Content #52

**How to Mark Your Trumpet Music**

This is a subject which seldom comes up for we all use our own method when marking our music. Your own system may work for you but in some cases, a more accepted notation could be more effective. I have prepared some examples of the most accepted notations for marking music and will explain each to help you understand their use.

RULE #1- ALWAYS MARK IN PENCIL!

Example A

One of the most frustrating occurrences in symphony playing for a trumpet player is counting measure rests. This is especially true during rehearsals for after counting to measure 430, the conductor stops the orchestra to work on a second violin part and the counting begins again at measure one! Large numbers of rests can be simplified by notating recognizable beginnings to sections such as melodies, sudden dynamics, etc.

Example B

It is very easy to get lost in repeated measures and this is made much easier by listing the number of each measure above the pattern. All you need to do is read the number, not the pattern.

Example C

Composers sometimes forget that trumpet players run on air not an Eveready battery. For an entire section to breathe together each player must remember where that spot is and a simple written breath mark will serve that purpose. Most players use a coma as indicated at the end of the fourth measure and some use a V as shown at the end of the sixth measure.

Example D

During rehearsals, a conductor may suggest a particular emotion need for a passage and short indications of style will be helpful to you as well as the next player. Remember to keep the comments short, for you will have to erase them at the end of the concert.

Example E

In some periods and styles of music, the first and second trumpets are written in unison but were intended to be played in octaves and for that reason; you will need to indicate this on your music. You may be able to remember this but if some one else needs to fill in for you, the indications will be helpful for them.

Example F

I added this one just as a joke, but some people will find it helpful.

Example G

Combo charts are seldom full scores and the players are more concerned with the form, than any thing else.

Example H

Chamber music usually is interplay of individual melodies, sometime starting with one instrument and continuing with another. For that reason, an indication of the beginning of a melody will help you fit your line into the mix. Knowing what the leading instrument is playing just before your entrance will also give you more confidence for your entrance.

Example I

Playing shows sometimes mean that your notes will need to be adjusted. If the original charts were written for a big band and are now being performed by a combo, many times the high notes will need to be dropped an octave in order for the combo to sound fuller. Indications for lowering your notes an octave can vary among individuals. This indication of an octave lower can be written as 8va, 8va basso, Down or any other notation which can easily be recognized quickly by the reader. I have started using an arrow which for me seems easier and quickly understood by the next player.

Example J

Many times the trumpet part is doubling other horns and the trumpet part is not necessary. To indicate the sections where the trumpet player is able to rest a short time, circling the notes or writing in tacit or unison will indicate that the part can be left out. For me, I prefer circling the passage.

Example K

This is just another example how to indicate, down an octave.

Example L

The markings you see in this example are without doubt the most useful in this post. Rhythms are some times confusing and when you put lines in your music to indicate where the beats are, everything falls into place, Your eye is drawn to each line and the notes will rhythmically follow.

Example M

The eye glasses you see at the end of this line is a warning to you that something quick and unusual is about to happen. This means that you will need to look ahead for something of concern. Sometimes it could be a solo, a quick page turn or a rhythm which you may not see in time.

Example N

This is the same as example G but when playing shows it is more often the lyrics of the singer which will be added for letting you know where you are in the show.

Four final suggestions-

* Don’t be afraid to write in comments and hints if they will help you play better
* Your markings should be as universal as possible for the next player will appreciate something they can understand
* Keep your markings as short as possible
* MARK ONLY IN PENCIL!