

THE BASIC CARUSO

Five exercises for trumpet

by

Markus Stockhausen

Exercises

Dedicated with gratitude to
Carmine Caruso

Dear friends and trumpet colleagues,

Finally, I can show you the exercises that I found very beneficial years ago, that have already helped quite a few players. Do them with care and dedication. They are wonderful medicine.

Good luck, Markus



Meeting Carmine Caruso

In January 1978, I came to New York. It was a winter with heavy snow, and New York was peaceful and quiet. I contacted Marvin Stamm, whom I admired from his recordings with the Pat Williams Orchestra, and told him that I would like to have lessons with him. He said that instead of taking a lesson with him I should go to his teacher, Carmine Caruso, which I did. Nevertheless, I had a good time with Marvin; he took me several times to studio sessions, giving me the opportunity to feel the scene and meet other players like Allen Rubin and Lew Soloff. I also witnessed the Maynard Ferguson Band rehearsing somewhere in a New York hotel. It was a great experience at that time.

I had seven lessons with Carmine. Each time, he would write the next exercise for me on a little sheet of paper. In the beginning, I believe I just had the „six notes,“ but by the end of the month, I had the full system. At this time, a book of his exercises was in preparation, but had not yet been released. I had the impression that he wasn't too happy with the results. Though he had a system, his approach to teaching was to work with each student as an individual.

His studio was dusty and contained old bookshelves full of music and an electric fan. The heating in the room made it very hot, so he wore an undershirt when he taught, even in this cold winter. Often he wore headphones while I played, the kind they use in airports. I now understand why he wore these because the trumpet is often loud to my ears also. I too sometimes use plugs or phones when I play or teach a lot.

Carmine was very kind to me, like a father. His eyes were loving, yet distant at the same time. He was very patient, and very clear - to the point. He recognized all the struggles I was going through at the time. I played with a dry embouchure - especially the top lip - but this presented a problem during concerts when I sweated a great deal, especially when the spotlights were focused upon me. His pedal tone exercises followed by the chord pedals gave me a wet embouchure, producing much better playing results.

Carmine's exercises focused my embouchure, gave me strength and endurance, and developed my high register. At times, I would overdo practicing these exercises. The soft-loud-soft exercises as well as the loud-soft-loud ones were especially very strenuous to me when practicing them on a daily basis.

Nevertheless I continued practicing Carmine's exercises for quite some years, though not always with regularity. Within time, I found my own way - being a little more moderate, not applying the full system. In this way it worked for me and for many of my students and friends to whom I showed them. I called these exercises „The Basic Caruso“, and this is what I would like to now explain to you, dear reader.

To finish my story: I met Carmine Caruso only once more in 1981 for one lesson, but this was not a good period for me, and I could not go deeply into it with him. After the lesson though, we went out for dinner, and he was very kind to me.

I do the exercises only from time to time now, whenever I feel the need to focus my embouchure or prepare for a hard trumpet concerto. Often, just doing the „six notes“, the body remembers everything immediately, and I am able to play up and down without any further warm ups. It is magical how the body can reproduce results that have been properly programmed. In fact, this is the basis for Carmine's system - as well as those of others, of course - that the cells have memory.

I am truly grateful to Carmine for his teaching. I consider his system unique, one of the authentic approaches to successful trumpet playing. For me, it is the „East Coast System“ as opposed to the „West Coast System“ of James Stamp whom I met for three lessons in Switzerland in 1979. Done with intelligence, patience and care Carmine's system produces wonderful results. For me, it was a gift.

In the summer 1978, the year following my first lessons with Carmine, my father, Karlheinz Stockhausen, composed for me „Michael's Journey Around the Earth“, a fifty-minute trumpet concerto written for the Ensemble Intercontemporain that also includes other soloists. It is extreme in many ways - long and high, with very low precisely notated pedal notes, requiring flexibility and good endurance. Without the preparation by Carmine, I would hardly have been able to play the piece.

Now we come to the exercises.

Very important to notice: The active breathing before each exercise - two beats breathing out (exhaling) and two beats breathing in (inhaling) while keeping time by patting your foot, combined with a breath attack on the first note, are the essential to practicing these exercises.



The Basic Caruso

five exercises by Markus Stockhausen

These exercises are based on what I learned from Carmine Caruso in 1978 in New York. During the years I developed my own way of doing them for daily routine or preparing myself for difficult work to come.

There are six basic rules to observe:

1. Tap your foot 1+2+3+4+ (tempo about 60 bpm) throughout the exercise, with a clear up and down movement. The reason is: one muscle controls all other muscles. Because of the foot, these exercises are played sitting.
2. Breathe through the nose only (to ensure that the embouchure doesn't move).
3. Keep the mouthpiece on the lips throughout the exercise. The embouchure shall remain in its position even during the bars of rest, only the pressure can and should be removed, so that the blood circulation refreshes the lip.
4. The first note of each exercise is always played with a breath attack (b), the later notes attacked (t=tongue) or slurred, as indicated.
5. Always, before each exercise and during the bars of rest, breathe out two beats completely (!) and inhale two beats. In the high register the tempo can be reduced while breathing out and in, to avoid hyperventilation.
6. Keep the flow steady, play always at a medium dynamic level.

1. Six Notes

tap your foot
mouthpiece on
breathe through the nose only
2 beats out - two beats in

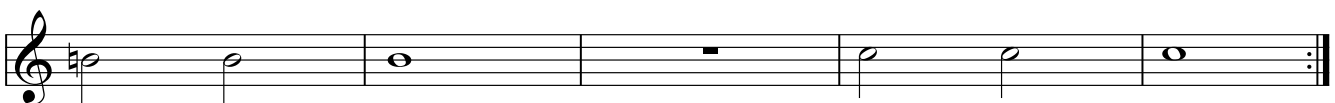
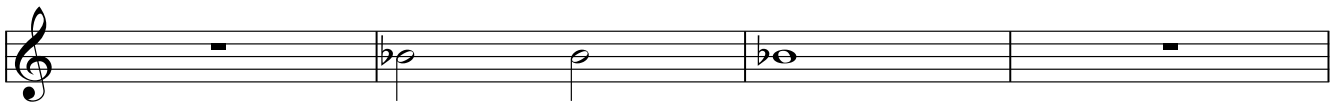
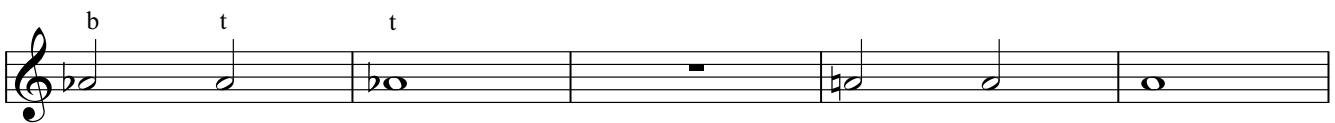
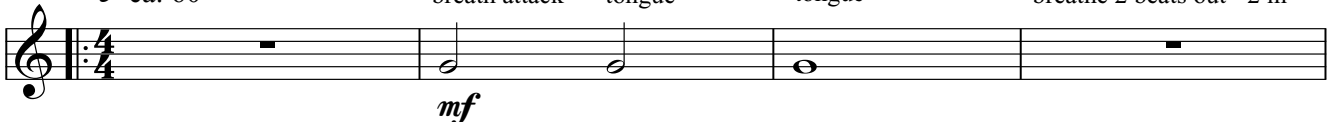
♩=ca. 60

breath attack

tongue

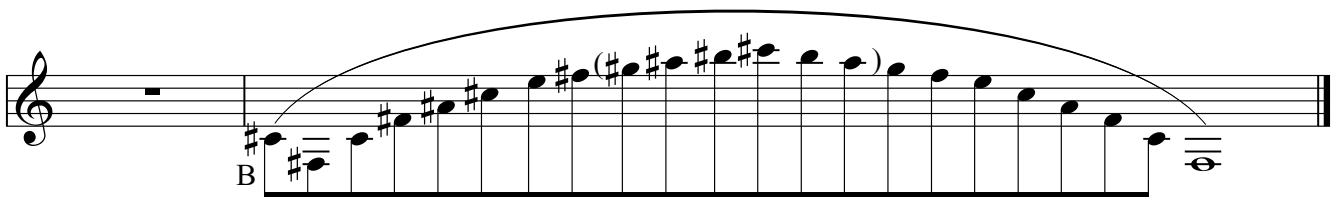
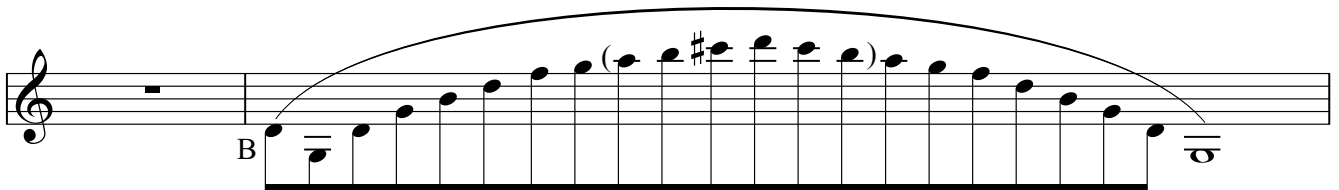
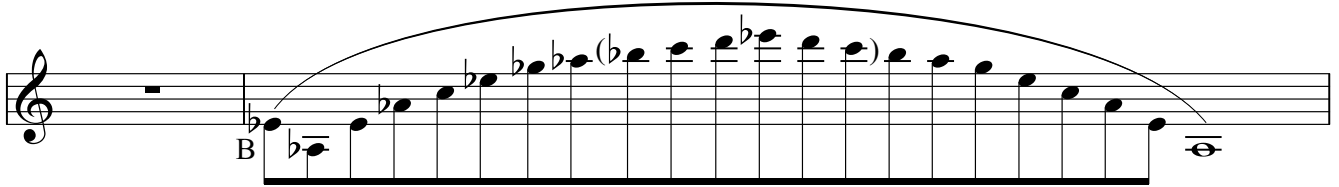
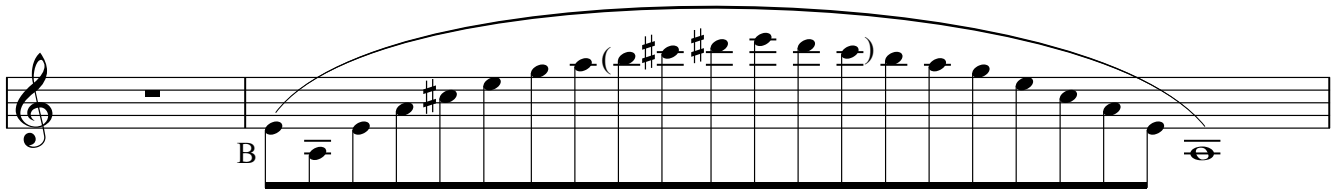
tongue

breathe 2 beats out - 2 in



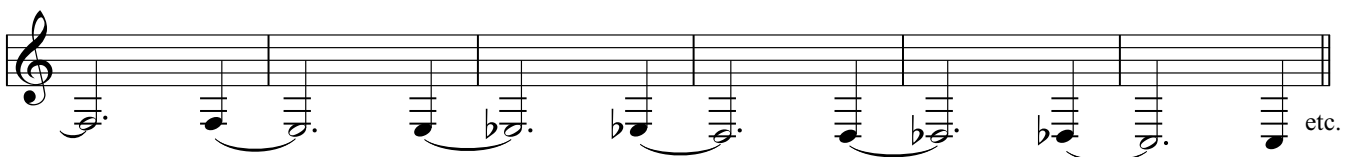
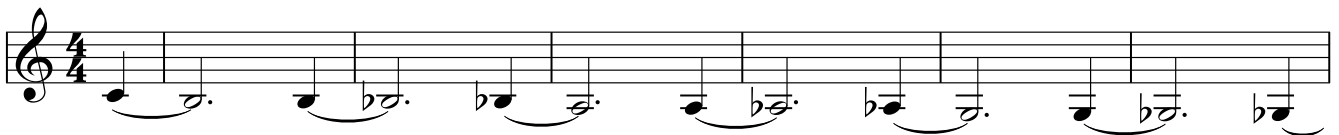
repeat without taking
the mouthpiece off

Rest for a short time before playing the "Seconds".
If you are a beginner you might just play the "Six Notes"
once or twice a day for at least a week.



4. Chromatic Pedals

Only in this exercise is the breathing normal.



as low as you can go,
up to three octaves down
see fingering chart on page 8

Complete the chromatic pedals with a chromatic scale

Go only as high as you were able to go with the seconds today

5. Chord pedals

Start as high as you were able to go with the seconds today and play a major-arpeggio three or four octaves down. Continue chromatically.

etc., transpose down chromatically

Variation: after playing it twelve times, start again from the high note and add another octave down. If you before were playing three octaves down, play now four octaves and continue the arpeggios as far down as possible.

Complete this exercise with one major scale and the parallel melodic minor scale, either 3 octaves or less up & down. Change your scales from day to day.

For example: C-major / A-minor melodic

Valve fingerings for the pedal register

0 2 1 12 23 13 123 1 12 23 13 123

(123) (123) (123) (123)

A musical staff with a treble clef. It contains 12 measures, each with a single note. Above each note is a number representing a valve fingering. The notes are: G4 (0), A4 (2), B4 (1), C5 (12), D5 (23), E5 (13), F5 (123), G5 (1), A5 (12), B5 (23), C6 (13), D6 (123). The notes from G5 onwards are written in a lower register, with a sharp sign above the G5 note.

123
(0)

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

A musical staff with a bass clef. It contains 12 measures, each with a single note. Above each note is a number representing a valve fingering. The notes are: G3 (123), A3 (0), B3 (0), C4 (0), D4 (0), E4 (0), F4 (0), G4 (0), A4 (0), B4 (0), C5 (0), D5 (0). The notes from G4 onwards are written in a lower register, with a sharp sign above the G4 note.

0 2 1 12 23 13 123 1 12 23 13 123 123
(0)

A musical staff with a bass clef. It contains 13 measures, each with a single note. Above each note is a number representing a valve fingering. The notes are: G3 (0), A3 (2), B3 (1), C4 (12), D4 (23), E4 (13), F4 (123), G4 (1), A4 (12), B4 (23), C5 (13), D5 (123), E5 (123). The notes from G4 onwards are written in a lower register, with a sharp sign above the G4 note.

Further comments on

The Basic Caruso

First of all for me these exercises are breathing exercises. They teach you to take a controlled full breath within a certain time. Don't worry about the embouchure, as it will regulate itself. Be very attentive to exhaling completely - no air remains! Then inhale fully, breathing from the lower diaphragm and into the back, then filling the lungs - especially laterally, and finally into the upper chest, without raising the shoulders. I learned this threefold breathing from Hatha Yoga.

General advice: the body must be relaxed in order to take a deep comfortable breath. The more complete the breath, the better the sound. Our breathing capacity is also part of our instrument and serves as resonator. A full breath will give a full sound. Many players choose mouthpieces that are too big because they want to have a big sound, but they breathe poorly, struggling with the high register. Our endurance is 80% dependent upon our breathing. When we get tired, we breathe poorly, and endurance decreases quickly. Therefore, you should not practice for too long a period when being tired. Rather, stop and continue practicing again after a period of rest. In this way, we develop faster. Psychologically speaking, a good feeling remains, making us want to soon play more.

„Seconds“: play as high as possible today until no sound comes out or until you feel you must stop because it has become too taxing. Even when no sound comes out, continue playing just hot air for one more interval so the body gets used to the effort. Then stop the exercise, rest for about 20 seconds, and pick up the exercise where you left it (second setting). In this way you will develop especially your high register.

In all following exercises, do not play higher than you reached when playing the „Seconds“ today. Tomorrow, it may be different.

Already - while playing the „Harmonics“ - things are easier, and you feel the benefit from the „Seconds“.

Don't forget to put the mouthpiece on your lips **before** the first exhalation.

Remember that no one plays at the same level every day. Learn to listen to your body. Challenge yourself when things are going well, but don't force yourself when you are tired or feeling negative. The golden middle way.

Markus Stockhausen, July 2003

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