

## Breaking Up the “Boys Club”



*Kiku is currently performing trumpet exclusively on a Getzen 3001MV Artist Model Mike Vax trumpet.*

Think of some great American trumpet players. Everyone can come up with an impressive list of players both past and present. Now, go back through that list and pick out the women. What’s that you say? There aren’t any? Hmm. Now take a look at your local band programs. How many females occupy the seats in the junior high, high school, or college trumpet sections? I’m guessing not too many. These are exactly the trends Kiku Collins is hoping to bring to an end.

Kiku started her trumpet career in a small, New Jersey town following in the footsteps of her older, trumpet playing brother. By the age of 12 her skills were becoming apparent despite being one of the only females in her school band. At age 16, after spending two summers in their National Music Camp, she earned herself a scholarship and a place in the prestigious Interlochen Arts Academy in Michigan. From there, Kiku went on to study classical performance at the Manhattan School of Music under the tutelage of her mentor, Dr. Mel Broiles. He constantly encouraged her, as one of his few female students, to fight on and pursue her dreams. His words have stuck with her and have helped shape the successful career she has now.

In 2006, Kiku’s career took the biggest jump to date. After years of playing with her own group, sitting in with other artists, and countless studio sessions, she landed the role of Beyonce Knowles’ trumpet player. The next year was a whirlwind. Performing with Beyonce and her band for numerous television appearances, multiple music videos, and a world tour befitting a pop superstar.

Somehow, through it all, she was able to write, arrange, and record her own jazz album. *Here With Me* is an instrumental album featuring Kiku on flugelhorn and also her multi-tracking on trumpet and trombone. The album debuted to rave reviews, opening doors for the trumpeter including an invite to headline two brass festivals in Europe. First with The Brass Group in Palermo, Italy and second the Durham Brass Festival in Durham, England. Even more impressive is the fact that, despite performing with Beyonce and promoting her own album, Kiku still found the time and energy to continue with her hectic NYC schedule. Playing gigs around the city, sitting in on recording sessions with other artists, and most importantly raising her six year old daughter.

What does the future hold for Ms. Collins? She’s continuing to promote *Here With Me* while working on album number two. As usual, she can be found performing her solo work all over NYC. You can also catch her playing around town with other artists/groups like Psycho the Clown and Voltaire to name a few. Biggest of all is that she is joining Michael Bolton as the lead trumpet for his current American tour. Pretty good for a girl in a supposedly all boys club. A fact Kiku expects isn’t lost on her young fans. She hopes that her talent, style, and success can inspire the next generation of female trumpet players.

You can learn more about Kiku Collins by visiting her at [www.myspace.com/kikucollins](http://www.myspace.com/kikucollins) or at [www.kikucollins.com](http://www.kikucollins.com). Her site includes a bio, blog, schedule, photo album, music samples, and more. Her album, *Here With Me*, is available from [www.innova.mu](http://www.innova.mu), [www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com), and for download via iTunes.

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# Daily Warm Up for Elementary Brass Players

By Bobby Herriot

(Edited and reprinted from September 1972 *Getzen Gazette*)

## 1. WITH THE LIPS ONLY

Try to make a buzzing sound by forcing the air through the lips. To do this, put your mouth in the same position needed when you put the trumpet up to your lips. Grip the muscles in the corner of the mouth FIRMLY, but not tight. Now put your tongue behind the TOP teeth and release the air and sound between the lips. Don't worry about producing any particular note. Just be happy if a sound comes out. Do this approximately 6 times to get the lips loose and vibrating properly.

## 2. WITH THE MOUTHPIECE

Take the mouthpiece in your left hand and place it on your lips in the NORMAL playing position. Take a deep breath and play the following exercises. If you need help finding the notes, you may use your trumpet to play the first note to get it into your ear. A piano would be better though. Just be sure to play through all three exercises with just your mouthpiece.



Please note that frequent rests are needed during the initial stages of playing. It is extremely important that these rests are observed during the warm up period and during all practice sessions.



## 3. WITH THE TRUMPET

Hold the trumpet in your left hand and place your right hand in playing position. With your three playing fingers perfectly on TOP of the finger buttons and your pinky OUT of the pinky ring repeat exercises A, B, and C

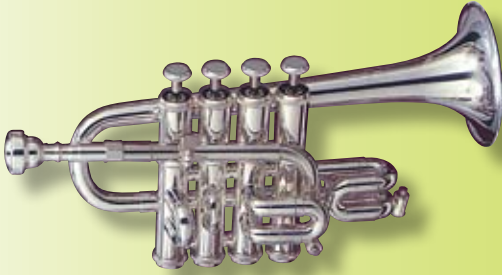
This warm up should be done every day before attempting to play any other exercises or tunes. If it becomes a habit, which it should, then the rest of your playing will be made much easier resulting in better control over the trumpet.

## Blast From The Past...

Jim Cullum Sr. (clarinet) and Jim Cullum Jr.  
(cornet) cut a little loose harmony!

— *Getzen Gazette*  
December, 1964





## Getzen and Blackburn: A Perfect Combination

After working with well known trumpet maker Cliff Blackburn, Getzen is eager to announce an exciting addition to the 940 Eterna piccolo trumpet. Beginning in late 2007, all 940 Eterna short model piccolos will come standard with a set of Blackburn leadpipes. This is a response to the overwhelming number of comments we have received from players expressing their belief that using Blackburn leadpipes with the 940 elevates the overall quality and playability of the 940 piccolo.

## For Your Viewing Pleasure

The Getzen production video library has been expanded yet again. This time visitors to the "Inside Getzen" section of [www.Getzen.com](http://www.Getzen.com) can watch a trumpet body being mounted, a trombone bell being buffed, and see a sheet bell stem is hand formed into shape. This adds to the impressive list of videos available for down loading including bell spinning and the brazing of a trumpet valve section.



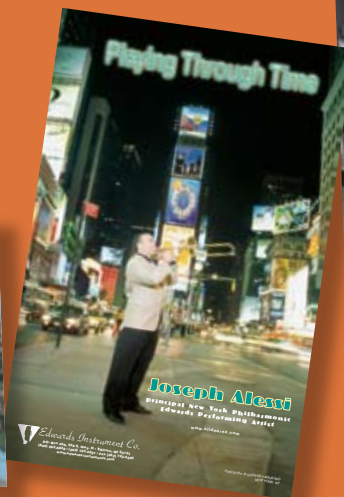
## Decorate Your Bandroom On US

Attention school band directors: Tired of the boring, blank wall space in your bandroom? Want something to spice it up a bit? With our help, you can now decorate your bandroom for the cost of a postage stamp.

Simply snail mail a poster request to us on your school letterhead and we'll ship you one of each of our promotional posters highlighting instruments and artists from both the Getzen Company and Edwards Musical Instruments. As an added bonus, we'll include some current and back issues of the Getzen Gazette featuring several educational and informative articles.

Mail your requests to:

**Decorate with Getzen**  
**PO Box 440**  
**Elkhorn, WI 53121**



# *How to Play Test an Instrument*

*By Charlie Miller*

(Edited and reprinted from April 1978 Getzen Gazette)

How many times have you seen someone play test an instrument and spend most of his/her effort trying to hit that high F? Or try to perform a passage that they would find difficult on their own instrument? Testing one's abilities rather than the instrument will only lead to frustration and teach you nothing about the horn being tested. So what should we look for when we test a new instrument?

I believe when you're testing a new instrument, you should do only that. You should be finding out just what that instrument will do for your playing. What are its limitations? This is important because the instrument chosen is what you'll be living with every day and you'll either enjoy it or fight it for a long time. So here are some suggestions we all might consider when trying out a new instrument.

## **1. Quiet Please**

Find a private room for your first encounter with the instrument. I believe it's preferable to be in a room neither totally built for sound or too live and all echo. This way you'll be in a middle of the road acoustically speaking. This will give you insight into the instrument in the average acoustical situation you may be performing in.

## **2. What Will It Do?**

This is the main point of play testing. Try to find out what the instrument can do. Based on how it's built, what is it naturally capable of without you forcing it? What tends to be easy on it? What's more difficult? Play as naturally as you can without changing your style while trying to get the instrument to do something. Any changes you make will be required every time you play the instrument. If you do change something, you'll cause yourself discomfort with the instrument and cut down your general efficiency in proportion.

## **3. Look To The Future**

Chances are you won't get to know an instrument well in one or two sittings, but you can get a good idea of how it will fit into your everyday playing. General practices, formal rehearsals, and live performances. There are certain things about an instrument that can be realized only after playing it a while, but if we watch for them initially, we can get an idea of what to expect from the instrument as we grow into and get used to it. Some examples are: How are the notes placed (Centered? Spread? Do they "lock in"?). What is the uniformity of sound and response over all registers? How's the pitch of various notes (its scale)? How does the instrument project? How do you feel and sound after playing it for an extended period of time? How is the mechanical action of the instrument? Play slowly and listen carefully for these things and any others you may have in mind. This way you can get a clear picture of the characteristics of the instrument in question.

## **4. Blindfold Test**

A way to get some objective opinions about an instrument is to get a few people in a large room with their backs turned and alternately playing different instruments for them. Be sure to tune the instruments with each other and play the same piece more than twice per instrument. This helps ensure that intonation differences won't be misinterpreted as tone quality. It also rules out freshness and fatigue as factors. Each time you play a passage get opinions. If everyone says the same thing you have a good idea it's really so. Do this until you have sufficient feedback on each instrument.

Keep in mind that an instrument is an individual, personal thing. Ask questions and use the ideas of others, but remember that how the instrument feels to YOU is most important. We all differ in our physical make up, such as lung capacity, oral cavity, tooth size and shape, etc... Also, musical likes and preferences are different from musician to musician. After all considerations are made and all opinions are listened too, the most important decision falls back to you. How do YOU feel about it? Always bear in mind that this is the instrument you'll be working with day in and day out. Be sure you know what you're getting into and that you like it for your own purposes. These are a few thoughts on testing new instruments. I'm sure there are many more possibilities. To repeat, I would say the main target is to approach the instrument realistically to find out what it can and can't do. While play testing, avoid becoming personally involved in some difficult passage, high notes, or any other thing that won't really help get the answers you're after.

We all know that the relationship between a musician and his/her instrument is very intimate. We get to know every corner of it and every thing it's capable of. Just how far we can push it to play soft or agile. What it will do in the low to high registers. How hard we can push it to play loud before it breaks up. How the instrument feels in our hands. These are the beautiful things about an instrument. The things that, if we know them well, give us a chance to improve and deliver better. If we know our instrument well, we can then easily monitor our own personal ability and progress. We then know what we can do and what gives us problems. Then, and only then, can we grow and develop our abilities and ambitions as players. Learning not to blame the instrument for a personal shortcoming.

# Basic Concepts In Brass Playing

By *Dr. Leonard A. Candelaria*

(Professor of Trumpet & Artist in Residence, University of Alabama at Birmingham)

Many players seem unaware of the fundamental concept that must remain foremost in the minds of all wind musicians. The concept is that, no matter the style, tempo, volume, or range of music being played, the sounds we produce on our instruments must always possess a vibrant and rich quality of tone that is the product of blowing air in a smooth, flexible, and continuous manner. The following ideas may be of benefit to most brass players.

## AIR CONTROL

1. Always inhale air deeply, calmly and silently.
2. Be sure to inhale in time with the tempo of the music.
3. Think to yourself as you do the following; 1, 2, 3...Breathe...Play
4. Make playing feel as though you were sighing through the horn.
5. Always blow firmly or gently as needed with positive energy!

## PRACTICING TIPS

1. Always begin each practice session by playing soft, slow, and sustained middle-register tones. Never begin by playing loud and high. Without being comfortable in your ability to play your very best tone on each and every note in the mid-range, you should refrain from playing high, fast, or loud.
2. It is better to practice for several short sessions (20 -30 minutes at a time) rather than practicing only once daily for an excessively long period. Rest frequently during each session.
3. While you play each exercise or study, keep one goal in mind the whole time. Do not be satisfied with your playing of the exercise until you achieve your goal on a consistent basis, then pick another goal. Primary goals should always be the relaxed and efficient use of the breath, the production of a rich and resonant tone quality, clear and consistent articulation, and precise fingering.
4. Other basic musical goals are accuracy of pitch and intonation, precise rhythm, following dynamic indications, consistent phrasing, and control of width and speed of vibrato.
5. Always strive to make everything you play sound like beautiful music. This even applies to scales, scale drills, arpeggios, lip slurs, and articulation studies.
6. Repetition is the key to fine playing and effective practice. In order to do the correct things in the correct manner every time we perform, we must do them correctly many times in our practice before they become correct and automatic habits.
7. Remember, both good and bad playing are a matter of habit!
8. We play like we practice and we practice like we play. So practice often and practice well!

## THE TONGUE

1. The air always starts the tone, the tongue just cleans up the front of the note by knocking the “fluff” off the sound.
2. Use the pointed tip of the tongue to articulate in most cases.
3. Flick the tongue positively and quickly as you blow and think of saying “Too”. Think of saying “Too” and “Hoo” as though they were two parts of one word: “Too-Hoo” then becomes “T-hoooooo.”
4. Now say “T-hoo” several times in succession with no spaces between the individual articulations. This is the basic manner most repeated articulations should be played.
5. Use “Too” for rhythmic styles of articulation and “Doo” for most melodic styles.

## FINGERING

1. The fingers of the right hand should be slightly curved with the fleshy pads of the fingertips directly over or touching their respective valve buttons. The thumb should rest under the lead pipe with the tip of the thumb touching the space between the first and second valve casings. Overall finger dexterity will be enhanced if the little finger is free to move without using the finger hook.
2. The fingers manipulate the valves so that the valves move as quickly as possible from up to down, or down to up. The action of the fingers should be smooth, firm, and positive.
3. Coordination between the air, the tongue, the fingers, the lips, and the tempo/rhythm is the primary concern.
4. Practice all difficult technical passages slowly and carefully many, many, many times before attempting to play at a faster tempo. Use a metronome to ensure accurate rhythm.
5. In fast passages, think of “banging” the valves down with good rhythm to clean up the execution.

## THE EMBOUCHURE

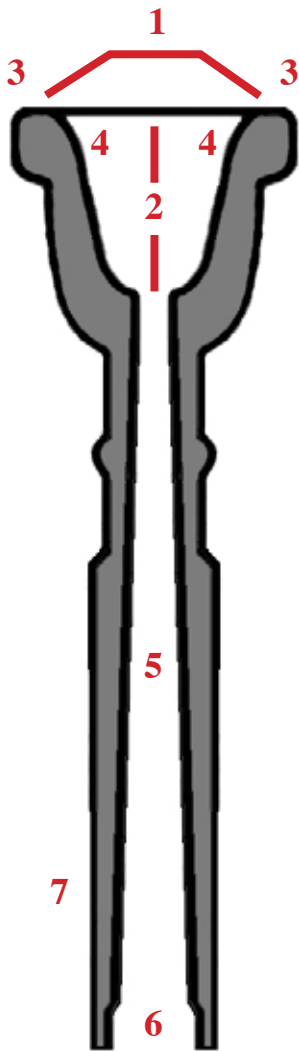
1. The lips must always be together and touching before the tone starts.
2. Firm the corners of the mouth by making “dimples” or by “krinkling” the corners of the mouth.
3. Buzzing the lips alone without the mouthpiece is commonly termed “free buzzing.” One or two minutes of “free buzzing” is an excellent way to begin each practice session. With the center of the lips firm (not tight or rigid) and lightly touching, blow firmly and steadily as you silently say the word “POO”. With a little practice, the lips should vibrate or “buzz” freely. You should be able to sustain the vibration for a few seconds. The vibration that results could sound like “P-uzz”. Whether the resultant pitch is high or low is less important than producing and sustaining a free and vibrant “buzz”. Later, superimpose the consonant sound of the letter “T” over the “P”, changing “POO” to “TOO”. Now use “TOO” to start tones.
4. To buzz on the mouthpiece follow the same approach as outlined above, but do these things on the mouthpiece alone. You may have to blow more firmly with the mouthpiece than you did with the lips alone. Keep the corners of your mouth firm and the center of your lips (inside the cup of the mouthpiece where the sound is made) should be relaxed but touching.
5. Learn to sustain high and low sounds on the mouthpiece as well as slurring from low to high and back down. Sustain the mouthpiece tone by sustaining the movement of the wind (the blowing of air). Also practice articulating connected repeated tones without creating space between the notes.
6. The sound quality of the mouthpiece tone is important. It must be free blowing and vibrant with lots of ‘buzz’ in the sound. Use lots of air and play at mezzo forte or forte.
7. Practicing problematic passages on the mouthpiece, regardless of their technical nature or musical style, is often the fastest way to improve the playing of the same passage on the horn.
8. An effective approach is to play a passage, buzz it, and play it again.

# Dimensional Characteristics of the Trumpet Mouthpiece

By Dr. Maury Deutsch

(Reprinted and edited from the September 1979 Getzen Gazette)

There is nothing more crucial for a successful trumpet or cornet career than a proper fitting mouthpiece. This clearly points out the importance of a qualified instructor for the beginning student. A pitfall that faces many young trumpeters is an orgy of mouthpiece changes. This is frequently the result of an unwarranted belief that qualities such as range, tone, endurance, flexibility, etc... can be magically improved by a mouthpiece change. This article aims to clarify the functions and interactions of the dimensional mouthpiece characteristics and is not intended to encourage a self-induced mouthpiece change. Basic criteria for judging the efficiency of a mouthpiece are: 1) The tone possible in the lower register, 2) The ease of playing in the legitimate upper register, and 3) The lip flexibility obtainable in the middle register.



**Cup Diameter (1):** The component most frequently mentioned when seeking a new mouthpiece is cup diameter. A large cup diameter favors both amplitude (tonal volume) and lower register play. The resulting tone has a mellow quality because the energy principally resides in the fundamental and lower to middle partials. With a medium cup diameter, the air pressure forces more of the energy into the upper partials with a corresponding increase of brilliance. A small cup diameter favors the highest partials. The tone then acquires an almost metallic quality.

**Cup Depth (2):** Playing in the lower and middle registers is easier with a deep cup. The deep cupped mouthpiece, with its more mellow tone and greater volume, is frequently recommended for playing hymns. A shallow cup provides a greater rebound of vibratory energy. This energy return interacts with the lip vibrations resulting in an increase of vibratory intensity. High notes of metallic quality are consistent with a very shallow cup. A popular innovation used by many jazz artists is the double cup mouthpiece, i.e. a shallow cup progressing into a deeper cup. The shallow portion subtly aids the upper register and the deeper segment helps volume. A negative consequence of this is the loss of acoustical energy due to the greater number of reflective surfaces. Higher pitched trumpets (relative to the standard Bb trumpet) naturally require a narrower diameter and a shallower cup for maximum playing efficiency. On the contrary, lower pitched trumpets require both a wider diameter and a deeper cup.

**Outer Rim (3):** The outer rim cushions the instrument's impact on the lips and teeth. A narrow rim will subtly increase lip flexibility (less of the lip is demobilized). However, there is the danger of lip irritation from impact over a relatively narrow area. A wider outer rim (cushion rim) acts to aid the play of the upper register by increasing the overall lip tension. However, the vice like effect of the broad rim is a detriment to flexibility.

**Inner Rim Edge (4):** The principal function of the inner rim edge is to provide termination points for vibrating lips. This is analogous to the opposite terminal points of a vibrating string. A moderately sharp inner rim makes for greater playing precision and accuracy of attacks. Too sharp an edge can cause lip discomfort and also interferes with lip flexibility. Too rounded of an inner edge has a negative influence on clean attacks and accurate intonation. However, greater flexibility is possible.

**Throat (5):** Although a large throat favors a greater volume of tone, there is difficulty in playing pianissimo, especially in the upper register. The greater air pressure required to play the upper register frequently causes these tones to be slightly sharp. A narrow throat opening makes the high notes easier, but can weaken the lower register. The backwash of vibrations interacting with lip tension results in a nasal quality at lower dynamics and a metallic quality at louder dynamics. Some trumpet

players extend the throat opening (without increasing the diameter) in order to obtain still greater resistance. The upper register is made easier, but there are negative consequences. The overcompensation required of the embouchure makes low notes slightly sharp and high notes slightly flat.

**Backbore (6):** The back bore is encased within the shank. Too small a backbore does not permit sufficient energy to reside in the fundamentals. The result is a nasal quality as energy falls in the middle partials. In addition, the upper register has a tendency to be flat. Too large a backbore makes playing precision more difficult. Also, the upper register has a tendency to be sharp.

Remember that the ideal mouthpiece for you cannot be determined without playing it. The choice must be based on your lip, mouth, teeth, and facial characteristics. A cardinal rule is to avoid extremes in each of the constituent parts of a mouthpiece. One must choose a mouthpiece that not only meets the specific needs of the player at the time, but one that also provides the versatility to meet future needs. It is important for us all to realize that choosing a mouthpiece is more of an art than a science.

As an aside, not all mouthpieces are made of metal. Louis Armstrong carved a mouthpiece out of wood when he was a youth. Plastic mouthpieces have some advantages. The softer plastic material has a subtle positive effect on flexibility. However, intonation and clarity of attack is slightly inferior due to the lack of the firmer support from a metal mouthpiece. The greatest advantage of a plastic mouthpiece is the added comfort they provide when performing outdoors during cold weather.



**Tom Getzen** (center) met with **Mike Vax** (right) following Mike's performance with the University of Wisconsin Marching Band during their annual Spring Concert.

Tom's grandson **Dylan Linhart**, trombonist, attended the concert as well and was excited to get to meet Mike after the show.



**Dave Surber** (right), Getzen Sales Manager, welcomed **Sky McCain** (left) to Elkhorn from England. Sky is a trombonist with the Hartland Town Band and was interested in trying some of Getzen's wares while in the United States on business.



**Mike Vax** (left) and **Jim Stella** (right) met with **Vladimir Antselevich** (center) during the 2007 ITG conference. Vladimir traveled to ITG from Israel and was happy to play and later purchase a 3001MV Artist Model trumpet.



**Tom Getzen** (right) welcomes Willson President **Willi Kurath** (left) to the Getzen Company in Elkhorn.

## An Exciting New Partnership

An exciting new era has begun with the creation of a new partnership between the Getzen Company, Inc. and Willson Band Instruments of Switzerland. Following a very productive visit from Willi Kurath in September, Getzen is pleased to announce that it will be the new United States distributor of Willson band instruments. Particularly, Willson's stellar line of tubas, euphoniums, French horns, and other background brass.

"This is an exciting time for both companies," commented Tom Getzen. "The partnership of two storied, family owned businesses should be a refreshing change of pace in an industry filled with corporate giants and takeovers these days."

Beginning October 1, 2007 Willson instruments will be available for sale by Getzen District Managers. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact the Getzen at 1-800-366-5584 or via email at [information@getzen.com](mailto:information@getzen.com). The full line of Willson instruments can also be seen by visiting [www.swissprofi.ch/willson](http://www.swissprofi.ch/willson)



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