themselves to certain kinds of music, obviously are not gonna have the experience. I think part of that is where they live, I think that effects it. I think players who spend any kind of time in New York, or Boston, Los Angles, or even place like Atlanta or Seattle, where there's a thriving freelancing with players of all different kinds coming together to do gigs, I think they're at a disadvantage when they teach.

Alex Iles: Jim Miller who plays in the L.A. Philharmonic, was a very active freelance player when he was at Julliard in New York. He was doing private shows, he was playing salsa gigs, he was doing all kinds of stuff. So I think that gives him a huge advantage as a musician overall anyway, but I
think as far as a teacher he really relates well to the
different languages of the instrument. As far as real focused
jazz, especially with bebop language and being able to
speak in terms of improvisation, and all the elements of that
that we know, I really think that people have to be sort of ...
They have to have some part of their life where they really
express themselves as jazz musicians themselves. I think
that knowing, having that information, and being able to
teach it is possible, but I think a lot of people shy away
from it and defer to other people, like maybe non-
trombonists at the school.

Alex Iles: And maybe that's better, I don't know. That's where jazz
trombone might be a contradictory thing in a lot of ways
because I think ... I don't know about you, but I think I've
learned a lot of my information I learned from piano
players, sax players, and drummers. It's not just ... My
wife's listening and she's mimicking the flute 'cause she's a
flutist. Of course, yes dear I did learn a lot from flute
players. But that's another thing too. Actually, if you want
to talk about that in classical music, I think trombonists ...
As a side, I think trombonists a lot of the time, even as
classical musicians, are very sheltered and limited in terms
of their expression as classical musicians because I think so
many people have this hybrid specific pedigree that doesn't
incorporate a lot of things that very often only comes to the
surface when they audition for an orchestra, and their
audition committee consists of string players, and
woodwind players, and stuff.

Alex Iles: I think so many trombonists are in this ... It's almost like a
convent that we live in, where we don't really ... We're not
exposed to certain things musically that are taken for
granted by other instruments. They do. I played ... I'll bring
my wife into this conversation. I took a lesson with her on
the CPE Bach unaccompanied sonata. You have not lived
with that piece. Have you ever tried playing that piece?

Austin Seybert: No, I have not.

Alex Iles: It's really nice. There's a couple transcripts of it for
trombone. It's a nice piece to play. It's a beautiful
unaccompanied piece, check it out sometime. You'd love it
Austin. It's right up your alley. It's a much more practical
piece to play then the cello suites because it's actually for a
wind instrument so you can actually breathe. It's a huge
relief. You're playing Bach, it's a B Bach, and you can actually breathe, and not make excuses. But anyway, I heard the piece and I loved it, and I started learning it, and I was practicing, and I said, "Hey, come over and take a listen. Let me know what a real flute player has to say.", because they live with that piece. It was like ... She was face palming all the way through that lesson because it was like what ... Don't ... No ... All the phrasing, the expression, the whole point of the piece. I was like ... I was so far off, it wasn't even funny.

Alex Iles:

It was like I was playing it with the typical trombone phrasing, which I mean that with all the love in my heart, but I just found that there were ways of approaching music, and phrasing, and ideas like that so few trombonists really get inside of the way that woodwind players do. Maybe they have the luxury because their instrument's so easy. My wife's laughing. I think there is sort of ... We're so encumbered in so many ways technically by what our instrument, that we never really ... We only scratch the surface of that stuff. I think that that's an important thing even within the classical ... What I think a lot of classical trombonists even, are not steeped in their own thing as much as the thing that they say that they report to be a part of.

Alex Iles:

It's hit me in the face, both the times when I auditioned for orchestras, and when I took a lesson with Sandy, and on the tone on flute fantasies too. You've probably played those? Have you ever played those?

Austin Seybert:

Yes I have.

Alex Iles:

Yeah, the CPE Bach is way better in a lot of ways. Those are fun, they're cute, and they're nice pieces, but the CPE Bach really is a pretty heavy ... It's definitely a piece of music that you can feel really good about playing. It's really fun. Anyway, there's more to it.

Alex Iles:

You kind of get inside that a little bit. I remember going to a Master class with Ron Leonard, the cellist, and listening to him talk. The students were just killing this music, and he was just sitting there going that sounds perfect. He was getting inside what that music was about. He was going ... We don't do any of that. It's really ... There's so much of this, specifically of playing the trombone, I can't quite
describe it, but I think you can discern what I'm saying. There's a real kind of ... What's the word I'm thinking of? We're funneled down a path a lot of time with that particular genre. I think that goes on in the jazz trombone to sometimes. People, if you're not playing ... The only way you can really learn jazz is if you study JJ Johnson, bebop, and that's it. That's what ... You have to do that. And I think, yeah, everybody at some point has to come face-to-face with that. It's too big a thing to ignore, but I think that there's a lot of avenues expressively that are maybe not to do with that, that people don't really take full advantage of.

Alex Iles: I think we understudy some of the masters before JJ a lot of the time, like Teagarden, some of those players. There's so much to learn musically from those players, and there are some other players that are around the same time as JJ or after that were contributing things that get lost over time because we all focus on those specific names that have become the important quote-un-quote names. One of the luxuries I have where I teach, up at Cal Arts, is that most of my students up there that are jazz majors, are studying lots of things besides just trombone. They all do composition, and lead groups, and it's very hands on jazz training. Some of these guys are studying lots of different kinds of music that has nothing to do with trombone, and I think it's really healthy aurally.

Alex Iles: I have one student right now in particular, whose just ... He's getting so much stuff, even as an undergrad, that he's churning on in his ears, that I'm envious. He's up to the task, and he's got good ears naturally himself anyway, but it's really exciting to see him getting all this stuff to send his brain into a nice spin, in a good way. And I think that that ... It's not necessarily the traditional path of ... But it's stuff that aurally really tests him, and inspires him. I think that that's probably more important than ... That that is happening is what's important I guess. The act of having your ear and your brain stimulated in a way, that's the connection between the skill and the expressive part of music that I think is ... I think it's possible to have that as an undergrad, but you can't learn everything about that. That's the germ to everything else that follows, I think.

Alex Iles: Also, a lot of things that you ... I think a lot of stuff, especially for young professional trombonists, I think really learn on the job. There's nothing that replicates being on the
road, or being on a cruise ship, or being in a Broadway pit. There's things that you learn about playing specifically that I don't think teachers can teach. I don't think it's their place. That you learn just out of survival, and some of that's personal too. That sort of begs the question of a good player is not just a good player. They usually have some survival skills outside of playing that they develop as professionals. You learn that stuff from doing the gig. And knowing the tunes that you need to know ... If you're doing club dates, you gotta know the right kind of tunes. You're not gonna get to play dime steps that night probably, so you better be able to play some other stuff, and know the horn parts to the Motown tunes.

Alex Iles:

It's all those sorts of things. Again, I don't know how responsible schools are for exposing that idea, but I think they can get a kid through there that has developed the ears, the appreciation, and maybe the feeling for the style of whatever it is they need to know. It's like the outline, the global version of whatever that is. Maybe that's a good thing to learn as an undergrad. And also, the last thing on that is that I think sometimes exposure to certain kinds of music ... Exposure to all different kinds of music for undergrads is good because sometimes you actually learn what you don't want to do. That can be just as important. My Dad always said that it's just as important to know what you don't want to do than what you do want to do.

Alex Iles:

I think that when people understand their limits, that's a really important professional attitude to have. To know that maybe I'll investigate this for myself at some point, but I cannot honestly say that I can accept a call if somebody called me up to do this gig. I have to know, I have to be able to say no. Also, that's why I think it's important to explore other instruments, especially as undergrads. I really think it's good for tenor trombone players to do at least a semester of bass trombone, to sort of get what that feels like. Play and ensemble, or form a quartet, or do something where they're playing their other instrument because I think it's important for them to know what's that like because there probably will be an opportunity or a situation where the bass trombone will become part of their life, whether they want it to or not.

Alex Iles:

I think that that's good to expose them to know what that is. If your somebody like Jim Pugh that's decided not to do
that, that was a professional choice on his part, I know at one point. I think that it doesn't say anything bad about you to say no. You can actually save yourself a lot of grief. It's better to say no, than to put yourself in a situation where you're really compromised and you look worse than you are. That's a professional choice you have to think about. I think it's good for undergrads to be exposed to those things in some form just to be able to get that experience of what are the things that I'm comfortable with, how can I apply my skills that I developed as an undergrad into the next new thing. Anyway, again I don't know if I answered your question.

Austin Seybert:  
Cool. Yeah, this is great. I'm really enjoying this. Question number five ... Two more.

Alex Iles:  
Okay.

Austin Seybert:  
What is your opinion of my studio model, and my undergraduate trombone curriculum. Any notable positives, any concerning negatives?

Alex Iles:  
I like it. I really, really like the fact that it's comprehensive and all inclusive. I think the idea of being inclusive of other things, and exposing people who are of one particular perspective, and giving them exposure to others is so important. If not for their own application as a professional, but as someone who appreciates and knows what these things mean. I think it's really, really a great thing. As far as ... Know, I'm just looking at it on practical terms. Sometimes I think, it's pretty comprehensive in that it's strength is also ... My one thing that I might be a little critical of is that sometimes I wonder if, in a practical way, how many kids would really get the most out of all those categories, and all the stuff that you've included, which I would include them all myself. That's not the problem.

Alex Iles:  
I think in a way ... The materials to me ... I know that that's important from an academic point of view, but sometimes the actual materials people practice is not as important as the skills and musicianship that they're developing as they work on it. I don't think you have to teach everybody everything while they're in school. Maybe not to the extent that some people put a syllabus together that has this huge list. I think that ... If you look back on the way you learn, for me if I look back, I got a whole lot out of learning that
first whole suite when I played it in high school. I learned so many things about playing in an ensemble, playing that piece with a really good group. It was like I learned how to follow a conductor on that piece. I learned how to make phrases that went against my instinct that became my instinct. It was weird little things like that, that you'd sometimes get from one piece of music. That you'd get lots of things from that.

Alex Iles: Jumping into the Omnibook, and learning ... I learned, I learned Fontana solo from that, from that one experience of learning tunes, and the incorporation at the same time learning Fontana solos from that, from the super sax record. Just that experience opened up my transcribing chops, and my feeling for playing bebop phrasing. It's weird. I didn't have to play every single bebop tune to learn pretty good bebop phrasing from what I learned from that tune. So maybe the ... That would be my only ... And it's a very mild criticism, and it's ... Again, the criticism comes out of the thing that I'm in total agreement with how your outline is put together.

Austin Seybert: Okay. Just maybe go into slightly bit more detail. What were your thoughts on the ... Putting together the scale permutation spreadsheet, and the scale jury, and the melody tunes list for a general trombone studio, etc.

Alex Iles: Great. Awesome, awesome. I think both those things are great. I'm sort of ... With tunes, it's so great to do that, just hammer that into people. Whether it's that tune, or other tunes that they come up with. If they want to come up with a better tune that they learned in every key, then I would probably let them do it. When I do teach improvisation, the first thing I always ask people is what kind of music are they listening to, and what kind of music do they want to play. Very often, a lot of times as you know, people come in and they hear this ... They're listening to some really cool music that's way beyond their skill set, so the challenge is to find things that are not insulting to them, but still will help them on a path to be able to eventually hear the things that they really want.

Alex Iles: That's challenging for me 'cause I don't always know how that's gonna play out, but I think giving people lots of things to play by ear and do learn in different keys, is a great ... I think that's a huge service for a player to be
doing, regardless of what kind of music they're playing too. Ear play is such a ... It's becoming a bigger and bigger part of my teaching deal. You've summarized it better than I ever could, of how that plays into playing music.

Alex Iles:

We grew up in a generation ... I'd like to say you and I are of generations that are beyond the way people used to learn before the jazz education thing came into be, and also before the music become so complicated. When jazz was a mainstream music to American popular song, and everything, people learned those songs, those melodies, the same songs the jazz musicians were learning. It's so funny, everybody knew the same songs whether you were a musician or not. You learn those tunes, and that process develops your ears. Nobody realizes it at the time, and people learned songs like that automatically as part of the environment.

Alex Iles:

You look at the way Louis Armstrong ... There's those legendary stories about Louis Armstrong sitting on the roof of his house. Do you know that story? Where he's sitting on the roof of his house, he's in this perfect apex for all this music, and he would just be playing all the songs he was hearing all around New Orleans. It's a very romantic story, but I don't think it's too far from the truth. But his first day of getting the trumpet, he was figuring out songs by ear. He wasn't working out of the Rubank book. It was all very simple, humble ear play.

Alex Iles:

That's the way people learned. More musicians of your parents and your grandparents generation, that's the way they learned an instrument. You were doing that before you got in the band often. You were messing around with your friends. It was more like a garage band mentality among the players that were learning instruments, especially in America. You had people taking violin lessons, and maybe people with money were spending money on piano lessons, but there was always a piano in the house. Everybody could tinker around on the piano and figure out ... A lot of them were figuring out tunes that didn't require that much private study, or it wasn't this formalized thing that music has become. Oh, I want to get my kid into music. I gotta find a place to give lessons, and maybe in a school district, or in some band or something, but it was much more down home, and part of the household life. People sang, and played piano, and they didn't have TV then either.
Alex Iles:

I think having all that access to music was such a huge thing. I think everybody's ears were better then. I think the class of 1930 ear training would kill the class of 2016 ear training class. They would bury them. I think it's in a culture there weren't so many distractions of entertainment, and other activities that people do. So I think that that's ... The tune list thing is great for that. I think that helps fill in a little bit of a void. At least people appreciate the void that's there.

Alex Iles:

As far as the scale pattern thing, I really like the idea of learning scale patterns without necessarily ... Not from a theoretical point of view, but again from a hearing point of view. One of the first patterns I make everybody learn in my studio usually, is just be able to just run exercises through the modes, even if they don't know what they're called (singing). You just go up the scale and you make an eight not scale out of each one of those scale tones. If you're just playing the B flat major scale, but they're going through all the modes, and then when ... Again, so that when they're introduced to the idea, if they want to investigate the harmony, they already know what that is. They don't know what it's called, but then when somebody says, "When you start on a C in the key of Bb, you're playing Dorian. Oh, that's what the Dorian mode is." That sort of helps make that make sense, but it's only because they really were playing more than just the Dorian, fa-so-la-ti-do major scale over and over alone, which is important, but that's just one way of playing the scale. That's one song in the key.

Alex Iles:

When you get people playing more than just that one song, and have them playing different permutations, and thirds, and all the mathematical combinations, I think it is really good. I'm beginning to see the validity of practicing them both by ear, and seeing it once in a while. I think it's good for them for their sight reading. Practice scales does help your sight reading, whether you do it with music or not, but if you do have the music there in front of them, then again it's an aha moment. If they have it by ear, and then they see, they go, "Oh, that's what I'm playing. Oh, great, cool." Then they make the connection and it's in the back of their mind, so if they encounter some sort of intervallic pattern in sight reading, it makes sense. Again, it's more of an aha moment, rather than a what the moment.
Austin Seybert: Cool.

Alex Iles: So I love messing around with different permutations of scales like that, and doing it. I'm not so sure ... I think it's good to have the names as reference, but I don't necessarily hold people accountable to that in trombone class, in my trombone lessons. I just want to hear them play. I think in terms of the key centers. I try not to even talk about scales anymore, it's more like play in this key center. This is what you're gonna do, you're gonna play in this key center, starting from root to root. You're gonna play in this key center starting on the third degree to the sixth degree, or whatever. So to me, the knowledge of that key is more important necessarily than the ... It's root to know it of course, but not necessarily just thinking of just the scale that goes with that key. All those notes, you want to make sure that people are familiar with all those notes in that key, starting on anyone, going to anyone. That's the goal for me.

Alex Iles: And also making kids improvise in that key, make up stuff. Do a free form improvisation in that key with no other notes, so you're totally free, but totally restricted. I love working on so many things it seems like, in improvisation, with that idea. You can do whatever you want, but not that.

Alex Iles: I'll actually do that to my students. I'll have them ... I do all the little tricks of making them play a chorus of all things or something like that within an octave. If I have a sax player who is taking some improv, that is really hard for them. That's one of the hardest things for a sax player to do is just play within an octave. It's really fun to watch. Even really good sax players, when they're given that limit, it really messes with their brain. Or I'll just have them play four notes. These are the four notes that you can use, and just see what's ... They have to rely on good rhythm, good time, and sell me on the fact that you know this tune with these four notes.

Alex Iles: That's kind of a challenge, but it's an act of creativity too. I feel like the best creativity happens within a box sometimes. When you limit someone ... Creativity isn't just about the freedom, it's making use of a freedom within a set of constraints. That's to me the best kind of creativity to explore. Then when you are given more freedom, it's a luxury. Then you can really let loose, but practicing within
limits is I think a really fun thing. That's what I do with scale practice sometimes too. I might make them do just four notes of a scale, or the first five notes of a scale, which recycles that way so you're switching key centers. I think that for jazz musicians that such a huge skill to have, is to be able to switch gears going from key center to key center, fluidly. You don't have to play all the notes, limit yourself to just two or three, or four or five, and that can be enough of a challenge. Like every beat, if you go through every beat playing in a different key, that's really ... That can be really a very rewarding experience when you start to get that down. Then that helps them in so many other ways later when they decide to more of just their playing on a tune, and they want to reharmonize things, they have a fluidity

Alex Iles: Once they get a little bit of knowledge of what that is, they don't ... They can switch keys, they just don't know the cool keys to switch to. But if they can pretty much switch back and forth to any key fluidly, then they're ready to help adapt that skill into their playing. I think that that's kind of a fun thing to work on. So I think that that all grows out of the simple, again humble, act of playing all the different scale permutations slowly but surely. But I would also refer back to what I said about Bobby Chesney, about the scale thing, is you never know ... When you practice a certain skill, you're not really sure exactly when that's gonna become part of your vocabulary. It's one of those things that develops over time, and it's kind of an organic. I like the approach of it being organic not forced.

Alex Iles: I think it's hard sometimes when people ... You get into a typical sort of jazz type class were they go, "Okay, today guys we're gonna talk about modal plane." Suddenly, these people are given this really different concept for a lot of them, and it can be very awkward. I think it sometimes might turn people off a little bit that they can't really do it convincingly. A tune like Dolphin Dance or something. I don't get this, what's going on with this tune, and I think that when they try to instantly get the right and left brain working on that kind of thing it can be very daunting at first.

Alex Iles: That's why I like ... They should have the playing of all those chord scale relationships in their playing before they really know what that's called. That's why I like to make
them play all the different modes without necessarily giving them names. Then when they're given a scale with an interesting name, they’ve already done it. They’ve already run through the melodic minor scales that are in a melodic minor scale. So once they get all the different … I don’t even know the names of some of those modes myself, but anyway if you get introduced to some of those unusual, more exotic scales then you can go, "Okay, that's what that was." Or those bebop scales where they add a note, add a major and a dominant seven to it. That just gives you a way to play a dominant scale, and you put those different notes in different parts of the beat now. You're not limited. You can go up and down a scale, and come out on one. Okay, that's cool.

Alex Iles: Have you ever checked out those Barry Harris videos on YouTube?

Austin Seybert: No, I haven't.

Alex Iles: Oh, those are great. He's ruthless. He talks about all the different things about how so many piano players have messed up the ... Or improvisors have messed up what was a beautiful thing. It's really funny how he talks about it. He gives some really interesting scale choices that are not in the books. They are things that people play. His proof is in the pudding. This is the sort of stuff that ... This is what Hank Jones would have played right here. This is the kind of chord scale thing that he would've done. It's like that's not really what the books say. It's very interesting, lots of passing tone. We would just write it off as passing tones, or leading tones or something, or just out of the key. But he's actually said, "No, no, no." He was actually thinking of this scale. When you play it you go of course, it makes total sense. It's kind of fun. Those are fun to check out.

Alex Iles: As a teacher I found those really helpful, and I sometimes refer my students to those because Barry tends to be a little more ruthless than I am with some of the ideas, and I like it when they watch Barry Harris giving a master class, and coming down on a really good player. I said, "You're lucky that you don't have to deal with that every week with me. I'm letting you off easy." Those are good. I would be very curious to hear what you have to say about some of his ideas specifically about that.
Austin Seybert: Yeah, I'm definitely gonna those him out.

Alex Iles: I wonder ... I'm trying ... There are about half a dozen of them, and some of them are kind of long. If I think of a couple of the moments of the ones that I saw, I'll forward them back to you 'cause they are ... I know you would dig them. Barry Harris ...

Austin Seybert: Fun.

Alex Iles: ... Such a great bebopper, man. He's the best.

Austin Seybert: All right. So one more question, and it can be as short or as long as you like. It's anything in this curriculum you would like to see added to this curriculum? Is there anything you feel is missing, anything you feel isn't necessary or should be removed?

Alex Iles: Oh, man. No, I think as a ... Having studied with a guy who was a really good, well-rounded teacher, Roy Main, he had a pretty good take on the skills ... Introducing the freelance players in L.A. to what that was. That's the way he taught. He taught it like ... The players who were starting with him didn't necessarily want to be in an orchestra, didn't necessarily want to be jazz musicians specifically, but he had a very ... He had a survey approach to a lot of different kinds of music. He was very competent. He could sit in an orchestra very comfortably, he played jazz himself really nice, he played beautiful ballads. He was just a good ... He knew the curriculum, he'd studies with Jimmy Stamp and some notable teachers himself, so he had a good pedigree.

Alex Iles: My experience studying with him, was very similar ... I mean this in the sincerest way possible, I really feel like your curriculum, and your layout of your studio reminds me of a modernized version of Roy's approach, which is in a lot of ways very similar as it turns out as a parallel development. But if you're familiar with Buddy Baker's stuff?

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Alex Iles: Very similar, Buddy was that same way. From what I've known, and a lot of his students, and his books. Do you have his handbook?
Austin Seybert: Yeah, I do.

Alex Iles: He's got two books. He's got the handbook, which I actually have a copy of the original of his handbook.

Austin Seybert: Oh, cool.

Alex Iles: A student of mine gave me it. And there's a few other things in there that are pretty good, but his overall take ... He worked really hard at trying to come up ... He'd make up those handouts when a topic would come up. He would either assign a graduate student to the idea. It's like make me a list of this. He knew what he wanted, but he would assign it to a graduate student, and then other things that graduate students would come up with, he would sometimes include. Like a little thing on modern trombone expanded techniques, wrote a little two page thing about it. It was great.

Alex Iles: Little things about particular topics, timing and speed, whatever it is. But he as really good at coming up with a little game plan, sub-routine for all these things. It was all from that perspective of a multi-stylistic and multi-generational kind of approach that I thought was really healthy. As an undergrad teacher, that was I thought, really doing a service to his students. And Roy had the same approach. A good classical trombone player would learn something from Roy, a good jazz trombone player would learn something from Roy.

Alex Iles: And I think that your outline is the most comprehensive version of that I've seen. It's really ... I think it's a very good model ... I think it will be a very good model for people who are interested in expanding their own studio, maybe thinking about some different things, and developing an appreciation for stuff that ... Maybe giving their students an opportunity to hear and see some different kinds of music that the usual curriculum kind of ignores in a lot of ways. I think it's fantastic, I really do think it's ... I've seen a lot of these curriculum outlines either ... Just looking at people's syllabi, different syllabi on ... When I was trying to put together a syllabus for my own stuff, I was basically ripping off people that I would look around.

Alex Iles: I think that this kind of thing we're talking about was a more common way of playing trombone. I think it's
become so diluted into jazz players and classical players, that there's very few, for lack of a better word, cross-over players. To me they were just trombone players, but that's the way most the player of my generation played. Every once in a while there would be a couple of guys that would be more focused on classical, but they were kind of... I wouldn't say they were on the outside, but they were more toward the border of the mainstream. Same thing with real strictly jazz focused players. They were a little bit more unusual. They were kind of like that guy.

Alex Iles: The mainstream players tended to kind of jump into other things a little more easily, at least out where I grew up in Southern California. You talk to your trombone majors at Cal State, Northridge, and Cal State Long Beach, and at UCLA. At USC, you tended to have a little bit more specialized players who maybe auditioned orchestra careers and stuff. But even there, there were always a good number of players that were more interested in more of a freelance perspective or commercial perspective. That was something that was on people's minds, it existed, it was a real thing. Now, it's become a very small segment of the trombone identity.

Alex Iles: I notice it in such a huge way whenever I go to the festivals. That sort of middle ground. Tom Ervin, Buddy Baker, all those guys were freelance guys. They had a very well-rounded look at music, and that seems to be less common than it was in the 70s and the 80s, at least from my perspective. This is totally anecdotal, it's not any... I have no data to back this up, but it just seems to me from what I see... And what I see with your outline, is really taking a very courageous stance of unifying, and finding some overlapping curriculum that could actually bridge the gap to be a much more vital and better service to student... A much more rewarding exposure to what a musical future is for most players.

Alex Iles: The probabilities of being a jazz trombonist have always been rough, and they're rougher now than they've ever been. If that's what you want to do, you're biting off... You better be serious. You can't kind of do that, and you can't kind of be an orchestral player, you never could really. And especially in the last 20 years it's become... With freelance music being less common, especially in the recording world, the chance of being another kind of trombonist is
pretty rough. There's still some opportunities, few and far between as they are, there is an opportunity for an orchestral trombonist to get a job, whether it's in a military band or whether it's in a symphony orchestra.

Alex Iles: That is a job opportunity that exists. It's not real common, it's probably easier to become a senator. Somebody said that about becoming a principle clarinet player in a major symphony ... This was 30 years ago, it was easier to become senator. Your odds were better. So it's still a viable choice, but for all the hundreds, and hundreds, and thousands of people that are going to music school, I think it's not fair for them to go through knowing that there are other kinds of music that they would probably enjoy, be able to communicate through, be able to teach, be able to expose the next generation of musicians to, whether they're playing it or teaching it. I just think it's important to keep that kind of idea alive. I think your outline really does that. It really does.

Austin Seybert: And that's ... Yeah, for me that's the reason why my project is what it is, is because I was mostly concerned about why isn't there more players that like this. With the amount of lack of jobs of being an orchestral trombonist, or a jazz trombone player, why aren't there people advocating this? I know there's a lot more of professional musicians that are living in big cities and doing this, but it's pretty much nonexistent in academia. I feel like it's just doing students a big disservice. They go through school, they think they're gonna come out and get some kind of big shot job, and no matter how well they play, realize it pretty much just doesn't exist.

Austin Seybert: In fact, whenever I started doing what I'm doing, I was a classical player only. I didn't play jazz. For me, it was a move that was completely and utterly economical.

Alex Iles: Right, sure.

Austin Seybert: I just ... That's how I got started. It had nothing to do with I'm gonna be that guy who is gonna play both. It was literally like I need to pay rent. There's no way to make this happen.

Alex Iles: Yeah, I think that my original thing was very similar. I really ... Being so isolated in my own little world, listening
to records, and listening to recordings were my way in through ... That was my protocol for learning music because I didn't really have the groups to play in as much. I had a good school music program. It was an excellent school music program that I grew up with, we had band and stuff. But the real educational music that you ... Stuff that you can get a musical education, that was much more through recordings. I basically tried to find recordings, every recording I could find with trombones in it. That's what that became.

Alex Iles:

I wanted to figure out, at least, how to be functional in all these things 'cause I loved to play. To me, it was not necessarily economic, it was just I want to play. I wasn't really worried too much about the money, but I totally get what you're saying. As it turned out, my decision was a good economic decision. Not mastering anything really helped as far as trombone playing goes. I was like a last minute cram on several things. I had to really to get to the point where I could function in that world a little bit. That turned out to be really beneficial on many levels for trombone playing, my relationship, for rising, and everything.

Alex Iles:

It's little things like that, that I would pick up as I went, and having that feeling of a Cuban rhythm section looking back at the horns in disgust. You don't know what that feels like. Then you're going, "What? Everything feels fine." You learn that you're just not playing the time the way they feel it. They hate you, and you don't even know because you don't even speak the same language, and you have to deduce that. You go, "Okay, maybe if we push the time a little bit more." Finally, they turn around and smile, it's like okay I guess we got that one figured out. It's just really interesting how those sorts of experiences you ... Again, it's a survival thing, either just to pay the rent, or just to survive musically, you gotta figure out what you gotta do.

Alex Iles:

In some things it's funny ... A lot of people complain your schools don't give you any practical skills, well I'm not sure how responsible schools are for some of these things. Like I said, I think there's certain academical and intellectual pursuits that are really worth pursuing in school, especially in terms of music, that you're not gonna get in the real world and you don't necessarily need specifically, but they give you an advantage in the real world in that you gain an
appreciation for things that are out there in the real world. 
You develop certain skill sets that you can then apply to the 
real world, like we were talking about before.

Alex Iles:  
I think that those are the things that academic situations are 
good at teaching. Thinking, and writing, and 
communicating, and in terms of music hearing, 
reproducing, expressing through music, I think a lot of 
those things are very teachable, and very learnable in an 
academic setting. And in a certain way are practical, but 
they're not directly practical. They're not ... I think that 
people who just spend time learning repertoire to be able to 
win an audition, I just don't know that's the schools job. 
They want to place students too 'cause it makes them look 
good, but ... Then there's that whole political thing about 
school that gets really ... Like how many students they've 
placed, they all have jobs ... I would almost avoid those 
schools. If I were an undergrad now, I'd go, "I don't want 
the schools that are placing. I don't really care about that. I 
want people who are interesting people, who have really 
interesting experiences and skills from having gone through 
school."

Alex Iles:  
You can get that from a small liberal arts school, in the 
middle of a small state. I think that that ... If you're one-on-
one, all you need is one really great teacher to show you 
some stuff that you would not get if you were just out 
trying to work. It gives you a little more of a sophisticated 
musicianship, rather than just being a robot or being able to 
nail a bunch of excerpts. I just don't ... Or being able to 
blow over giant steps at 300 beats a minute. I don't think 
that that's necessarily a goal either that I see a lot of jazz 
majors in school ... There's a certain kind of homogeneity 
that comes out of that, and that's dangerous. And that's one 
of the worst things about the jazz education movement to 
me right now is that there's this homogeneity problem. And 
it's no one's specific fault, it's just the nature of institution. 
Institutional learning creates homogeneity, that's the way it 
is.

Alex Iles:  
I think that that's why you can have a homogenous level of 
skills, that's okay, but a homogenous level of musical 
direction, and musical insight, is dangerous. I think that's 
why I think your program is so great because it puts prick 
in that perspective. It's like, "Hey, there's something a 
classical player ..." Look, Joe Alessi has a huge
appreciation for JJ Johnson. Every undergrad should have that same exposure. They should feel that too. That shouldn't be limited to just certain classical musicians that have made the jump. That should be standard, that should be everybody's standard.

Alex Iles: Somebody like JJ could appreciate a great classical trombonist and study with them. That should be in everybody's mind. He wasn't great because of that. He wasn't a great player necessarily because of that, but he happened to also have that correlation. That says a lot about his mindset as a musician. Not just that he did that. What he gained from that, I'm not sure, but the fact that he was into, that's cool, that's really important. He would probably say the same thing.

Alex Iles: I just don't think that ... The practical implications of whatever you're learning should be secondary nature to what it's doing to you overall as a musician. That to me is more interesting, and that I think is what schools can do pretty well. Give you skills that can help you to become a professional, not be a professional at the end of it. It's not vocational. I really ... That's a pet peeve of mine I guess. I get all fired up when I think about school, and people in school ... It's that idea ... It's summed up ... When I was in school I used to get really irritated on the last day of class before the final, and people would ask is this gonna be on the test. You've just wasted an entire semester to me by asking that question. You've just ruined your entire education by asking ... 

Alex Iles: All you care about is whether the material that you're learning is gonna be on the test. There's none of this process of being exposed to this subject, going inside it, finding out what experts say about it, whatever. All the analysis we've done of all these things. That's all you care about is whether something's gonna be on the test. Those are the kind of people that go to school 'cause they want to get a good job. That defeats ... To me, that defeats the purpose of education, but that's another topic.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. Well thank you so much for doing this. This is great.
APPENDIX E: Interview with Amanda Stewart (edited)

Austin Seybert: All right. So how did you learn trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Amanda Stewart: All right. So for me to begin answering these questions, I had to gain a knowledge of audiation just in general because this is a concept that was not formally taught to me. So since doing this interview, I feel like I’ve learned a lot already preparing for it. So I feel like in my early, because I began trombone when I was six.

Austin Seybert: Whoa! Really?

Amanda Stewart: Yeah. I was six years and nine months, so I figured out how many months it was.

Austin Seybert: Wow.

Amanda Stewart: So I feel like that, my learning process was maybe different than usual in that I would say I can't recall any kind of audiation practice. Basically the way I learned the instrument, there could be probably some correlation to it because there was no formal ... I feel like a lot of this, you mentioned it in your intro of your Word document about how audiation is a huge part of jazz study, formal jazz study. And so in starting really young, my teacher was not a trombonist, he was a baritone player. That was his main instrument. But his profession was the elementary school music teacher in my town, so he obviously had a knowledge of all the instruments.

Amanda Stewart: His basic approach was we just worked through a beginner band book and he began giving me some of the easier things out of the Arban's book. And then the other main thing that he did was he had written out all of the known hymns for church music and probably every lesson, I had to prepare one. So it was very church organized you could say. And we both went to the same denomination, so there was some level of ... Like that was totally normal especially for that area. For the small rural town in Maryland.

Amanda Stewart: So I guess in that way, learning tunes was kind of how I learned playing the trombone. I feel like even how I held the trombone was proper form, would be changed later, even because I was so small. So the mechanics of how to
do it, I feel like were not necessarily traditional. I feel like I should have thought about this a little bit more. So in some ways, learning tunes, I probably learned more from, I guess you could say. An aural way.

Austin Seybert: It sounds like you did have a lot of beginning early aural training. It just may not have been in a commercial or popular jazz way, but it still sounds like it was very valuable to your development.

Amanda Stewart: Yeah. At the same time though, I feel like in many ways, I didn't know what was happening. Maybe it was almost like Suzuki, but not, because I was reading music. I feel like in Suzuki, there's a lot of stuff. You're taught to memorize, you're taught to be able to identify what's happening, and it almost feels like it was like osmosis. Somehow it was magically happening, but I didn't know it was happening. So there is that thing where I always felt like it was always tied to notation. And the whole thought of playing something by memory, I didn't even know that was really a thing for a long time.

Amanda Stewart: So I feel like in some ways, there were pieces of it, but it wasn't like a full foundation of it for playing. I would say that was how I learned it from the beginning, but I would say that for me, having more of a formal teacher was when I started studying with Keith Jackson in my eight grade year. And that was, I would say, the first time I had a real structure to what I was doing, and began to have a real understanding of what was happening.

Amanda Stewart: Coming from a jazz background, he would have me do some stuff during some of the lessons where he would have me play a tune by memory. Just try to be able to. Kind of like what you're describing in your curriculum outline. So that was my first introduction with that. And then he would also have me, he would play something on his trombone and then I would have to try to play exactly what he played. So there was some development of that. I feel like that was my first time in a learning situation where the person who was teaching me knew exactly what he was doing and how to use that tool.

Amanda Stewart: And then after that, that was probably the last time I ever had anybody try that with me. I didn't have any of that at
Juilliard. I feel like the only training I had in it would have been just ear training.

Austin Seybert: Really?

Amanda Stewart: Like some element of, yeah. Because during my lessons, there was no ... I have no formal jazz training. There was nothing at Juilliard. So having that concept of playing something, a tune, or trying to develop the ability to hear something and then play it, other than matching a tone, like matching Joe's tone, or matching what he was doing on the instrument, there's that component. But in a formal sense, like Keith used to do, that was nonexistent. I feel like I missed out. Because there's certain things about my playing that I think really could've benefited from that and also just I'd probably be a better player now because I'd be able to hear music differently and analyze it differently, I would assume.

Austin Seybert: It's really interesting you say that because I was having an interesting conversation with Brad Edwards and he says he does a lot obviously, with those books in his teaching, a lot of aural teaching as well. And I interviewed Keith Jackson because I grew up a half an hour from Morgantown. And so, what was I going to say? And a lot of them, it's interesting because Keith's perspective of my curriculum was, "Well, if you want it, you make time and it's your responsibility." Where Brad was more like, "I'm concerned that there isn't enough time." And I'm actually have a really, kind of mixed on that because I know for a fact, for myself to become a jazz player, I had become behind as an orchestral player. And I'm okay with that. I really am. It's not that I think less of myself, or less of people who don't do both. I understand that to do both, you're gonna have to take time off of one or the other to really become, I think, at least proficient.

Austin Seybert: One thing I was telling Keith and Brad is I don't expect my students to be able to improvise, at all to actually be quite honest. But I do expect them to come out and become great trombonists. That's easy to teach. Great trombonists and they can have really open ears. And if I can do that, than anything that they want to do from there, I think will basically manifest itself. And so if I have this student who plays trombone well and can hear just about anything with
All right. Let's go ahead and move on. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

My feeling is that a lot of classical players probably lack to some extent because it's not formally focused on, in my opinion. From my training, from being at a conservatory, there's zero. Other than, if you look at from the general sense of mimicking what your teacher does in regards to timbre or sound concept and those things, those are present, but I think the jazz approach to it with your instrument in your hand is ... It would be interesting to try to introduce that from a jazz medium to a classical studio several times a year to have that knowledge, to have that experience, to open up their ears and their mind to that. That would be really helpful. Or if there's a way to integrate that in a classical sense.

Just to create some kind of formal template to say this is the classical version of this and this is how it can help a trombonist become better, classically. In essence you want, I always feel like you want to become a well rounded musician and I know definitely where my weaknesses lie and the entire jazz medium is a big weakness and a lot of that was I didn't seek it out at Juilliard. Obviously, I could have sought it out more because there were people there that teach just that, but the intermingling of the studios was very minimal and it was also not encouraged. I feel like it was just very one track. If you studied classical performance there, you were expected to give it everything you had. I was even told not to do homework for other classes unrelated to my trombone practicing. I was told just get a C. Doesn't matter. That's not why you're here. You're here to win a job.

I guess it worked out for you.

Yeah, fortunately. I never actually followed that advice. I always tried to get A's because I felt like that was not good advice. So I didn't take it. I would say though, at a university setting, it's much more likely that the players will be able to have experience, or have time within multiple mediums and I think that's really very beneficial
with becoming a well rounded musician. So the less holes in your foundation. I think that way.

Austin Seybert:
Yeah. And it is interesting that it wasn't encouraged, nor were you really expected to do anything like that. And that's something that that's really across the board of everything I've experienced. And for me, I don't have the dream of winning a job in an orchestra and doing that for the rest of my life. That's actually never been something I've ever had a dream. I've always just been ... I like playing trombone. And so I go, "How can I play trombone and make a living doing it? Oh god." And so for me, it's like, "Well, I guess I could, orchestra's really one of the good paying jobs." And then once I found out the real world about the state of getting a job in an orchestra, I was just like, "Well, I don't know if I can do this, and I don't know if I'm good enough."

Austin Seybert:
And so that's when I started putting my eggs in a lot of different baskets trying to say, "Let's see what I can do over here and we'll see what happens." And it just ended up happening that I just felt like when I got out of my undergrad, I was behind as a trombone player, behind as a classical player, and I was behind as a jazz player. But I started putting things together very quickly as a masters study with Jim as a trombonist. And then once I felt like my trombone playing was really, really where it needed to be, and it's obviously still improving things like that, then that's when I was like, "Well, I need to get better at doing this classical thing. There's no way I'm going ..." And by classical, I mean specifically orchestral. And there's no way I'm going to get into these conservatories. I'm competing against people that are been doing this same thing for years and years. And I just can't pick this up. I'm not going to compete.

Austin Seybert:
So I was like, "Well, I need to go get a degree such as this to help me do this." And it's just an excuse really, to go." And to be honest, it's funny. I kind of feel like I should have took some time off and just spent a couple years just really, really focusing. But hindsight's 20/20 I suppose. But anyway, it's been really interesting. Even I've been getting a lot of, the last two, three months, I've played in like four different orchestras and two of them were okay for service orchestras and I think that's something that I was just
missing. I just wasn't doing that. I got to play Brahms 2 for the first time.

Amanda Stewart: Awesome.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. And I got to play Till Eulenspiegel for the first time. And I was like, "Oh, I've always practiced these excerpts. I never actually got to play in a concert." You know what I mean? It's just constant. And I think the people that actually focus on it, that's how they get the experience doing it because they are doing it. I think there's definitely a beauty for doing that. I think at the same time, if you want to do both, it is a matter of, there's no doubt about it, you are going to suffer. Put it this way. If Johnny A and Johnny B had the exact same level and one does one exclusively, Johnny A is gonna be better at that one exclusive art than Johnny B. And that's just the way it is.

Amanda Stewart: Right, totally.

Austin Seybert: So it's really interesting, I've been following this process. All right. Next question. Do you feel that the typical undergrad trombonist is well equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergrad? Why or why not?

Amanda Stewart: I would say at a conservatory, no. For the reasons we're talking about. Because usually I would say the majority of conservatories, and I can only speak to that because I only went to a conservatory. Exposure to it, sure, because we had one master class with Wycliffe Gordon, so there's some level of this exists. Other music exists out there in the world. But in regards to a full understanding in any way, because within jazz, there are all these subsets. And I couldn't really give you a clear definition of a lot of the things that would be those subsets. I feel like I have a very clear understanding of classical music. Really, really clear because that's all I did. That was my focus. I would venture to say that of the people I know who have studied trombone at a university as an undergraduate, there is definitely a difference. They definitely are exposed to other styles of music and also required to play in those other styles of music. So there's definitely a broader understanding of more styles of music, for sure.
Austin Seybert: Piggybacking off that a little bit, obviously I want to make sure that this doesn't come off as conservatories are bad. Obviously you've been very successful. You've done auditions, you've won several auditions already at such a young age, and so obviously the conservatory model works in the sense that people are getting to do what they want. My thing is, and actually to get your opinion on it, of people you went to school with in your time at Juilliard ... Was it like six years, maybe?

Amanda Stewart: Four. Just studied for my undergrad there.

Austin Seybert: Okay, got you. Okay. How many of those people in conservatories do you feel that have won major jobs in the trombone studio?

Amanda Stewart: A lot, actually. It was interesting. I looked at a picture. There was a picture I had of my, I think it was my freshman studio and I think it was 80% of those people are in major orchestras. And the other percent, I think are somehow, still involved in music, but maybe not in one of the salaried orchestras. So that percentage rate is extremely high.

Austin Seybert: I think that says a lot about maybe your teachers.

Amanda Stewart: Definitely. Yeah. I think coming from looking at these from ... It depends on the lense in which you're looking at universities and conservatories. If you're looking at it from what's the goal of the student, I guess you could say, or what's the goal of the institution? If it's to help ... We'll just look at it from performance majors. If it's to get a performance major a job in a specific industry, let's say classical music, then I would say that the conservatories are the better model because all you do is focus on that one thing. If the purpose of the institution is to give that performance major a well rounded education and less about getting them a job, then the university is better at it.

Amanda Stewart: Is there a way to give elements of both, somehow? To maybe tailor them more to the student of what that student needs? I think that should exist. But a lot of times, so for instance at Juilliard, I went there to get a job because I wanted to play in an orchestra. That's why I went there. So it was the best place for me because that's what I wanted and that's what I got. And I'm extremely grateful for that. To be able to go to an institution like that and play with
Joe, because I wouldn't be where I'm at without that intensity and that intensive focus in that area.

Amanda Stewart: I think though, at the same time, sometimes I wish there would have been a few things along the way to implement that. To maybe help me open my eyes at how could I become more well rounded once I leave, once I'm a professional, quote unquote. That would've been helpful. And this is unrelated, totally unrelated to your questions, which, is there anything missing, it's your curriculum. So that's what the question here is, the last question is about. But I would say just in general curriculum, something that I think can be focused on at universities, but in the places, at least, I think it's something that's becoming part of curriculum, which is talking about performing. Like the concept of performing, how to manage yourself, how to manage your stress, how to stay healthy, how to be an effective practicer and not hurt yourself. All of those concepts were not discussed at Juilliard when I was there.

Amanda Stewart: So there's some things. And I think those are, that complaint might be something that is maybe just for that, for Juilliard, or just for that set of teachers or something, maybe. Because I can't speak to all the other schools around the countries conservatories and what they're doing. I can say that knowing some of the other conservatories and knowing some of those teachers there that those are things that are being more openly discussed and sought after by the teachers to bring into studio. That knowledge.

Amanda Stewart: So I think that's changing and that's something that I would love to see changed for the better, across the board. Universities and conservatories. But that is not really your topic.

Austin Seybert: I don't know. I think it's good discussion for sure. Fourth question. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are well versed in classical, orchestral, and jazz commercial pedagogy?

Amanda Stewart: What is my opinion? So I think my opinion on that is if a teacher is responsible for ... If the teacher's at a university and they're responsible, the goal of their students, of many of their students, is to become a well rounded player, then it would behoove that teacher to be informed and equipped to do that on all styles. So I think in that scenario, at a
university, you would want somebody who is capable of providing that.

Amanda Stewart: At a conservatory, or maybe at a university that's more focused towards one particular area of performance, I think that bringing in somebody, whether permanently or periodically, to supplement their education would be wise. So I think in that instance, if you're teaching trombone performance at Curtis, or something, I don't think it's of high importance that you are really well versed as a jazz player if you're going to be there solely teaching them how to be an orchestral player because they're coming to that school to study with a person who does that, specifically, and that really well.

Amanda Stewart: But at the same time, I think it would be good to introduce those students to other styles and I think that in that case, you have to supplement their education somehow, by bringing in someone who is mastered it, or has mastered that style or those styles that they're not focusing on.

Austin Seybert: Awesome. Great. All right. Moving on. All right. Okay. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate curriculum, trombone curriculum? Any notable positives, any concerning negatives?

Amanda Stewart: I thought it was great. I actually really liked it because I felt like how you were approaching it, it was going to be very ... You were covering all your bases. And I feel like you're creating a well-rounded student in that case, with that curriculum.

Austin Seybert: Putting this a little bit more, catching onto a little bit what you were talking about the conservatory model, do you feel that students that went through this program would be able to, let's say, go through a program like this, say a trombone performance major that's trying to get a well-rounded background ... Actually, let me just describe the student for you. Trombone performance major, at X University, division 1 school, loves everything about trombone, wants to do an orchestra, but plays in jazz bands, trying to do the jazz combos, and trying to be part of a salsa band or a cover band in the area. And then come senior year, he's of above average talent and is looking to do a masters at a conservatory to go study orchestral trombone. Do you feel
like a student like this had a chance to make it into a school like this? And why are why not?

Amanda Stewart: I think so. I think so. I think a lot of times, I think this curriculum works as long as there's ... So what separates people out classically, a lot of times, is how firm their fundamentals are, or how established their fundamentals of how to play the trombone, how to make a good sound, how to play in time, how to play with good articulation, it's that ability to replicate excellence in that area. And I feel like that's what, a lot of times, being a classical trombonist is about is for playing excerpts.

Amanda Stewart: Now playing solos is different to some extent, so I think if that is instilled in the students from this curriculum while approaching classical excerpts and that concept of, these are the tools you have to have, so when they go audition at a conservatory, they're able to present those excerpts in a way that speaks to that teacher or that panel of teachers who are sitting there at that school, and says to them, okay, this person has a knowledge of what ... Maybe it's not polished like they will be if they went to school here and studied here for two to four years, or whatever, but there's a grasp of the techniques and the fundamental aspects of playing this instrument. And I guess that would be my one amendment or something, to saying I think the curriculum does work, but I think that has to be present.

Amanda Stewart: Because I think just introducing students to the excerpts and just having them playing a section, but not having maybe an understanding of, okay, so when you play this excerpt, what do you have to think about. What do you have to be careful of? Is it having a general style? That's great too. But those fundamental aspects of how to separate yourself out in the classical world, and that's usually what does it. Does that make sense?

Austin Seybert: That makes total sense. Let's see, anything about the curriculum specifically, in the studio model, that you liked or maybe were confused about or anything like that?

Amanda Stewart: No, I thought it was very thorough. I feel like I was like, "Oh, gosh. I need to study with him."

Austin Seybert: Ha! You’re kicking my butt in our lessons currently!
Amanda Stewart: Half of your curriculum, I'm like, I don't know. The other half I'm like, oh yeah, I know all about that.

Austin Seybert: That's funny.

Amanda Stewart: I thought it was very well rounded, and I was like, "I'm gonna keep this and I'm gonna do some of these things myself." I thought it looked great. Very thoughtful.

Austin Seybert: All right. Thank you. Is there anything, well, we'll go onto the next question. Anything in this curriculum you'd like to see added that you feel is missing? Anything you feel is unnecessary or should be removed?

Amanda Stewart: No. I think the little detour I went on about performance practice, taking care of your body, stuff like that, I would always love to see that addressed at some point during a person's education. Maybe once a year or something where there's some out in the open discussion about injury, about mental health even, how to approach performance anxiety. Because I feel like a lot of times what happens, these topics aren't discussed because they're things that people want to hide, so I think it's really helpful to students to bring them out in the open and to take some of it. Because I feel like there's a, especially in the brass row, if you in any way say "I have a weakness" in any area, you're looked at as less than.

Austin Seybert: I agree and that is the first someone has brought that up on my interviews. Very thoughtful.

Amanda Stewart: Or weak, or simply weak. This person's weak. And these are topics that I feel like it's across the board too in musicians in general, but I feel like especially in the brass row because brass players, it's all about being tough, and strong, and blah, blah, blah. So I feel like maybe in other musicians might be, I think string players are better at it. Especially when it comes to injury. That's a topic that, I feel like, everybody knows about in the string row because it's so prevalent, but I feel like injury is also prevalent in the brass row, but there's that strange ego thing that happens.

Amanda Stewart: So I feel like any time you have the ability as a teacher to bring these things out, like once a year or something, just so that it's an open topic, so nobody feels afraid to bring it up in a classroom. Nobody feels shame or fear related to
the topic so that it's right out in the open and this is a safe place. We can talk about this issue. Because if anybody continues on as a performer, they will confront all of those issues. So being able to confront them in a healthy, safe way, I think is huge on how they'll handle it later.

Austin Seybert: And something I learned, I know we've discussed briefly, not this specifically, but about a person in my life I've encountered in the last few years, is that I've found that if I want to do whatever I want to do, I need to surround myself with people that support that. And if you don't do that, then life can make your life a little miserable.

Austin Seybert: It's a labor of love. So anyway, is there anything else you want to talk about?

Amanda Stewart: I think that's good.
APPENDIX F: Interview with Brad Edwards (edited)

Austin Seybert: I'm really glad you agreed to do this and I think I'll just go ahead and start and ask some questions. Alright. So how did you learn trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Brad Edwards: Well I learned the trombone through the typical public school band programs and then taking lessons with a man that came to the house. I cannot recall any aural exercises whatsoever.

Austin Seybert: Interesting. Did you do any in college at all?

Brad Edwards: Well, there was an aural class.

Austin Seybert: Okay, so just like traditional aural skills?

Brad Edwards: Right.

Austin Seybert: Okay. Alright, cool. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio. Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Brad Edwards: It plays a more important role than they realize and the majority of them lack.

Austin Seybert: Gotcha. Do you feel that the audiation is really only addressed maybe only in the theory classes or do you find that there are teachers that are addressing that issue maybe in private lessons or in their studio models or anything like that?

Brad Edwards: I'm new here. I don't really know what the other teachers are doing in terms of audiation.

Austin Seybert: Okay, cool.

Brad Edwards: We're all in our little silos, you know.

Austin Seybert: Okay. Alright. Do you feel that current students are well equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Brad Edwards: Most aren't.
Austin Seybert: Do you have any clarification on any issues why or any symptoms of that?
Brad Edwards: Lack of opportunity.
Austin Seybert: Lack of opportunity. Could you delve into that a little bit?
Brad Edwards: So I've just completed a single semester at ASU but then previous to that was 17 years in South Carolina so most of my answer is going to be South Carolina related.
Austin Seybert: Okay.
Brad Edwards: So you're in a town like Columbia, South Carolina, how many salsa bands are there and they probably have some trombonist that they go to regularly so if you're a college sophomore that you even know of the existence of a salsa band or a salsa date or how you would get called, for that band to call you they already want you to have some competency in it. I found that most students, if they did not already know how to improvise in jazz, they were very intimidated to take that first step and so it's crossing that divide, to go out in public and do a paying gig. Actually I have a question for you. So you did jazz gigs you said, right?
Austin Seybert: Yes.
Brad Edwards: Was that a frequent occurrence and did they pay pretty well?
Austin Seybert: Frequent occurrence depends on the area. I grew up in West Virginia so the music economy was a lot lower compared to the Midwest, but what was very frequent was doing unusually in that area I was doing lots of duo guitar, happy hour and stuff, lots of Latin salsa things and I played straight gigs probably once every few weeks or so for about... if I played three hours, two sets, I probably got paid 70 to 80 bucks.
Brad Edwards: And how did you get those gigs?
Austin Seybert: Well they kind of just came out of just networking really. I was really lucky and it's interesting you said opportunity. In West Virginia, I can count on one hand how many jazz
musicians are in that entire state and so whenever I was interested and I was really bad and I immediately just even getting a little bit of language improvisation under my belt, I immediately became one of the trombone players to call, 'cause there was no one to do it. Not because I was good, just because there's no one there.

Austin Seybert: Eventually I drove out to Washington DC and I took lessons from Harry Waters for just about three years.

Brad Edwards: He's pretty good.

Austin Seybert: Yeah he's pretty good. He taught me a lot. Just like in the other side where I was starting to get church gigs and cantata and brass and per service orchestra kind of stuff, it kind of just spiraled out of control, in a good way, getting opportunity.

Brad Edwards: Were those things built into your curriculum?

Austin Seybert: They were not.

Brad Edwards: It was just stuff you did on your own out of your own initiative, right?

Austin Seybert: Yes, and so for me, I got a music ed degree where I was doing classical trombone, did the classical recital things and all that. I played in all the ensembles and then I got a jazz performance degree as well. I look back at that now. I completed 258 credit hours in five years, which is an absurd amount of credit hours, and I look back at that now, and I'm like, there's just no way I could ever expect a student to even do that. That's one of the reasons when I decided I wanted to get my masters, I wanted to go study with someone that could play both and that has a background, and Jim Pugh was the only guy I really knew of.

Austin Seybert: So yeah I think if I was anywhere else, if I was actually in an area where... let's say I was in Miami or a major area, I don't think I would've got that opportunity because there'd be so many people that are specializing in that that I would have just probably fizzled out. So I think I got lucky in that regard. Starting my doctorate and kind of this trying to figure out why aren't there more people doing this, that's why this whole project started. I wanted to see what can I
do to help bridge that gap and that's why this project started.

Austin Seybert: So I guess to really answer it really clearly, I think it was exactly what you said. It was opportunity.

Brad Edwards: So it's a combination of opportunity and imitative.

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Brad Edwards: On the part of the student.

Austin Seybert: It first started with initiative and then that created the opportunity.

Brad Edwards: Right.

Austin Seybert: So I think you actually answered that question just fine. I think I'll just move on to the next one if that's okay with you.

Brad Edwards: Sure.

Austin Seybert: Cool. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are equally well versed in classical/orchestral and jazz/commercial pedagogy, specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?

Brad Edwards: Time.

Austin Seybert: Time, yeah.

Brad Edwards: What I mean by that is there are only so many hours in a day and you have to make a living. If I follow what I did, I can't really point to many times when I was not busy. Just putting out fires, keeping the plate spinning. So for a very long time in the back of mind I thought well I really should become a better improvisor, devote time to that, but each day comes and goes and there's the list of things that you really really have to do and the things that you might get to and then becoming a better jazz improvisor was always on the might get to list and the days start and finish and I'm like well, didn't get to it today and didn't get to the things I really urgently need to do and that's been true...
Brad Edwards: You know I did a lot of gigs as an undergraduate and a fair number of gigs for a masters and you did what the gig demanded of you and you were just busy all the time and the time wasn't devoted to that. I was at Hartt School of Music and I played lead trombone in their jazz band and I played in the early music ensemble and the modern music ensemble and the orchestra and I was working brass quintet, carrying over 20 credits every semester. In the jazz bands I saw these guys that came in as freshmen and were already miles and miles ahead of me as improvisors, like just living on a different plane and I saw them walking around all day with headphones on just completely immersed in that language and the sense I developed from that was to be good takes an unwavering almost total commitment and really the majority of your day has to be spent listening, listening, listening and my thought was well how the heck and I'm going to do that because if I make more time for that, I'm going to make less time for something else so what's going to go? What's going to fall away from the list?

Brad Edwards: So I could never see anything that I could hack off of the list to carve out the time to do it the way I felt like it needed to be done. Do you know the name Steve Davis?

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Brad Edwards: When I was a senior at Hartt he was a freshman.

Austin Seybert: Oh jeez.

Brad Edwards: Yeah, he walked in as a freshman and was already just like... I listened to what he did and I thought I could put everything else on my life on hold and do this exclusively and maybe in seven to ten years, maybe, I could start to be able to do what he's already doing.

Austin Seybert: He's actually one of the guys that I... for all my jazz improvisation students I always refer to him as one of my go to guys.

Brad Edwards: And there was a guy two years older than him named Jon Hasselback and I don't think his career went out and lit up but he was a great improvisor. He and Steve would just go back and forth and I thought of them as being on the same level as players at that point in life.
Austin Seybert: It’s really interesting that you say you felt like you had to drop everything you were doing to do that. I had an interview with Alex Iles, I had an interview Chris Buckholz at New Mexico State and both those guys are improvisors and do other things as well and we both, we all three had very similar experiences and they asked, Alex asked me, "Well how did you learn improvisation?" And I told him, I was like, "Well, I didn't play my big horn for 15 months. I didn't play large bore trombone for 15 months. I didn't play. I gave it up for almost 15 months." That's how I learned. It took me that long to figure it out.

Brad Edwards: More time for one thing is less time for another.

Austin Seybert: Yes, exactly and I've always felt like that was... maybe it's what I had to do but trying to figure out is there a more efficient way to make this happen and that's really what kind of prompted me to this, 'cause I would want a jazz trombone student to be able to pick up a Bach 42 and play and have it a characteristic sound and play second trombone in a community orchestra or a church quintet gig and I want to a traditional classical student to be able to sit in a big band or be able to sit into a really loud percussive salsa group and be able to really match.

Austin Seybert: Cool. Alright. I'll move on to my second to last question. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

Brad Edwards: I had it up here. It's clear. I would call that a positive. You could most likely walk into a job and hand this to your students and as long as you adapt it a little bit to the whatever legal language the university requires you to put in a syllabus, I think you'd be in okay shape. The negatives which I think I mentioned in my written comments it's a very optimistic thing. You are a highly motivated individual and your assumption will be, when you get to that first playing job, that the students are also highly motivated and this is a syllabus designed for highly motivated people.

Brad Edwards: So yes it may motivate them but you're also going to get the situation where a student comes in and then you find out that in all truth, they only practiced three days that
week and then now you're faced with a choice. Do you kick them out? Do you just fail them and say okay you're on your way, bye bye, but then if you don't have big numbers, you can't really do that so now you got to find a way to nudge them in the direction you want them to go and then you get a problem with your syllabus of well the syllabus says this and therefore if I'm going to grade you by this, I have to do this and you slam them and their grade, they drop, or they bail. If you bail them out in their grade, then another student, who actually did abide by the letter of the syllabus feels like well what the heck? I got an A, and they got an A, and I know they didn't do as much as I did so it's not fair.

Brad Edwards: So most syllabi, when they run into the real world, they become more vague. You learn to be... and you're already pretty good, you've got your recommended readings and your recommended recordings, but a syllabus, if you've got a highly motivated student, I don't think you need a syllabus at all. The best students I've had, they're just, they're often running and they don't need to be told what to do. I'm just scaring a little bit to make sure they're not avoiding something. Does that make sense?

Austin Seybert: Yes.

Brad Edwards: And the syllabus is really needed for the lesser motivated student, of course they're the one who is least likely to look at the syllabus so you have to kind of say look, you need to do this, and when they come in the next week and they're like yeah I didn't do it, that one thing you're going to have to figure out and maybe you're already having to figure this out is when a student just flat out doesn't do what you're asking, are you willing to, are you going to be a consequences kind of teacher or how are you going to approach that. So I have made, over the years, highly detailed syllabi and progress sheets and curriculum models and then I put them into the real world and they get chewed up like hamburger, partly because what works for one person doesn't work for the other person.

Brad Edwards: So it's ironic. We throw so much energy into the creation of the perfect syllabus, only to give it to the students and they proceed to not read it or pay attention to it and it comes down to well what did you tell them to do in a lesson, does that make sense?
Austin Seybert: Yeah, absolutely, and I've learned, this is my third year of going into adjunct teaching. My first two years I was teaching jazz courses at a different university and then got this new job and I'm adjunct at Bradley and I'm teaching all low brass students and music appreciation courses and everything like that I've only been trying to apply a third of this curriculum, and I've found it difficult.

Brad Edwards: You did describe that as an ideal curriculum.

Austin Seybert: Excuse me, I'm sorry?

Brad Edwards: You did describe it as an ideal curriculum.

Austin Seybert: Yes, yes.

Brad Edwards: And I think that's fine. At some point you're having to actually give grades and that's where you have to kind of sit down and say okay what grade do I give this person based on the syllabus because in the end, it's a legal document to a certain extent. It is a contract. So you have to... there's the aspirational material and then there's the you actually have to do this. My predecessor here at ASU, I looked at his syllabus that he was using with the students and it was very heavily weighted over on the aspirational side. He was saying things like, "I'm going to make this be most significant trombone studio in the nation."

Brad Edwards: It's like yeah, everybody wants to have the most significant trombone studio in the nation, that's fine, but that's your aspiration. I mean what are you actually going to do? Yours is better in the sense that you're being more detailed and you've got to do this. This syllabus shows me that you've already been teaching.

Austin Seybert: Well, thank you. Yes, absolutely. I talked with Chris Buckholz. He said, as you know, as you get older and you start to teach full time...well...I've got lots of mistakes to make, and I get that, but when I eventually get a full-time job and things like that, he says that I'll make more mistakes and I'll keep on adjusting this for the rest of my life and he says it's just a process and you'll learn what to do and what not to do and things you really and things you really didn't like about your thought and it just kind of growing pains and a growing process.
Brad Edwards: And when you change schools, the system that you had finely honed might not work in the new school.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, yeah. Absolutely.

Brad Edwards: Question for you actually on your scale, permutation spreadsheet. What are vertical scales?

Austin Seybert: So the way I start to get students to read changes, which is different then developing audiation skills and transcribing, I start relating chord scale relationships to the parent scale. So for instance I refer horizontals as being scalar and motion diatonic so E flat major for example. The vertical is stacking diatonic thirds. So B flat (singing) and back up like that. The reason why I do that is it stacks the first four notes of that vertical scale show the chord scale relationships, a B flat major 7 and then the second stack, the C minor 7 chord on top shows the extensions, the nine, 11, 13, top of that. And also it just has a nice poly chord concept. So start thinking of the scale in different ways.

Austin Seybert: So for instance B flat major 7 and then top of that is C minor 7 on top of it.

Brad Edwards: You have B flat major 7 and then do it starting starting on C in the key of Bb.

Austin Seybert: Yes, exactly.

Brad Edwards: Okay, makes sense.

Austin Seybert: The reason why I do that is just to show that relationship. So even if I have a student that is like well I don't know what's the parent scale of E flat octatonic, and it's like well, a stack of these notes and then oh the E flat fully diminished chord. Okay, I got it. Then later in the... to be honest I would be very surprised if any undergraduate got to anything past that second page but if they happen to get past those really crazy modes, you're going to have to know that relationship otherwise you're going to get really lost. So that's why I do it.

Brad Edwards: Okay.
Austin Seybert: Okay, I think I'll just move on to my last question. Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added to this that you feel is missing and anything you feel is unnecessary and should be removed?

Brad Edwards: You mentioned chamber music in a very brief way and I guess I would like to see it balanced a little bit more in favor of chamber music.

Austin Seybert: Would you like to see it balanced more in favor of chamber music in lieu of a less orchestral excerpts or just more of chamber and keep the excerpts where they are?

Brad Edwards: I think students that want to play excerpts are going to play excerpts.

Austin Seybert: Okay.

Brad Edwards: And the excerpt stuff is, it's fine. My office is next to Dave Hickman’s trumpet studio and every trumpet student has an individual lesson and a group lesson and the group lesson is a trumpet section. Well the group lesson is he assigns students to trumpet sections and they come in and they play through excerpts, rotating parts.

Austin Seybert: Wow, I didn't really think of that.

Brad Edwards: And he just... now the trumpets have more material to work with than we do. They have books and books of things that they can play through and so they're just playing as a section and he is known as being a very harsh teacher. That if it's not cutting it, he's going to let them know in no uncertain terms that that would not get out of the first round of an audition and that sucks. So they are... I have been told that they are nervous about going into their group lessons unprepared. Now the downside of that is the trumpet players generally don't want to play in brass quintets because they want to save their time for their individual practicing and for sounding good in a section.

Brad Edwards: So that's a highly specialized training to be a good orchestral trumpet player and specifically know the licks, and that's fine. It's not the best representation of the job market.

Austin Seybert: Okay.
Brad Edwards: Because, in a given year, how many trumpet players in this country are going to win an audition in a section that's going to pay a living wage, relative to how many are coming out of the schools in the country. It's probably more than the trombone players but yeah, I'd be surprised if it were more than 20, nationally, paying a living wage. I mean I haven't tracked down how many trumpet openings there are, but in trombone, it's generally running about 10 or so. Salaried jobs with orchestras. Maybe 10 to 20, I guess. What's your sense of it?

Austin Seybert: I was actually going to say between eight and ten. I'd be surprised if it was over ten.

Brad Edwards: Yeah, ten is a pretty good year, and since Sam Schlosser seems to win fully two thirds of all of them, Sam Schlosser I mean, that guy won Milwaukee and he won Cincinnati and he won San Francisco opera and he was a finalist for Philadelphia and he won Atlanta, so he seems to... you know, if you want to win an audition, go study with Sam Schlosser, 'cause he obviously has it down cold, and I've had students take lessons with him and they've said it's extremely intense and he's just one of those guys who will go at it hard for seven hours straight and just tear you a new one constantly. But once again, that is extremely specialized in the same way that when I was at Hartt those guys were going around all day with the headphones on being intently devoted on perfecting one thing.

Brad Edwards: So I think the job market requires us, most of us, to be a reasonably good generalist and to get to the very highest level of any one area requires you to, as you did Austin, set everything aside and become a very focused specialist, but that's a gamble. If you choose to become a very focused specialist, you're now putting some options to the side and you're saying okay I'm going to follow this one narrow path and it's a gamble because there are some really great players trying to go down that path. Monstrously talents players, so I think the smarter decision is to become more of a generalist.

Austin Seybert: Cool, alright. So you generally feel that I need to put more of an emphasis on chamber music, quartet, quintets, that sort of thing.
Brad Edwards: Well, let's say this. If someone has a lot of trombone quartet experience, they're learning a lot of the same skills they will need to use in an orchestral trombone section. They're learning to tune, they're learning to balance. There's a difference in that they're not learning how to follow a conductor in sync with the brass section but how do you train them on that? That's just you've to get in front of a conductor and compare what you see with what you hear around you. But when I got in air force band, the other trombone players in the section were largely guys from either UT Austin or Michigan State. That's just how it shook out and they both had a wealth of trombone quartet experience under their belt and I had zero, and I immediately struggled.

Brad Edwards: They had quick instincts for blending that I was sloppy on. The hearing, the style of attacks. I think if you can get someone to be a really excellent trombone quartet player, especially if that quartet is going to play music in some different styles, I feel like that's a great training ground that they can apply to their orchestral or to playing in a section, a jazz band section.

Austin Seybert: Excellent. That's probably some of the better advice I've received on things to change about the curriculum. Thank you, that's great.

Brad Edwards: Generally it's a pretty amazing thing. The challenge is you've got to find four relatively equally skilled people, unless you just purposely mix ability, you've got to find a time when they're free and you've got to find a room they can meet and they you've got to hope that in your schedule you can meet with them. That's where the rubber meets the road and I've been working pretty hard. One of my teaching assistants here is pretty much supposed to be the chamber of music coordinator, just getting all that taken care of and getting in there and coaching the groups. I need to get him to be a lot more proactive on that this next semester but I feel like... and I saw some very nice success. Some really good sounding quartets, or trios if you have to, but getting that to work nicely I think that be a really huge boon because if that perfect balance of soloistic playing and ensemble playing.
Brad Edwards: You do a trombone choir, they're sort of lost in the mix. Solo playing is it's own thing, but quartet, that's a really nice balance.

Austin Seybert: Cool, that's absolutely wonderful advice and that's actually my last question. Do you have anything else to say, or?

Brad Edwards: Um, no. I think... I wish I had a time machine and I could go back and plunge in more and be more well-versed in the jazz side of it. One of the ironies I have now is here I have this full time teaching position and I know intellectually that I really should have been playing in some salsa band gigs and some dance band gigs so I can convey that knowledge to my students and now I've got to figure out how to make up for a deficit that just my career took me in a path where I didn't need to do that and I didn't have time to do that and so now I've got to figure out well I know they need to do it, so how can I get to that point when I'm not teaching from a position of expertise.

Austin Seybert: You know it's interesting that you say that. The original reason why I started this project was just 'cause I was just generally curious about why aren't there more people doing this, like Jim, and even at this point, really even Harry, he's played in the army brass quintet and he's more of a jazz player but he's had experience doing other things.

Brad Edwards: I'll leave you with one or two other little things that have popped into my head. There was a study of performance in science class by boys and girls and actually it might've been math as well and also just not even by gender but by level of performance but they found that people were moving at a certain parallel point and then at some point one group sort of edged ahead and about that same time the other group suddenly dropped off quite rapidly and I think it was a perception thing that once you sensed that you weren't as good at it as some other people, you then started to avoid it and started to say things like, "I'm not good at that, I can't do that."

Brad Edwards: Then the people who were rewarded or patted on the back as being yeah you're good at this, they took off and so you ended up with either by ability or by gender, whatever metric, those who were good took off and those sensed that they, maybe they were only a little behind in the race, but they perceived themselves as being way behind in the race.
and so they fell off quite rapidly and I think that's similar to even in high school there is one kid who could sort of improvise on the saxophone and I couldn't do it as well as him and I didn't want to stand up and take out a solo.

Austin Seybert: So perception is a powerful thing.

Brad Edwards: Yup. If you perceive yourself as being not as good, you tend to avoid it and then you become extremely reluctant to get up and embarrass yourself. I think that's maybe worse with all the high stakes testing that's done now.

Austin Seybert: Oh interesting.

Brad Edwards: How good you are, whether or not you're a failure or not. There's I think a lot young people now, it's that test score and what percentile are you in that that's closely tied to their perception of their failures, successes, human being, and so if they perceive themselves as not very good, they're going to turn away from that and go towards a thing that they think that they are good at.

Brad Edwards: Your perception... if you had been sort of the top one, you would've viewed that perhaps as a valuable prize and you didn't want to lose it. It's sort of like a football team playing not to lose. I've got this valuable thing and I'm not going to venture out into something where I'll be bad at it because... so in a way maybe your disadvantage became your advantage.

Brad Edwards: When I started at ASU last fall I had the students write down, in one master class, on slips of paper, what was that moment where you knew that music was the thing that you were going to go into or go towards and then I collected the slips, there were no names on them, and I started reading them out loud to the students. I was going to have them read them themselves but I thought anonymous might be better, and it was interesting how many of them, their decision to go in that direction was because they were in a situation where they were the best one or they won something or they won an audition and they got to be first chair so they viewed it as a competitive thing, so they're good it and so they're going to do more of it.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, that's dangerous.
Brad Edwards: Not by its own merits. Not because they were in love with some piece of music but because this was a way they could be the best one. Plus when the kid is young, that's a really huge deal. The first trombone kid that can play a high B flat, immediately because the coolest, the big man on campus. I don't know if you remember that from your formative years, but that first kid that can hit a B flat, all the other kids are like, whoa he's so cool. There was one other thing. Oh yes. So you’ve been teaching adjunct, you haven't gone into a full time job yet, right?

Austin Seybert: Nope, not yet.

Brad Edwards: Well, what was I going to say Austin, is the term that I made up after starting, 'cause my first full time job and the term that I remember and it still holds true is what I call the avalanche of details is when you start a full time job, it's just like someone opens up a big bucket and pours it on your head of little details. You need to fill out this survey, we need you to do this mandatory form, by the way this committee meeting is at this time and you're just swimming in it and part of it is starting to realize what things you can safely ignore, because if you really read every memo and every vision statement by some dean, you won't do your core mission, because unless you have an ability to sleep two hours a day. Just get ready for that, the avalanche of details, and if it involves a move as well, where you're also trying to buy a house, trying to sell a house and just anything you have with your family, that's a whole other bucket load of details to stay on top of.

Brad Edwards: So kind of ask yourself where your balance is between your core and all the other stuff that is suddenly being dumped on your head. Does that make sense? It's a little negative but...

Austin Seybert: Yeah, and I totally understand. It's in my nature to be very positive about and optimistic about things like that. I'm learning that there's things that I'm going to pass time there now and there are things that I'm dealing with that I did not expect to and they were different even when I was a Millikin and so it's... and it's been a good experience. I'm really glad I'm doing what I'm doing and really just very fortunate. I've been able to get teaching experience while I'm getting my doctorate. So that's been a lot of fun.
Austin Seybert:

Well, I really really appreciate it and it's been a long phone call I'm sure. Thank you so much for your time, and whenever I get this transcribed I will send it to you for you to look over.
APPENDIX G: Interview with Chris Buckholz (edited)

Austin Seybert: I guess the only way would be to start. Anyway I guess first question I had for you is how did you learn the trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Chris Buckholz: Well, let's see. I started out as a euphonium player in sixth grade. In seventh grade I was serious enough about it that my parents were considering getting me an instrument, but I wanted to play in jazz band and so instead of getting me a euphonium, they were advised to get me a valve trombone and so I started playing valve trombone. Concurrently with that I was also playing cornet, so how did audiation, oh then sorry, I'm meandering, so then in eighth grade I got a slide trombone. I'd already had valves. I took some lessons from somebody at the local music store, but I very quickly realized that the slide positions coordinated with the valve combinations.

Chris Buckholz: I was able to take the valve stuff that I knew and apply it to the slide. Then I had lessons after that with a professor at the University of Colorado when I was in junior high school, but basically my initial contract with the trombone was figuring out these slide positions because I already knew valves pretty well and audiation. I was in a French class in what was that, like eighth grade I want to say, seventh grade, eighth grade, not long after I had started playing valve trombone and there was this tune that came on with the beginning of these French films that they would show us, these short films in French. I can still remember the tune.

Chris Buckholz: I remember fingering along with this tune. Valve combinations on the valve trombone and I went to go to band after that and I tried it and all the valve combinations were correct, so I was able to aurally process without an instrument and know what those notes were. I always did a lot of improvising from seventh grade on and a lot of playing by ear. In fact I probably did too much playing by ear and not enough playing off music and doing what I was assigned to do, but because I was really interested in improvising. I was very interested in just playing things that I heard and imitating people off of recordings. A lot of what I did when I was young was "audiation." It wasn't told to me to do that, that's just what I did.
Austin Seybert: Got you. Okay.

Chris Buckholz: Cool.

Austin Seybert: Okay, well, that's really actually interesting. That's very interesting. All right, I'll just go ahead and move onto the second question then.

Chris Buckholz: Okay. I can elaborate on that if you need anything else, but I mean basically that's kind of what it was. It was never a systematic thing, except maybe with improvisation, but even that I really got very little information. I just kind of played by ear.

Austin Seybert: When I was growing up, I started, when I was in ninth grade I started transcribing Tower of Power and Chicago, Beagle's tunes and doing kind of like that when I was younger. That's how I really got started. I actually didn't really even get into BeBop or anything like that until I was really into college.

Chris Buckholz: Sure.

Austin Seybert: That's real interesting that even that young you were doing some of those things, that's really cool. Okay.

Chris Buckholz: Yes.

Austin Seybert: Moving on. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Chris Buckholz: Well I guess it depends on what your definition of audiation is. I guess one of the reasons why universities like to hire, generally hire people who play the instrument well is so they can model for their students. If you define audiation as being able to hear the way something is played, sound, articulation, intonation, all that kind of stuff and then being able to imitate, incorporate that into your own playing, then I would say that there's probably a fair amount of audiation if the professor plays. I have to say that the only person I studied with who did any really playing in the lessons was Dennis Smith. John Swallow really didn't play in the lessons. Arnold Jacobs was not playing. My principle teachers, well the jazz guys all
played. They all played and we played back and forth, but there wasn't a whole lot of audiation and I think what you're defining as a traditional trombone studio.

Chris Buckholz: When there was it was extremely helpful to have a role model, but generally things were described verbally. Sometimes that was helpful and sometimes that wasn't. In my own teaching I do a lot of playing for students. Not only play, do extra tuning and just do extra duets, but they'll be playing a piece and I'll play what I want them to do and they have an instantaneous model orally to hopefully be able to play it back and most of the times I would say that is extremely effective. If they can hear it, generally they do pretty well. It depends on the student but I would say the majority, the vast majority of students that I've taught, if I use that kind of audiation in lessons, they respond very positively. If you're talking about me playing something and having them play it back, I do that quite a bit with improvising.

Chris Buckholz: Well in one of my classes I do a good bit of just playing something and teaching it to them by ear and having them figure it out. In the lessons we don't do as much of that, because we need to get through their assigned material, so I don't have as much time to be able to do a whole lot of that.

Austin Seybert: Okay.

Chris Buckholz: Does that kind of answer your questions?

Austin Seybert: It absolutely does and what you just said kind of will lead to another question I have later. Thank you for doing this. I guess the third question kind of ties in is, do you feel that the typical undergraduate trombonist is equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study, why or why not?

Chris Buckholz: Well, I would say the average, boy that's a really tough question. It really depends on the institution and it depends on the teacher and it depends on what the student wants to do. I would say probably most undergraduates across the board unless they're going to school at Julliard are not prepared for a professional career and at most universities where the students are doing multiple styles of playing, they are at least familiar with them, they may not play them at a high professional level, but they're at least playing.
them in a way that's generally good and I'd say in addition to the just kind of stylistic stuff that is not up to a professional level, there are technical things as well. I guess across the board the way our curricula are structured is solely around classical music for the most part. Very few people incorporate jazz or any other styles really into what they do unless there's maybe something that's quasi-jazzy in a written out typical trombone literature thing. Like, god, what would be an example of this.

Chris Buckholz: Well like Ballad in Blue, that's got kind of like some swing rhythms in it. Some people play it absolutely square, but I think very well, some are trying to do...

Chris Buckholz: I think it's, it's really just swing rhythms. If you treat those triplet figures as swing rhythms it's fine. That's an example there where maybe a teacher will teach a different style, a more jazz/commercial style, but generally it's like we've got to get you through the classical stuff, because that's what you're going to have to play for your jury and that's what the other brass faculty are going to be expect and so that's what the curriculum is centered on is across the music. As far as ensemble experiences, in a lot of places students can get quite a bit of experience playing at least in a big band. Will they get any further refinement of that in their lessons or even more concepts, like improvising, probably not. Sometimes that's the fault of the teacher. Sometimes that's because that's all the student wants to do. You're probably not going to study jazz improvisation if you know some of Vienna, that's not what he does and that's cool.

Chris Buckholz: You're there to study classical music and that's what the curriculum is centered around that's it. In other places you may be able to get some of that from your teacher. It's not like I'm the only guy but it seems like there's not a whole lot of people that are really trying to do it at a high level. Either they're a jazz player or a classical player and one or the other suffers, so the question was? Undergrads are they prepared in different styles? It depends on the student and it depends on the program. If they're at a program where there's a strong jazz and classical component, I would say the outcome is much more likely that they will be fluent in both styles than if they go to a school where they're just focused on orchestral playing, or they're just focused on jazz playing.
Austin Seybert: Okay, cool. All right moving on here. Fourth question. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone performers as educators that are well versed in classical, orchestral and jazz commercial and pedagogy, specifically as it pertains to Bebop improvisation and nuance?

Chris Buckholz: What's my opinion? What is my opinion about that? Well, you know not everybody wants to study it and I'm cool with that. I mean if people just want to study orchestral excerpts for four years and go out and try to get into that world, that's their decision. I think the world has changed a lot in the past 30 years since I was in school and I think that you ought to have some knowledge of being able to play in a swing rhythm. You should be able to play in a swing rhythm, because it's being written into new classical music today and that's the strongest case I can make for it. You don't necessarily need to be a fluent improviser. You don't necessarily need to be fluent in Bebop, but you definitely need to have a good, at least strong sense of swing rhythm.

Chris Buckholz: I'm not particularly offended that there aren't a lot of people that are strong classical teachers and strong Bebop players combined, I think that if students are really interested in that they can go to different people and get that. I think it's helpful, I think it's helpful if the teacher can teach that and they don't have to go to do multiple different sources. It's also helpful for the classical player to also be a jazz player, because you can I think, if you're a good teacher better articulate what the differences are. What the differences in sound are. What the differences are in articulation, what the differences are in the technical demands, because you know it. You've done it and I don't think there is a tremendous appreciation among classical players for what jazz players do. I don't think there's a tremendous appreciation per se among jazz players for what classical players do.

Chris Buckholz: It's nice if a player can do both, but if you're really serious about it and you want to learn both you can go to different specialists if you want. I do think it's good to get your feet wet in both and I also believe that if you're a straight up jazz player it's good to be able to play with a classical sound and play with a classical articulation and a classical style, because you'll get called to do some of that stuff. If you get called you're going to want to fit in and if not you're not going to get called again, so yes, yes.
Austin Seybert: That kind of leads perfectly into one of the reasons why I'm doing what I'm doing.

Chris Buckholz: Uh-huh.

Austin Seybert: That's why I really developed, really my fifth question is really about the studio model system and how I was going to teach it. It's a lot of things that I would have to do outside and really unexpected, but anyway, and I'm sure as you looked at, my fifth question is what is your opinion of my studio model and the undergraduate trombone curriculum. Any notable positives, any concerning negatives?

Chris Buckholz: Well obviously the positive from my biased opinion is that you're doing both. I mean that is the positive for sure and it's not just well we're going drill classical music and that's the end of it. I think that's a tremendous plus, particularly because 99% of these students who think they're going to go out and have an orchestral career are not going to have an orchestral career or maybe they'll have an orchestral career, but that means playing in something like the New Mexico Philharmonic for $4000.00 a year. There are a lot of people fighting, grasping for these $4000.00 a year jobs now and I just, personally I don't understand it, but they've been drilled that that is really the only thing that is meaningful and has value in our society and therefore that's what they're going to do. I think that the fact that you're addressing the realities of the musical world and getting them to be involved with both styles is the positive.

Chris Buckholz: The drawback to me having taught for a long time now is just time. When I had fewer students when I first got to UNM. I gave people jazz lessons. Anybody who was interested we got together for a separate jazz lesson and I was able to tailor things to them and how to transcribe things on their level and work on tunes on their level and work on scales on their level and do playing back and forth and it was great, but the more your time gets chewed up, the more burned out you get and the less time you have to do that stuff. Now I've got 11 students and I really don't have time to give jazz lessons to everybody and so you're trying to adjust it in having separate jazz in there, which I think is great. I really do. I think that you know this is one of the things that you're not going to get rewarded for.
Having the students play a separate jazz jury, could be a really positive thing.

Chris Buckholz: The problem is that all your colleagues are going to expect their students to play classical jury. You kind of have to do both and if you're at a smaller program, that can be difficult, because they're already doing a billion things, because there's not bodies to cover everything. If you go to school like Indiana University you're going to be lucky, lucky if you're playing in one ensemble, maybe two. At a place like UNM you might be playing in four. At Yale I played in six or seven. The idea that you're going to have time to work on all this stuff and they're going to have time to practice it and master it is more difficult at a smaller institution than it is at a really big one. If you're at a bigger place you can have a little bit more freedom to do this stuff, than a place that's smaller and everybody is kind of having to do everything.

Chris Buckholz: That's something just to kind of keep in mind. I wouldn't discourage you from pursuing this, but it is something to be aware of, that you're going to hit a wall with time and you kind of have to be judicious about it and not everybody is going to support your idea of having jazz jury, who are they going to play for? I have my students play for the other jazz faculty and that works out really well, but the jazz faculty may not be into that. They might be like I don't want to listen to these extra students. Hopefully, they'll be supportive but you know you just don't know.

Austin Seybert: Yes.

Chris Buckholz: That's the complicating factor in trying to do both is time and the longer you teach the more you'll kind of see that. It's very difficult for me and it's very difficult for anybody else who's trying to do this to balance the amount of time it takes to do both well and have them have time to practice and be in their ensembles and be functional and study and still hold them accountable and try to teach them the level there is.

Austin Seybert: Yes and that's one thing, to the best of my ability, when Jim kind of challenged me to do this. Put this together in the best way I possibly could, because he would basically tell me you need to try the best way possible, how are you going to do time? How are you going to be able to teach all
this, even let's say like a classical, a trombone performance major comes in but he still wants to learn improvisation. You're not going to be able to give him that time. Because what if you have jazz trombone majors? What if you're only teaching low brass like I am currently?

Chris Buckholz: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Austin Seybert: That's why when I tried to do this as kind of the studio class, at least I was trying to go through like with the improvisation studio, going through basically a one year curriculum, that would basically keep on repeating itself and trying to, giving these students something to go through. When I was in my undergrad I was a classical mid trombone performance major, realized I was never going to get a job in an orchestra, because you never know until you actually start looking into it.

Chris Buckholz: Right, yes.

Austin Seybert: Then I did jazz trombone and realized you never really know until you start looking into it and so I'm like what am I going to do. I was doing both in my undergrad, like both juries, jazz jury, classical jury. I was doing classical with a teacher in my undergrad over at Marshall University and then driving six hours every two weeks for two and a half years with Harry Watters and doing jazz with him. That was just of like my experience, my undergrad and that's why I ended up with Jim, because I was like, who's the next best person I could possibly learn both from.

Chris Buckholz: Sure.

Austin Seybert: That's why this whole thing started. I think this whole thing is really a work in progress and I think I'm always going to be changing and adjusting, adjusting as in the time I have available and adjusting to where I'm at academically and professionally.

Chris Buckholz: Sure.

Austin Seybert: Going with a job and things like that. I think as time goes on things will either change for the better or really change to fit the institution that I'll be teaching at. That's really the end goal for me.
Chris Buckholz: Well and you'll figure it out. You'll figure it out. It's always kind of a shock when you first start teaching full-time as to how your time gets divided and just how much work it is, but you figure it out. You start figuring out what's important, what's not important. It's not like it's always going to be a struggle. It's always a work in progress, but it's not necessarily, it's more like finishing touches rather than framing the house if you know what I mean.

Austin Seybert: Yes and I think you know, I've been teaching adjunct for three years and doing my doctorate at the same time, so I have a lot to learn and a lot to see. I know my opinions will change as time goes on.

Chris Buckholz: Sure, sure.

Austin Seybert: Anyway, I'll go to this last question.

Chris Buckholz: Sure.

Austin Seybert: Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added to this that you feel is missing. Anything you feel is unnecessary or should be removed?

Chris Buckholz: Well unfortunately, I'm sorry, I'm at a theater in Santa Fe, we just got done with a rehearsal, so I don't have the stuff right in front of me.

Austin Seybert: Okay.

Chris Buckholz: I'm just trying to remember.

Austin Seybert: Well I can kind of tell you a little bit basically.

Chris Buckholz: Yes, go ahead, go ahead, uh-huh.

Austin Seybert: Essentially I had basically a three studio model. A general trombone studio. Orch rep studio for the performance majors and then a jazz improvisation studio. Not everyone was required to go to each. Everyone is required to go to general trombone study. Only performance majors are required to go to Orch rep, although it's highly encouraged. People who want to do it that are not trombone performance majors and then vice versa only jazz trombone majors would be required to go to the improvisation studio and vice versa, anybody is welcome to do it. I had a scale
permutation sheet that going through a basically, starting
with all modes of major, all modes of major, natural minor,
ionian and harmonic minor, classical melodic minor, all the
symmetrical scales, modes of melodic minor, all the way
through. Modes of harmonic major, blah, blah, blah, but
that's way down the line.

Austin Seybert: Then every single semester being able to complete two of
those permutations minimum, going through the vertical,
horizontal, second, third, fourth, depending on what the
scale is and then I had a tunes list. Basically learning tunes
by ear. I had four levels. Students had to take, I had six to
eight, which is, now I realize is just entirely too much.

Chris Buckholz: Most likely yes that would probably be too much.

Austin Seybert: I'd probably do two to four tunes.

Chris Buckholz: Remind me, you're going to do these tunes in which
seminar?

Austin Seybert: These tunes will just be mostly in the general trombone
studio.

Chris Buckholz: Okay, okay, got you, all right.

Austin Seybert: Yes, I think that pretty much covers everything. Then I had
an actual curriculum with both sides of the horn that I
would follow and a general background I would follow for
students.

Chris Buckholz: Uh-huh, so would you have them learn jazz tunes in a jazz
seminar or would it just primarily be scales?

Austin Seybert: Oh definitely would be learning jazz tunes, like if I pull it
up right here. I think, I should actually have this up before I
did this.

Chris Buckholz: That's okay.

Austin Seybert: I'll pull this up. Dissertation, curriculum model, so what I
have written. I apologize, apologize. Here it is. What I have
written is a studio class will be required by all jazz
performance majors and is concurred by all majors who
attend. In this class specific trombone issues pertaining to
jazz and commercial performance, jazz improvisation, and
nuance are addressed. The last class of each month will host a special interest class. At least every single student will be able to perform or present specific topics on improvisation during this time. Large ensemble excerpts, solo excerpts, and transcriptions will be assigned every week.

Chris Buckholz: Okay. I guess I would just maybe have a list of tunes. It's going to change because like if you try to do everybody at the same time, you're going to have different levels of players, so it makes it difficult to work on that in some ways in a group setting. However, however the benefit of that having all your jazz students work on the same tune and then doing it at seminar is that the younger students can hear the older students play and hopefully the older students can help out the younger players. I think there's benefit to that. That might be something that you can incorporate in, or your could do some call and response stuff, like you play a lick and then they play a lick. I've done that stuff in Masters classes and stuff. That can be good, so you're working on their audiation, being able to hear things and play them back. If you don't, I'm not saying you don't have that stuff, because I don't know, but if you don't have that stuff, that might be something to put in there.

Austin Seybert: Yes, later in the, not in that, that studio model specifically, because my dissertation would just get way too big if I did that at this point.

Chris Buckholz: Sure.

Austin Seybert: All right, well next question. Well is there anything you feel like that you feel like was unnecessary or should be removed or you feel like it's a good start or what were your thoughts on that.

Chris Buckholz: No, I think it's a great start. I mean I think you've done really great work and for me it's nice to see that it's actually being addressed. People are starting to think about this now, because for most of my career it's been you do one or the other. You don't do both and there's no reason to worry about it, because you don't do both. You're either on a jazz track, you're on a classical track and that's it, so it's nice to see that addressed. You've done excellent work. You're very organized. I think over your career it's just
going to be a question of how do you balance these things? Because at most schools the students have probably more to do than they really have time for and how do you address that and it's a continuing problem.

Austin Seybert: Yes.

Chris Buckholz: If you're in a large program, yes then you can get away with a lot more of this and you know honestly you mentioned something in the College Music Society, it's in the air right now. People are starting to think about this stuff more than any time in the past where you've got to be well versed in everything. You need to be able to play all styles. There's no reason why you can't play all styles, except that it's more work. I think that what will help you in your career is the fact that administrators are going to start thinking about this stuff, because this is the buzz topic right now and start incorporating it. In some ways that may make, I think the fundamental problem is still going to be there, but if you have the support of administrators and the curriculum is kind of helping you out, that could be a great benefit, because right now and the way it has been in the past as you well know, it's one of the other.

Chris Buckholz: It's not going to be like that forever. It's going to change. I would say in the next ten years there's going to be quite a bit of change in music, college music curriculum and it's going to reflect what you're doing and that's great. That will help you out too.

Austin Seybert: Well I 100% agree and actually the original reason why I got into this, because I was a poor kid trying to earn money and that's why I got into jazz, because I could get a duo guitar gig at happy hour or I could play in a salsa band and play harmonic minor all day, as long as I wanted it.

Chris Buckholz: Yes, I agree.

Austin Seybert: I could get a gig playing the church gig, per service orchestra type of thing was happening as well, but that doesn't happen very often.

Chris Buckholz: That's right.

Austin Seybert: It was purely an economic choice that is now leading me into more of a pedagogical outlook on why aren't more
people doing this. It's been kind of a labor of love and I'm looking forward to see where life takes me with it.

Chris Buckholz: Yes, that's great man. Yes, so if you can send me a copy of your dissertation, I would love to see it once you get it published.
All right. I'll just go ahead and get started. How did you learn trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

It was playing by ear, playing along with the Beatles. The Beatles White Album, I went tune by tune and just learned the melodies, every tune off of that, Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da, Back in the USSR, Dear Prudence, and just sat in my room and learned that and then went out to expand that further, went to Chicago and even not necessarily jazz, but just music that I liked, melodies that I liked and that grew into Frank Sinatra, Ella Fitzgerald interpretation.

I'm not really a great sight reader to begin with because I'm dyslexic, severely actually, so playing by ear was a tremendous release for me. Again, just a lot of ear training in the room, figuring out what the keys were, what the starting notes were, the form, if it's an AAB tune, what is the melody starting note? What is the starting note once we get to the bridge? Just making mental notes to myself and learning how to sing through the horn.

As a teacher, I do the same thing with my students. I require that they do at least 20 minutes of Pandora playing every day. The good thing about that is it's just like a gig. You don't know what's coming up and you can't rewind. You're in constant react mode and it's tremendous ear training. They program the Frank Sinatra channel and Frank Sinatra just sings the melodies the way they're supposed to be played, the way they're supposed to be sung and that's in the trombone range anyway. 20 minutes of playing along with Frank Sinatra every day is a good life enhancer.

Wow. That's beautiful.

Yeah.

Cool. All right. Well, maybe next question, if that's okay with you.

Sure. Absolutely.
Austin Seybert: All right. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students traditionally lack or excel in this area?

Harry Watters: It's absolutely crucial. Students need to be able to hear the note before they actually play it, of course, after teaching you for a few years and I'm assuming, Austin, you have perfect pitch, right?

Austin Seybert: I do not, but people have told me that I do.

Harry Watters: Yeah. If you don’t you probably have incredible relative pitch to the point it appears it is perfect.

Austin Seybert: It's interesting that you say that. I don't remember growing up with this ability. I remember developing it. I remember sitting down, I was obsessed with trying to be able to sing the pitch of what I was hearing in my head and being able to come out in my trombone. I wasn't good at it at first. It was really interesting. I don't think what I was ... Maybe what I have isn't perfect pitch, but it's funny because right now, I can sing any pitch I want to and make it come out my horn.

Austin Seybert: My sophomore year of high school is when my band director starting noticing that I was able to do those things. I was able to sing and play on my trombone. It wasn't a jazz thing. It wasn't a classical thing. It was me just singing Solfege and thirds and fourths and fifths and sixths, and just trying to memorize those intervals and one day, I just woke up and I just knew where everything was. It's hard for me to really explain.

Harry Watters: Good, so sort of like an awakening?

Austin Seybert: Yeah. Really. Honestly, that's a perfect way to describe it.

Harry Watters: Yeah, and that can be developed in students too and I really encourage this with my students to just develop a sense of tonal recognition like you're memorizing dates on a history test. You can hear that B flat. You can relate that to everything else. If you can just hear that B flat and be able to pick it out of the air at any point, but then, my students also play the note game with me. Okay. That's a G. Find that on your horn. Play that note on the piano. They'll team up in groups and a partner will play a note on the piano, in
the middle range, and then as quickly as possible, their colleague needs to be able to find it on the horn and play it. Boom.

Harry Watters: It gets faster and faster and it is neat. Their sense of tonal awareness is heightened within a few minutes and they can keep developing that. I do that all the time and just encourage my students to play the note game. My brother and I did that when we were kids. We had a piano near the dinner table and we would bet each other peas and carrots what a particular note was. I don't have perfect pitch and neither does my brother, but we have a very strong sense of relative pitch.

Austin Seybert: Honestly, maybe that's what I have. I mean, a lot of people tell me they think I have perfect pitch. I'm just like, "Whatever," I mean, maybe I do or maybe I don’t. I did not have this ability when I was a freshman in high school. When I was a sophomore in high school, it changed for me. Maybe what I have is exactly what you're talking about.

Harry Watters: Well, and again, that's a good thing. Your sense of developing that is something that can be put into a curriculum and most, I think most students, most music majors, have an ability to have an extremely strong sense of relative pitch if it's cultivated. You're never done cultivating it. Pitch, being able to play in tune, you're never done with that either. Playing with drones, locking in on the fundamental and then the perfect force and perfect pitch with that. I'm sure you have the atonal energy, right?

Austin Seybert: I do.

Harry Watters: Yeah. I mean, you put that on the organ setting and then go into the lower octaves. That's ideal for locking in on pitches and then recording that. With that C drone going and then listening back to see how fast you're locking in and making sure that sparkle hits in your skull where it's really, really focused and perfectly in tune. That has to be listened to in recording an autopsy. It's really important. My students have to record themselves every single day on their warmups and also on their, just playing their material and the standard always needs to be, is it good enough to be on a CD and if not, why not?

Harry Watters: You know the deal. We're in the same mold there.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, it's interesting the way you talk about this. Whenever I went into college, I was a good trombone player for a high school kid, but that was not my strongest skill as a player. My strongest attribute as a musician was my ear and honestly, it really wasn't that close. I felt like, I remember when we started taking lessons, how much we worked on trombone because I was behind and I wasn't really a great trombone player. I was okay. It's interesting that I feel like no matter what I was efficient at, as long as my ear was together, I was able to catch up.

Harry Watters: You always took it very seriously. You took it very seriously and that's why you're so successful now.

Austin Seybert: Well, thank you. All right. Next question. Do you feel the typical undergraduate trombonist is well equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Harry Watters: No. No. As a rule, no. I think probably the problem is the curriculum, and you identified that pretty well in your proposal. I also just think that undergraduates are, they have too much on their plates. They're expected to ... National Association of Schools and Music, they keep adding requirements and their students are playing in way too many ensembles and all these extra activities, but also, with digital media and smartphones, they're also distracted. It's going to be as battle that as educators, we're going to be fighting more and more just having them put down the phone and concentrate on what the heck they have to do. The phone has to be in airplane mode. If they get a buzz that's a text, they're going to put their horn down and see who just texted them. It's a terrible thing.

Harry Watters: I'm going off topic here, but just making sure that students are able to concentrate, no matter what they're focusing on, either classical music or jazz, but if they ask Frank Sinatra how he was able to do all the things he did. He was an Oscar winning moving star. He was a multiple Grammy winning artist. He did all of these things and they ask him how he did all that and he said, "Well, I tackled each project one thing at a time. I just focused on one thing at a time. I don't think about all the things I have on my plate,".
Harry Watters: I think probably the goal is trombone studio educators is to get them in there and teach them how to focus. Help them to be able to focus. If they're working on the Creston, they need to sound like David Bremner playing the Creston. It doesn't matter what their instrument is. Now, they're going to put that down and go and sound like Gilkes, but they don't need a different instrument, but they just need to have a different sound concept in their head. Right? I just did the Creston. Now, I'm going to go over to Marshall Gilkes and I'm going to be Marshall Gilkes for the next 20 minutes, but being able to put on different hats immediately and being able to switch and become totally immersed in that new style and being able to concentrate is absolutely crucial.

Austin Seybert: Awesome. Beautiful stuff. All right. Next question. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are well versed in classical, orchestral and jazz commercial pedagogy?

Harry Watters: I think that's improving overall because I think it has to be. It needs to improve at a faster rate, but Buddy Baker sure was, he provided the template for that. He showed us all how to make that happen and Tony Baker at North Texas. He's one of these guys that's committed to both and of course, Jim Pugh, so I think there are plenty of models out there and I've been hired at Towson as the classical trombone professor. That's my gig. You know how I feel about both sides. There's definitely a movement towards enlightenment.

Harry Watters: I do think that this curriculum model here is going to really help us and I'd like to use some of this in my syllabus, if I could, with your permission.

Austin Seybert: Absolutely. Yeah. I mean, that would be great. This entire project really was, it started off as, I'm getting my Doctorate in classical trombone and I walk into the classical trombone studio and I'm playing for the studio. I'm teaching the undergrads and I'm watching these undergrads that really great trombonist technicians that have ears of a toddler around me and I'm like, "What is the problem? Why can't they hear this simple diatonic interval,". They got a senior undergrad. They got Masters'
Austin Seybert: For me, it was like, what's the real problem here? Why? This project morphed into, well, audiation and the classical model really is pretty lacking and so that's when I just realized, well, maybe that's why there are not that many people that really cross both sides and usually, if they're going to cross sides, it's going to be a jazz player going over to the classical side and vice versa, and so it was a labor of love and trying to put together a project that I could use for myself, for both professionally and just pedagogically, but then also maybe I'd be able to help someone else.

Harry Watters: Yeah.

Austin Seybert: Maybe the traditional, classical trombonist that's been doing it for so many years is looking for something else to give their students and if my curriculum can do that, then I'm very happy with that.

Harry Watters: Yeah, and I think that's the spirit in which it needs to be put out there, definitely. On question number five, can we get down to that point yet?

Austin Seybert: Yeah. Sure.

Austin Seybert: What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

Harry Watters: Overall, I'm very, very impressed with this. That's why I would like to include some of it in my curriculum, my syllabus as well, and I would of course give you credit for that. I'll list you as a source. I really like the tune list, man. I think you picked some good ones and making sure that they can play these tunes in any key is absolutely essential, being able to start at any note and finish the melody, I mean, that's going to really make them one with their instrument and essentially making their instrument an extension of their body. That's what you want. That's what you want. That's what Watrous did. He wasn't playing the trombone. He was singing through the instrument. That's awesome. That's awesome.
Harry Watters: Any concerning negatives? I don't really have any negatives to say. I will say this. It's extremely challenging and if this is going to be enforced the way it's written, there's going to be some blow back from students and from faculty as well just because I know what's involved, just being at Towson and knowing what is possible with scheduling. My students, they're all music ed majors and like I said before, they're slammed with all these extra activities, you know, woodwind techniques, percussion techniques, all these other survey classes and being able to physically schedule three different trombone studio classes, I don't see how that's possible. General, classical and jazz, I mean, I would love to be able to have three separate hours to be able to isolate, but getting that into the class handbook, if you can pull it off, more power to you. I don't think I would be able to do this.

Harry Watters: I think in the real world, it's going to be much more doable to have one studio class, which is what we all have at Towson. We have 11:00 on Thursdays. That's our studio class and it's one hour. I was just able to get a trombone choir or trombone ensemble hour added to this and we meet, it's going to be TBA, or to be determined, but that's all I can do in addition to the regular lessons. You might get some blow back. I'm just telling you.

Austin Seybert: Yep.

Harry Watters: Just so you know.

Austin Seybert: Absolutely. I totally understand that. In the trombone model, I bring up that I try to really cater to, and maybe to the music education majors more specifically.

Harry Watters: Yeah.

Austin Seybert: The three studio model, for instance, this is how I imagine it would work and this is me being very ambitious and experienced, would be that music, a general studio would be that all trombone players are required to go, just like traditionally, like you said, [crosstalk 00:20:08]. Music education majors are only required to go to that hour. Then, the organ chamber rep studio, which is the classical studio, would be for the performance majors and then the jazz improvisation studio would be for the jazz majors.
Austin Seybert: Obviously, I think the studio would, if you were a performance major, a classical performance major, you have two you are required to go and if you're a jazz major, you have two you're required to go. Music ed or non major or minor, you're only required to go to one. Obviously, it would be heavily encouraged if people wanted to, they could do as much or as little, minimum required or as much as they want and I tried to be very conscious of the fact that a music ed major already have so many requirements. I got a music ed degree in my undergrad, so I get it. I know what they're doing.

Harry Watters: Well, what you'll probably be able to accomplish or actually have on the schedule is the general and then if you have students available for this, the classical trombone studio and the jazz trombone studio, that's probably going to be, "Off budget," or, "Black ops,". They're going to show up and just add another time. I don't think you're going to be able to get the School of Music or the department to list those as official classes or official hours, but if you can just say, "Hey, this is what you're going to have to do. Come on in," but I don't think they're going to get any extra credit for that. You know what I mean. It's not going to be officially in the university schedule.

Austin Seybert: Gotcha.

Harry Watters: Hey. More power to you if you can pull that off.

Austin Seybert: You're probably very, and right in the fact that I'm not going to necessarily be able to give credit for these extra studios, but if I have a studio of, if I'm in a general division one school or something and I have 20 trombone majors, maybe 12 are music ed and I got four, maybe six classical and two jazz majors, maybe we could do the outside and it would be very beneficial and it's beneficial, I think, for a performance major to be able to know what Brahms Two sounds like, the end of Brahms Two or to be able to play Lohengrin and be in a section and to actually know how to hear it and play it.

Austin Seybert: It's funny. When I got out of my undergrad, I was clueless about that orchestral stuff, absolutely clueless and it's because I never did it. It never was something I did or was told to do. I would have, I think, just tried to do my best to make that happen.
Harry Watters: Yeah.

Austin Seybert: I think it's more, like you said, it's something that I would have to make sure that it would be something that's extra credit and try to get students that want to do this and that.

Harry Watters: Yeah, I think coming from a, just a motivational perspective, getting them to want to be there

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Austin Seybert: You think that maybe, obviously with scheduling and administrative issues of scheduling all this, maybe creating a culture of enlightenment with students will help push this forward a little bit.

Harry Watters: Yeah, getting enthusiasm going. Making sure that your students are there to help each other. It's a nurturing environment, one filled with, "Man, I can't wait to get this next thing started," so yeah. Let me think here. Oh. The syllabus, one thing I would think here, I love the tunes' list and the tunes' list jury. I like that idea.

Harry Watters: The practice goals. Now, you put down in here, "The goals will come in time,". You know, I think that probably, at least for me, it was absolutely essential that I had goals from the get go, very, very tangible goals, immediate goals, kicking butt on my next lesson. Intermediate goals, getting into a great graduate school. Long term goals, getting a job, recording a CD. 30 years from now, being a principle trombone in the New York Phil or being first call trombonist in LA for studio work, but creating ridiculous goals for myself kept me going and I would think that that's probably very, very good for all students to establish goals, even though they're going to change.

Harry Watters: These are shifting goals, but they need to be able to see themselves in unbelievably high positions or doing great things musically from the get go. If a student comes into my studio, I'll ask them, "Okay, what do you see yourself doing? What's your plan," and if there's any hesitation, if they don't have a plan for themselves, we have a problem.

Austin Seybert: That's something that I'm really, really thankful for. I remember you said that exact phrase to me the first lesson,
basically. I can still remember after, I think I played a confirmation for you and about five minutes later, you're like, "Well, this is what I think about your playing and what's you plan," and I had zero ideas what my plan was.

Harry Watters: You got it together very, very fast. What you've accomplished, Austin, is amazing. I'm very proud of you. I know all your teachers are and I know your family is proud of you too. I would encourage your students to come up with their own goals as fast as possible.

Austin Seybert: Thank you. I will do so.

Harry Watters: You don't want them to wait for goals. Now, I think we've covered most of the questions. I'd like to also talk about your proposal itself. Is that going to be submitted as part of the dissertation?

Austin Seybert: Yeah. The proposal basically is a premise. Then, much of the proposal that you see will be the first few chapters and then the transcriptions will be a large portion of the dissertation, the transcription of the interviews is a large portion of the dissertation and then I'll have a conclusion of common themes amongst the interviews that I've heard and very interesting points about each interview. I want to make sure that people see this project as being helpful rather than pretentious and cocky.

Harry Watters: Exactly. I know. I know. I know you. There's love in your heart and you want that to come through on the page too and I know you will.

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Harry Watters: There's one typo that I found. There might be others, but I didn't see any. I mean, this looks great. Page five.

Austin Seybert: Page five.

Harry Watters: "When Jacobs was a boy, he learned," this is at the bottom, you need to get rid of that word right there. "When Jacobs was a boy, he picked up the cornet and learned all the valve fingerings,". I know it was a cut and paste error.

Austin Seybert: Yes.
Harry Watters: Yeah.

Austin Seybert: Yep, there it is. That's definitely it.

Harry Watters: Yeah.

Austin Seybert: Whenever I said, it's funny, some people mentioned the valve fingerings and I would just put slide position, but actually, in his book, he actually uses the words, "Valve fingerings," for everything. It was really interesting. If it was related to the trombone, he always put, "Valve fingerings," so I'm not really sure why he did that, but I just went ahead and cut and pasted that.

Harry Watters: If that was what he was thinking, then putting it in there, there's nothing wrong with that. Awesome, I'm very excited for you, man. I'm proud of you.

Austin Seybert: Well, I appreciate it. Thank you so much.
Austin Seybert: How did you learn trombone, and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Jon Whitaker: So how did I learn in terms of grade school time or in school, like college?

Austin Seybert: Well, you can be as specific or vague as you want.

Jon Whitaker: Okay. Well, I started in the sixth grade. Normal public school band upbringing. I don't really have any pedagogical recollections of anything we did in those early years other than I knew I played a lot. I practiced a lot because it was fun. Then we had a pretty strong public school band program all the way from elementary school up through ... I mean, middle school, sorry, all the way up through high school, so it was never an issue of wanting to play or practice.

Jon Whitaker: I guess it was my junior year of high school, I started studying with Ray Conklin at Murray State, which is local to where I went to high school and that's why I ended up going to college. And that's when my early recollections of any pedagogical stuff, and he is very grounded in just basic fundamentals. We do Remington every ... I probably did Remington, something out of the Remington, either a three-note slur or a long tone or something like that in just about every lesson, even up into my last year of school.

Jon Whitaker: And he was just an absolute stickler about making sure that it was correct. He was very diligent in making sure that there was consistency. And actually saying that out loud, maybe I ought to go back and practice that way again, but ... And then also he was very much ingrained in the Arnold Jacobs ... a lot of the Arnold Jacobs stuff, which I noticed in some of your writings that that was something that was on your mind. We can probably talk about that a little bit, but very much a ... Just very diligent in his weekly assignments of which slurs and which long tones and which articulation exercises and everything that he wanted us to be working on and prepared for that next week.

Jon Whitaker: And sure enough, we'd play it in every lesson like it was etude or something that was assigned. And it could be
something as simple as a four-note flexibility. But you had to come in and nail it and you couldn't go on until it was right. One interesting thing that might tie into your projects here a little bit is that he didn't ... I didn't maybe hear him play more than 10 notes in my entire time with him, because he has a pretty-

Austin Seybert:  

Jon Whitaker:  

Yeah. He has a pretty severe case of TMJ, so there was no modeling in terms of ... I mean, a big part of my teaching is, when it's fundamentals time, a lot of it is monkey see, monkey do. And I'll just decide, okay, what do I want to work on with a student when I want to work on clear attacks? And so, I'll just pull a trick out of a hat. It's usually five or six exercises, but I'll just ... not with any music in front of them or whatever. I'll just play something at them or change the pattern a little bit so that they have to pay attention to what they're doing and what I'm playing.

Jon Whitaker:  

But a lot of that teaching is done by hey, listen to me. Do it like this. And I tell them, "This is not necessarily the best way to do it, but it's a way and it's better than yours at this point." At least with the undergrads, it's better than yours, so just copy this. There's an element of this I want you to copy. But he never did that. He did a lot of singing. Tons and tons and tons of singing and lessons. He would sing at us and with us, so it reminds me of listening to old recordings of the Remington trombone choir where he's just ... you can hear him singing over the top of the group, which is pretty cool to listen to actually. But that was ... So I would say that I was indirectly trying to buy Remington and buy Arnold Jacobs, and I did end up studying with Mr. Jacobs quite a bit. But early on, that's where things got started.

Austin Seybert:  

Yeah. It sounds like ... The second part of the question being what kind of aural exercises, it sounds like your teacher ... your undergrad teacher really ... You said he sang at you, was already ... It sounds like he was already putting in the seed for a little bit more of a "all experience" in your lessons; would you agree?

Jon Whitaker:  

Yeah, absolutely. And he would make us sing a lot of the time. Particularly if we were ... there was an interval that we would continually scratch or miss or some intonation
things or whatever, he would have us sing too. Buzzing was a big part of it too. I'm trying to remember. We may have buzzed more than we sang in lessons. It's been a long time ago, but that was a big part of it too.

Austin Seybert:

Awesome. Thanks. Cool. I'll move on to the next question. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Jon Whitaker:

So what exactly do you mean by "audiation" in terms of ... like what context do you mean by that?

Austin Seybert:

Audiation as in the ... like working on the ability to hear what you see, see what you hear, feel what you hear, hear what you feel, and developing a really personal relationship with your instrument as it pertains to pitch.

Jon Whitaker:

Yeah. Yeah, I think all that's really important. I'm trying to figure out a way to put it. What I find in my own teaching and things that frustrate me with undergrad students as it regards to ... like let's take scales, for example, or patterns or just something like that. I may play an arpeggio pattern at them, and then play it again but play again a different order. And a lot of them having the ability to hear what ... A lot of times I would play it once, they'd play it back to me and get it right. Then I'd play it again and alter one pitch and skip interval or something and then have them play it back to me, and they'd play it the same way they played it the first time. Just like their mind and their focus and concentration is on something completely different instead of listen to exactly what you hear and copy exactly what you hear.

Jon Whitaker:

Obviously, from a music theory standpoint, that's important. But one of my big pedagogical heroes and somebody that I really look up to is Michael Mulcahy. And every time I've had a lesson with him, regardless if it was back when I was in school or as recently as last December, a year ago December, just the insistence on "I want you to copy exactly what you hear, every aspect of it: the tone, the volume, the tempo, the attack, the sustain, the release. Basically, I want to brainwash you into trying to sound like this." And so, I think in that regard I think it has an unbelievable place in the studio in terms of the learning to make a sound on the instrument or whatever.
Jon Whitaker: I don't think there's enough emphasis on it. I think in a classical ... In my experience at least, in a classical setting of here's something and then being able to play it, we're really a slave to the page, I think, in a lot of respects. I'm not sure if that's exactly what you're driving at in terms of what you're looking for in terms of audiation, but I don't teach students to necessarily play by feel. I subscribe to the old quote, I don't know if it's Gale Winds or somebody said, "Nobody gives a damn what you feel like, it's more about what you sound like."

Jon Whitaker: But I also know that it's really difficult to play well when things aren't feeling right, and I do think certain notes in particular registers have a particular feel and there's not coincidence to where things ... when things feel a particular way, they sound a particular way. When things feel stiff and tight, they sound that way. When things feel really easy and relaxed and effortless, that's usually the sound that's coming out, and I think the game is to try and figure out what contributes to both the positive and negative aspects of those two things. Does that make any sense?

Austin Seybert: Oh, it makes perfect sense. Do you feel like freshmen, as they come in, do they generally lack in this area? Or do you feel like they're average or above average? What's your general experience?

Jon Whitaker: I think in general with the students that I get, your run-of-the-mill, basic middle-tier B flat trombone players that come in, lack this a lot.

Austin Seybert: Okay.

Jon Whitaker: And I think it has a lot to do with just what is made important in the band room in public school. And that's not necessarily saying that everything that happens in public school is negative. It's just ... Not a lot of it prepares someone for a focus study of an instrument like what they get when they get to school. It's not necessarily the band director's fault. They've got stuff to do. They've got other people in the room. It's a different animal.

Jon Whitaker: Now, I will say that when a freshman comes that's really gifted and ahead of the game, usually is someone that has been studying privately with a local professional. And they
have an easier time with the stuff when they're not necessarily worrying about nuts and bolts. They figured out how to play, and we'll get some of those from time to time. I think the majority of the students at my first job, which is a very small liberal arts school is probably ... For 3000 students total on campus, probably 85 music majors. I'd venture to guess that very few of them got it. More of them get it here. I would suspect that all ... a very high percentage of them get it at Indiana, Northwestern, Juilliard, those kind of places. So it just depends on the level of the student. But I would say to generalize it across the board, I think that there's probably a lack of understanding of all that.

Austin Seybert: All right.

Jon Whitaker: At least from my experience.

Austin Seybert: Cool. Next question: Do you feel that the typical undergraduate trombonist is well-equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Jon Whitaker: I would like to think that they are, but I've ... I think they should be, and I think this day and age, you really need to be. But if I think about my current crop of people that are about to graduate ... No, I have to ... Well, let's say someone like Ben, who's a buddy of yours, right? Probably of anybody that I've seen had an understanding of everything across the board, meaning that he could stand up and improvise and sound like he belonged and could play lead in the big band. Sound like he could belong. He'd go to a bar and play with a cover band and sound fine. He'd play solo and sound right. He'd sit in an orchestra and sound right. And so, he would be the best case of that.

Jon Whitaker: I have a couple of other grads that are about to graduate that are remarkable talents. Unbelievable players, but have their blinders on big time in this orchestral path. It's just the way they've gone. And so, they have both played in some jazz stuff here, a little bit. They played one semester, it was the jazz trombone ensemble was just a come all ... If you don't play jazz, but you want to have a little bit of experience and try to learn some of that, this is your semester to try and do that. I try to encourage them to do that. I try to encourage them to do improvise a little bit. But
they are leaving here ... I don't know that they're equipped to handle ... If they would get called the last minute to go sit in with a big band, if they'd be able to hang, you know what I'm saying?

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Jon Whitaker: So I would say a typical undergraduate ... Oh, man. That's a tough one to generalize it, and here's why: Because I tend to think that students become little mini-mes of who their teacher are, right? So they ... The good and the bad. And I'd say with me, my weakness or whatever is being comfortable standing up and improvising, let's say. I would say that I'm pretty well listened and well studied and well versed. I probably listen to more jazz right now than anything, but the comfort level ... And it was because when I was 18, I was over and over and over and over and wasn't forced to improvise and didn't do that. I played a lot of jazz, but didn't ever improvise. And now, I'm too old and quote unquote smart to ... or scared to jump out of that comfort zone.

Jon Whitaker: So I think a lot of it depends on the culture that they come up in their studio environment. I mean, I don't know. I would say generally that they're not. That students coming out of undergraduate are not, and I don't know if I can generalize why or why not, but I do think that that a lot of players that come out of school that are comfortable improvising are typically people that are studying with people that are comfortable improvising. Does that make sense?

Austin Seybert: Yeah. And to really ... I understand what you're saying there, but I'd play devil's advocate. You said that maybe that's a reflection on you. Ben Carrasquillo is one of my best friends, and one of the best ... really one of the best musicians that I've really played with since I've been here in the Midwest I think of him being a classical and jazz musician equally and just a wonderful trombonist, I think that reflects ... It was really one of the reasons why I really wanted to use you in my project. It reflects on you as a teacher.

Austin Seybert: You say you're not a jazz improviser, but I think for him, that's ... Put it this way: If I had had a choice between being a great improviser and a great trombonist, I'd pick 100 out
of 100 times a great trombone player, and that's me personally. And I think that those ... Part of the problems that I'm seeing is, it's not necessarily important that a teacher be able to know how to improvise, it's that there's a bit ... there's a component. It's my experience and what I'm seeing in my research and just been the experience doing is it's important to have a component of ... really of aural skills and then an open floor plan, as it were, to allowing students to be able to do this. And I think the students that you said had the blinders on, I don't think if you even improvised, that they probably wouldn't be doing it anyway.

Jon Whitaker: Yeah, yeah. And you mentioned something there just about your training or whatever that aural skills ... We're doing a ton of ... One of my dearest friends on the planet is a trombone player named Sim Ford. I don't know if Ben's ever told you about Sim Flora or not.

Austin Seybert: I know of him but not personally.

Jon Whitaker: Yeah. So Sim is an interesting cat in that he is this great trombone player and great improviser and great jazz musician and is the ... And was a Roy Main student and thinks Urbie Green hung the moon, and those two things were, alone right there, make him good in my book. But he got out early in his career. Got out of this trombone teaching and got into teaching theory and composition. Twenty-five years of his college teaching career, he was the theory teacher.

Jon Whitaker: And when he comes to one of my group warm-ups that I do at these conferences sometimes, or if he'll come and watch me teach or whatever, he says that a lot of those lectures that I give are a theory teacher's dream in that I'm basically using floor patterns and solfege patterns and things to teach people to play the instrument, but I'm trying to get them to not look at the page when they're doing it. And to be able to take a four-note solfege pattern and play it in any key starting on any note and know exactly what they're doing in a lot of regard, that's exactly what a jazz musician, a good improviser, is doing on the spot. Obviously, it's more complicated than four notes at a time, but ...

Jon Whitaker: And so, from a classical side of things, I think it's ... Those skills are super, super, super important, and so we're doing
a fair amount of that in every lesson. It's just that the ... We'll talk about this in a little bit when we talk about your curriculum, but I tend to ... After I feel like a student is at their particular operating level and proficiency level of the instrument, I let the student's interests a little bit steer the repertoire. Some of them are very interested in all these competitions, solo competitions, and excerpts and stuff, and I'll let them go that way.

Jon Whitaker: Some of them are interested in ... The music ed students are more interested in how would you apply all this that I've learned to how would I do this on a podium with 85 kids in the room? And so, Ben is one of the few that this has been really fired up about it. Well, I mean, that's what he's wanted to do all the time, and I knew that he would be successful because of the play areas. But he also, if he wanted to go and audition in an orchestra, he could have done that too if he wanted to. And maybe he will someday. Who knows? But, anyway.

Jon Whitaker: So I think, again, just general speaking, I think that your typical classically trained or university trained trombone player is probably not as equipped as someone like Ben, to go out and do all of it.

Austin Seybert: All right. Next question: What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators/performers that are well versed in classical/orchestral, and jazz/commercial pedagogy?

Jon Whitaker: Opinion on the lack of trombone performers ... So lack of classical people. The lack of pedagogy ...

Austin Seybert: Basically, what is your opinion on having the performers and educators that maybe do ... that do both? Maybe the one ... Instead of just a classical trombone player or a jazz trombone player, what's your opinion on maybe why there is a lack of ...

Jon Whitaker: Ah. So why is there a lack of somebody that does both ...

Austin Seybert: Yes.

Jon Whitaker: ... equally well?

Austin Seybert: Yeah.
Jon Whitaker: I'll be real interested to see how you write all this down, but there's this opinion ... This certainly was the opinion of a lot of the people that I went to school with and came up with. I don't know if it's this way now or not, but it seems like this ... There's this opinion that the ultimate end goal of all of this and why we practice or whatever is to get a job in an orchestra. That's every trombone player at some point thinks that this is ... That's it. And I'm not poo-pooing that at all. I'm not saying that because I didn't ever get in one. I mean, it's ... I get the opportunity to play with a lot of really great orchestras, and it's unbelievable. It's great.

Jon Whitaker: But so much is focused on ... I think a lot of times it's focused on trying to play that way and to get into one of those orchestras to where then people that study and/or get that their life's goal, they, like we talked about earlier, they put on the blinders and they don't ... When they're young, they don't ... They're not exposed to and/or work on any of the commercial or jazz stuff. Same way on the flip side. You have some high school kids or some kids in certain studios that all of them are just playing with the improvisers and play classically or whatever or play ... They're a good all around players, and they play commercial and jazz stuff really well, but if you ask them to play any basic fundamental passage four times in a row the same way, they couldn't do it.

Jon Whitaker: I think a lot of it is driven by the individual teacher, the individual culture. That's not to say either one of those is wrong. It's just that it's ... that's what it is. And I think it's comes back to what I was saying. It's rare. I think and you could play devil's advocate again, which I totally respect. I think it's rare to have someone like Ben for instance graduate from a place that ... I'm sure he's told you about what the state of the jazz program is in here too. I mean, he's one of the only ... one of two or three of the only majors, someone to improvise and play the way that he plays and him not studying with someone that does it, you know what I mean?

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Jon Whitaker: I agree that ... And Ben will tell you his last year, all he did was play little horn, and he'd come in and we'd play etudes of stuff, and then he'd improvise for me. And I wouldn't necessarily be able to tell him we need to do this, you need
to play this note over this chord better, whatever. But just based on the guys that I listen to and he knows who those guys are ... I mean, for me, it's Urbie, who's I wouldn't say is the greatest improviser ever, but he's in terms of sound is somebody that people want to emulate all the time. As well as Rosalino and John Allred. Those are my two go to guys.

Jon Whitaker: Is Paul Compton on your list of people you're interviewing?

Austin Seybert: Yes. I'm actually interviewing him this Sunday.

Jon Whitaker: Okay. See, Paul, it would be interesting to know what his students are up to these days because Paul sounds fantastic with the big horn in his hand. But Paul can also really improvise.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. I actually met him two years ago. He came to the first complete trombonist workshop with Jim Pugh, and I was just ... I was honestly just blown away. He has this incredible buttery warm big horn sound and then really can just rip it on the small horn.

Jon Whitaker: He really can. And he can ... I mean, it's been probably 10 years since I've heard him, but he can really improvise. So I would be interested to see if what I'm saying about all this actually holds true. If he's got cats that are ... like more than one guy that's improvising and how he integrates that into his curriculum. I know a couple of his students that have graduated and gone on to Northwestern and some other places that are taking the orchestral path. But it'd be interesting to see how he works it into his ... I'll have to read your paper to find out what he says, but ...

Austin Seybert: Interesting you say that, because I know recently he's had two students, one of them is doing jazz trombone for his master's. And he has another student that's a senior of the school that is a really good improviser, really good player. And the reason why I know is because I came to this trombonist workshop with Jim. All of those players, what I've noticed with them and it holds true for Jim too and even my first teacher, Harry Waters, holds true for his students that I've heard, they all have something in common. And what I've seen was: They're all fantastic trombone players.
Austin Seybert: And this is something ... we can talk about this too sometime a little bit is that what I really absolutely despise as a trombone player is ... I've been in the trombone lessons where I've had a quote unquote jazz trombone lesson and the level of trombone instruction is very low, and you're just learning patterns or licks or stuff like that, and you're not learning the instrument. And that's something that I've really come to pretty much ... well despise. I'd much rather be training a great trombonist that has really open ears and maybe is behind on improvisation than by latter if that makes any sense.

Jon Whitaker: Right. I mean, that's one thing with Sim. I mean, if you go to take a quote unquote jazz lesson or quote unquote trombone lesson with him, I mean, he gets out a piece of paper and starts writing out all these Roy Main exercises that Roy had him do out. If you don't have his book, you ought to get it: The Main Method. There's a lot of really good just fundamental stuff in there and none of it's jazz. It's just exercises, but ...

Austin Seybert: Yeah. Alex ... It's funny because Alex, I'm good friends with him and he ... I interviewed him and he's actually wondering if I ever studied with someone that studied with Roy Main because he said a lot of my curriculum is very similar because he studied with Roy Main. And I was like, "No, I've actually never even ... Actually, up to that point, I'd never even heard of who Roy Main sadly enough.

Jon Whitaker: Yeah. You need to chase that rabbit down that hole then-...

Austin Seybert: I think I do.

Jon Whitaker: ... because there's ... Yeah. You'll be pretty amazed once you start tracing all of names of people that came through Roy Main's studio and studies. It's pretty unbelievable. Sim used to live at Roy's place, and so he would be set up in the room that people had to come through to get to Roy's studio and would play duets with all these cats coming through there getting their lessons. And I can't remember any of the people, but it's definitely people you've heard of. So, anyway. But, yeah, that's something.

Jon Whitaker: But anyway, Sim would take you through your paces fundamentally. Play this way. You go to one of Wycliffe Gordon's clinics and when he's doing a trombone clinic, it's
not a ... Early on, he would come to the Alessi Seminar and teach some clinics, and he would be talking about Allred and Rochuts.

Jon Whitaker: And Jim seems the same way to me. Bordogni's and fundamentals. The difference that I think that people make is that playing Ride of the Valkyries or playing jazz standards or whatever: Good playing is good playing. It's just a different language. And I think that the fear or the unfamiliarity of which either side of that that people ... I mean, I think it's fear that brings that on, you know what I mean?

Austin Seybert: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Jon Whitaker: It's like, "Oh, well, you don't take a jazz lesson." It's fear of playing in that language or speaking that language, rather playing that style. And I wish I knew a way to bridge that gap. And most of my classical guys that I'll say, "Hey, we're going to ... In studio class, we'll have a jazz artist ... Sim comes every couple years, or we'll get somebody in here. Everybody's going to bring the horn out and improvise. You would think that you were asking them to go and get a root canal without any anesthetic. It's like they're just scared to death of it. So yeah, I wish I knew the answer.

Austin Seybert: All right. Cool. This is a great conversation. All right. Fifth question. There's six total. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

Jon Whitaker: Okay. I'm going to pull it up and just look. I skimmed over it. I looked at it a long time ago, and then I ... Let's see, where is it? Here we go. First, I want to commend you on how thorough you are ...

Austin Seybert: Thank you.

Jon Whitaker: ... in this. It's very thorough, and it's probably 10 times more thorough than anything I ever hand out. And I'll tell you why that I haven't personally taken the time to be this thorough, and then you can take it or leave it. But I found early on that it is ... Well, I had a colleague early on that their lesson model and their curriculum was set up based on a checklist. And if you were a freshman and you played this
instrument and you wanted to receive an A in the class, you had to basically just check off everything in the A column. And if you didn’t get up to a certain point, that was a B, that was a C, and that was it. It was all just about coming in and playing ... Which this is not necessarily your curriculum. I'll get to the point in a second, but basically the whole ...

Jon Whitaker: Well, if every person played everything and checked all this stuff off and got an A, by the end of the semester they got it all checked off, they'll be a better player. But there's no room for and/or discussion of pedagogy or changing the individual student. And what I found so early on is that there's no way for me possible to script a curriculum that every student I get is going to fit into. For example, if I get an undergrad that has studied with me two and a half years in high school and they're well ahead of the game or has studied for two or three years and come in, and then I get another undergrad at the same time that comes in and maybe they're a music therapy major or a music theory composition major but play well enough to get in the studio but never had a trombone lesson, it's really hard to fit those two people into the same mold.

Jon Whitaker: And I found that every time that I tried to adhere to you've got to play this, you've got to play this, you've got to play this, and these are the things, it was difficult to do that. So my materials, I don't even know the last time that I had a student look at any of that stuff, you know what I mean?

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Jon Whitaker: I have a course of study documents on our website. We never look at any of that stuff. The curriculum, the way that I have it set up is I take student A ... I very quickly diagnose where they are and then try and get them to point Z. And we might get stuck on step B for a semester and a half. So what I was going to say, was going to ask you, and this is not even just a negative, this is just me, again, like you said, playing devil's advocate, which is one of my favorite things to do because it spurs up conversations.

Jon Whitaker: But what happens in the case with either this tunes list and you get them checked all this off or all the scale stuff or whatever with a student that has an embouchure change or blah, blah, blah, you know what I mean?
Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Jon Whitaker: That gets hung up in part of the step. And have you been using this in your current teaching? How does it seem to be working, I guess is what I was going to ask.

Austin Seybert: Yes. So later in the ... Somewhere in there I make a note about advanced students or students that have embouchure changes or have an injury or a little behind. This is a very straight and narrow, right down the middle interpretation of where I feel like maybe the general student would be. It doesn't describe the students that are behind. It doesn't describe the students that are ahead either. If I have a freshman that comes in, and they audition on the Grondahl and they sound great, so then where I'm going to start them is going to be very different from a student who walks in and is struggling and playing third-line Gs above the bass clef staff.

Jon Whitaker: Andante, allegro, or something like that.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, exactly. So same thing happens where for a jazz trombonist comes in and they're really struggling on playing any type of slow blues at 120. Then I have a freshman come in, audition, and they're playing All the Things You Are and they sound great. So I'm just like, "All right." Well, they might be getting ... They're going to start probably working on getting tunes under their belt, where you meet that freshman that comes in that's really struggling but wants to make it happen, that's when we're going to start working on the fundamentals of the trombone first. And that's when I like to actually really point out is that ...

Austin Seybert: My jazz trombone students, this is funny, because I basically tell them when they come to take lessons from me that I will not and I refuse to teach them improvisation until they can show me ample progress on the instrument, as from a technical ... sound resonance, accuracy, technique, everything. And once they start doing that, then I start showing them ... giving them a little bit of snippets of information: Why don't you do this? I want you to listen to this recording. Let's do this transcription. And until they get really to the point where I feel like that they're on an exponential rise of ... trombone playing is going up, that's
when I start, okay, let's go ahead and do this, and we basically do half and half.

Austin Seybert: For some students, that's a long time. Sometimes it's not. I would say most of my ... I have a former student right now who's going to be a sophomore in college, studying with Jim, and I had him since he was a 7th grader in school. So he's been around me for six years, and I didn't teach him jazz improvisation until he was ... three months before his auditions for college. And I decided I did not feel like he was ready to handle it, and I'm really glad. To be honest, I'm really glad because he's an amazing player now.

Austin Seybert: And so, I think that in general, the lists that I make for the curriculum, they're there for having the plan, but the plan is always ... You go into war with a plan, then you figure out what to do from there. That sort of thing. And so ...

Jon Whitaker: On those lists real quick: I think from the sophomore year on, I think the classical solos, a few of them might be ambitious.

Austin Seybert: Okay.

Jon Whitaker: I mean, and this is purely subjective, and I change my mind every four, five, or six years based on what the talent level is like. But the Sulek and Grondahl in the sophomore year, I think I'd probably put those junior year. Certainly, the Casterede is senior year or grad-student level. The Hindemith the same way. And part of it for me right now is based on collaborators and having the ... A, having people to play with, and, B, with the collaboration that the Sulek takes musically. And again, this is broad strokes. You have a high level kid come in as a freshman and they sort of get it, but you also have your run-of-the-mill B flat whatever, it might take them a little while to get developed, so ...

Jon Whitaker: And again, I know these are just recommendations. They're not any hard, fast, in the sand ... Well, when you're a junior, you have to play this. You have to play that. That was something that stuck out.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. And I was telling someone else, I can't remember offhand, but I just turned 28. And I told them, I have plenty of time to make more mistakes and get even more experience. I think it was Brad. Yeah, Brad Edward. Brad
Edward told me that, "Yeah, I really like this. And this area, I think it's a little ambitious. In my experience ... and then we talk about it. You know what? I think those are the things that ... I'm actually coming to realize because you're saying a lot of very similar things, maybe I'm just looking at it from a very ambitious point of view.

Jon Whitaker: It's typical, I think. I was probably the same. That's a good thing, and I think your future students will benefit from that, and then experience and age will help you cull ... If it is too ... I mean, I look at a lot of this and wonder if I could personally get through it in a 50-minute lesson or 60-minute lesson every week and at the end of the semester, how much they would cover in terms of my student ... But my teaching style is maybe different than what yours is, and I'll explain that in just a second, but you will ...

Jon Whitaker: As you do this more and more and more, you will find the things that, A, work, and, B, that are important to you, and you'll cull everything else out of your curriculum and/or your approach from that. You'll take everything else out of it that is either not working or not necessary or whatever, and hopefully you'll have a big enough studio and a family and an active performance career to where you won't have time to actually update any of these documents. It's like a lot of the people I think that have these thorough documents either, A, don't have a lot of students, or B, did this when they were young and they just haven't had time to change it. That's certainly me.

Jon Whitaker: But my personal approach always is that I want to try to make a difference in every students playing, in every [inaudible 00:45:13] that they come in terms of the way they operate the instrument. And so, I get a little bit stubborn and stuck on fundamental things, like if there's embouchure thing or if there's a breathing thing or if there's a sound thing or if there's a connection or an articulation. I find more and more and more I'm having to tweak peoples' articulation. And so, I get hung up and there may be even with some of my best students, the first 35 minutes of the lesson is monkey see, monkey do until it's correct. Or at least they can repeat it over and over and I see that they get it and then they know what to go and practice.

Jon Whitaker: And I get hung up on that stuff so much to where then ... having then a pretty elaborate ... We got to get all these
scales. We got to get all these etudes. We got to get all this other stuff out. I find that I ... There are a lot of lessons where people will come in and they play a very small fraction of the stuff that they have prepared or practiced that week. And so, I recently just stopped assigning so much. B, practicing a lyrical etude. B, practicing a technical etude. And B, have 85 percent day just surrounding yourself with making a good sound and making a great sound on the note you're on, and then figuring out how to make a great sound on the next note, and then have it ... Figure out how to get from that note to the next note.

Jon Whitaker: It's overly simple, but as you know, it's ... You take the Bb major scale for example. Those are the first notes that we all learn to play, but if you can't make a great sound on every one of them and get from note A to note B with the right connection, what's the point of a lot of other stuff? And that may be oversimplifying it, but I find the more I do this and the more ... and the students that I have that are successful are the ones that just buy into just doing the work fundamentally, and we just run out of time.

Jon Whitaker: And so, it's all about efficiency with their time. It's efficiency time in the 60 minutes, and by the time they get in and we talk about football a few minutes and then giggle about something stupid that was on Facebook and then actually get the horn out, half a lesson's gone. It's like you ... It'd be interesting to read this in 10 years or 15 years and see how much of it sticks. But ...

Austin Seybert: Absolutely.

Jon Whitaker: ... I wouldn't change anything necessarily. I also liked and thought it was pretty ballsy that you put a dress code thing in there. I've always thought about doing that, but it's just the M.O. down here that you wear shorts and a ball cap every day. I mean, there are people walking around town in shorts now and it's probably going to snow here tomorrow for the first time in years. But ...

Austin Seybert: Yeah, you know what? The reason why I did that is because ... My last two years I was teaching at Millikin University, and I wasn't teaching applied lessons. I was teaching only jazz classes. And I finally had the opportunity this year ... I moved basically half an hour
away to a different college over at Bradley, and now I'm teaching low brass applied. I'm teaching music appreciation classes and throwing some jazz things in there, so my load's getting a lot heavier. I just started noticing the boy students would walk into a lesson like they rolled out of bed ...I have one girls walking in with barely any clothes on at a 9:00 o'clock a.m. lesson. I was like, "Guy, girls, this is not appropriate at all."

Jon Whitaker: Right, right.

Austin Seybert: Sometimes students come in smelling like they didn't take a shower, which they didn't. And so finally I was like, I'm done with this. As long as students walk in, they smell good, etc... I'm pretty okay with it, but I pretty much abstain from the fact like, "Guys, we can't be walking in with ... looking like you just woke up. I don't want to smell you." It was a little too much. Maybe that's my ... a little bit of OCD talking right there, which is probably the case. I never really enforced this as an adjunct, but as a full time professor, if I am allowed to do so, I definitely will within reason such as marching band practices, etc, that get in the way.

Jon Whitaker: No, but I don't think so because I think you can tell a lot ... When a prospective student comes and takes lessons from me and it's just ... It's either a prospective student or it's what I call a "one-hit out-of-towner," where somebody just comes in from out-of-town just to take a lesson, which happens a lot. You can tell a lot about their playing by two things: One is by the way they correspond with you, they email. If they address you in ... If they open an email and they just start typing and they don't say, "Dear Professor Whitaker," or Jon or whatever, they just start typing, that's a red flag to me. Or if they don't sign the email. They don't put their name at the end of the email, that's a red flag and you're not in that camp.

Jon Whitaker: If I look back at your emails, if you do this, it's totally fine because we know each other, but I'm talking about a stranger that reaches out to you. That's a red flag to me, the way they just ... Little things about the detail that they take when they correspond. The other thing is when they walk into your studio to take a lesson, how they're dressed and how their materials are. Are they just completely flustered and their horn, their case is half open and the horn's
hanging out and they can't find ... Their Bordogni book's all chewed up and everything. All of that, or do they have their act together? They come in ... They carry their own pack. They got their books. I can tell nine times out of 10 how the next hour's going go based on those two things.

Jon Whitaker: Right now I've got a good crop of those. I've had some in years past that just ... They wear the same old gym shorts and flip flops all the time. It's like, you got to start taking yourself a little more seriously. But anyway, I thought it was pretty cool that you actually put that in there. This day and age, I don't know if ... I mean, universities and all this gender stuff, they may not actually let you put any statements in those documents about how they dress or whatever. But you could certainly ...

Jon Whitaker: All of this curriculum stuff and all this studio whatever, it's all about developing a culture. And you can develop a culture by leading by example and just being and they will ... If you've got good citizens and you've got people that look up to you, they're going to become you. They're going to pick up on all your strengths, and unfortunately they're going to pick up on your weaknesses too. And then the really good ones are going to point them out when you make a mistake, which some of my guys love doing that. But it's all about developing ... It's about developing a culture, and if you develop a healthy culture and everybody is on task in terms of taking care of business, and they correspond professionally, and they're organized in their time management and their calendar and all that stuff, they'll figure out how to play the trombone, because playing the trombone's the easy part.

Jon Whitaker: Being an undistracted member of society is the difficult part. That's hard this day and age. And I think that the students that are the most successful coming out of undergrad schools right now are the ones that don't fall into the social media trap and fall into the ... I'm a hypocrite. Man, I'm on it all the time, but I tell my guys not to be. They don't let all that stuff consume them, and they work hard. And that's ... I think that's what we're up against now as teachers, so ... Anyway, sorry I'm rambling.

Austin Seybert: Oh, it's okay. So we talked a lot about the trombone curriculum. Do you have any thoughts on the way I set up the studio, the studio model?
Jon Whitaker: Let's see. Studio class, no. Let's see, jazz. No. I'm looking through it. I don't think so. I think it looks good. So you have weekly studio class, and what sort of chamber music would you have in there?

Austin Seybert: Well, the way I set it up is that I would basically divide ... It's more work on my part, but I feel like ... Put it this way: I feel like if I'm going to be able to provide an experience to my students, to be able to teach, classical/orchestral pedagogy and jazz/commercial pedagogy, there's no way I can get through that in a lesson. And so, I feel like the only way I could possibly do that is if I created more studio times. And so, I would have a ... The way I broke it down was, I did a three-studio model. I called one general trombone studio, orchestral chamber studio, and then another one jazz improvisation studio. And I required ...

Austin Seybert: So like I said, this is all hypothetical. The curriculum that I have made up because I'm a doctoral student. That's what you're supposed to do when you're doing doctorates or whatever. Everyone's required to go to general trombone studio. Majors, not majors, minors, everyone. Anybody taking applied lessons. Classical performance majors are required to go the orch rep in chamber studio, and then jazz majors will be required to go to the jazz improvisation. And obviously, it's always highly encouraged for everyone to attend as much as they want. Everyone can go to as many or as few as you would like. So music ed majors only have to go to one studio.

Austin Seybert: Someone I interviewed said that maybe it was a little ... asking too much and maybe being part of one studio. My thoughts on that are: If you can't take an extra hour of your day to be part of a trombone quartet or be able to sit there and play Brahms Two in a section and you can't make time to do that, then maybe you shouldn't be a trombone performance major.

Jon Whitaker: Right.

Austin Seybert: Same thing for a jazz trombone major. If you can't make time to do this, maybe you shouldn't be doing this degree. But that's just my thoughts on that. What do you think about that? Do you think that's too much? Do you think it's too little? What are your thoughts?
Jon Whitaker: Well, first of all, I think our students will do eventually once you get the culture set up, they'll do what you ask them to do. And if they don't, things become difficult and they'll either transfer or they will eventually graduate, and it might take you two or three cycles to get things set up. So the way that I have it set up is that we have weekly studio class for an hour and a half, which is longer than anybody meets at one given time in the school. I think a couple people are starting to do that now, but I found that I couldn't get anything done in an hour. By the time we get through 10 or 15 minutes of announcements and, hey, make sure you sign up for this, and can anybody come and cover this gig and this ... I mean, there's always stuff to talk about when we're together, so I moved it to an hour and a half.

Jon Whitaker: We have trombone ensemble two nights a week for an hour and a half, so Tuesday night and Thursday night at 6:00 to 7:30. And then the jazz trombone ensemble's Wednesday night, 6:00 to 7:30, which I've rested. I don't do anymore. I'm going to have to do it again because my other ... The guy that was doing it is graduating, and my current DMA student doesn't. So I'm either going to have to take it over, or it's going to rest for a little bit. But anyhow, it's a lot of time. I'm demanding a lot of time of them, but it's what I personally feel is important, and that's what we do, and that's what they're used to.

Jon Whitaker: Now, we get sometimes creative with the trombone choir times in that I might not meet every time, and/or I might not have trombone choir on Thursday. I might have quartet coachings. or I might have an orchestral section rep coachings. Or I might ... Whatever. I might play with that.

Jon Whitaker: The one thing that I liked about the model that Illinois had when I was there is that every studio in the school had a studio time two days a week in the middle of the day. And every professor could do with that what they pleased. And the short time I was there, we just did trombone choir. I can't remember very many times, if ever, going to a quote unquote studio class or master class. It was basically just ... We just did trombone ensemble. And I liked that model in a way because every student in the school has that time and that's the way it's blocked out. But depending on where you end up teaching and all that, just some schools have that and some schools don't.
So I don't think it's too much. I think you ... What I find though is that the more active the studio gets and the better the students get and all that stuff, I have to be flexible. In this case and point, I had a student tonight email me. I just sent out the spring calendar, and I do all the calendar digitally. It's all on Google, and they're all ... We spend the first studio class getting all their devices synced up with my calendar so they can see it. And then when it's finalized for the next semester, I'll blast them all a text, "Hey, check it out. It's all there. This is possible. Don't miss."

But what that means is: Look at your calendar now. I'm probably getting to you first. What conflicts do you see that might be a possibility? And sure enough, I had a student email me: I've got a grad school audition on this day. I got a grad school audition on this day. I've got a gig on this day. I've got summer music festival live auditions on these days. I've got to miss X, Y, and Z. Is this okay? This is not and going through that, so you have to be flexible. If you demand so much of their time, you got to ... Nothing’s more important than what they're doing with you, in my opinion. And frankly, when you start getting your job and you get set up, the reason that most of those students come to school ... I mean, I think the reason that any trombone player comes to Alabama is because I'm here. And it's not because of me. It's just because they seen the culture that we have. I mean, it could be anybody, but the majority of the students that come to Alabama, if you were to ask them, they're going to come ... They're coming here because of the trombone experience or because they’re football fans. I mean, that's pretty much it.

It is the most important thing and the reason they came, but you got to give them a little bit of room. And so, that's something that I struggle with that I get softer and softer as I get older because the more active the studio gets, the more conflicts are going to be. So do you have any plan to do any trombone ensemble stuff in your-

Austin Seybert: Yes. Yeah.

Jon Whitaker: ... curriculum?
Austin Seybert: Absolutely. Yeah. And just any of my ... Any time I've taught trombone at any level, I've always done a trombone ensemble. In fact, I actually am ... This semester I'm starting up a community trombone ensemble in central Illinois.

Jon Whitaker: Cool.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. I'm actually really looking forward to it. It should be a lot of fun. However, I don't quite have enough students to do a student only ensemble. So I decided to do this community ensemble to get more local players and band directors involved, which has actually been pretty positive fallings, which I'm really excited about.

Jon Whitaker: That's awesome.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. I feel like it's really important, and I assume that really with any ... With me, I'd probably just make it a part of the studio. If you take applied lessons and you're a major, I expect you to be in trombone choir. I think if they're minor or non-major, I wouldn't expect them to do it, but I'd highly encourage it. But yeah, if they're a major and you're taking ... Well, tell you what, if they're taking four credit hours or three credits lesson, they're required to be in trombone choir. That's-

Jon Whitaker: Yeah. That's the way I've done it. I mean, I'd do it. If you are enrolled in any trombone lesson at Alabama, you're in, and so the music minors and the non-majors that take lessons, that's sort of thing. A lot of them ... So when I first came, it was all God's children could play in the trombone choir, and it was great when I first got started because the choir was huge and everybody could play. Got a lot of people involved or whatever. As the studio got better, we had to dumb down a lot of the repertoire. And so, finally ...

Jon Whitaker: It's probably next to last year might be, maybe sophomore year, I drew a line in the sand that only members of the trombone studio could play in the trombone choir. And that then now means that we have a thing in place where if you want to be a music minor or a non-major that wants to take lessons in each capacity, they have to pass an audition. I mean, they have to take an audition just like they're going to be a major because somebody's got to teach them. If they get enrolled in lessons, somebody has to teach them, and
that somebody's usually me. And so, I don't want to be spending half of my week teaching 30-minute lessons to somebody that just wants to play in the band and whatever, so we've changed that. But it's a good way to keep a cap on it.

Jon Whitaker: What I probably should do is have two trombone choirs. I have this studio trombone choir and then all-campus trombone choir with all the marking band kids, anybody else that would want to play in a choir and let the grad students conduct it. That's what I probably should end up doing, but I just haven't. But I think it's important. I think it's drastically important. It's a weird thing, because the only time you really play in a really great trombone choir is when you're in college. You spend a lot of time rehearsing it and training for it, but it's not something that you end up doing. But it's great training for ensemble playing. It's great for you to be able to continue any common threads pedagogically that you had with students and lessons for the week and show them musical applications for it.

Jon Whitaker: And the big thing is getting started in a new school. And the person that you're going to want to ... The people that you're going to want to make the most happy early in your teaching career are the ensemble conductors. I mean, the one thing you can improve when you get a job at any school, I mean, depending on the situation, but any new school, is you can improve the way the trombones sound and the ensembles. Whether it's concert band or jazz band or orchestra, you can improve that. And the quickest way to do it is to run sectionals for them and also do a trombone choir. And it doesn't take long. And if you get the ... Particularly at a small school, if you get the band director and those people on your side, those people usually control the scholarship dollars, and those people usually have as much power as the chair, if not more. Things will happen. It's like, "Oh, man, can we do anything for you?" "Yeah, I could use a thousand dollars to bring John Allred to do a clinic," or Jim Peter or whoever. "Oh, great, no problem." It's just like, boom, and then it's like the sky's the limit.

Jon Whitaker: So I can't stress the whole trombone choir thing enough. And it's a good outreach for the studio. A lot of kids hear our trombone choir, see it in concert or hear it on YouTube or wherever, and they just want to come to play in the trombone choir. So I can't stress it enough.
Austin Seybert: Yeah. Awesome. Thank you. All right. Last question, and this can be as short or as long as you'd like it to be.

Jon Whitaker: Okay.

Austin Seybert: Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added that you feel is missing? Anything you feel is unnecessary and should be removed?

Jon Whitaker: I don't. I mean, the only thing ... The scale list is pretty extensive.

Austin Seybert: It is.

Jon Whitaker: And from a classical standpoint, there's some of these on here that I'm not certain that ... And maybe it's not geared for every student. Maybe it's more of a jazz thing; is that right?

Austin Seybert: Well, it's ... The way I set that up is that the first ... If you look at the first page ... There's two pages, right?

Jon Whitaker: Yep, yep.

Austin Seybert: I would say the first third of those pages, maybe the first half. First half of those pages, I would expect a performance major to get through most of those if they were an undergrad.

Jon Whitaker: Okay.

Austin Seybert: I feel like that's pretty fair. And if they're a classical major and they want nothing to do with jazz improvisation, I really wouldn't get them involved in some of those bebop scales or anything like that because they don't need them.

Jon Whitaker: Okay, yeah.

Austin Seybert: But they definitely need the modes in major. They definitely need all the different minor sounds. They definitely need the symmetrical scales, because they're going to be hearing that ... Since you're playing Berlioz, playing Gershwin or Ravel or anything like that, you're going to hear those sounds. You might as well get used to the way they're ... Getting used to those sonorities. I know
it looks kind of, what's the word, daunting at first, but this is basically what the sheet is and how I ... In my master's, I came up with this sheet, and it's like, well, I'm going to ... This is how I'm going to practice. This is how I'm going to practice my skills. And basically it looks out ... It basically encompasses every single diatonic possibility of an interval within that scale.

Austin Seybert: And so, if you look at ... The thing is that every time I say or major or something like that, it will say vertical, horizontal, then it has third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh and it blocks out the eighth because it's not really that possible. And then, the vertical, way I set that up is that the horizontal's just like scale or flash, and it's just a regular scale. The vertical's actually skipping diatonic thirds. So if you had a C major scale, you would C, E, G, B, and then D, F, A, C on top. And the reason I do that is because ... It's mostly, to be honest, for my jazz players so they can easily see the chord scale relationships and upper extensions.

Austin Seybert: So if you do the diatonic third for a major scale, it's C, E, G, B as a major seventh. And that's so they automatically know that those notes are associated. And then on top of that, you have the nine, 11, 13 natural on top, so D, F, A, C. And that's good for the jazz players and really from the trombone perspective, it's a really ... pretty good exercise. They've got a two octave exercise right there. Students who really struggle with the range thing, I always tell them they can do C, E, G, B, go down to the D and then go back up. They can adjust the pattern to fit their physical needs. But it's just there for mostly from a beginning improvisation standpoint.

Jon Whitaker: Oh, okay. Yeah, I don't think there's anything that needs to be added or taken out. Like I said earlier, I think once you get doing this a lot and you get a studio of your kids and you recruited, it's the culture you got set up, time will tell whether or not you'll be able to get through all of it or not. Or you'll want to try to get through it or not. And I used to have all kinds of scales and arpeggios they had to do ... The Bordogni they had to do it in five ways, and then they had to memorize a shorter thing and be able to play it in three adjacent keys. I mean, I had all this stuff that was super, super important to me, and I was so fired up to get everybody on it, and I got through a fraction of it.
And I recently, in terms of what books I subscribe and exercises that I have people do and what do I really think is important. I got to thinking, well, what my heroes in the here we go again quote unquote classical trombone world, orchestral trombone world, but you would agree with me that all these people are great musicians regardless of the language they speak. What did Joe Alessi do when he was an undergrad? What did Mark Lawrence do? What did Ralph Sauer do? What did people like that ... They didn't have 48 different versions of the same exercise in 12 different books. They had a Bordogni book. They had an Arban book. They had a Marsteller and Schlossberg and Kopprasch and Blazevich. That's about it. I mean, if you really think, and that may be more than any of them practiced out of, but ...

Go back to look at what did these people do? And I'm still trying to figure that out, but having talked to a lot of them, it's not rocket science. And again, in terms of trying to teach someone to operate the instrument, I think that's for me one of our biggest roles is to make sure that they fundamentally can play the instrument, and then hopefully they're going to be inspired and musically curious along the way to take the knowledge and the skill that they've got and they've learned from practicing all this stuff to speak whatever language. If they want to play avant garde solos, great. If they want to play ... If they want to try and go be Urbie Green, well go be Urbie Green. If they want to play in an orchestra, go play in an orchestra.

For me, just structuring the lesson is to try and get the student to that spot, just like ... Do you ever sound like Joe Alessi or Mark Lawrence when you graduate? No. Do you need to be making progress toward that? Yes. And if that's playing scales six octaves in whatever pattern or whatever, great. Or if that's playing long tones until you're blue in the face, great. That's great too. I mean, I think it all looks great. I think it's just a matter of it all settling in and you getting two, three recruiting classes and graduation classes under your belt to see what will stick and what won't.

Yeah. And I think that it'll be ... I know for a fact I'm going to change things. I know-

Yeah, absolutely.
Austin Seybert: ... it's going to happen. This curriculum is based on experience I've had with my teachers and former students. Ways that I have learned personally that only ... necessarily work for me maybe, who knows, and then a combination of inexperience. And so that's why I really ... I did this project because of ... and trying to get ... interviewing people that have done this, that have experienced this, and to get their thoughts on it. And I know that it's a labor of love and that as time goes on that my thoughts will change. I imagine that what will probably end up happening is that what I think is plausible and realistic is ... I need to dumb it down at least another 25 percent, or who knows. But as Alex Iles told me, "I think you should shoot for the stars for a few years, and then ... Shoot for the stars and then bring it back down to earth a little bit whenever you realize what works, what doesn't. So ...

Jon Whitaker: Yeah. I agree. And again, just like we were talking about culture, I think your students will end up doing what you ask them to do. And if have a percentage of your studio coming in and in the element every week and knocking it down, you know it's possible. The bottom half or the bottom third or whatever, those people need to step up to the plate. And if everybody comes in, they're just folding every week, then you've got too much on their plate. And if none of them are making, A, any progress fundamentally, and, B, they're not able to get through a lot of material ... That's what it's been when I've made those changes in my approach in the lessons and curriculum. It's been looking at the studio as a whole. Nobody's really getting through this, I need to back it down a little bit.

Jon Whitaker: But again, I've spend so much time in lessons on fundamentals, that I recently had to stop assigning more than just a technical and a lyrical etude. And I have them pick. It's like go find a lyrical etude and prepare it for next week. Go find a technical etude. We have to define what a technical etude is. Arban's first study is not ... and playing it real fast, that's not technical etude. I'm talking Blazevich or Harder for an upper level performance major, that kind of thing. But prepare a Bordogni and bring it in. It doesn't have to be a hard one. It could be one of the first 20. I guarantee there's stuff we'll need to fix.

Jon Whitaker: Maybe I'm oversimplifying it or putting a little bit rest on their plate, but I'm so demanding on them in terms of the
sound that they make and their connections and getting them started and all that stuff that ... All stuff that's going to either get them through or keep them out of getting out of first ground. And if we can't get past that, then what's the ... We shouldn't really be practicing anything else. So, anyhow.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. Cool. All right. Well, man, this has been great. I really appreciate it
APPENDIX J: Interview with Keith Jackson (edited)

Austin: So how did you learn trombone? What kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Keith: As far as learning, pretty traditional. Started in fifth grade kind of deal. Private lessons probably shortly thereafter, like seventh grade. Actually, all exercises in the school, not much of anything. At least up to, through senior high school. Occasionally played in a couple bands, cover bands, garage bands, things like that. And we would do arrangements, so those things we would try to cop by ear, or learn whole lines by ear. But as far as training, I would say there's nothing until beginning college with your traditional sight singing class.

Keith: I did have a cousin who played in cover bands who was a commercial musician. So learning how to ... Man, again it was kind of informal.

Austin: Gotcha. Okay. Let me move onto the next question then.

Austin: What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Keith: One, I definitely think it's something we need to be bringing to the forefront more. With time, I would say the aural skills in audiation are actually, especially early in the development, more important than the written skills, as far as theory goes. Because you can learn to label ... if written theory is labeling things, if people can recognize, then they can learn to label. But if they learn the label and still don't know what they're actually labeling, it's a long term problem.

Keith: But also as far as developing really versatile comprehensive musicians, if they don't have their whole skills they can't switch styles, plain and simple. So for example, and I know we'll talk about your curriculum later, but to cover all that information without the aural skills, not possible. You can't really get multiple styles of learning in, multiple styles of music making in, without the aural skills because if nothing else they can't pick up nuances that make those styles really happen.
Keith: So I think it actually, should have, notice I said should, have a critical role inside the studio. Every studio, not just trombone. In general, I would say most students lack the skills. Those students who have the skills, normally in my experience have come from non-traditional backgrounds or they actually have a significant jazz, well not jazz so much, improvisation background coming in. So I find that the students are lacking the skills. And when I say non traditional, the kids who do have it, either through coming up as singers or some kind of church background, where part of their background is a non-academic setting.

Keith: Gotcha, okay.

Austin: Alright, cool.

Austin: Do you feel like the typical undergraduate trombonist is equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Keith: I would say they're definitely not. And actually, it's obvious in this conversation when we say "all" we're talking about all the art music, whether it be jazz or classical, and of course all the contemporary styles of pop. So when you say ... explain that's what "all" means, because in the academy sometimes people think "all" means jazz and classical, that's it. But since I don't think most of them are coming out, and I think it's one, that they've not been taught how to listen. And then not been encouraged to actually spend time on applying those listening skills.

Keith: So I would say the number of students that have been told to transcribe anything, or play anything by ear, is very small. And even working with adult students, which I still get to do occasionally, and say, "Okay, play Somewhere Over the Rainbow" or "Play anything. Pick a Beatles tune and ask them to play it by ear", they basically freak out. Even if they're experienced teachers. Especially if they've been teaching instrumental music at the high school level. If they've been teaching elementary it's different. But if they've been teaching highs school instrumental music, they're not comfortable doing things by ear and playing by ear.
Keith: And I think that's the sign of an ongoing problem that's still not been addressed. I don't believe people are learning how to listen and then how to play it on their instruments. Now, having said that, that's obviously the focus of your curriculum. That's not the only thing that's keeping people from being equipped to handle all styles of music. I also don't think there's time in many curriculums for a lot of different styles and there's a lot of fear.

Keith: There's a lot of fear of a lot of these students to use a lot of different ensembles to count. So I'll be specific with that. Some places still have the, you're a trombone player, only concert bands count, and anything else you take, that's fine, but it's not going to count towards your degree.

Austin: In my experience…non-band related ensembles lack scholarship opportunities as well….which probably puts a hamper on students branching out because of that time versus money commitment.

Keith: I'm not surprised. I did not know that when I said that. But I'm not surprised because it's pretty common, especially with scholarship hours applied to the band program. So that's one thing that really hampers the academy addressing issues of versatility.

Keith: Now, if students are in a situation where they're encouraged to do their own projects, that helps a lot. So some of it's audiation skills. Some of it's not listening or getting to apply different styles, so whether it be playing in a cover band or actually playing in a big band that respects, okay, we're playing Ellington's Nutcracker, let's play like the Ellington band. And that's not what's based on what's written on the page. That's based on listening to the Ellington band. The problem is, the East coast and West coast now sound pretty much the same, but they didn't used to. Woody Herman's band from the sixties does not sound like Woody Herman's band from the forties. And the only way you can pick those things up is by actually listening and diving in.

Keith: Same thing happens with classical. If you listen to an Opera orchestra play Wagner it's not the same as a Symphony orchestra plays Wagner, because a Symphony orchestra never has to do it with singers. So I don't think we teach
how to listen to nuance and also, we teach that, and it goes across styles.

Austin: So you're saying that it's really the skill set of being able to listen to the details and nuance that can really transfer from any style. If you do it in one, it's going to be beneficial across all the others.

Keith: Correct.

Austin: Awesome.

Austin: Next question, what is your opinion on the lack of trombone performance educators that are well versed in classical/orchestral, and jazz/commercial pedagogy, and specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?

Keith: I think trombone has done better at this than many instruments. But I still think we have a significant divide where people, and I'll use myself as an example, I've obviously not been in school for quite a while, spend a lot more time learning the repertoire and nuance of the orchestral repertoire than they do learning tunes. And since I think there are very few teachers ... let me rephrase that. The percentage of teachers who are comfortable teaching both is small. And even worse, I think there are some who say they are who really aren't.

Keith: So the lines of, and I'm sure you've heard it "Oh yeah, I'll make sure they understand what all it is to cover the third book in a big band." Well that means you're basically acknowledging they're not going to improvise. And you're still acknowledging ... and I love big bands. You're thinking the big band is the core of the music as opposed to improvisation is the core of the music.

Keith: So I think we have to get over that hump still. I forget, the second part of the question was about, how's that-

Austin: How's that pertain to bebop and the lack of educators in the classic orchestral and jazz commercial pedagogy, and as it's an end, specifically how it pertains to the lack of bebop improvisation and nuance taught at the undergraduate level.
Keith: So I think it does go back to listening again, and knowing history and respecting it because I doubt the majority to teachers, trombone or otherwise, could give you a lineage of any kind and say, "Listen to X, Y, Z leading up to bebop." And then go back to bebop ... I don't think most teachers could give you that lineage of those players. And because they can't do it, it makes it intimidating for the student whose being given patterns but no way to understand how the patterns fit into the improvisations.

Keith: So if somebody can't draw the line from Lester Young to Miles Davis in the sixties, and they can't come up with five to six players to connect them, they can't guide their students. And because they can't guide their students, then they can only address patterns and teaching bebop, which is like not addressing nuance at all. And they're probably not really doing it. You're listening, they're doing digital. So I know people whose bop students ... and I think Aebersold's are fine. I'm not mocking that at all. But based on the scale pattern approach, and yet they don't hear scale patterns. And sometimes they can teach students fairly well that way, but at some point it breaks down and then you realize the students who are being taught don't actually hear the language, they're just replicating. That might be a harsh statement, and I'm not sure if it's very clear.

Austin: I don't think it's harsh at all. It's funny, because I've seen, at the University of Illinois, I work with Jim. And really with him, I didn't even learn much improvisation with him, it was more trombone than anything. But then there's some teachers there that are very much pattern oriented. But then Tito, the jazz trumpet professor at the University of Illinois who I worked with during my time there, is more getting to know sonorities and hearing them up and down vertically. And it's really interested to see that, whereas I feel Jim is definitely more aural than others. It would have been interesting to learn improvisation with him because I never really did.

Keith: Oh really, okay.

Austin: If you ever have a chance to send a student to Jim Pugh, he is an incredible trombone teacher. My Master's, my entire Master's, my Master's was in jazz trombone. And I didn't learn an ounce of improvisation in any lesson for two years.
Keith: Really?

Austin: Not one bit. I think he felt like I did not play at a high enough level to learn improvisation. Where he wanted me to be, as a professional player.

Austin: Funny enough, when I started my Doctorate in classical trombone, that's when he started showing me some things.

Keith: Wow, I did not know that.

Austin: Yeah. He's an incredible trombone teacher, and a very regimented ... And that's really where I really get a lot of my discipline from, is really from him. Because I was really, I don't think undisciplined, I just didn't know what disciplined meant until I went to Jim. What I really needed was someone to sit down with me and be able to transpose in all the clefs. And not that I couldn't play before, but be able to play with a nice, lyrical style with a clear response present sound across the entire horn, not just one register or the next or an equal transfer. And we played through bozza saxophone etude books, we played the Farkas french horn book that he transcribed himself. It was lots of crazy stuff.

Austin: One of these days when I come through we should get some lunch, I should show you some of the things he does. He's very, very detailed. And I think what he taught me was, being as a jazz trombone player at the time, he always taught me that it doesn't matter how well you improvise, trombone is first. And that's something that never really got taught to me until I was there. So now I was on my class, my DMA, I came in with a pretty high skill set on trombone, thanks to Jim, and was able to catch up on the orchestra stuff. I was very much familiar in things in solo lit. And that's where Amanda Stewart was really good for me, and still is.

Keith: Okay yeah. I'd forgotten or missed the fact that you'd studied with her.

Austin: Yeah, it's been going off and on for the last two years, and she's been really good for me, in that regard. Which is kind of a small world, actually.
Austin: So I think this whole idea with me starting this project was trying to figure out a way to balance ... And I was thinking to myself, if I'm a trombone teacher, they're not going to hire me to be a jazz trombone teacher. Nor did I really want them to that's not my goal. My goal is to teach the trombone, and I don't want to be exclusive to one or the other.

Austin: And so it was really an interesting project to get myself involved in, especially doing the interviews and trying to see what people's thoughts were. I don't expect a classical jazz performance major to come in and be able to burn on Donna Lee by the time they get out. But I do expect them to be able to put out a representative sound on a salsa recording if they're going to play in a salsa band. You gotta know how to improvise on harmonic minor, because that's all they want to hear. You gotta be able to play some kind of representative of sound over blues. No jazz guy's ever going to expect a classical dude to walk in there playing Donna Lee at 300 or Giant Steps. I wouldn't, and it'd be ridiculous to do that. But it's not ridiculous to have a B flat or F blues and like, 'Alright, well, have at it.'

Keith: And don't embarrass yourself.

Austin: I think that's kind of the whole idea. I don't want a jazz trombone major to get called for a brass quintet gig, take the gig, and shows up with a .500 bore horn and can't put out a representative sound on an Ewald or something.

Austin: That's the entire idea of what this project's about, with audiation being kind of the center. So anyway, I'm talking a little too much. Let's see.

Austin: Next question. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

Keith: It's funny, when I first skimmed it before I read it, it took me a second to see you do say, "For the three studio classes a week." You do say, "Here's who it's required for. But all are welcome." So when I first skimmed it and I didn't see that, I thought, "Oh man, this is a humongous problem of time for credit hours." But once I saw that, I was like, "Okay, this is in balance." And if I remember correct, I'm going to pull it up in front of me. I think it was three
Austin: The way I broke it down was, all trombonists period, doesn't matter if they're major or non-major, if they're taking applied lessons have to go to general trombone studio. Only trombone performance majors have to go to Orch Rep studio, and only jazz trombone majors have to go to Jazz Improvisation studio. However, it's highly encouraged, if you would like, to participate in as many as you would like.

Keith: So that was thing, when I first read, I thought, "Oh, too much time." I thought, "Oh, I like this." Because it should build, should, build a studio where it's one community, it's not three different communities within a trombone studio. So it should work.

Keith: One thought was that perhaps a certain number of those could be "required". So maybe freshman year, if it's a classical major, maybe their freshman year X number of the jazz ones are required.

Austin: Oh that's interesting, maybe try to drum up some interest.

Keith: So that would encourage them in that, yeah, you encourage as well. One way to encourage is to initially bump them a little harder so there's not that fear. Because I know places where people work well across borders and places they don't, so maybe that encouraging ... especially if it's one teacher doing it all.

Keith: I thought the 12, I think it was for the scale? It must have been tunes. Each one, 12 keys, every semester. I thought that's probably aggressive for the freshmen. So I could even see the freshmen six, sophomores 8, juniors 12, so that way actually they learn how to.

Austin: So you would say to scale it, based on the years, so they doesn't really get overwhelmed.

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Okay.
Keith: Because even as much as I think the audiation is making peace in many curriculums right now, there's the reading aspect that takes time too. And I'm assuming these are probably hour a week lessons?

Austin: Yes.

Keith: So I can see, and you're from Washington, I could see many of our freshmen coming in, if I said, "Okay. You're going to learn Amazing Grace and four other tunes in all 12 keys in this semester, plus your scales." That could take both semesters, just on those. That first semester. Because they don't know how to practice efficiently yet.

Austin: I mean, you know what? You're totally right. That's something that's funny because I think every one has made the note that that was too much for that age. So that's definitely something that I'm definitely going to have to edit.

Keith: Okay, I'm glad I'm not the only one. Because I was going, "Man, I like this." Because to be honest there were some things of it, like your tune list for example, I've already thought, "I've done this off the top of my head but never actually had a here's a sample for four years." Because I don't know if you remember the Tom Irwin book about developing the high range.

Austin: Yeah, I'm familiar with it.

Keith: He has a list of tunes that are good for high range development, so I think it's the same kind of idea. I think we've all gone, "Oh man I need a tune right now to make them play or buzz" and can't think of one. But having a list in front ready to go I think is a great idea.

Keith: What else about the curriculum. I like the fact that you have tunes, excerpts, and band excerpts. So often the band stuff gets ignored, and first the kids will know that coming in. There's a better chance of them knowing. I think you had Holst on there someplace, they might know those melodies, so I think that's a good one to include.

Austin: Yeah, I wanted to make sure I represented American Songbook tunes, nursery rhymes, spirituals, common melodic, orchestral excerpts. And even some band excerpts.
I'm definitely going to play. Like Rolling Thunder is something they're going to play somewhere, a long time, if they want to be a professional trombone player, sometime.

Keith: One thing that confused me, and I don't think it would be a problem in a lesson setting because you could explain it, and it says, "A scale handbook by Gary Keller's required", which I don't actually know. I actually could literally not figure out your grid. I could not figure out what it meant.

Austin: The scale permutation spreadsheet?

Keith: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, so what that is basically evaluating every single intervallic option for every diatonic scale. So the first thing you'll see is at the very top, I think it might say Ionian. So just a major. And then it will say vertical, horizontal first, thirds, fourths, fifths and sevenths.

Keith: Right.

Austin: And then it might be an X out the eighths?

Keith: Right.

Austin: Because it's not possible, and then it repeats itself. So basically I would have a student learning their Ionian scales and all the permutations. So the horizontal, people already know. And it's the scalar fashion, just do re mi fa so la ti.
The vertical, what I call it and why I use it, it's basically skipping diatonic thirds until you repeat the octave. So then C major would be C E G B and then D F A C.

Keith: Oh, that's what that meant! That one was confusing me.

Austin: The reason why I do that one, it's more for my beginning improvisation students and really jazz student is just to show that parent scale core relationships and the first four notes in that diatonic scales shows which chord goes with which.

Austin: And then the one on top, you know the D F A, is the nine eleven thirteen diatonic so you can really show what the extensions are, and then even if you break it down into C E
G B, then the next chord on top, the polychord, is D minor seven.

Austin: That's why I do it that way. And then I do it in thirds, do it in fourths, fifths, sixths and sevenths. And then I have a sheet where I have it all written down for students. Only one permutation starting on C, so people can see what it's supposed to sound like, because some students learn a little better like that. But generally, I want students to do it by ear, figure it out. And that list goes on forever, right? Some really weird scales. But that's something that I would only really expect, I would say, an incredibly intuitive, incredible undergrad or usually a Master's, even Doctoral students.

Keith: Right, plus the fact then they never stop.

Austin: Exactly, just showing that there's always something to find. I even left blank spots. There's always things you can do.

Keith: Alright, thanks. Because that's actually the big thing, I need to ask him actually how this translates. Going back to the trombone curriculum, I actually like the fact that you have different recommended reading throughout, and the fact that some of them are not music based but they relate to the profession.

Austin: Yeah, and those are probably my favorites, honestly. Those are some that I really, I felt like they've helped me as a person and to deal with stuff that you don't expect to deal with.

Keith: Right, yeah. And that also can change, which is good about it. Trying to think if there were any method books I thought were fine, the grading of the solos made sense to me. I don't think I had any other ... I mean the positives I think I've already mentioned. The negatives were things I didn't understand. So I think that was where I was on the curriculum. I'm definitely looking forward to seeing it once you've done the interviews and tweaked it a little more, because it looks like it's actually a easier curriculum as it speaks, as you have it now.

Austin: Yeah, and that's something since I'm new, I haven't 100% instilled it, because I didn't really want to freak people out. I'll do a little more next semester, and if I'm there this
coming fall, then I'll do 100% what I'm trying to do all of it. But this semester I did scale permutation and the tunes list, and that was enough to freak him out a little bit.

Keith: Okay, yeah. Freak him out slowly. I prefer the pace.

Keith: There's one thing I guess I'm not seeing in your curriculum. Any introduction to bass, alto or euphonium? You mention that?

Austin: I did not. I did not mention much of that really at all. I think it's something that I would do individually. I would want a bass trombone player to probably work on tenor, and a tenor player to work on alto.

Austin: That's something that I did not address too much, and I think it's something I'd like to address in the future, and how I would do that. Because I haven't really put a whole lot of thought into doing, because I know how I did it. Just recently, two years ago, I started playing bass really seriously. So the reason I started playing was because Jim's jazz trombone ensembles, we actually won the American Trombone Workshop this year.

Keith: Yeah, I saw that, yeah.

Austin: I'm playing bass in that group, I'm not playing tenor at all. He just kind of threw me in there. He's just like, "Well I need someone to play bass and you're the only one that plays a lot of big horns." So I bought my own bass, and started working on it. And now I feel like I play it fairly well. I don't feel like I play it well enough on the classical side to say I'm a bass trombone player, but a good range and a good sound. I want to get a little more of nuance on my playing on that side. But yeah, I think I want to think a little longer on how I would introduce it. And that's something I could learn as time goes on. I just turned 28, so I have a lot of time to make more mistakes and figure things out.

Austin: But that's definitely something in the future I want to address.

Keith: One thing, I can't believe I hadn't though of this when I was reading your stuff the first time, I would think it would be an important mention because I think adding horns in the
future, if ideation is a basis for their learning, I think adding those second horns would be much easier.

Austin: Oh yeah, you would definitely be right. And it's funny because coming out of my undergrad, the strongest part of my playing had nothing to do with trombone it was just my ears. You know Sean when he was teaching there, I contemplated switching to piano because I was so-

Keith: I didn't know that.

Austin: Oh yeah. I play piano fairly well, I am able to walk and comp and accompany my students during jazz lessons which is a huge help when teaching. I almost switched to jazz piano because I was getting so frustrated with the trombone. But….I'm talking too much again.

Austin: Well man, I really appreciate you helping me out with this.

Keith: Oh no problem.

Austin: I've had mostly positive results, and I think the only thing people were a few were concerned with was just time feasibility.

Keith: Really?

Austin: So it's just really interesting. It was a really interesting conversation. Either most people were thinking that it's great, this is how I would improve it. Or some people were mostly like, well I think there's a really big issues of time, but it's really ambitious, is the kind of general response that I was getting.

Austin: I'm not mad about it or anything. I just thought it was super interesting, that-

Keith: Well, especially that it's talking to those who aren't doing it that thinks it is a time time problem.

Austin: Yeah, time and ambition were the people that were saying it was more of that issue that didn't do it, and the people that did do it, like Tom Brantley and Alex Isles, and they were like, "Hey, I think this is extremely important, and this is why."
Austin: It was really, really quite interesting.

Keith: Yeah that is interesting. I wonder if there's a weakness, and acknowledged weakness. None of us are balanced. We might be like, "Oh, you know, it's problematic because of X at just a fundamental." And the fundamental being audiation. If we all include, not that sings audiation, but every curriculum outside the studio includes some level or aural training. And that means we must think it's important on some level. So why not include on the studio? I know audiation is slightly different but ...

Austin: It's very interesting. I've taken up a lot of your time.

Keith: Oh no problem.
APPENDIX K: Interview with Paul Compton (edited)

Austin Seybert: Alright cool, I'll just start with the questions. How did you learn trombone and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Paul Compton: I learned trombone in the traditional public school system starting in the sixth grade. It was not ideal. We had basically our principal actually at the time in my elementary school. Our principal was a former horn player and he was the beginning band director. We did twice a week for I think it was just 30 minutes. Twice a week after school we did group brass, beginning brass instruction. So he had the entire beginning brass together twice a week, all the wood ones together twice a week. I think percussion might've been on its own, just one day a week or something like that.

Paul Compton: He used a book called I recommend, and more or less for the whole first semester we just played slowly through that book, which is pretty similar. I don't know that it's used much anymore, but it's pretty similar to a lot of the more popular beginning band books. Kind of a mixture of play on melody or play a scale then play a melody, and things like that.

Paul Compton: Then he augmented it a little bit with some scale requirements and things like that. But he was a pretty fine brass player and so I feel like he actually got us all started well, but the amount of attention we were able to get was pretty limited in my situation. And there was really no aural component at that time that I remember.

Paul Compton: Nowadays most of those beginning methods are coming with a CD or play along, something. But at the time there really wasn't any. He didn't really require us to sing much. That was actually kind of a big hole I think, in probably my first three years. There wasn't much of that. My middle school experience was kind of on the weak side and it wasn't really until I got into high school that my first ...

Paul Compton: I took one private lesson in the sixth grade and at the end of the lesson the teacher informed me that he was moving out of town and that he was going to recommend I try someone else. The other person that I tried, I didn't get along with very well. He wanted to change my embouchure and stuff.
So I actually from that first lesson until the ninth grade, I didn't really take any individual lessons.

Paul Compton: But in the ninth grade I got with a teacher that I stayed with for quite a while. He started to talk to me more about listening and a little bit of singing, but I would say that now in hindsight I really feel like that was a pretty neglected part of the early instruction that I had. My ninth grade teacher, when I started to study with him, he had had a student that struggled tremendously with sound, and he felt like he had resolved that issue by having him listen quite a lot.

Paul Compton: That kind of started opening me up to trying to discover recordings and things like that, so that I was getting a little bit more of an influence aurally, but not ... I don't remember a whole lot encouragement for playing by ear. Later I did have one of my high school band directors, when I expressed an interest in improvisation, he said well all I do is I turn on the radio and I try to play along.

Paul Compton: At the time that was actually a kind of confusing instruction to me. I didn't really know how to start. But now that I think on it, I love doing that these days a lot, and I think that that is a very valuable thing. But he kept it kind of simple and he said yeah I just turn on the radio to a Jazz station, popular music, whatever. It doesn't matter. I try to figure out what key it's in and make up my own parts.

Paul Compton: I actually feel like I wish I would've followed up a bit more on that at the time, but that's one of my earlier memories of something a little bit beyond the traditional instruction. Basically I feel like I had a little bit of help because I did take piano lessons for several years before I played the trombone. My piano teacher required us to do aural training. We would take ...

Paul Compton: This was my second piano teacher, so I took from a different person for a couple of years and then I got to a teacher that was pretty connected in the whole system of, I can't remember the exact program but there were different levels and criteria. She had us take an hour lesson every week and then an hour of theory and ear training. We'd spend 30 minutes. The theory was group. There would be a couple, a few students together that were basically at the same level.
Paul Compton: We would take about 30 minutes of music theory instruction and then we would go individually into another room with headphones and do a lot of dictation and intervals and things like that. So I was exposed to that a bit at a fairly early age. I felt like she did a really, really great job with it. But I never had much of that connected to the trombone until much later.

Austin Seybert: Do you feel like that maybe that early aural skills subconsciously was able to be connected to your trombone at least at one point?

Paul Compton: Yeah definitely. I definitely feel like my ability to define the pitches on the instrument and walk in went much more easily than most of the kids in the situation I was in. We actually, in my sixth grade band program ... I don't know if anyone, I think I may be the only one that really pursued music beyond that. Retention wasn't particularly good from sixth to seventh. I think it was mostly because a lot of the students never quite connected to the instrument very well in that first year. I felt like I was able to connect a bit more because of my piano training and the ear training and music theory that went along with that.

Paul Compton: I wish in hindsight too that when I was doing that early on that I would've understood it even more and followed up on it even more individually. But I didn't particularly enjoy studying the piano. My mom, it kind of had been my mom's lifelong dream to have one of her kids play the piano because she had always wanted to play. So my very first couple of years of training, she also studied as an adult beginner.

Paul Compton: It never quite ... She was always wanting me to practice and stuff, and I never really had the interest in practicing the piano very much. But almost, almost from the start when I got on the trombone I was much more excited about practicing and playing and discovering new things and studying. Especially once I got to the ninth grade. I really got excited about playing and practicing, and I wanted to play and practice as much as possible.

Paul Compton: But I do think that all of that early ... I think I probably studied for I want to say it was about four or five years before I played the trombone, and then there were I want to
say maybe two or three years more that overlapped when I was studying piano and trombone. Then by the time I got to high school I was focusing entirely on trombone. I also wish that I could go back because I was with a really great teacher. I wish I would’ve continued my piano study all the way through high school. I think I stopped right before ninth grade and when I started focusing pretty much entirely on the trombone.

Austin Seybert: Alright, great. Next question. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Paul Compton: I think it’s extremely important and I do think that most students coming in are, that is a weakness for them. I also think that it’s a little tricky. It’s a little tricky by then to get them on the right path toward doing that better. But I think it’s an important, because I really feel like the act of actually playing the trombone, moving the slide, making a sound on the instrument, is a fairly simple idea. Especially putting air into the instrument, if you whittle it down to all you’re doing is blowing through a piece of tubing.

Paul Compton: Playing, actually manipulating the instrument itself is a fairly simple concept, if you have everything right in your head and in your ears. So I think that so much of the early instruction kind of circumnavigates that a little bit, so there’s a lot more muscle memory oriented teaching and playing that takes place. I feel very strongly that that was my own case as well, maybe not as extreme as some. But I feel like a lot of my early practice habits, even though I was pretty diligent about practicing, I feel like a lot of my early practice habits were too oriented around muscle memory and just having the horn on the face all the time, and a lot of repetition. Just playing.

Paul Compton: I was very focused and dedicated, so if I was preparing for all state auditions and things like that, I would get that music learned. I feel like I played it fairly musically, but I feel like my path would’ve been much better if I would’ve been developing the aural side of things and audiating more often, singing more often, developing the ears further, and having my concept far more in place before I even play a note.
Paul Compton: As a teacher, I've done some experimentation with students where before I allow them to play a note of a solo, I have them sight singing it, playing some at the piano, analyzing the intervals, listening to recording, and developing a very clear concept before they play a note of it. I feel like that has been pretty successful at times.

Paul Compton: The same thing sort of similar in terms of memorization, because I have my students do a lot of memorization. Often I feel like students approach memorization as a separate idea from learning a piece, and I try to encourage that memorization is basically the result of learning something correctly. On many different levels, you learn it right and then you've got it. You've got it memorized. That's something I think that in the Jazz world is more successfully done pedagogically, and a little less so I think in the classical. Average classical training.

Paul Compton: But I do think that it's extremely important and I do think that it's typically, some students come in and they have some natural gifts. Perfect pitch or something. They come in and they're a slightly different story, but I'd say the average student that doesn't have any serious natural gifts struggle tremendously with connecting their mind and their ears to the instrument, to the music.

Austin Seybert: It's interesting that you say that. When I went to my undergrad, I could easily tell you that my biggest strength as a musician was not the trombone. It was easily my ears. That was if not ... Really, quite honestly it really wasn't that close. It's not because I was a bad trombone player, I was just ... My background going in from pre-undergrad was I took AP music theory when I was a freshman in high school, and so I took pretty fairly advanced theory for a freshman. Then I took those concepts and then I was trained writing and transcribing, maybe not Jazz charts but listening to rock bands and orchestras or things. Some kind of video game soundtrack or something. Something along those lines. And writing it down. Trying to figure it out. I'm arranging it for groups that I was playing in, you know? I was singing in a group, playing piano, and not really getting much involved in trombone.

Austin Seybert: I know for a fact that that was very influential on how I was able to, once I got my trombone playing really caught up, it was a really big exponential curve because I didn't really
have to work on catching my ears up to my playing. I felt like the really hard part, the ear part was already there. I think it's interesting that some of the things that you're saying about getting their students to plug it on piano or singing their part. I've done that as well, and actually in part of my curriculum I kind of mention that a little bit. I guess we'll talk about that later, but making sure that no matter if you're a Jazz player or classical player, I think transcription is very important in the process.

Paul Compton: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Austin Seybert: Alright well I'll just go ahead and move on. Do you feel that the typical undergraduate trombone is as equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Paul Compton: I think that varies quite a bit. I think that my goal as a teacher is that I want my students to be as versatile as possible. The type of student that I attract typically is interested and experienced in a variety of styles, but I would say that the average undergraduate trombone curriculum is weighed fairly heavily more on the classical side. Not that that training doesn't provide the skills that sort of apply to everything, but I would say it's common for it to be a little bit more centered around more classically oriented etudes, technical studies, and solos.

Paul Compton: Then in some of the more specialized institutions, the larger schools of music and the conservatories, they often try to keep the path of study pretty independent and exclusive, and require students to choose a direction, either classical or Jazz. But I personally feel like I try to guide my students to study everything, and with only a few exceptions.

Paul Compton: I'd say all my students over the years since I've been teaching at the college level have played in all style of ensemble and have at least done some focused work on improvisation. Whether or not they were planning to make Jazz a major part of their future or not. Definitely they've explored improvisation at least on an introductory level and certainly listened quite a bit. I try to encourage my students to listen as much as possible.

Paul Compton: Earlier this year I actually brought into a studio class I think it was 12 recordings, and I did a little test. A little
drop the needle kind of blindfold test. I had 12 different trombone players. Tenor trombone and bass trombone, classical and Jazz players playing today, and some players that are from the past that are no longer with us. A pretty wide range of things.

Paul Compton: I played them for my whole studio and asked them to see if they could identify who the players were.

Austin Seybert: Wow.

Paul Compton: Many of them actually struggled quite a bit with it. I figured that some would be kind of obvious and some would be difficult to identify. There were a few that got more than half, but there were several that only got one or two. So I put all those recordings, and it was like Carl Fontana, J.J., Christian Lindberg, Joe Alessi. You know, mostly fairly well known. Some of the bigger names in our world. And a couple of slightly more lesser known, like I can't remember if I put a Steve Davis. I know I had Michael Dease in there, I think.

Paul Compton: Then we talked about that a little bit and I put all of those in the drop box, and I said I want you to listen to these a bunch, and we're going to go back at the beginning of next semester and listen again to the same players. Same players, different recordings, and see if your ears have ... Your ability to recognize vocabulary and style and nuance and inflection and sound and timbre. See if you identify them more. And I encourage you to listen to these recordings and other recordings more, and I gave them a long list of names.

Paul Compton: In the syllabus that I pass out, usually I started about five years ago putting something in the lesson syllabus that is just titled things all trombone players should know. There's a really long list of important teachers, important performers, classical and Jazz, ensembles, books, textbooks, technique books, etude books. A lot of stuff.

Paul Compton: It's not completely what I would consider to be complete or comprehensive, but a pretty good start for sure.

Austin Seybert: Yeah.
Paul Compton: I pass that out because these days it's another thing that I share with my students is when I was younger and I was in high school late eighties, early nineties, at that time this is completely pre ... It was right before personal computers and the internet and access increasing. Long before YouTube and Facebook and all of these things, iTunes.

Paul Compton: When I was trying to figure out just who players were, just finding names, let alone finding recordings, I had a teacher that he had a ... I don't know if you've ever seen, I don't know if they still have it, but years ago there used to be a magazine called Cadence magazine. It was a record industry, Jazz record industry publication that came out. I can't remember if it was monthly or quarterly but he had one sitting around.

Paul Compton: Basically it was a review and a listing of personnel for all the latest Jazz releases. I took that thing and I went through, and every time I saw a trombone I highlighted it. A trombone player listed, I highlighted. Sometimes they were the leaders, most of the time they were side men and stuff. I highlighted them, and we had a local NPR station in El Paso where I grew up. They had a Jazz show in the morning from 9 to noon, and at night from 10:30 to midnight or something.

Paul Compton: Every time I found a name, I'd call. They would take requests. So I found a name, like Conrad Herwig, the first time I found Conrad's name I called up. I was like can you play something by Conrad Herwig? And they said okay we'll take a look. Then they'd come on and say yeah by special request this is Conrad Herwig, and I'd hit record on my little stereo system and record it and then listen to that. I'd call my friends and have them do the same.

Paul Compton: Then I would start to have things to listen to and I'd also start to have names, so every time I went to a record store I'd hunt and search and try to find stuff. Nowadays it's really easy to access all of that.

Austin Seybert: That's killin. Yeah.

Paul Compton: But there's so much out there that sometimes I think students have a hard time figuring out where to start. Sometimes they still don't really know the names of the people that are out there doing it unless they're helped
along a little bit, so I try to help that along a little bit. Then sometimes the attention span of listening to the same thing many times doesn't really happen, and I feel like that repetitive listening to really great things is super important.

Paul Compton: My friend Stockton Helbing is a great drummer, talks about when he was going through and working things out, that he'd listen to the same album 100 times. Pretty frequently as he was really trying to absorb it and figure out what was going on and what people were doing. So I've been trying to encourage that a lot. I share some of my things. As in my early days I also had a few teachers that shared some things with me, and now I own thousands of trombone CDs. I've got a lot of them. So I try to share and get students.

Paul Compton: We didn't do it last summer but typically when we do May madness for two or three weeks in the summer, we listen a lot together and I try to introduce them to good recordings and new names that they aren't familiar with every single day, and hopefully get them to follow up and listen more.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. This is beautiful listening to some of this. What I'm hearing is listen, listen, record. These words that I find so dear to my heart, because that's something that I ... It's funny that you say that, because I can still remember times when I think I was a sophomore in college, in the summer I would listen to the Grondahl, and I sat there and I listened to that thing for at least 100 times. I think I had a recording of Joe Alessi doing it, I had a recording of Christian Lindberg doing it. I don't think ... I think it might've been just those two actually. I would just keep on over and over between the two listening and back and forth, because I wanted to play that piece so bad.

Paul Compton: Yeah I think that that's ... I started to notice that, because I did the same thing. When I was looking for classical trombone recordings when I was a sophomore in high school, there wasn't much. Chris Lindberg had kind of just gotten started doing recording. I think maybe he had a couple of his first albums out. I took a lesson from John Kitzman, and he gave me his album. It had the Creston and the Hindemith. And the two danses, Defaye's two danses.

Paul Compton: I had actual LP because I was also right there on the transition from LP to cassette and CD and all that. He gave me that LP and I listened to that thing constantly. I actually
played the Creston in high school, and I think that the only way I was able to learn it is I had absorbed it so much from listening to it so much. I don't even know, when I started that piece if I could read tenor clef.

Paul Compton: My early performances, that was mostly what I remembered from listening to it. I think it was a really important part of my early, definitely an important part of getting excited about playing the trombone. But definitely an early influence on developing my sound and range, and at the time I didn't even realize that this is a pretty difficult piece of music. I just liked it so much that I wanted to play it so badly. So I started playing in the upper register a lot and developing the upper register fairly early.

Paul Compton: I could squeal out high notes pretty much from the start, from sixth grade already. But as far as any kind of control, I think when I started playing the two danses and the Creston, that was really important early development for me for feeling confident in the upper register and trying to play it by having a clear sound in my head for what I was trying to do.

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Paul Compton: I think I avoided playing with tension in the upper register because of a lot of those early things. But I definitely think these days, that was another thing too that I remember at north Texas, where there were a lot of versatile players but there were also a lot of players that were ... This is something I never did. A lot of people would label themselves, well I'm a principal trombone player or I'm a second trombone player, I'm an orchestral trombone player, I'm a Jazz trombone player.

Paul Compton: I never wanted to differentiate. I always wanted to play the trombone in any situation. When I was at UNT there were other people like that, but there were also some that were really, really focused completely on orchestral or completely on Jazz. I noticed that when the Jazz players had to learn a classical solo for studio class, I was always really, really knocked out by how the best ones would wind up sounding on it.

Paul Compton: My friend Mike Lukey is an example. I was practicing constantly, and he wouldn't. He would listen constantly.
When I heard him play, his end product was really, really tremendous. He would listen a lot, he would study the score. He would never touch a piece unless he had the piano part already and had studied it and played some of the piano part, and sang it, and listened to recordings. The end product was a much, much better end product than the average classical player that kind of just hammered away at it for hours and hours and hours without developing a more clear concept of what they were trying to do. So I learned a lot from observing that and being a little bit, having one foot on both sides.

Paul Compton: I think the listening aspect is something that isn't emphasized enough.

Austin Seybert: Awesome, beautiful. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are well versed in classical, orchestral, and Jazz commercial pedagogy?

Paul Compton: I think it's changing a little bit, I think. Maybe it should be changing more, but I feel like there are more players and teachers out there now that are versatile. It's still a smaller number I think than it should be, but I feel like often, speaking of college teachers specifically, it's been my experience now that I've been on the search committee aspect of... Because for a few years, many years ago I was on the applicant hunt and submitting from that perspective.

Paul Compton: Now being in my 15th year, 14th year at OSU, 15th year of full time college teaching, I've been on a lot of search committees to hire people now. A lot of people on the faculty are 100 percent interested in hiring the best classical person. Some of them treat it very much like it's an orchestral audition and they're looking specifically for the absolute best classical player that they can find. I think sometimes missing out a little bit on versatility, finding applicants that are versatile, then it winds up kind of creating an atmosphere that is a little bit more one dimensional in the teach aspect, too.

Paul Compton: But I think it's changing a little bit. I think that it should be, because I think that at least in my opinion training exclusively to play the symphonic repertoire in an orchestra that's existed for several hundred years is not the way to advance. That's always a wonderful component of the music world and a wonderful thing that I like to do also,
but I feel like we need to be creating new things, new music, new performing opportunities, more chamber music, more variety, more originality to keep an audience.

Paul Compton: It's my feeling that college professors should be encouraging versatility and I think like in our situation, I spend time and lesson working on improvisation and encouraging students to listen to great Jazz players. I also encourage them to take lessons from our Jazz instructor. We're now in our second year of having a full time Jazz person. We're kind of late to the game on all of that, but we've hired someone that's specifically here to teach improvisation and direct Jazz bands and combos. He's a saxophone player.

Paul Compton: I have several of my students actually taking improvisations, improvisation lessons from him now to get another perspective and something where they have a little bit more time to work very specifically on improvisation. We do a Jazz trombone ensemble thing, that I try to get them as versatile as possible so that any phone call that comes along, for any job they can say yes I can do that. They've listened to the tradition and they can play ensemble, they can play section, they can play lead, they can improvise. I encourage them to do summer things.

Paul Compton: So I think that in this day and age if teachers don't encourage their students to try to be versatile, that they're putting them at a real disadvantage. I have had some friends that had complete tunnel vision and they're playing in orchestras or they're playing in military Jazz bands, and so there is an aspect of that single focus that can propel you into a job maybe a little more easily than versatility can, but I think that there's enough pops related music that orchestral players should have versatility.

Paul Compton: I think some of them think well, if I kind of learn how to swing a little bit then I can get by, but they haven't listened to the tradition. I think it becomes really, really clear to anyone listening if someone has actually spent time listening to the tradition or not. But personally I think it's a really important thing.

Paul Compton: Because ever since I got started getting really serious about the instrument, I wanted to play any style, play anything, do anything. I've loved Jazz trombone, listening to the great
Jazz trombone players just as much as listening to the great classical trombone players. I love it all. I try to pass that on to my students as well and try to get them interested in playing in all situations, and not just at a very introductory level but trying to pursue it at an advanced level.

Austin Seybert: Alright, cool. This is the second to last question. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

Paul Compton: I like it a lot actually, and I've done a fair number of these dissertation projects over the years. I actually really, really like what you've presented. I actually have learned some things and there's some things that I want to incorporate into my playing and teaching based on just reading over this a couple of times now.

Paul Compton: It's very well organized and the materials listed are great. The inclusion of recommended recordings I think is really fantastic. That's something I fairly often don't see. Like I said, just giving them names of albums and names of players points them in the right direction. If they start to listen to these recommended recordings then I think that'll lead them to many additional recordings. That was my experience.

Paul Compton: I think incorporating tunes and having them learn in the multiple keys is excellent. I think having a basic structure plan is great. I found that when I try to keep things somewhat graded or somewhat on a plan, I often find that I have to kind of be flexible, and things kind of move in slightly different directions than I expect sometimes. But I think it's really great to have a plan and a structure as a starting point for sure. Sometimes things will evolve more quickly or less quickly.

Paul Compton: In my experience, I encourage my students to enter as many competitions as possible for a number of different reasons. Sometimes that dictates the repertoire that we study. I try to do that so that they're always having short term goals, because I've run into a lot of students over the years who they decide okay well I want to play in an orchestra. They get into college and they finish a degree in performance, and they were really just looking at that long term goal. Like okay well I want to get a job so I'm just
going to go through college and be a performance major, finish all the requirements here, play in all the ensembles here.

Paul Compton: Then they get done and it's time to start auditioning, and they either don't know where to start or they're intimidated by it or they're very nervous about it. So I try to get my students auditioning for various things right off the bat. Sometimes the competitions and the requirements for the competitions dictate a little bit of the study, of what I wind up doing.

Paul Compton: But everything that you have listed there I think is very sound, very well structured, and I think would help your students succeed very, very well.

Austin Seybert: Alright cool. If I can kind of elaborate on this just a little bit, what is your opinion on ... I'm sorry, I'm losing my track of thought. Sorry. What is your opinion on the part of the syllabus I write about classical majors and Jazz majors attending different studios. Do you feel that that's asking too much of a student's time? Or too little? For instance I have three different studios in the curriculum. A general trombone studio for all majors, minors, A orchestral and chamber rep studio and that's for all performance majors, and then Jazz improvisation studio for all Jazz majors. Although it would be highly encouraged for everyone to attend whatever they would like to, of course.

Austin Seybert: For all the performance majors, do you think that asking them to really take another hour out of their day to specifically hone in something that pertains to their degree, is that asking too much? Or do you feel like it's just about right?

Paul Compton: I personally, my feeling is that demanding a lot of their time but providing them a whole lot of value for that time, I think is a great thing. I personally, sometimes my students come in and they're like oh man, you're really asking a lot of us. I'm like well, but you want to succeed in this business, you want to have a job in this business, you want to be able to follow your specific dream. You've got to put in a lot of time. I think it's good. I think it's a good thing, a valuable thing.
Paul Compton: My particular situation, I do a daily routine five days a week, and I encourage all my students to go to that. So they're playing fundamentals, and as an incentive to get up and play them together and support each other. I do that five days a week. We have trombone choir with everyone once a week. We have octet twice a week. We have Jazz trombone ensemble. We do studio class. Everybody gets a lesson. Performance majors get an hour and a half.

Paul Compton: I wind up ... And our studio class is primarily opportunities for students to get up and play. Play for each other, slash sometimes guest artists, sometimes lectures, things like that. Through the course of all of that, it keeps them very busy but they're also making much, much quicker progress. I personally feel like it's a good thing. Sometimes they have to be convinced a little bit that it is a good thing. Sometimes they think well, I only need to be in the things that I'm enrolled in. I only have to be at my one lesson a week and I only have to be at my classes and ensembles.

Paul Compton: But I personally think that it's a really strong positive and a really valuable thing for them, and that it'll benefit them greatly to do that. I think it's a good thing. I have no issue with it. Once in a while, you never know, once in a while a student will push back on time commitment. But for the most part, my personal experience for the most part has been pretty good even if occasionally it takes a little bit more convincing for a student or two. But usually, if the culture kind of gets established, then everybody's on board and they're eager to learn, and they're willing to commit, and they're willing to benefit from the things that the professor is making available to them.

Austin Seybert: Awesome. Okay, alright. This is the last question. Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added that you feel is missing? Anything you feel is unnecessary or should be removed?

Paul Compton: I don't think so. I don't think there's much missing. I really feel like there's much more here very, very well presented and very well planned than most teachers that I've seen. On one hand, a teacher might say well I don't get that specific because every student's a little different and I don't get that specific because things will sort of evolve as they need to, but I personally feel like what you have presented here is a very good model for anyone trying to teach the trombone at
the collegiate level, and especially anyone that wants to really, truly as you say in the modern trombonist, the kind of skills and the kind of knowledge that people should have these days, to be versatile and to stand out and to work, and to get noticed in auditions and the application process.

Paul Compton: I think what you have here is very, very comprehensive, very, very thoughtful. Everything makes great sense. I don't see any need to ... Certainly no need to remove anything. I think what you have here makes great sense and covers pretty much all the bases. Definitely I don't ... Just after reviewing it a couple of times, I don't see anything necessarily either that's missing.

Paul Compton: Things are always evolving. There's always new material is being written and like I said solos that might come up. If a student's interested in auditioning for something or competing in something. Some things that might pop up that we haven't included here. But I think it's a really, really well organized plan.

Austin Seybert: Awesome. Well man, thanks so much for doing this. This has been really, really, really, very helpful.

Paul Compton: Yeah, no problem.
APPENDIX L: Interview with Tom Brantley (edited)

Austin Seybert: Cool. All right. Well, thank you so much, and I'll just go ahead and get started. All right. Question number one, how did you learn trombone and what kind of oral exercises did you participate in as a student?

Tom Brantley: Well, my learning was both formal and informal because I grew up in a musical household, both parents being band directors and they were actually in college very young, so I went to music classes with them and grew up in a band room. My first instruments were drums and a bugle. I don't know if serious is the word for it, but I was listening to everything from Maynard Ferguson recordings, Chuck Mangione recordings, things like that from the 70s, and Buddy Rich on drums. So, I was imitating those trumpet players, and sounds, and melodies, and improvisations on a bugle, and then eventually a cornet, and then was just playing drums on anything I could find. My parents were dragging me to band camps and also drum and bugle corps.

Tom Brantley: Up until the age of 10, that's what I did, and I was arguably, I mean, I could hang with any in the high schools that we would visit, and was, like I said, Billy Cobham by the time I got a little bit older were drummers that I was into.

Tom Brantley: Rhythmically and melodically, my ear was very strong. By the time I got to 5th grade, which was when I started playing the trombone in 5th grade band, and that became a bit more formal. Oh, and I was playing piano some too with some lessons here and there, sort of, kind of. It was just music, I got the bug, it feels like the age of two or three. I did that over everything and anything else.

Tom Brantley: When I got to trombone, I was actually socially shy and quiet, and I really didn't want to do trombone, but the band director chose it for me in the beginning, the band director, because she knew that I already knew how to play the other instruments that I wanted to play, which was either drums or trumpet. She said, "No, no. You already know how to do it." My dad played trombone and so did my uncle, and so did my grandfather. So she said, "Why don't you do that?" And I was like, "Yeah, okay, whatever."

Tom Brantley: I started out, also my dad's Conn 88H, which was obviously a big horn for a 10-year-old, but it was a really
strong band program, great band director. I look back on that and just go, "My God, I was lucky." But things came very easy for me with the exception of tone and sound initially on the trombone of course, which took a while. But I had my dad yelling at me to do nothing but long tones, and lip slurs, and Arban's book and all of that sort of thing.

Tom Brantley:
And then in 6th grade I started studying with actually a former Matty Shiner student, and he was also a university professor, Bob Schmaltz, and just a fantastic teacher. And he was a jazz player and a classical player, and although he worked primarily on classical style with me and fundamentals, the jazz was always kind of there, and he knew for me, I was already into jazz because of all the big band stuff I was hearing with trumpet and drums. And so I fell in love with Watrous, and Urbie Green, and Carl Fontana, and all of those guys, and a lot of blues as well because I grew up in south Louisiana, and a lot of live music, and a lot of Cajun music. So I was sitting in with everything from Cajun bands to blues bands, R&B, soul, and then also was playing gigs in Catholic churches.

Tom Brantley:
So I was playing those jobs with my teacher, Gabrieli and things like this. So, it was a nice combination of a lot of styles that I was grabbing onto. And every Sunday I was playing with a jazz combo, having to try to learn how to improvise and learn tunes at a very young age too, but all of this was by ear and with other than my trombone teacher working on scales and melodious etudes and things like that. I wasn't really interested in music theory or anything like that, even my scales. He taught me the cycle of fifths, for instance, but I learned it all by year, and learned it in a melodic kind of fashion. So right off the bat, he was cracking the whip on making sure my technique was good and clean and articulation was clear and all of that. Sound got there because I was spending an hour or so just on a long tones, and lips slurs, and tonguing every single day.

Tom Brantley:
While there was, like I said, formality there, my everything was by ear, and everything was pretty melodic and rhythmic because of, I guess, my drum background. So I was very initially into making sure it grooved no matter what it was I was playing. And of course, I had a metronome. I don't think I was using a tuner back then or anything, they didn't have much of that at least where I
was. But like I said, it was a nice combination of things. That was pretty much it.

Tom Brantley: I guess later on, I don't know how far you want me to go, but late in my high school career, I got into a good high school program my junior and senior year. Went to Interlochen between junior and senior year, and to prepare for that, my teacher didn't really work with on orchestral excerpts with me, but he did kind of, if I remember correctly, tell me, "Hey, you need to maybe look at this stuff." So I didn't know tenor clef or anything like that and my reading was abysmal because of the ear point. So I learned, I remember Valkyries, Bolero, Lohengrin, Tuba Mirum, La Gazza Ladra, all by ear off the record.

Austin Seybert: Beautiful.

Tom Brantley: Just like I was learning ... Yeah. So, I didn't think about it being difficult back then, and I even won an audition my freshman year in college with the Mississippi Symphony. I went to the southern Miss having learned the excerpts on the list by ear. I remember they had ... I was a 45-minute audition because I had learned Bolero just slightly wrong on one rhythm, I can't remember what rhythm it was, but I was told afterwards, I played it ... I think the guys said 16 times without shipping a note, and he asked me how I did that, and I was like, "I don't know. I was just trying to get the damn rhythm right." So they threw music in front of me for that audition because I didn't have any, and I could read just enough to see where I was off on Bolero and they ended up offering me the job. I mean, it wasn't much of a job. It was at the time, a part-time gig playing principle trombone. But it was really the beginning of, "Oh, okay. I got to learn how to read."

Tom Brantley: And my teacher, Marta Hofacre really drove that in, but she tried to stay out of my way, as she put it, because there were so many musical things that were already going well, she just kicked my butt with saying, "Hey, you got to learn how to read."

Tom Brantley: So that's when I got into the bitsch etude books, stuff like that, French etudes and just read as much as I could every day to get my sight reading and reading and to catch up. Hopefully that answers your question.
Austin Seybert: Yeah, that's a great, that's actually superbly interesting to me. Cool. I'll move on to the next question. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio? Do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Tom Brantley: Yeah, well, most of the time for your average student, they lack, because in my opinion, it's not used enough. I mean, it's gotten a little bit better over the recent years with smart music, even though that's not one of my favorite tools, at least it gets them listening maybe a little more than your average student did 10, 20 years ago. But otherwise, it needs to be done a lot more at a much younger age. I mean, I just described my upbringing at a young age and it was a huge advantage for me. So unless I get a star student who is already kind of hip to that and already playing with drums and doing things like that, it's pulling teeth, trying to get him to get their intonation going, even much less, learning how to play by ear, learning how to phrase.

Tom Brantley: It's rare that I get a student that comes in that was like me, meaning that they have trouble reading. It's usually both. They have trouble reading and they can't hear all that well a lot of times. I'm sad to say. So yeah, it's not done nearly enough. They just need to have more listening going on. Not enough band directors are doing that in their band rooms, some are, my band director did luckily, always had music going. And so I tell all of my music majors, you've got to do that when you get your kids, you constantly have music going all styles in the band room so that they're hearing it. So yeah.

Austin Seybert: All right. Cool. Do you feel that the typical undergraduate trombonist is equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Tom Brantley: Well, when you say typical, I'm assuming you mean just, again, kind of what I run into when I go around and do masterclasses at various universities and run into either students who are upperclassmen. Yeah.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, just like average ... Yeah, exactly. I would say average to above average students that are looking to become a professional either trombonist or musician or a teacher, educator, etc.
Tom Brantley: Yeah. Again, in my opinion it's a little bit scary. For one thing, they're so focused, perhaps, on orchestral playing that even with that, they haven't studied that music enough much less the different styles that they need to make a living in the 21st century in an orchestra much less if they don't win an orchestra job.

Tom Brantley: I mean, in my opinion, it's a real serious problem in the world, certainly in Europe and the States, if not worldwide, but more so in the States, I would argue than my limited experience in Europe. I think we're very stubborn here in the American brass world with how we're training our students, brass players especially. It's not a knock on our current superstars because obviously they ... I don't think we have a problem in teaching them how to play the trombone, meaning they can play the trombone, it's the level is higher than I would've ever imagined in my lifetime, my short lifetime. But in terms of style, oh, in my opinion, we're woefully behind singers, and string players, and even woodwind players. I think the brass players, we're doing ourselves a huge disservice by not exposing them to more styles, making them less and more and be better musicians rather than just technicians. So I think that's a real serious problem overall.

Austin Seybert: And I 100% agree, which is actually part of the reason why this project really started. All right, I'll move on to the next question.

Tom Brantley: Cool.

Austin Seybert: What is your opinion on the lack of trombone performers and educators that are well versed in orchestral, classical, and jazz commercial pedagogy specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?

Tom Brantley: Sorry. Read that question again. This one I'm having to look for here.

Austin Seybert: Okay. What is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are well versed in classical orchestral and jazz commercial pedagogy specifically as it pertains to bebop improvisation and nuance?
Tom Brantley: So just to make sure I understand the question you're asking do I think there are enough educators out there that are versed in bebop and improvisation?

Austin Seybert: That and maybe your opinion on why there might be a lack of educators doing that as well.

Tom Brantley: Yeah. Well, in defense to anyone, because I can tell you for me, even though I can hang in playing bebop and I feel pretty strong about it, it's really hard to be able to ... if I'm starting to play with a saxophone player or a trumpet player or even any player, or a trombone player that only does bebop and they don't do any classical, then I have to start really getting in the woodshed. So in other words, it's difficult to practice both every day, much less someone who didn't, for whatever reasons, weren't exposed to it early on. It's just you have to practice twice as much, that's what I tell my students, when you're having to learn both, be a strong orchestral player as well as be able to learn the language of bebop.

Tom Brantley: And so because of that, I might occasionally run into some orchestral players that might talk kind of a good game or maybe think that they're good enough or know enough and can do it, and then I hear them play and it's like, "Gosh, my God. They don't really ..." That's usually the case, and in the orchestra world, that's one of the things that I am really, really, really painfully disappointed in when I play pops gigs and sit in with them because, oh, if they would only study that style as much as they study the orchestral or the western European, if they would only study American jazz as hard and as detailed as they study the really good orchestral players, then the orchestra should be a lot healthier.

Tom Brantley: So, no. It's yeah, you have to work a lot harder to do it, but man, how much better would the music be, period, especially 21st century compositions and even a lot of 20th century compositions, and Lord knows, the trombone literature, the solo literature, the [inaudible 00:18:24], those things, those would be so much better if these players knew that language, and they just don't even know it on the surface, much less the inner workings of the language of bebop. And I know I'm being maybe overly harsh, but I just got to say it. And so I again, that's part of ... I know this is a lot of the reasons you're doing this project, and bravo by
the way, but yeah, it's not there most of the time. Our job is to really be as accurate and stylistic as we can in everything that we do.

**Tom Brantley:** So when I play a blues band, I was just talking about this this morning on my church gig at this all Black Gospel Soul Church that I did and talking to guys from Memphis, and I lived in Memphis for a minute and played in a BB king band, blues band, it was all their players, and they opened up these blues from me. And my goal while I played was to only play blues and not go into the bebop side and just play blues. That was my goal. And for them to not know I was a jazz player and much less, a classic player. And lo and behold, during the break, the guy comes up and he says, man, you're jazz player, aren't you? And I put my head down. I was like, "Ah man." I said, "I was trying to just ..." He says, "Oh no, no, no, you sounded great," and it was very nice. He says, "It's just that you play in-tune and your tone is good."

**Austin Seybert:** That's hilarious. That's funny.

**Tom Brantley:** So it made me laugh. I was like, "Yeah, I don't know if I can quite go that far with my concept." So there's a limit. I'm not going to go try to get some funky, dirty sound just so that I can do that. I don't know if I agree with that whole idea, and again, he wasn't being critical, he was just trying to give me a compliment. So I think that there's a ... when I start talking with my students, I try to make them make sure that, I'm not saying you got to play out a tune in unless you're doing it for a color or something like that, or play with a bad sound, unless you're wanting to do it, again, for color or if it calls for it on the piece, on the style.

**Tom Brantley:** But anyways, I do think that sometimes jazz players, for instance, they won't play a blues on their set because it's a blues, and I'm like, "Wait a minute, man. Just because the blues is "easy" doesn't mean that you have to know what you're doing to play a slow blues." So one of my assignments for my young, especially if I get a hot shot bebop player or as a grad student, one of the first things I do is make them play a painfully slow blues and see if they can do it. And a lot of times they can, but sometimes it's like they have trouble just keeping it. And I tell them, "Keep it blues. Don't try to play your double or triple time stuff, just ..."
Tom Brantley: One of my heroes for instance is Ray Anderson, and of course Roswell Rudd, that whole group of kind of jazz players, which I think is really, really important. My other hero that I think ... I heard him say one time is David Taylor, and I heard him say, "Yeah. If I ever get my doctorate, it's going to be in bebop." Because he said he admired his friends like Lew Soloff, who was alive back then, and guys who can do it, and he always wants to do it, and he certainly has the chops, but he just never really studied it enough to master it as an improviser. But he gets it. He's one of those guys, I think he can play anything on the instrument just about.

Tom Brantley: But anyway, man, I'm sorry, I could go on forever.

Austin Seybert: Oh, it's okay, no. It's fun listening. All right, cool. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives? Any concerning negatives?

Tom Brantley: Okay. Let me pull up my notes here because man, I love your stuff and I was going to ask you if I could steal some of it. But one thing I'm big on, I love that you have the listening list and Austin, please don't think I'm, again, judging or being overly critical, that's the last thing I want to do really with anyone much less with you.

Austin Seybert: Yup.

Tom Brantley: But I would love it if you maybe made your listening list just a little bit more diverse. If I remember correctly, I don't have it in front of me, but for instance, you have Joe Alessi on there a number of times, which of course, they got to check out Joe, but it might be hip. I can't remember if you had any for instance Christian Lindberg, or Jorgen Van Rijen or someone-

Austin Seybert: I have Christian Lindberg, Toby Oft, Ronald Barron.

Tom Brantley: Yeah, and maybe more, maybe some Ray Anderson or Albert Mangelsdorff or somebody like that, and Jay ... and I know you probably have J.J on there somewhere too.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. I tried to be a little more conservative on really both sides of the coin there, but conservative is not the word, a little more right down the middle.
Tom Brantley: Right, right, right, right. So, I mean, obviously, you can't ... and the thing I have here, I'm looking at my notes, it's like comprehensive with an explanation point, which is fantastic, I love it, but it is time consuming, and I see that you're trying to be mindful of that with the different majors.

Tom Brantley: One thing that I might share with you that we've worked really hard here at USF, and my brass area is pretty much on the same page as I am, but they're not jazz players, the trumpet player is, but tuba and euphonium guy or orchestral players, and I can't have them sit through juries and have them play, listen to my players play jazz. So if I do any of that, I have to do it outside of the rest of the faculty, and I don't know if you have to do that or not, but I could see that being difficult for a lot of schools because as much as I love my colleagues here, and I really do, we're on the same page, that would be difficult maybe depending on where you end up moving around or where you end up ... you know what I'm saying?

Austin Seybert: Yes, absolutely.

Tom Brantley: Yeah. And then I have, let's see, style, to focus more on style. You might want to be careful ... and I get it, man, we have to use words, we have to use labels. So you have jazz commercial, commercial, man, there are still guys that ... there's one faculty member in particular at my school that is very negative against jazz and he uses that term commercial in a very negative way. And so I try not to use that at all anymore for that reason. Yeah.

Tom Brantley: I try to think about, okay, in jazz just like in classical, there's a ton of different styles, and with my students so that they don't feel overwhelmed, so I don't feel overwhelmed, say, "Look, we're learning to play the trombone and then you're learning different fields, different articulations, different colors, and you have to do a lot of listening to a lot of different styles. So if you're going to work on Latin, let's go to Willie Cologne, let's go to music from Cuba, let's go to Brazilian music and listen to as much of that culture's music as we possibly can, certainly it involves trombone." And then same with the blues. Rather than just going to jazz players like J.J or whomever else to learn the blues, let's go to guitar players, Freddie King, B.B King, Albert King, and check them out, and really again, get that style.
Austin Seybert: So you're trying to avoid that connotation, that negative connotation by just being more diverse in your options for students?

Tom Brantley: Exactly. Yeah, man. And classical too, I mean obviously, you want to think about landing an orchestra job, orchestral playing, I use that all the time, but I try to lean them towards just being wonderful soloist, and then if they have to play Tuba Mirum for instance, they have to realize, okay, be lyrical but you can't use Vibrato, if you're going to play Bolero, be lyrical, and if it's in a jazz, you can think sentimental over you, but obviously no vibrato and etc, etc.

Tom Brantley: So I don't know. What I'm trying to say is, is I'm trying to simplify it but be very detailed at the same time. So I don't know. You might think about just how you word ... leave commercial out for instance, as an example.

Austin Seybert: Okay. Thank you.

Tom Brantley: But otherwise, man, I'd be really interested to follow your career after this and see where you end up and just see how much success, because I've been at USF now for 17 years, and so even though I still want to keep growing and trying new things, and I am, I understand the limitations. I mean, the reality of again, saying, "Hey, the tuba teacher, the horn teacher, I want my guys to play jazz juries in front of you." That's just not going to happen. I have to find creative ways to ... and it's not that difficult to make it work, but anyway.

Austin Seybert: Well, cool. Do you have any opinion on the, if you remember, the audition based tune list and the scale permutation spreadsheet and that sort of thing?

Tom Brantley: Oh yeah, man, that scale permutation list. I didn't look at it maybe enough to understand it fully, honestly. And again, that's something honestly I still I'm catching up with from the theory side of things. I mean, certainly know my modes and I love that you're having them playing in what? Thirds, fourths, fifths, sixths, seventh, that like going through the whole thing. I mean, I couldn't quite figure it out just looking at the chart. I'd love to maybe see you do it on a YouTube video or something and demonstrate it in order for me to maybe try to use a little bit more of that. Because I do scale juries and I make them play all the modes, and I
have them playing in thirds and fourths, I don't go quite so
far as sixth and seventh, but if they want to keep it going
with that, certainly my grad students in the jazz majors will
dive into that.

Austin Seybert: Well, the reason why ... what I do is, and it's something that
I've really ... that scale permutations spreadsheet really is
just me projecting my practice on paper and putting that
with my students. Basically what it is, is just going through
every single diatonic intervallic value for the parent scale.
So I'll have my students, if I say, "We're doing major scales
for your jury this next time, and I'm going to pick two
scales and you're going to do all the permutations of that
scale." So for major, that's not really that bad all diatonic,
but I have them do vertical, horizontal, then thirds, fourths,
fifths, sixths and sevens.

Austin Seybert: And horizontal, what would I do ... I explained this to my
last interviewee, but horizontal is just the regular diatonic
scale, and then vertical is just stacking diatonic thirds. And
reason why I do that is for mostly my jazz majors that are
learning improvisation so they can kind of stack and see
that chord scale relationship immediately, and then they
can see the core scale relationship with the first four notes,
and then the diatonic extensions on top. And so really
turning into like a poly chord.

Tom Brantley: Yeah, okay. Cool.

Austin Seybert: That's why I do that. That's literally the only reason just so
that they can immediately see that B flat, major seven, be
able to see that immediately. And most students get through
two permutations for a scale, I don't make them go through
the whole thing, but they're practicing it, and I make them
sing it. I make them sing. "Can you sing, vo vi vo vi vo vi,
diatonic sevens. This is something I did with my masters
with Jim a lot, and really, the list down below is something
I never really ... I'm never going to expect a student to get
into modes of harmonic major like I had to. I would never
expect that from my undergrad, but they're just there
because-

Tom Brantley: I got you. Okay. I looked at that and I was like, "Whoa." I
think I even said that out loud looking at it.
Austin Seybert: I would expect if I had a music education major, and they're going through their seventh ... let's say they are on time to graduate, and they're in the seventh semester of study ... the seventh semester and then the eighth semester of student teaching, I would expect to make it through the major scales, aeolian harmonic minor, classical melodic minor, and then be able to go through all the modes, Dorian, Phrygian and so on, and so forth. Anything really past that, getting into symmetrical skills like octatonic and whole tone and things, that would probably be like where I expect them to be, right around there in the seventh semester of music education, major jazz majors, I expect a lot more.

Tom Brantley: Yeah. Well, that's impressive man. That's really good, and I need to push my guys ... I mean, I feel like I do push them on scales, but some of them are ... to use that phrase again, pulling teeth. But yeah, that's great.

Tom Brantley: I've got a guy, I don't know if you've met or heard of Nick Finzer.

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Tom Brantley: Yeah. So you might've seen some of the stuff he's posted that's similar to what you're talking about with scale permutations.

Austin Seybert: Actually it's really funny. I was a finalist for his job he left at Florida state not too long ago. Small world.

Tom Brantley: Oh yeah? Ha. Well, I have one of his ... I have a master student who studied with him, and so he's hipped me to some that, so it made me think of the Finzer stuff right away. But anyway, yeah. So, that's great though. I was just curious. It makes me feel a little bit better. I was like, man, if you're able to get your students to do all of that, I want to find out how the heck you're doing it-

Austin Seybert: No, no, no.

Tom Brantley: ... because that was ...

Austin Seybert: Definitely not. I'm young, ambitious. I had an interview with Brad Edwards earlier today, and he says like, "If you're at an age right now," I'm 28, he said, "You are at an
age right now where ambition is a great thing." And I've only been teaching for three years and this is my first year of teaching applied study at a university, I was only teaching jazz classes for the last two. And so now I'm adjunct teaching applied low brass and at university. And so-

Tom Brantley: When I started ... Go ahead.

Austin Seybert: Oh...sorry...Well, I was just saying that it's been interesting. Even just this semester, I've already changed so much that I thought I wasn't going to be able to do, and I'm like, "Oh wow. I didn't think that ..." it wasn't a problem for me, it wasn't a problem for like DMA students that I'm going to school with or whatever, something of that nature. So I'm always adjusting, which I've realized that's going to be something that I will be doing for the rest of my career.

Tom Brantley: Yeah, you will, man, and you'll figure it out. I think that's why we still teach one on one is you have to adjust your curriculum, and I love that you ... I don't think you labeled it as a sample curriculum, but you had a curriculum for freshman, sophomore, and I did the exact same thing. What I was going to tell you is I started teaching at USF when I was 29, and I think it was this past semester, I had a student come to me and says, "Hey, I ran into one of your former students," and he wouldn't say who. And he said, "And he said that you're a lot easier now than you used to be." And I was like, "Oh, I don't know if I agree with that, but there's a good chance that, yeah."

Tom Brantley: Well, in fact, I know, I was like you said, man, when I started, when I was 29, I came in like gang busters and I had that sample curriculum, and I knew that when I wrote it out, that was not going to ... I brought it to my interview, by the way, if you don't do that, when I brought it to my final interview, no one else had done that and they were blown away, but I was very careful to tell them that, "Hey, this isn't set in stone. I would adjust this depending on the student, and the level, and the whole thing," But I know you know that.

Tom Brantley: But man, what I was going to say is, it hurt a little bit when that student told me this, that I'm easier now than I used to be because I don't want to be ... I don't want my standards to lower, it's the last thing we want, right?
Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Tom Brantley: So, try your best to just keep pushing it because those students that were with me way back then when I run into them, they really appreciated it. They hated it at the time, and some of them fought it like crazy. Yeah man, I feel like it's very easy to slip a little bit because you run out of energy and just you get tired of fighting it.

Austin Seybert: Got you. Yeah.

Tom Brantley: Obviously, you got to choose your battles as they say, but I would do my best wherever you go to bring what you have man, because they'll hire you. You'll know right away. I interviewed for a job about 10 years ago and I showed up and they were worried about me being too much of a jazzer. That was the word I got right when I showed up for the interview, and it pissed me off, and I went the opposite direction and just talked about jazz the whole interview. And of course, they didn't offer me the job, but it was a school in Louisiana, and that's my home state, it was close to New Orleans, and I was so disappointed. And they didn't have a jazz studies degree at the time, and I was like, I just told them, I was like, "Man, you guys are crazy." It was so close minded of the people that were there.

Austin Seybert: Well, yeah. It's been a very interesting looking at academia, the walking dinosaurs in the room, and I'm looking forward to possibly maybe bridging that gap somewhat in the coming 20 to 30 years or something. So anyway, I wanted to ask you my last question.

Tom Brantley: Sure.

Austin Seybert: Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added or that you feel is missing? Anything you feel is unnecessary and should be removed?

Tom Brantley: Well, yeah, I'm screwing up because now I'm reading my notes and I wrote them a few days ago. Other than trying to broaden it in such a way that ... I always go back to the quote from three different people from the 20th century, Duke Ellington was quoted in an interview, Louis Armstrong was quoted in an interview, and Kurt Vile was
quoted in an interview that there are two types of music, good and bad. I know I'm quoting it out of context from what they were saying, but I get this in part from the group I toured with for so long, Rhythm & Brass, which ended up being like the perfect group for me to play with because we approached everything as authentically as possible as a chamber group. So, if we were going to do Pink Floyd, which we did, we tried to be Pink Floyd, but bring our own thing to it at the same time instead of turning it into elevator music. That's just one example.

Tom Brantley: But if there's a way in the curriculum to even make it a little bit more broad, then that might help. But at the same time I tell people and my students that if you learn to play bebop, if you learn the language of jazz, and if you learn the language of western European classical music and everything that that involves, then you should be able to theoretically play just about anything-

Austin Seybert: Beautiful.

Tom Brantley: ... as long as you keep your broad mind because you'll have the technique to do anything theoretically, if you've mastered all of those styles, and it will be a lifelong endeavor of course, but that is the approach I try to start with with my freshmen without overwhelming them and to try to get them to keep it simple. Is the music good or is it bad? Does it sound good or does it sound bad? And then, okay, go listen to this to find out what it's supposed to sound like. It sounds so simple and naive, but I have here written, and I don't know if I want this published-

Austin Seybert: Okay.

Tom Brantley: ... but I went and did the Joe Alessi Seminar about 12 years ago or so. And we were first friends, he actually invited me to it, so it was a cool thing. I loved Joe before I say this, in fact, he's one of my favorite people in the world, much less trombone players, but he said something very interesting during the week that's just stuck with me. He said, "For years, and years, and years, all I thought about on the trombone was technique and how to be just technically perfect, and now I'm focused on style." Now, this was just 10, 12 years ago and I was like, "Oh my God," because I'm the opposite as a player, I have problem with technique because early on, all I focused on was style. And so I don't
know which one should we learn first. In my opinion, in the way I teach and my philosophy, is you help technique by getting better with style rather than the other way around.

Tom Brantley: So I don't ever say, "Hey, let's go practice on fundamentals or technique," I say, "Hey, let's go work on music." And it might be long tones, it might be a technical study, but I want it to sound musical, in other words, it's got to sound good. You know what I mean?

Austin Seybert: Yeah. Good music.

Tom Brantley: Yeah. And so I think that learning all of these different styles and specifically jazz, it's going to do nothing but help your classical playing, and learning classical playing does nothing but help your jazz playing. So whenever I'm playing to jazz, if it's a like a jazz recital or I'm a featured soloist, I'm going to play a Rochut backstage just before I walk out on stage, and vice versa. If it's a classical recital, I'm going to play a jazz tune or maybe even the transcription, because it helps my mindset and helps my playing.

Tom Brantley: I think what you're doing here is, like I said in the email, it is something I've been working all my life with music, and I think that it's a must for the 21st century

Tom Brantley: Hopefully you can use this answer that I gave you. I really don't have anything real specific to add. I think maybe just change the wording on the curriculum to where it's more open, if that makes any sense at all.

Austin Seybert: It does.

Tom Brantley: And then just so you know, I'm working on an etude book, I'm on sabbatical this semester and I'm working on an etude book and it's going to be styles. In fact, when you called, I was recording ... I'm basically starting right now, and I was recording kind of a Gregorian chant because I want it to be progressive and it to be like maybe something that people could use as a warm up even. I don't know, we'll see how it turns out. Well, my plan is that covers many styles in this etude book as possible because we just don't have anything like that, or at least that I know of, where it's really covering a lot of different, well, styles in one book, you know what I mean?
Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Tom Brantley: So I don't know, we'll see how it turns out. But both from my own playing, and I don't know about you, Austin, but for me, when people ask me, "Hey, do you have to change anything when you go from style to style?" And I don't. If I'm in good shape chopswise, then my mindset is I can play anything that's thrown in front of me, in one hour I can cover as many styles as I need to without a problem. You know what I mean?

Austin Seybert: Yes.

Tom Brantley: I might switch horns or something, equipment to make some things easier to do, small horns type thing.

Austin Seybert: Yeah. For me, I think that I have to make a pretty conscious change going between horns in just the airstream department. I feel that I have to make slower, warmer, and I can make it faster, brighter no problem, the green light on that is on all day, but it's the slower warmer on like actually playing bass, and I have to really get inside. And so usually when I warm up in the morning, I play bass trombone first thing every single morning. I go biggest to smallest.

Tom Brantley: Exactly. Exactly.

Tom Brantley: I just wanted to share one other thing with you that my wife actually reminded me of. I did get to study with Christian when I was 20.

Austin Seybert: Oh really?

Tom Brantley: Yeah. It's basically the same, he was doing the same thing that Joe does now. And at the time, I had my teacher and others saying, "Hey, you're going to have to decide between jazz and classical. You make a choice"

Austin Seybert: Oh, I've been there, I've been there.

Tom Brantley: Yeah. And there's a whole bunch of other stuff too. So what I did was I brought recordings. I was playing in a small group job and I had cassette tapes of my jazz playing. So I brought it to Christian and I had him listen to it. I said, "Christian, should I stop doing jazz? What's your advice?" I
told him what was going on, and Christian's very, very intense. I don't know if you've ever met him.

Austin Seybert: I have not.

Tom Brantley: He's extremely intense guy and so what he says is like gospel for him. And so I remember he slammed the table and he says, "You would be crazy to stop playing jazz." He says, "I would love to be able to do what you do and play this language." And he said, "The same problems I hear in your classical playing on trombone, I hear in your jazz playing, so it's the same thing, but you know the style," and he says, "and I don't, and I wish I did." I mean, that like changed my world, you know what I mean? In terms of confidence.

Austin Seybert: Yeah.

Tom Brantley: So Christian for me, it hurts me when I get on trombone pages and I think it's been this way for him from the very beginning actually, when his first album came out back in '83 or '84, people in America didn't like his playing because he had so much bravado, and he played a certain way that we just don't play over here, and it's that way to this day. And of course, he's strong on his opinions, but they're just that, they're opinions, in terms of, "Oh, I don't buzz the mouthpiece," stuff like that. It's like, oh, come on. So what he doesn't? There's a ton people that don't buzz on their mouthpiece.

Tom Brantley: I get disturbed by it and so I stay off of those pages. I mean, I love Brad Edwards’ pedagogy page and by the way, he's one of my favorite people, and I'm not saying he's one of the "bad guys" at all, he's the opposite. Like you, I love seeing you had his books listed. So I think he's one of our good guys, not that there are bad guys. I mean, shoot, I'm not trying to put people in camps, but I just feel like Christian maybe is very, very misunderstood to this day, and my opinion, he's done more for our instrument than anyone ever has in terms of getting literature written for us, in terms of making the trombone known as a solo instrument, I mean, that was his goal. That was his whole goal was to make trombone a solo instrument, and he was the only guy that did it for a long time and he didn't do anything else but that.
Tom Brantley: Again, I'm not pitting him against Alessi. I mean, the first thing he told me way back, this was 1990, he said, "You need to go study with Joe Alessi." And at that time, I hadn't. And so all those guys are on the same camps and I've run into people that have them in different camps and I'm like, "Oh, come on." I mean, they're obviously very different players but they're on the same team. I mean, Joe's biggest influence was J.J, so I don't know, man.

Austin Seybert: Oh no. I am enjoying listening. It's actually been a really cool process, getting to meet a lot of players and educators that I really respect and heard so much about. Joe speaks very highly of you, and then just looking and seeing what your career has done, it's just like, I absolutely have to interview this guy.

Tom Brantley: Well, cool.

Austin Seybert: All right. Well, I appreciate it and let me know whenever you get the styles book together. That sounds really super interesting.

Tom Brantley: Yeah Austin. Well man, bravo on this brother and I appreciate you including me on it, and yeah, just send it to me when you're ready
APPENDIX M: Interview with Tony Baker (edited)

Austin Seybert: Okay, cool. I'll just go ahead and get this started. How did you learn trombone, and what kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Tony Baker: Let's start with the first question. I learned trombone, I guess the typical public school way. I got into beginning band in seventh grade and there's a book that we used what's called the Belwin Band Builder. It was great for giving a beginning brass player what he or she needed. It just so happened that my junior high band director was a trombone player, and a fantastic trombone player, so it was great to hear him play. He demonstrated a lot, which was probably the best aural instruction I could've received, was to actually hear what the trombone should sound like early on. That in addition to the fundamental stuff that I was getting out of the book and my own practice, that gave me the start that I needed.

Tony Baker: I kind of fell in love with the trombone and immediately started practicing it one to two hours a night in junior high. I don't know how my parents put up with it because their door to my bedroom, and it was a one story house, but they let me do it. I think they were just happy to see me not running the streets. That's how I got my start through practice, and through the band book that we were using, and through the demonstration by my band director.

Tony Baker: What was the second part of that question?

Austin Seybert: What kind of aural exercises did you participate in as a student?

Tony Baker: Okay, you know what I did a lot of was I listened to Jazz. In my hometown of Little Rock, Arkansas, we had of all things, a full-time Jazz radio station.

Austin Seybert: Huh.

Tony Baker: Yeah. At that point, I started to fall in love with Jazz and I had started recording things that I liked on my cassette player straight from the radio, we're talking old school here, and one of my favorite things was to play along with what I was hearing. At that point I didn't really even know the difference between what was the head and what was the
improvisation, I just tried to catch everything that I could, and of course like any radio station, they repeated things, so each time I heard something over again, I would catch a little bit more of it. That was really, I think between hearing my band director play, and copying him, and imitating what I was hearing on that Jazz radio station, that was probably the best aural start I could've gotten to learning the instrument.

Tony Baker: Of course, that's how I became familiar with people like J.J. Johnson and Curtis Fuller, and Charlie Parker, et cetera, et cetera, was by imitating those players when I was in junior high.

Austin Seybert: Beautiful. Cool. Let's move on to the next question. What role do you feel audiation has in the traditional trombone studio, and do you feel students generally lack or excel in this area?

Tony Baker: I think it has a huge role. One of the things that I find so much in my teaching, is just a lack of strength of ear. Being able to hear it and play it, being able to not just hear in terms of conceptualize it and play it, but hear it just in terms of imitating it and repeating it. I think that it has a huge role, and I think it's important for any instrumentalist, but especially us trombone players, our ears and our aural strength needs to just be so strong and in general, our students come in without the strongest ability to hear and to produce simply what it is they're hearing. It's all so instrument focused rather than hear it, produce it on the instrument. I hope I answered your question.

Austin Seybert: You did. You absolutely did. I'll kind of delve in just a little bit further, do you feel that your students ... Do you feel that your classroom performance majors, versus just say your Jazz performance majors, which ones are usually a little stronger in the general concept?

Tony Baker: I'd have to say the Jazz students are a little bit stronger, but even they aren't as strong as the ought to be for what it is they tell me they're wanting to do for their life and their career because, being lucky enough to be someone who is versed in both classical and Jazz, I can tell you how important it's been for my own development, to have strong ears. So, I think the Jazz trombone students just don't ... They have a better idea of what they need ear wise, than the
classical students, but even they don't understand just the importance of knowing tunes, the importance of being able to transpose on the fly, the importance of being able to take a tune, and just move it around anywhere they need to move it.

Austin Seybert: Okay, cool. I'll move on to the next question. Do you feel that the typical undergraduate trombonist is well equipped to handle multiple styles of music after completing their undergraduate study? Why or why not?

Tony Baker: I don't think that the typical undergraduate trombonist is equipped to handle multiple styles of music, and there's a number of reasons for this. One, in most programs, it's not necessarily strongly encouraged that the student branch out into styles of which they're not familiar or in which they're not interested. We (University of North Texas) probably do a better job than most schools at really encouraging students to really be as broad and versatile as possible. So, we strongly encourage our classical students to play in Lab Band, and we strongly encourage our Jazz students to participate in concert ensembles. We've got a Latin ensemble, new music ensemble, and we have chamber ensemble, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. We encourage our students to participate in all of it, but I think that in most programs, if the student is not interested in one area or another, they're allowed to stay uninterested if that makes any sense.

Tony Baker: That's not such a huge problem if the student is going to be going into the public schools. I still think it's a problem, but for those students who have said they want to play for a living, I think it's a real problem if you say you want to play for a living, if you're a classical player, and you can't play big band style. I think it's a real problem if you're a Jazz player who says he wants to play for a living, but you can't sit in a brass quintet and sound like you know what you're doing. So, yeah I would have to say no, students aren't as versatile stylistically as they need to be, and I do consider it something that needs to change.

Austin Seybert: Kind of going off that just a little bit. Do you feel that, obviously with North Texas ... That's one of the reasons I actually ended up looking there for my Master's about five years ago, and I ended up with Jim Pugh at the University of Illinois. Do you feel like the institutions are generally
supporting this, or is there an underlying commercial/jazz music bias that's not really supported?

Tony Baker: You know, how do I answer this question? I would say, most institutions aren't standing in the way of it, but it can't really be said that they are definitely whole heartedly, supporting it. At least that's what I've observed and that was my own experience. The institutions that I attended, they certainly did not tell me that I couldn't or shouldn't branch into different styles, but unless I had an applied teacher pushing me to do that, there was nothing from the institution's point of view telling me that, that is something that I should be doing.

Tony Baker: One of the things that I've always considered about higher education of music, is that it's so bad about putting people in a box and either telling them they have to stay in that box, or not encouraging them to branch out of it. I think that in general, music schools need to do a much better job of encouraging students regardless of what their emphasis is, to graduate being as versatile musically as they can possibly be.

Tony Baker: Not all of it is the institution's fault. If you're a violin performance major and you want to play in Jazz band, that's a bit of a problem. That's going to be a little bit tough for you. If you're a bassoon student and you want to play in a Salsa band, that's going to be tough, you know? I think that institutions could do a better job of encouraging students to be as versatile as they can be on their chosen instrument, you know? So, maybe you can't play in Jazz band if you're a violin player, but you could probably play maybe in a Mariachi band or something like that. If that makes sense.

Austin Seybert: It makes total sense. Next question, what is your opinion on the lack of trombone educators that are well versed in classical/orchestral and jazz/commercial pedagogy?

Tony Baker: Well, my opinion is that it's unfortunate. As someone who for many years had no life because he was spending so much time trying to become well versed in both, I do understand why more of us aren't more well versed at both, but there's a part of me that feels like from both an artistic and educational point of view, we ought to, as group of musicians, be making it a point to become more versatile
and just, again, for our own artistic enrichment, and for vocational advantages, and for the education of our students. For me, personally, the desire to be well versed in both classical and Jazz, first came from just an interest in both styles of music. Then, that branched into an understanding of the vocational advantages to being well versed in both. Then, that kind of evolved into what I felt was an educational need for me to be well versed in both.

Austin Seybert: That's really interesting that you bring that up. That's the literal arch that I took, and I'm still taking. I enjoyed both, but then I realized, I could make a lot more money. Next week, not next week, two weeks from now I'm doing a concert cycle with a service orchestra, and I play in a Salsa group later this weekend, and then I've got a couple of Big Band hits that I've got to do. I'm not ever going to grow up to be some hot shot principle player of a major orchestra, but I've always felt that it is very imperative that if I'm going to send a Jazz trombone student out into the world as a performance major, that he needs to know how to make a characteristic sound. Otherwise, they're just going to try to move to New York and play three hour, $20 big band gigs, and not going to make it.

Austin Seybert: That's something that really upsets me actually, is that notion of, students having this fairy tale ending of what they think they're going to do, and they're not prepared to take even 85% of the gigs they might get offered.

Tony Baker: Mm-hmm (affirmative). You know, what I always say to my students is, the days when you could be really, really, really good at one thing, and know that you're going to be okay, they're all but gone. Unless you're someone like a Jörgen van Rijen, or Michael Dease, unless you're someone like that, you really ought to know how to do to one thing really well, but one or two other things well enough that you won't embarrass yourself doing them. You know? So, if you're a classical player, maybe you don't need to necessarily know how to improvise, but you should be able to sit on a Big Band job and not embarrass yourself, you know? If you're a Jazz player, yeah you should be able to play second in a per service orchestra, and be able to hang in there. Maybe you're not going to be auditioning for anything, but it's just where things are vocationally. You can't be just a fantastic Jazz player anymore, and expect to be okay. You could 30 years ago, but not today.
Austin Seybert: Gotcha. Cool. Next question. This is the second to last one. What is your opinion of my studio model and undergraduate trombone curriculum? Any notable positives, any concerning negatives?

Tony Baker: I really liked it in general. I guess the thing that I remember seeing, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, but I remember seeing improvisation mentioned in there. Am I write about that?

Austin Seybert: Yeah, so basically, the way I tried to break it up is imaging if I'm a trombone teacher, not thinking of Jazz trombone or classical trombone, and then I would basically create three different studio times. One for general trombone studio, one for orch, rec, and chamber music, and another for Jazz improvisation specifically. It gets a little more detailed about who should go, who shouldn't. I think everyone should go to the general trombone studio, and then maybe only performance majors have to go to orch and chamber only, Jazz musicians to the Jazz, but it's highly encouraged. I had several audiation type of exercises building around melodies, and tunes in all 12 keys. Then, scale sheets and permutations, intervalic relationships, and things like that.

Tony Baker: I guess the thing that struck me at that time was, with improvisation, what I've found over the years is that there is a certain point ... Ugh, God how do I put this? There's a certain point below which, if you're not teaching it to that level, the student's not really learning it, you know? That was the only thing I wondered about, was how helpful the improvisation would be in a general sense. It's kind of the sort of thing that I've found that you're either really teaching it, having the student do transcriptions and learn tunes, and really do a lot of harmonic work, or it's best not to get into it if the student's not going to be working on it at that serious a level.

Tony Baker: That being said, I've also done this long enough to know that there's more than one right way to teach it, and my own feeling is that when you do get a job, and you're going to get a job probably, give it a shot. Give the teaching plan that you have mapped out a shot. It could be revolutionary. It could work. I just know from my own experience, when I've tried to, with a classical player, sometimes for improvisation, it usually wasn't enough to really help them
see any real improvement. In order for them to see real improvement, it would take more time away from their classical studies than I wanted to take. That being said, again, it's worth trying what you've mapped out. You've obviously given it a ton of thought, a great deal of thought, and you definitely have given it more thought at this point in your career than I did when I was at your point, you know? I think it's worth giving it a shot.

Tony Baker: I liked it. In general, I really liked it.

Austin Seybert: Alright, well I appreciate it. Are there any, besides the studio, any ... Actually I'm talking about the next question. Okay. Next question, sorry about that. Anything in this curriculum you would like to see added that you feel is missing? Anything you feel is unnecessary or should be removed?

Tony Baker: You know, I guess the short answer to that is no. That's not to say that there isn't anything that could be added, but I've figured out over the years that a curriculum is such a fluid sort of thing. When people ask my what my curriculum is, I tell them it depends on the student, you know? I can't say that I have one curriculum. I have very general areas that I want to make sure that I address, but how I address those general areas with each student is very different. So the short answer is no, there's nothing that I would say you must add or you must take out, but I would also say that you'll probably figure out what needs to be added and what needs to be removed on a student by student sort of basis.

Tony Baker: I think it's good to have something to start with. I do usually have some idea of where I want to start an incoming freshman, where I want to start an incoming Master's student, where I want to start a Doctoral student, and then from there, it's pretty fluid and flexible depending on what the student's first and foremost needs are, and second, what the student's interests are.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, that's something that ... I maybe should mention a little more clearly, this is not something I would do as a very rigid curriculum, it's more just a place holder to kind of give me a general ballpark to start at.

Tony Baker: Gotcha.
Austin Seybert: Like freshman year, if I've got a student that's already playing "Blue for Alice," I'm not going to start them on "All of Me" or, if I've got a student that comes in and auditions on the Casterede, I'm not going to start them on the Telemann, or Galliard Sonata, or something.

Tony Baker: Gotcha.

Austin Seybert: I think it's all general, and it's all a general relationship. It's something that ... I just turned 28, so I have a lot of learning and mistakes to make. So, it's something that I know that I'll be continually adjusting as I keep on teaching doing that sort of thing.

Tony Baker: Mm-hmm (affirmative), you're exactly right about all of that. Again, I'll say, I think it's good that you have a place to start, you know what I mean? A place to build from. You're smart enough to know that when you get into the field in earnest, some things are going to change, you're going to figure out some things, but I think it's good to enter the field with a game plan, and I think you've got that.

Austin Seybert: I really appreciate all the kind words. It's kind of a labor of love. So anyway. I think that's the last question. Any other comments or anything like that?

Tony Baker: Let me think if there are any other comments. No, not really. I was just sitting here thinking why sometimes we don't do as good a job as we should of making the education as broad as we could make it. I know that one thing that I find myself going up against is we have these barrier exams, as every school does, you know, and I know that for me, when I get a freshman Jazz studies major in, and I know that at the end of their fourth semester they have to pass this barrier or they won't be able to study Jazz, as much as I want to get them hitting the ground running on Jazz, I know that there's this classical barrier that they have to pass, you know what I mean?

Austin Seybert: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Tony Baker: Or on the other hand, a freshman classical major who seems to have an interest in Jazz and are really liking the workups of Jazz, but there's again this barrier at the end of their fourth semester that I know they have to get past, and if they don't get past that, it's going to be probably my fault.
I think that's what makes a lot of teachers kind of focus in and tighten up what they're teaching their students because they know that there is this milestone that they have to get the student over and they don't want to jeopardize that student getting past that barrier in the name of broadness of education. You know?

Tony Baker: Of course, that can be navigated. I've been navigating it for 20 years now, but that's always in the back of your mind. You want to make sure that while you're giving the student what they want, that you're also giving them what they need. So, anyway, that's what I was just sitting here thinking about.

Austin Seybert: Yeah, that's great. I really appreciate you taking your time out of your day.

Tony Baker: Sure, my pleasure.