

GAZETTE

Come Join the Celebration!!!



As we mark the 70th Anniversary of the Getzen Company’s founding, we would like to give each and every Getzen fan a chance to celebrate right along with us. What better way to celebrate than with a brand new Getzen instrument? That’s why we are happy to announce the 2009 Getzen Anniversary Eterna Giveaway.

What is the Giveaway and, more importantly, what can you win? Well, that’s really up to you. As many of you know, the original 900 Eterna trumpet brought Getzen to the forefront of the trumpet world. Overtime, the name Eterna has been applied to more than just trumpets as a full line of Eterna instruments has been developed. To this day, Eterna trumpets, trombones, flugelhorns, and cornets are some of our most popular and in demand Getzen models. It just seems fitting to recognize the impact Eterna instruments have had on the success of the Getzen Company over the years. The winning entrant will have his/her choice of one of six instruments. Depending on what the winner wants, he/she can choose either a 900 Eterna Classic Bb trumpet, a 907S Eterna Proteus Bb trumpet, an 800 Eterna Bb cornet, a 940 Eterna piccolo trumpet, an 895 Eterna flugelhorn, or a 1050 Eterna tenor trombone. That’s the choice of a brand new instrument carrying the tried and true Eterna name and backed by the history and tradition of the Getzen Company.

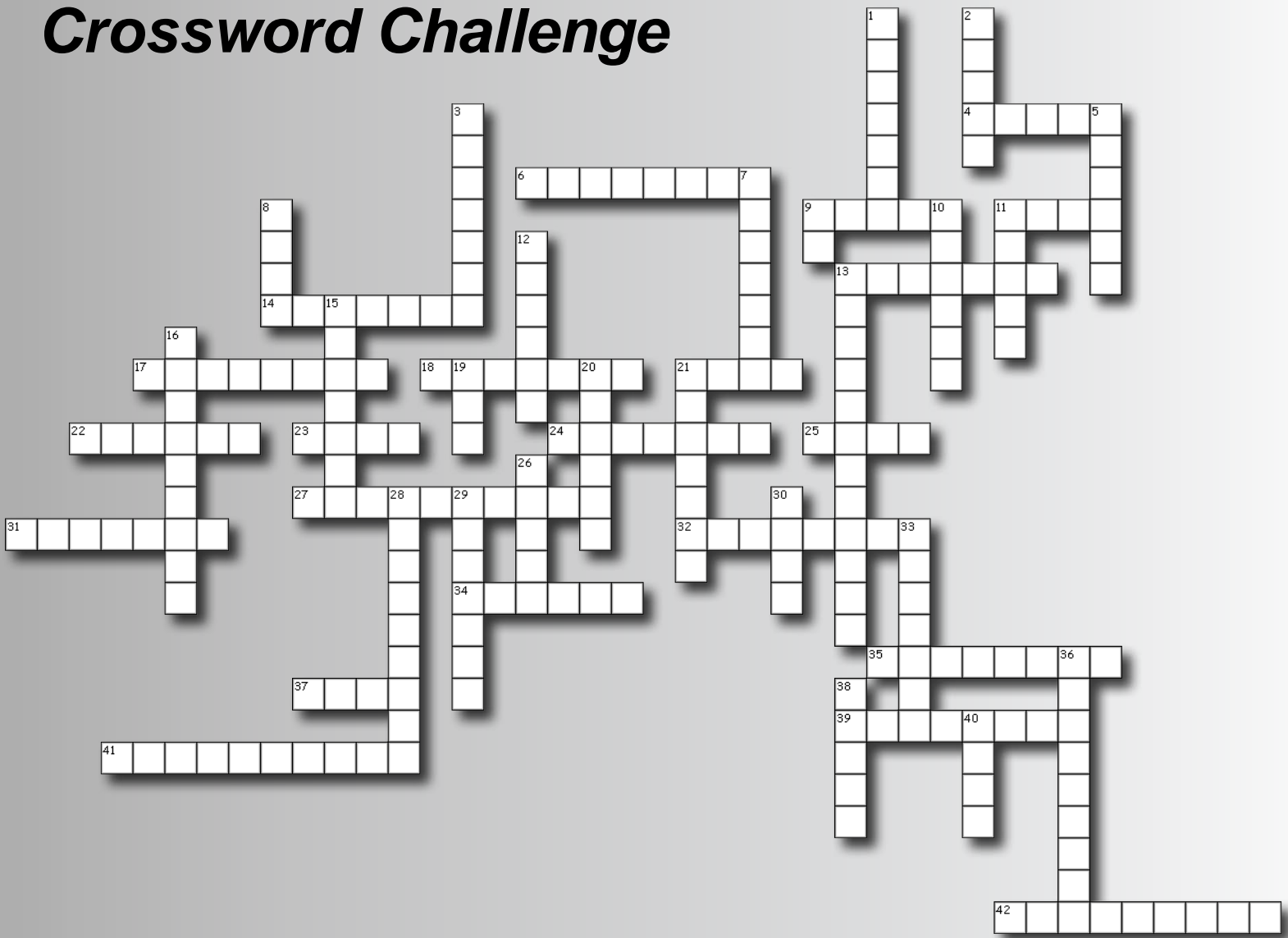
How do you enter? It’s easy, just visit www.Getzen.com and look for the “Eterna Giveaway” link on the home page. From there all you have to do is fill out the online entry form and click submit. That’s it. No essays to write, no recordings to submit, no dealers to visit, and nothing to purchase. We will collect the entries over the year (January 1, 2009 - December 31, 2009) and draw the winner on New Years Day. The contest is only open to legal U.S. residents over the age of 18 and only one entry per email address is allowed. The complete list of contest rules and restrictions is available in the contest section of our website.

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So come join our birthday party today. There may not be a cake, but we’ll be giving out the presents. While you’re visiting our website, check out the special anniversary edition of the Getzen Gazette to read more about our last 70 years.

Crossword Challenge



Across

4. Not flat
6. Sarah Morrow could teach you to play one
9. Proper tool for sounding taps
11. How you play if your slide is too long
13. The namesake of the 3001MV
14. Otherwise known as a trombone
17. Keeps your pistons moving smooth
18. This publication
21. _____Getzen; Company founder
22. What holds a horn together
23. Purlly American music born in the Big Easy
24. Clear protective coating
25. Getzen trumpet artist;
Japanese for chrysanthemum
27. English word for Mundstuck
31. This is no light weight Getzen trumpet
32. Small group of musicians
34. Doubtfully found in a pasture despite bell shape
35. What all young players need more of
37. What you do into your mouthpiece
39. You with your instrument
41. English translation is "wing horn"
42. National Association of Music _____
(NAMM)

Down

1. Coating a horn with a decorative metal layer
2. Product of combining zinc and copper
3. Acronym for National Association of Professional
Band Instrument Repair Technicians
5. A good one is made out of nickel tubing
7. Getzen Company's fitting hometown
8. The biggest trumpet
9. Most common trumpet key
10. Workhorse of the Getzen trumpet family;
First introduced in 1963
11. In diameter, the largest part of a bell
12. Sounds darker than brass; common on coronets
13. Musical group that's always on the move
15. Host city for the Midwest Clinic each December
16. A trombone has one instead of valves
19. Powers a brasswind
20. Heart of a 3047AF trombone; the _____valve
21. Gabriel's instrument of choice
26. Medium sized and middle ranged trombone
28. Current Getzen owner
29. Tiny Trumpet
30. Instrument end that sings not rings
33. Getzen premium trumpet and trombone division
36. Orchestral leader
38. Uses a push button instead of a lever
40. Keeps your instrument safe

Answers online at www.Getzen.com/gazette

Fresh New Look, Same Great Value

For several years Getzen has offered our Silver Trumpet Value Pack and we figured it was time for an update. The Value Pack still offers one of the best package deals around with a silver plated Getzen trumpet (models 590S, 700SP, or 700S). The Pack also includes a gold plated mouthpiece, leather hand guard, electronic tuner, select Getzen artist CD, trumpet care kit, and a special black, contoured soft sided case with shoulder strap. All of this for one low price. Contact your District Manager or local Getzen dealer for more details.



Three Ways to Get the Getzen Gazette

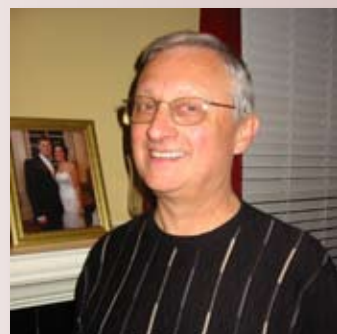
There are now three ways to get your very own copy of the Getzen Gazette. Of course, there is the printed version and many have visited the Getzen Gazette Blog on our website. Now you can download a pdf version and view or print copies of it from your own PC. Simply Visit www.Getzen.com and look for the Getzen Gazette section.

If you prefer the real thing, you can be added to the Gazette mailing list by mailing your request to: Gazette Mailing List, c/o Brett Getzen, PO Box 440, Elkhorn, WI 53121

Some Special Visitors to the Factory

In April, we had some very special visitors stop by the Getzen factory. Members of the Stan Kenton Alumni Band under the leadership of Mike Vax stopped by on their way through South-Eastern Wisconsin. We treated the band to a tour of the factory and lunch. They treated all of us to a thirty minute concert in the Allied Supply warehouse.

Thank you to Mike and the members of the band for stopping by. Thanks also to Breber Music of Elkhorn, WI for loaning us a drum kit, keyboard, and amplifier for the performance.



Welcome to the Getzen Team and Family

We are proud and eager to announce the addition of Dave Kaminsky to the Getzen national sales force.

For nearly 30 years, Dave has been in the industry with both Leblanc and Conn-Selmer companies working in sales, educator / artist relations, and helping to establish regional and national education programs.

Mr. Kaminsky will be handling representation for the South-Eastern United States.

What is a Hand Hammered Bell?

There's a lot of confusion about what a hand hammered, one piece bell really is. Not to mention the confusion about what makes them so special. Well, maybe not confusion so much as misinformation. The market is flooded with professional trumpets that have, so called, hand hammered, one piece bells. Thus creating images of craftsmen of old using nothing more than strength, determination, and skill to turn a flat piece of brass into an expertly crafted bell. In today's industry, that couldn't be further from reality.

In many cases, the way trumpet bells were crafted years ago has been left by the wayside. The overall specs and dimensions may be unchanged, but the manufacturing processes are light years apart. Do you think there were hydraulic presses slamming brass into bell forms at the turn of the century? What about computer controlled spinning lathes forcing a bell blank tight to a mandrel? While technology has made many aspects of manufacturing better, some advances have actually tainted the finished product. How many times have you heard someone say his or her 50 year old trumpet plays so much better than a new one? Why do you think that is? The brand names may be the same, but, as the saying goes, they just don't build them like they used to.

What makes a true hand hammered, one piece bell? What's the right way to craft one? I'm glad you asked. As I see it, there are several questions that must be answered. What's the bell made from? How's the pattern made? How's the seam formed/brazed? How's the bell formed? How's the bell spun? The answers to these questions are what separate the "wanna be" bells from the real deal.

What's the bell made from?

The Right Way: First and foremost, a true hand hammered, one piece bell starts out as a roll of plain old sheet brass. Sure there are different alloys and thicknesses, but the common thread is that they all start as nothing more than a simple sheet.

The Wrong Way: There are some out there that confuse seamless bells with true one piece bells. Seamless bells are formed from either a single piece of tubing or by electroplating a thick layer of metal onto a bell mandrel. Both of these methods have their advantages. We use seamless tube bells for our student line of trumpets and cornets. They're inexpensive and durable while providing easy tonal production.

However, these bells offer little in the way of projection or character. Electroplated bells allow us, and others, to produce copper bells at an affordable price. However, these are a long way from hand hammered, one piece bells in terms of performance.



How is the pattern made?

The Right Way: Simply put, the pattern is made by cutting the brass sheet to shape ... ideally by hand. That is, someone lays a template over the brass, scribes an outline, and uses shears to cut along that line. No stamping, no laser cutting, no computer controlled cutting tools at all. In fact, if we got rid of our electric shears and went back to manual tin snips, cutting a bell pattern would look just like it did before the Great War.

The Wrong Way: Keep reading. This and the next two "Right Ways" are covered by just one "Wrong Way" used by some of our biggest competitors.

How is the seam formed/brazed?

The Right Way: After the pattern is cut, it's placed in a hand press. Here the flat pattern is bent in bringing the two outside edges together. Basically, this press is nothing more than a table with a slot down the middle. The pattern is laid on this table with the slot running from tail to flare. A lever is pulled and the craftsman's strength is used to push a piece of steel through the slot taking the brass along with it. This folds the brass pattern in half. Then a hand tool is used to cut tiny notches at set intervals along the length of the pattern. The notches work to lock the sides together and form a perfect seam. This seam is then hammered, by hand, tightly together. From here, it's on to the torch room where the seam is brazed, again by hand, using a special brazing paste and torch. It's a hot, noisy job, but one that requires the human touch to be done just right. After being brazed, the pattern begins to look like a trumpet bell for the first time. It may be a burned trumpet bell that was just run over by a steamroller, but a trumpet bell nonetheless.



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How is the blank formed?

The Right Way: This is where things get interesting and a hand hammered bell gets its name. It's at this point the hammers come out. The burned, flattened bell pattern is taken into the aptly named Hammer Room. Here, the craftsmen involved start by "opening up" the pattern. In a nutshell they slide the pattern over a vertical, steel bell mandrel and repeatedly force it down onto the steel. Think of it as if they were trying to throw the bell straight down over and over again. The action forces the tight pattern to open up, meeting the mandrel's taper. They're beginning to open the throat of the bell, but we're still a long way from finished.

Once the throat is opened, it's hammer time. The pattern is again placed on a steel bell mandrel only this time it's horizontal. Large wooden and/or rawhide mallets are used to, let's just say, caress the brass to shape. Every inch of the bell's surface from tail to flare rim are hit again and again as the bell is formed. The blows rain down like a one sided prizefight until the shape is just right.

This step is the key to what makes a hand hammered bell so special. Keep in mind that throughout this hammering the brass is work hardened. The brass must be re-softened via torch annealing to continue. It's this hammering, hardening, softening, hammering, hardening, softening, etc... that gives the bell its truly unique tonal characteristics. Some think it's the lateral seam that's the key to a hand hammered, one piece bell's superiority over two piece designs. The theory is that a two piece bell's radial seam blocks resonance traveling through the bell while the lateral seam does not. While the seam plays a part to the bell's overall performance, it's just a small part of the whole. If the key was the seam, a seamless bell should be the best of the bunch because there is no hindrance at all. No, the real magic comes from the extremely complex and time intensive tempering of the brass. The kind of tempering you can only achieve with strong arms, a hammer, and a torch.



The Wrong Way: As I mentioned before, this "Wrong Way" is the competitions' answer to the three previous "Right Ways" we practice when crafting a true hand hammered bell.

Like us, many of the competition start with a simple piece of brass sheet. However, the similarities end there. Rather than cutting the bell pattern and forming it into a blank with little more than the skilled hands of a craftsman, the majority of work is done by machine.

The brass sheet is fed into a hydraulic forming press. Here, the sheet is sandwiched between a mold and a hydraulic bladder. The bladder is inflated and, under thousands of pounds of brute force, the brass is forced to the mold. This exposes the brass sheet to an extremely high amount of pressure and stress. Due to its lack of touch and feel, the machine only knows one thing, go from flat to formed. After this forming, the excess material of the sheet is cut away and you're left with what looks like a bulbous, overly inflated trumpet bell split down the middle.

To form the bell's seam the blank is put into another hydraulic press and bent to bring the two sides together. Again, no feel, no touch, just unbent and bent. Once the seam is brazed, the blank is already recognizable as a trumpet bell. It's now that the hand hammering is done. However, since the bulk of the forming was done in the hydraulic press before a hammer was ever swung, it takes very little time and very few blows to achieve the desired shape. Less hand hammering means things move along much faster. It also means there is much less annealing needed. Think back, remember when I said the real key to a hand hammered, one piece bell was the hammering and annealing? All of that great tempering of the brass is sacrificed here for speed. Sadly, in the world of manufacturing faster equals cheaper and, in some minds, that means better. Now I guess you could argue that some hammering is better than none and you'd be right. Although, that's like saying \$5 is better than none, but wouldn't you rather have \$500?

How is the bell spun?

The Right Way: When it leaves the hammer room, a hand hammered, one piece bell looks more like a brass funnel than a trumpet bell. It takes a pretty good imagination to see the shape of things to come. The journey of turning this rough looking funnel into a full fledged trumpet bell comes with it's first round of spinning.

Rather than being spun on a mandrel, like every other bell, it's slid inside a special cup and hand spun to form a rough bell flare. This inside out spinning is used because of the rough shape of the funnel. This is the only way to ease it into a traditional bell shape. Trying to go from funnel right to a finished bell would expose the brass to damaging stress and metal fatigue. After this first spinning, the bell is pretty ugly, but it's starting to shape up.



Continued on page 7...

Quantity vs. Quality: A Delicate Balance

By Brett Getzen

As many of you, dealers and retail customers alike, know some Getzen instruments are hard to come by these days. We face concerns about delayed delivery just about everyday. While building to order is better than having bloated inventory sitting on the shelf, people will only wait so long before they move on and buy another instrument. What's the deal?

When you compare the last few years to 10-15 years ago, our production numbers are down. That's despite the addition of new employees and the institution of new manufacturing techniques and processes. At the same time, our annual orders have been steadily increasing for almost every model. More orders plus less output equals long back orders. For a few specific models, we started the 2008 fiscal year with more instruments on back order from 2007 than we were able to build and ship in the previous twelve months. And I'm not talking about inexpensive student instruments. These are, unfortunately, higher end instruments. Eventually, many of these customers are going to go elsewhere. So what is the answer?

Just up production right? We could easily put the pressure on our people and start forcing horns through. Just crank them out as fast as we can. Maybe even cheapen some horns. We could take a cue from our competitors and cut corners to speed up student and step up production. Maybe even import some lines rather than building them in the US. Or, we could automate some of our production and let machines stamp out more of our horns. After all, a machine doesn't need a break and you don't have to pay it overtime. If we did all of these things, I'm sure we could out pace the last few years with ease and even approach record production highs in no time at all. It would definitely fill our back orders. Delivering on all of those orders means a lot more money coming in while the shorter production time translates to lower costs. Everyone knows what that means... higher profits. That's what business is all about right? Then again, we've all heard some of the horror stories going around these days. "Trumpet X is great... if you can try enough to find a good one." Or, "Every single Trumpet Z is the same... they just don't have any character." My personal favorite, "Sure it doesn't perform like a trumpet, but it looks like one and it was sooooo cheap." Maybe sometimes chasing higher profits isn't the right answer.

Our philosophy is a simple one. Higher production is great and we strive for that every day. However, we will never sacrifice quality and craftsmanship in exchange for upped production and delivery. Could we save time by cutting short the lapping and honing time on student trumpets? Sure. Could we save time by eliminating some of the hand labor on our one piece trumpet bells? You bet. Could we get more trombone slides made if we lowered our standards on plating, barrel shaping, and hand straightening? Definitely. Would our instruments be any good? Nope, but we sure could build them fast.

Years ago, as I got more and more involved in the business, one of my main concerns was quality. I was, and still am, extremely frustrated and discouraged to hear from dealers and players whenever they purchased a horn that was sub par. It was hard not to take those complaints personally. Being the squeaky wheel that I am, I got the grease in the form of being put in charge of establishing our quality levels. I wasn't very popular at times, but I refused to lower the standards I expected from every instrument we built. Having worked in the factory myself, I knew what we were capable of. It took a lot of work and persistence, but over time every goal I set was met and surpassed.

The quality of instruments being delivered today far exceeds those that we built back in 1991. There was a price to pay for those high standards though. Eliminating the pressure for volume and rejecting sub standard instruments will diminish monthly production output. It's a tricky tight rope act, teetering between high quality and high production. In the beginning, we fell from that rope again and again. There were times that our quality took a step back. Other times, our numbers were far below demand. Over time though, we have gotten better at balancing things out. Now, with the addition of people like Jim Stella, we are moving ahead in leaps and bounds. Steps like refining our manufacturing, adding more people, and instilling in our existing employees just what they are capable of are adding up. Everyday we move closer and closer to filling our back orders. At the same time, our finished quality continues to rise. It's a win-win for all of us.

Don't get me wrong, we still have a long way to go. Even with our improvements we realize this is not a time to just sit back and relax. There are always goals to be set and broken. In some cases, even with higher production we don't seem to make any headway. Just ask anyone waiting for a Custom Series tenor or bass trombone. The more we ship, the more that are ordered. Go figure. It's like treading water with a weight belt on. As soon as you get strong enough to raise more than just your nose out of the water, someone adds a few more pounds and the struggle starts all over again.

This past year has taught us a lot of lessons and brought several advancements. New people, ideas, techniques, and equipment are bringing us closer and closer to where we want to be. It's been a long and costly endeavor, but we are committed to it. Remember, at Getzen we only have to answer to ourselves, not a board of directors or sea of faceless stockholders. Cutting corners could benefit us in the short term, but in the long run it's just going to drag us down. After all, what's the long term benefit of quickly delivering a piece of junk to a customer? We're committed to providing you with the finest quality instruments you can find at an affordable price. Most importantly, we're committed to making sure that every one of our instruments is worth the wait. It's my name on every bell and I wouldn't accept anything less.



Showtime!
Nicole Sasser

Nicole Sasser excitedly released her first album during the summer of 2008. Her CD, entitled *Showtime*, showcases her talents as both a trumpet player and singer. It is available for purchase on her website at www.nicolesasser.com.

Mark Sheridan-Robideau, Peter Madsen, Doug Farwell, and Steve Wilson of the *Continental Trombone Quartet* proudly provided the musical accompaniment for the American Repertory Ballet this past October. The Worlds End/Worlds Begin show was held as a fundraiser to benefit the Highland Park, New Jersey group Artists Now.



Featured Custom Series Dealer



At *Tulsa Band Instruments* customer service and the personal touch are their top priorities. Unlike some stores, Tulsa's staff is knowledgeable and ready to answer all of your band instrument questions. In addition to sales, they boast Oklahoma's best, full service repair facility.

Tulsa Band proudly carries the Custom Series line along with a wide variety of other Getzen instruments in their Tulsa, Oklahoma store. For more information, visit their website at www.tulsaband.com.



Congratulations

We are very happy to announce another new addition to the Getzen family. On September 27, 2008 on a sunny beach in St. Thomas, Adam Robert Getzen, son of Thomas and LouAnn Getzen, married Leah Ginean Broyles. Both are eager to start their new lives together as husband and wife.

Hand Hammered Bell continued from page 5...

After one last pass through the annealing room, the hand hammered, one piece bell follows the path taken by every other bell we make. It's hand spun on a steel mandrel mounted to a special lathe. Hand spinning is a key aspect of bell making. It's all about the feel of the brass, the resistance of the tool, and the smoothness of the surface. Things much too complex for an automated system to monitor and react to efficiently. Yet again, the key to quality lies in the skilled hands of a trained craftsman.

The Wrong Way: Once again, superior craftsmanship is sacrificed for speed. Robo-spinners go from start to finish in one mighty pass. As before, there's no feel and no touch, just unspun and spun. Their job is to smash the brass into place rather than smoothly easing it down to size. Think of it in carpentry terms. Say you're building a table and need to cut a board to length. You can do it with either an axe or a circular saw. The end result might be the same, two pieces of wood, but the quality of the two pieces couldn't be farther apart. What's the old saying? There's the fast way and then there's the right way.

The real kicker in this whole thing comes when you realize that the "Wrong Ways" mentioned in this article are actually the best of the bunch. Some manufacturers completely skip the hammering process and rely solely on hydro-forming to go from brass sheet to the spinning lathe. Almost every benefit of a true one piece bell is lost. The worst offenders are those that hammer their bells for nothing more than show. Just so they can market them as hand hammered. I once saw an ad for a trumpet hailing its hand hammered bell. The ad featured a photograph of a finished bell on a mandrel being tapped with a ball peen hammer. Sure there's a hand, a hammer, and a bell, but that's not exactly the right idea guys.

Keep all of this in mind the next time you hear or read the term "hand hammered, one piece bell". While the description might be technically accurate, there's a lot more to it than mere technicalities. When a salesman tells you how great a trumpet is because of its bell, ask him some of the above questions. He might not know the answers, but if he answers them all with the "Right Ways" mentioned here chances are he's trying to sell you a Getzen.

What if all manufacturers
put quality ahead of
profit margins?



Elkhorn, Wisconsin U.S.A.

www.Getzen.com ♦ info@getzen.com

Then they would be more like Getzen.

That's because Getzen believes in offering superior instruments at any price. Premiums such as hand spun bells, hand lapped valves, and a family tradition of craftsmanship can be found on even the least expensive Getzen instrument. That is four generations of American made quality at a price that's hard to beat.