

Third Suite, Robert Jager, Alfred Pub.

Reference:

Miles, Richard, Teaching Music through Performance in Band, Vol. 5, pg. 514-522, Carl Kling. GIA Publications. 2010.

Recordings: Many good recordings exist. The recording that is part of the Teaching Music Through Performance in Band, list above is particularly good.

This suite is three short movements that are contrasting in nature. Each movement is typical of the sixteenth century Baroque dance forms. The first movement, March, incorporates shifting meters that create an asymmetrical feel to what is normally a very stable metric form. The second movement is a triple/duple Waltz and is similar to a minuet and trio movement. The third movement Rondo is a stylized tarantella in 6/8.

Each time I play or conduct this piece I always wish I could have the opportunity to meet Robert Jager. I am sure he has a wonderful sense of humor!

The first movement "March" should be approached stylistically as any other march that we play. All quarter notes should be given separation and lift. The asymmetrical structure with the alternating 3 and 4 meters and the 5/4 section gives this march a wonderful and unique feel. The opening theme should be approached with a march feel. Same for the brass statement at letter A.

Letter B is a return of the opening theme with full ensemble. New counter line in WW. I rehearsed this slowly and found that I needed to rehearse an end to each trill for precision and so the line does not drag.

Play the percussion interlude at letter C with confidence.

Letter D serves as the trio section of the march. All 5/4 measures are 3 +2.

Dotted eighth and sixteenth needs careful subdivision of 4.

Meas. 46 is chromatic scale for fl,cl,ob, cornet. Draw in hair pin for crescendo so they do not miss it!

Meas. 51-53 is really 2/4 over the 3/4 meter. It feels and acts like a roll-off! Cool!

Mvt. II.

Shifting meter again a unique and interesting asymmetric waltz feel.

I have conducted these two ways through the years depending on the ensemble. If we can play at the tempo indicated I use a super-metric four pattern for measure 1-44 each measure getting one beat. These are eight measure phrases. If we need to go a little slower, I stay in the traditional 1 pattern.

Meas. 45 & 46, I have stayed in 1 or conducted the quarter, three bars of 2/4, or a large three pattern on the quarter notes and then 47 & 48 are in 1.

Letter C-D I conduct in 1 except for the 4 bar which I do in 2/2.

The two quarters before letter E are molto ritardando! Meas. 83-88 I do in 1. Meas. 89&90 are in three with ritard. Atempo in 1 91-96. I treat the first ending meas. 97&98 the same as 89&90. I stay in three for letter F and then in 4 at 108.

I ask the flute solo to begin the ritard as soon they begin for a more expressive interlude.

Letter G is the recapitulation with the addition of bells at meas. 121.

Meas. 136 begins the coda. Tempos is slightly faster.
I ask one tuba to play the string bass cues meas. 136-139.
Careful attention to articulation to catch the slurred eighth notes.
Be sure cornets understand the tuning tendencies of the cup mute, so the last chord is in tune.

Mvt. III,

Drop the dots on dotted quarters to give it more energy and a maestoso feel in meas. 1&2.
Horn eighths need a light and separated approach without becoming choppy.
The melody at letter A needs to be played with the same articulation each time it is presented.
Rehearse to be sure all are on board stylistically.

Clarinets have a counter melody that begins with an inversion of the main theme. Balance to flute.

Meas. 27 is change to f minor.

Meas. 31&32 quarters need space and energy to the left side of the note to highlight the three groupings.

All eighth notes need to be articulated. Lots of tonguing in this movement!

Careful attention to the articulation patterns in Clar & Euph and then in Cornet and oboe. Its different. It creates a dialogue between the two voices that is really nice.

Return to F major at letter D. Melody is in WW agree on articulation same as first presented!

Letter E isolate and rehearse trombone, tuba, bassoon and snare drum together for rhythmic accuracy.

Meas. 61, I add a staccato articulation to the quarter on beat two each time it occurs throughout. It makes the melody more playful.

I add an accent to the eighth notes 1,3,5 in meas. 66,73,82,89,122,123,129,130. Because we had the three feel over the two earlier in this movement this to me is a reminder of that rhythmic motive. At time the accompaniment aligns.

Letter I is a development section. Several keys are explored.

New addition of xylophone to ascending three pattern of eighth notes. I balance to this because it is new!

Letter K, presto is the return of the A theme after a timpani introduction.

Meas. 169&170 there are two dynamic indications. The forte is in parenthesis others have p with crescendo. I interpreted this as giving the crescendo timbre preference and I needed to find a dynamic for the (f) that allowed the voices with crescendo to be heard.

Meas. 171-174 drop the dots!

Letter M, is closing. Subito p at M.

I have had some luck starting softer and adding a crescendo on the eighth notes in meas.

179&180 to help with cleaner articulation.

It is easy for the volume to get to a point in this movement where the eighth notes get ponderous and lose clarity. Keep volume under control so you maintain ensemble clarity and composer intent and playful character of the movement.