

Principles of Music

by Apollon Marie-Rose Barret

Editors note: The following are extracts from the front matter of the Barret Oboe Method. Most of Barret's idiosyncratic punctuation and capitalization have been preserved except in cases where the readability of the passage could be improved by small changes in punctuation. These short articles provide a fascinating glimpse into the musical scene and stylistic customs of the time.

THE OBOE

The Oboe, as a solo instrument, possesses the finest qualities, combining delicacy and force with sweetness and flexibility of tone, thus rendering it more capable than any other of embodying feeling with every shade and variety of expression.

In the orchestra it is indispensable, and the peculiarity of its tone, which is distinctly heard above all others, participates both of the stringed and wind instruments.

In the manufacture of this instrument, various experiments have been made to discover the wood best adapted to produce a good tone; experience has clearly proved that Boxwood and Rosewood claim the preference. I recommend Rosewood, having found that wood far superior in producing a full body of tone, which can be modified in the softest and most delicate manner: the lower notes especially are of a finer quality than in instruments manufactured of other woods.

Many endeavours also have been made to improve the tone and fingering of the Oboe. Boehm's system prevailed for some time, but the great inconvenience of that system, which diminishes the compass and changes entirely the quality of the tone, has induced me to make new researches. The Oboe, in its present improved state, is a very perfect instrument, and the modifications applied to its mechanism have preserved the fine quality of its tone in its natural state. (Barret states in a footnote that these improved oboes will bear marks from either "Triebert—Paris" or "Barret—London.")

The compass of this instrument ranges from B \flat to G alt: it has fourteen keys, two of which, having additional branches, increase the number to sixteen; from the greater length of the bell (a late improvement) the instrument derives a certainty of tone throughout, which enables the performer to produce the upper notes, such as E and F above the lines, with greater certainty. (Barret writes in a footnote that those studies including a low B-flat have been provided with alternatives for instruments not having that note.)

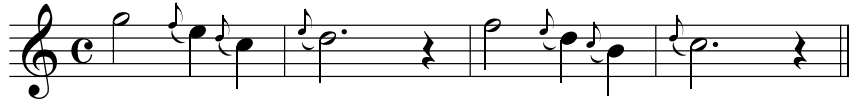
I would advise those persons who require an instrument to look more in point of economy to utility than to external beauty taking care it has the full complement of keys, otherwise bad habits of fingering are engendered, and which are difficult to eradicate.

In the selection or exchange of instruments, pupils should have the advice of a master, or some other competent person, as they are unable of themselves to appreciate a good instrument, or to detect an indifferent one.

ON SMALL NOTES, TRILLS, AND GROUPETTES

No fixed rules have been written on "small notes."

Their execution is entirely left to the taste and caprice of the player. This is so true, that a passage written thus (*Example 1*):



Example 1

Can be executed as follows by one artist (*Example 2*):



Example 2

And in this manner by another (*Example 3*):

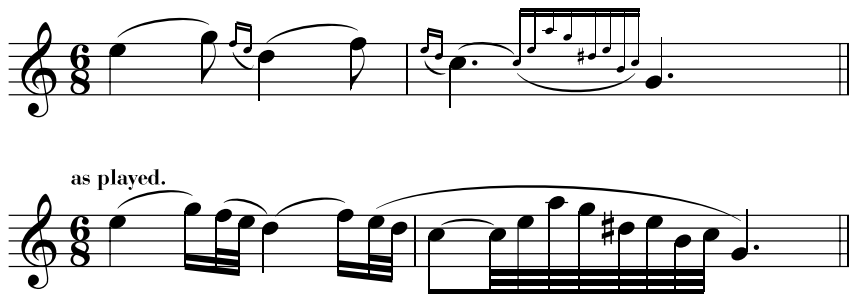


Example 3

And be equally good one way or the other: only Ex. 2 is more in the modern taste than Ex. 3 and of course preferable.

In our days, small notes are only employed as means of abbreviation, and in passages in which the player is in the impossibility of changing the intention of the composer, for, if there is any doubt, all the notes of the passage are written.

A point in which everybody agrees in the manner of executing small notes, is when there are several before a principal note; they must then be slurred quickly on that note in order to arrive in time on the principal note (*Example 4*).



Example 4

Forty Progressive Melodies

A. M.-R. Barret
Edited by Martin Schuring

Moderato. ♩ = 84

1

Musical notation for exercise 1, measures 1-6. Treble clef, common time, piano (*p*). The melody features eighth-note patterns with slurs and accents. The bass line consists of quarter notes and rests.

7

Musical notation for exercise 1, measures 7-12. Treble clef, common time. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns and slurs. A repeat sign is present at the end of measure 12.

13

Musical notation for exercise 1, measures 13-18. Treble clef, common time. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns and slurs.

19

Musical notation for exercise 1, measures 19-24. Treble clef, common time. Dynamics include *f*, *dim.*, and *p*. The melody features eighth-note patterns and slurs. A repeat sign is present at the end of measure 24.

Moderato. ♩ = 84

2

Musical notation for exercise 2, measures 1-4. Treble clef, common time, piano (*p*). The melody features eighth-note patterns with slurs and accents. The bass line consists of quarter notes.

5

Musical notation for exercise 2, measures 5-8. Treble clef, common time. Includes first and second endings. The melody features eighth-note patterns and slurs. The bass line consists of quarter notes.

Four Sonatas

Sonata No. 1

A. M.-R. Barret

Edited by Martin Schuring

Allegro moderato. ♩ = 96

The musical score for Sonata No. 1 is presented in five systems, each with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The piece is in common time (C) and begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The tempo is marked as Allegro moderato with a quarter note equal to 96 beats per minute. The key signature is one sharp (F#).

Measure 1: The right hand starts with a half note F#4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The left hand plays a simple bass line of quarter notes: C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2.

Measure 5: The right hand features a triplet of eighth notes (G4, A4, B4) and another triplet (C5, B4, A4). The left hand continues with quarter notes: C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2.

Measure 9: The right hand has a half note F#4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The left hand plays quarter notes: C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2.

Measure 13: The right hand has a half note F#4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The left hand plays quarter notes: C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2.

Measure 17: The right hand has a half note F#4, followed by quarter notes G4, A4, B4, and C5. The left hand plays quarter notes: C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2, C3, F2.

The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The dynamic changes from *p* to *mf* (mezzo-forte) at measure 13. The piece concludes with a final cadence in measure 17.

Sixteen Grand Studies

A. M.-R. Barret

Edited by Martin Schuring

Allegro $\text{♩} = 112$

1

6

11

16

21

26

p

p

f

p

Moderato e ben marcato $\text{♩} = 76$

Musical score for piano, measures 6-11. The score is in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major, and tempo is Moderato e ben marcato (♩ = 76). The piece features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The melody consists of eighth-note patterns, often grouped in threes, with accents and slurs. The bass line provides harmonic support with sustained notes and rhythmic patterns. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *sf* (sforzando). The score is divided into six systems, each containing two measures. Measure numbers 6, 8, 10, and 11 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

6 *mf* *sf* *sf*

8 *sf* *sf*

10 *sf* *sf*

11