

Performer's Guide to *Sonata in F Minor for Bassoon TWV41:f1* by Georg Philipp Telemann

Benjamin Bradshaw

Composer

Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767) is perhaps the most prolific composer of all time. He was the musical director of the five largest churches in Hamburg, Germany. He was known as a composer, critic, music theorist, educator, music publisher, violinist, flautist, and keyboardist. He composed over 3,000 works in nearly every genre and style of the time, including many chamber works for bassoon (see attached appendix).

Sonata in F Minor for Bassoon TWV41:f1

This sonata was published from 1728-1729 as part of *Der getreue Musikmeister*, which was the first music periodical. It came over a period of two months in four separate issues. At the end of the last issue Telemann says that this sonata can also be played on the recorder. This sonata has four movements in the style of the Italian church sonatas: slow, fast, slow, fast.

Resources

Hoffman, Klaus. "Telemanniana: Striefzüge durch Telemanns Musik für Holzbläser. I" *Tibia* 39, no. 4 (2014): 242-255.

- German article that discusses the relationship between bassoon and recorder in Telemann's music. Uses some specific examples from this sonata in his argument.

Hutchens, Timothy A. "New Editions of G.P. Telemann's *Sonata in F Minor* TWV41:f1 and N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Concerto for Trombone*" DMA diss., Arizona State University, 2016.

- Discusses details of Telemann's life around the time the sonata was written, as well as aspects about different editions of the piece.

Rüdiger, Wolfgang. "Sehr matt und schläfrig? Das *Triste* aus Telemanns f-Moll-Sonate für Fagott und Generalbaß als Unterrichtsmodell." *Rohrblatt* 10, no. 2 (1995): 56-65.

Wells, Peter. "Affect and the Recorder: A Rhetorical Question?" *The Recorder Magazine* 19 (1999): 83-85.

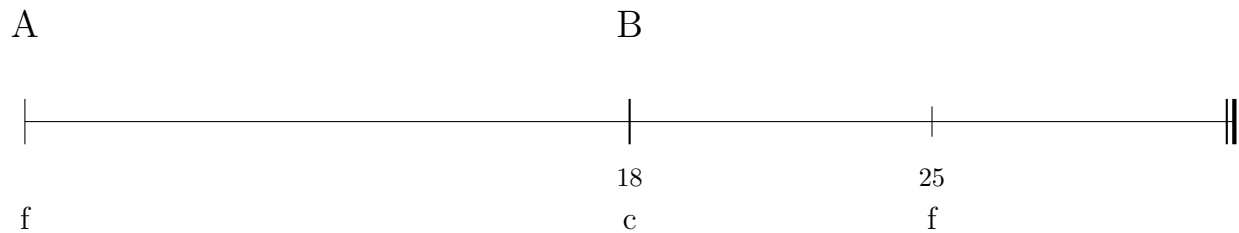
- Analyzes the first movement using rhetoric.

Recordings

- "Telemann for Bassoon" - Chris Weait
- "Bassoon Extravaganza" - Milan Turkovic
- "Telemann: Chamber Music" - Danny Bond

Movement 1

Continuous Simple Binary Form



Pedagogical Issues

This movement has several moments where some ornamentation is appropriate, especially at major cadences in measures 18, 33, and 35. One option is to add trills, but other options should be used as well. Another possibility is the use of turns and mordents to break up the use of trills in the rest of the movement. Appoggiaturas also offer another viable option. These can also be combined in many ways to create interest at these cadence points.

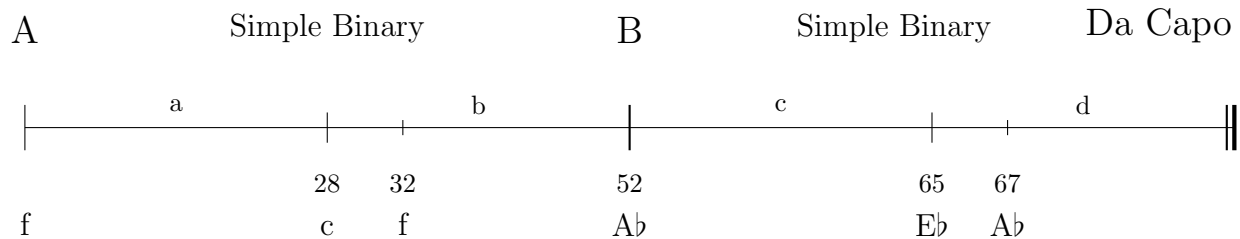
There is a compound melody in measures 21 through 24. The last two notes in measures 22 and 24 are not part of the upper voice with the previous notes. These last notes should not be accented, but rather taper away. This can be challenging because of the downward leaps that naturally want to be louder. The performer must exaggerate this taper or it will all sound the same dynamic.

Measures 25 through 28 can be very challenging to play correctly. It is recalling the music from measures 11 through 14, however this key creates a leap from D flat on the staff to low C under the staff. Immediately following this is an upwards two octave leap. In addition to having a good reed, the performer needs to use voicing changes for all the notes to speak and be in tune. The D flat should be played with at least an “ah” syllable, but preferably an “oh” syllable. This will make it easier to get the low C to sound as little voicing change needed. This will also help the low C to have a smooth attack instead of a loud, accented punch. The high C should be an “a” syllable. Note that this is not just dropping the jaw all the way for the low C and tightening it up all the way for the high C. Additionally, the whisper key lock and speaker keys can aid in smooth transitions between the notes.

The chromatic figures in measures 31 and 35 should have a sigh effect. The louder notes in the measure should be the C, B flat, and A natural. These notes create a dissonance with the underlying harmonies and resolve downwards by step, so the following notes should be softer and feel like a release of tension. In measure 15, however, the chromatic notes are all over the same harmony, and should be seen as one chromatic ascent to measure 16. To achieve these sigh effects requires quick tapers without closing off the throat to maintain good tone and intonation.

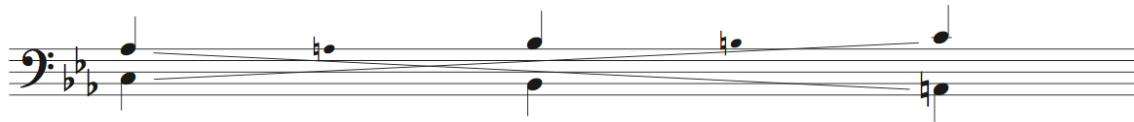
Movement 2

Compound Ternary Form



Pedagogical Issues

Measure 36 is complex and has a few different ideas going on simultaneously. The first is a chromatic rising line from the A flat in measure 36 to the D flat in measure 39. There is also a descending line from the C in measure 36 to the A natural in measure 38. These two ideas together make a chromatic voice exchange between the upper and lower voices.



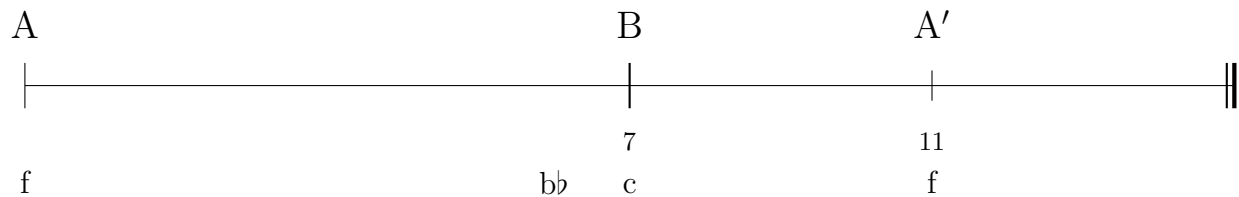
Then there is a neighbor note motive that connects these ideas. Of these three ideas, the neighbor notes are the least important. The most important is the rising chromatic line in the upper voice. The voice exchange is also important, but priority should be given to the upper voice. This results in strong downbeats that taper until the third beat and grow into the next downbeat. The difficult detail to accomplish is to also bring out the low notes on the second beats of each measure from the neighbor note motive without disrupting the upper voice progression. Slurring the neighbor note motive can help accomplish this.

Measure 46 through 48 offer similar challenges. In these measures the main line is F ascending to B flat in measure 49. At the end of each measure the line reaches over the next note and comes down to it on the downbeat of the next measure. There is a dominant pedal C that also sounds throughout these measures. Everything else is a neighbor figure to the main note of the measure or the dominant pedal. This section should use a similar dynamic scheme as above. The ascent of the upper voice is the most important thing with the neighbor notes the least important.

There are many repetitive motives in this movement that could easily be ornamented to add more interest. Some examples are measures 18, 23, 34, 68-70, 75, and 78 to name a few. These can be as simple as filling in the leap of a third. They don't all have to be trills or mordents, as the tempo of this piece makes that more difficult.

Movement 3

Rounded Binary Form



Pedagogical Issues

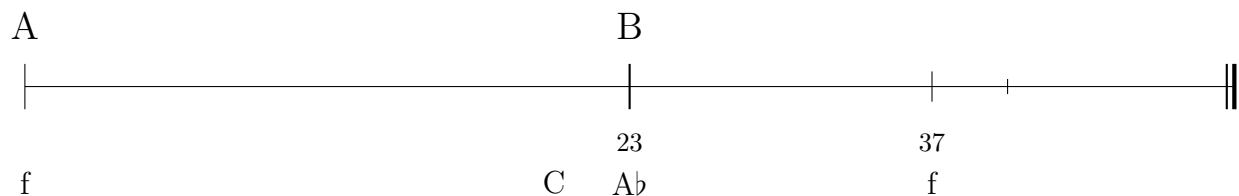
A common element in this movement is beat 4 being held over to the next downbeat as in measures 1, 4, etc. These notes should come from nowhere and grow into the next beat. There are some notes that are held from the previous half beat, such as measure 5, 6, and 8 which should be phrased the opposite way with a taper.

In measures 4 and 8 there are two leaps of a perfect fifth that need some preparation. In both cases it should be a gentle attack that grows to the next measure. The challenge is the voicing change between each of these notes and keeping air support going between the notes. The E flat will be flat if there is not enough support and an “a” syllable, while the G will be sharp if it doesn’t have an “ah” syllable coming from the C.

Additionally the phrases often end and begin halfway through a measure. Close listening and study should reveal where the beginning and ends of the phrases are in this movement.

Movement 4

Simple Binary Form



Pedagogical Issues

One of the main challenges in this movement is having enough air to make it through each section. One thing that can help is breathing out at some rests to get rid of stale air so that the next breath will be bigger and fuller. Measure 41 and 42 are a good example of this.

Measures 19 and 20 show a principle that applies throughout this movement, although perhaps less clearly. There is the main upper line and a less important lower line in between each note. Stress should be given to the upper voice in these measures. In other places the two lines are not as easily distinguished, but the performer should strive to communicate the main line.

Appendix: Other Solo and Chamber Works by Telemann for Bassoon

Concerti

Concerto in F Major for Recorder and Bassoon
Concerto in G Minor for Oboe and Bassoon
Concerto in D Major for 2 Flutes and Bassoon
Concerto in B Minor for Flute, Bassoon, and Viola da Gamba
Concerto in C Major for Flute, Bassoon, and Viola da Gamba
Concerto alla francese for 2 Oboes and Bassoon
Concerto in D Minor for 2 Oboes and Bassoon
Concerto in G Minor for 2 Oboes and Bassoon
Concerto in F Major for 2 Oboes and Bassoon
Concerto in D Major for 2 Violins and Bassoon
Concerto grosso in F Major for Recorder, Oboe, Bassoon, and 2 Horns
Concerto in B Flat Minor for Flute, Bassoon, Viola da Gamba, and Basso Continuo
Concerto in C Major for Flute, Bassoon, Viola da Gamba, and Basso Continuo
Concerto a 5 in D Major for 2 Oboes, Bassoon, and 2 Horns
Concerto in C Minor for Oboe, 2 Bassoons, 2 Violins, and Viola
Concerto a 6 for Recorder, Bassoon, 2 Violins, Viola, and Basso Continuo
Concerto a 5 for 2 Clarinets, Bassoon, 2 Horns, and Basso Continuo

Sonatas

Sonata in G Minor for Oboe and Bassoon
Trio Sonata No. 6 in F Major for Oboe, Bassoon, and Basso Continuo
Sonata in G Minor for Oboe, Bassoon, and Basso Continuo
Sonata in D Minor for Flute, Bassoon, Cello, and Basso Continuo
Sonata in E Minor for Flute, Bassoon, Cello, and Basso Continuo
Sonata in G Major for Flute, Bassoon, Cello, and Basso Continuo
Sonata in E Minor for 2 Oboes, Bassoon, Harpsichord, 2 Violins, and Viola

Other Groups

Six Quartets or Trios for 2 Flutes and 2 Bassoons
Quartet from Tafelmusik II for 2 Flutes, Bassoon, Cello, and Basso Continuo
Trio in C Minor for Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon
Trio in D Minor for Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon
Overture-Suite in D Major for 2 Oboes, Bassoon, and 2 Horns

Arranged

12 Fantasies for Solo Flute

Sonatina in A Minor for Recorder

Sonatina in C Minor for Recorder