

“Tannhauser Overture”
(abridged)

Richard Wagner

Scored for 12 trombones

arranged by

Bob Reifsnyder

Music from the

REVOLUTIONARY BONE COLLECTION

VOLUME THREE

About the Composer

"Tannhauser" of Richard Wagner (1813-83) was premiered in Dresden, Germany in 1845. It was the last of three operas to be produced there during his years as Kapellmeister of the city's Opera House (Rienzi and Der Fliegende Hollander are the others). It was completed at approximately the same time as "Macbeth" (1847) and "Damnation of Faust" (1846), with Verdi still in the early stages of his career and Berlioz in the middle of his. It is the second of his operas that is regularly performed in Bayreuth at the famous "Festspielhaus", which was built to premiere the "Ring of the Nibelung" by King Ludwig of Bavaria, Wagner's most important Patron.

Wagner's three early operas were all derivative of other composers. "Die Fliegende Hollander" is the first to be written in a totally original style, although he is still quite a ways away from the total maturity of the Ring of the Nibelung. One still finds arias and traditional operatic choruses, but he is beginning to use musical motives to represent characters and emotions throughout the opera. In Tannhauser, he takes this one step further, but not without one of the finest baritone arias ever composed as well as one of the most memorable choruses in the entire operatic literature. Unfortunately, the complete overture is almost never heard in the opera house, since it was shortened to make room for the "Venusberg" music, which Wagner added for its Paris premiere in 1861. Since this is the same period when he was composing "Tristan und Isolde", the music is too attractive to pass up; the original version of the opera is now almost never produced. Fortunately, Symphony orchestras still frequently program the original overture, which is the basis for this arrangement.

About the arranger

Bob Reifsnyder, a graduate of Interlochen Arts Academy, has two degrees from Juilliard and a Doctorate from Indiana University. As a trombone teacher, he has served on the faculties of the Juilliard Pre-College Division, Indiana University, Indiana State University, and Ithaca College. As a professional trombonist, he has been a member of the West Point band, the National Orchestra of New York, the Spoleto Festival orchestra, Goldman Band, Ringling Brothers, the German orchestras of Bielefeld, Kaiserslautern and Solingen, Terre Haute Symphony, Tri-Cities Opera, Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, Manitowoc Symphony and the Wisconsin Philharmonic. As a gig musician, he has appeared with the Metropolitan Opera, the orchestras of Wuppertal and Dusseldorf in Germany, L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, Chamber Orchestra of Lausanne, Fort Wayne Philharmonic, Syracuse Symphony, Binghamton Pops, Ithaca Opera, the Wisconsin orchestras of Sheboygan, Oshkosh, Green Bay and the Fox Valley Symphony.

Notes for this arrangement


1. **Performance-** These works are designed to add to the performance repertoire of the low brass choir.
2. **Clef reading-** These arrangements will hopefully also serve as advanced clef practice for trombonists playing the top parts. It is unfortunate that clef reading skills don't seem to be a priority for many contemporary trombone teachers, but the ability to transpose at sight remains a prerequisite for becoming an excellent professional musician. Please keep in mind that the first time one has to ask a conductor for a transposed part is likely the last time one will perform with that ensemble!
3. **Scoring-** There is some octave displacement to keep the individual parts within the comfortable range of the performing instruments and to establish the alto trombone as the highest voice.
4. **Range-** The basic range of these transcriptions is from high D to low B. For each of the three quartets, the ideal mix would be alto, .525 bore tenor, .547 bore tenor and bass trombone.
5. **Breathing and Articulation-** There are no breath marks in these transcriptions; that is perhaps the most personal decision a brass player ever makes. There are, however, notes left out in extended passages that would be otherwise impossible to perform well, hopefully in the most appropriate locations. Performers are also encouraged to add slurs whenever it is deemed appropriate.

Tannhauser Overture

$\text{♩} = 70$

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55



mp 3 3 3

mp 3 3 3

dim. p

02

p

The first system of the musical score is written in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking. The tempo is indicated as quarter note = 80. The music features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes, including a triplet of eighth notes. The system concludes with a crescendo (*cresc.*) marking.

8

Bass line musical notation for 'The Rose Tree'. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The time signature is 4/4. The notation includes a double bar line with a repeat sign. Dynamics include *dim.* (diminuendo) and *p* (piano). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, followed by a half note and a quarter note, then a quarter rest, and finally a quarter note.

The bass line of 'The Rose Tree' is written on a single staff in G major (one sharp). It begins with two whole rests. The melody starts on a half note G2, followed by a quarter note A2, a quarter note B2, and a quarter note C3. This is followed by a quarter note B2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note G2. The next measure contains a half note F#2 and a half note E2. The melody then continues with a quarter note D2, a quarter note C2, and a quarter note B1. The final measure consists of a half note A1 and a half note G1. The piece concludes with a final whole note G1. Dynamics include a piano (*p*) marking at the start, a crescendo (*cresc.*) over the first six notes, a forte (*f*) marking at the beginning of the final measure, and a piano (*p*) marking at the very end.

Musical notation for the bass line of 'The Rose Tree'. The key signature is one sharp (F#). The notation consists of a single staff with a bass clef. The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style with eighth and quarter notes. There are four measures of music shown. The first measure starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G2, a quarter rest, and a quarter note F#2. The second measure contains a series of eighth notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3. The third measure starts with a quarter note G2, followed by a quarter rest, a quarter note F#2, and a quarter rest. The fourth measure contains a series of eighth notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3. There are accents (>) above the first and third notes of the second and fourth measures.

[illegible]

172



fp *fp* *p cresc.* *fp* *fp* *cresc.*

121 *accel.*

fp *cresc.* *ff*

128 $\text{♩} = 80$

f *mf*

135

f *mf*

141

f *mf*

148

cresc. *ff* *dim.*

156

p

164

p

173

p *cresc.*

179

p *cresc.* *p* *cresc.* *mf* *p*

184



189



194



198



202



208



213



217



221



225

ff

231

ff

236

ff

242

f *cresc.* *ff*

247

dim. *mf*

253

f

261

cresc. *ff*

268

ff

274

ff

279



285



291



296



302



308



314



322

