A Performance Guide To Prokofiev: Romeo And Juliet For Solo Tuba

John Christopher DiCesare
West Virginia University, jcdicesare@mix.wvu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd

Part of the Music Performance Commons, and the Music Practice Commons

Recommended Citation
https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd/8149

This Dissertation is protected by copyright and/or related rights. It has been brought to you by the The Research Repository @ WVU with permission from the rights-holder(s). You are free to use this Dissertation in any way that is permitted by the copyright and related rights legislation that applies to your use. For other uses you must obtain permission from the rights-holder(s) directly, unless additional rights are indicated by a Creative Commons license in the record and/or on the work itself. This Dissertation has been accepted for inclusion in WVU Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Problem Reports collection by an authorized administrator of The Research Repository @ WVU. For more information, please contact researchrepository@mail.wvu.edu.
A Performance Guide To Prokofiev: Romeo And Juliet For Solo Tuba

John Christopher DiCesare

Follow this and additional works at: https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/etd

Part of the Music Performance Commons, and the Music Practice Commons
A PERFORMANCE GUIDE TO PROKOFIEV: ROMEO AND JULIET FOR SOLO TUBA

John C. DiCesare

Dissertation submitted to the West Virginia University
School of Music at West Virginia University in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts in
Tuba Performance

Keith Jackson, DMA, Chair
Cynthia Anderson, MM
Alison Helm
Caron McTeer
Travis Stimeling, PhD

School of Music

Morgantown, West Virginia
2020

keywords: Tuba, brass instrument, Sergei Prokofiev

Copyright 2020 John C. DiCesare
Abstract

A Performance Guide to Prokofiev: Romeo and Juliet for Solo Tuba

John C. DiCesare

As the most recent brass instrument to be added to the standard orchestra, the tuba’s solo repertoire is relatively new compared to other orchestral instruments. Ralph Vaughan Williams composed the first major concerto for tuba in 1954, over 100 years after the tuba’s creation in 1835 by Wilhelm Friedrich Wieprecht and Johann Gottfried Moritz. Though many composers—including Bruce Broughton, Eric Ewazen, Paul Hindemith, Gunther Schuller, and John Williams—have written solos for the tuba since Vaughan Williams, performers rely on arrangements and transcriptions of existing works to fill gaps in the repertoire. In 2011, Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s bass trombonist Charles Vernon arranged ten movements of Sergei Prokofiev’s ballet Romeo and Juliet for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Principal Tuba, Gene Pokorny. Sergei Prokofiev is one of the most well-known composers of the 20th century. His works include concerti, chamber music, orchestral music, operas, and ballets; one of his most popular works is the ballet Romeo and Juliet, William Shakespeare’s timeless story of star-crossed lovers. He also used material from the ballet to create three orchestral suites. This performance guide serves as a detailed resource for Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 1, Op. 64, arranged for Tuba and Piano by Charles Vernon. There are many resources that provide historical details and context on the life and works of Sergei Prokofiev, but there are few performance guides for tuba solos, let alone transcriptions of his works. Though the breadth of literature on tuba solos is limited, what is available will be referenced as best as possible. This paper fills a gap in tuba performance guides and provides a needed resource for tubists. There have been transcriptions of Romeo and Juliet movements for other instruments, including trombone, piano, and viola, but no performance guide or literature can be found for tuba. Since Romeo and Juliet was written for orchestra, there are many things to consider when performing a transcription. The player should know what instrument the original melody was written for to inform musical decisions, what character is represented by the theme they are playing, and what drama is accompanying that movement. This arrangement is for solo tuba and piano, so important orchestral lines are played by the piano. This guide helps decipher when the “solo” voice has the melody and is playing a background role. There are also technical challenges since the piece was not originally written for the tuba. In addition to the analysis of the transcription itself, the tuba player will run into technically challenging aspects of the music. The included practice guide gives the tubist a path toward working through the difficulties with various methods, techniques, and practice tools to aid in learning the piece. The first resources referenced in this paper are books, dissertations, and articles related to the composer Sergei Prokofiev and his music. These are used for historical context and biographical context. These also provide information on his ballets, including Romeo and Juliet. Performance guides for other solos are also examined to illustrate past approaches and ideas. The second methodology predominately used in this paper are musical scores of the original orchestral parts to Romeo and Juliet and the Charles Vernon tuba solo. Scores of Prokofiev’s earlier works are also cited in order to understand how he usually wrote for the tuba in an orchestral setting. Analysis of the original ballet score alongside the Vernon arrangement provides important information for the performer on the similarities and differences between the two.
Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................................1

CHAPTER 1: BIOGRAPHIES .............................................................................................................5

  SERGEI PROKOFIEV .................................................................................................................5
  CHARLES VERNON .....................................................................................................................12
  ERIK SARAS .............................................................................................................................12

CHAPTER 2: PROKOFIEV AND BALLET .......................................................................................13

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF ROMEO AND JULIET ........................................................................19

  1. INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................21
  2. THE CITY AWAKES ..............................................................................................................24
  3. PUBLIC MERRY-MAKING .......................................................................................................25
  4. THE YOUNG GIRL JULIET .....................................................................................................28
  5. MASKS ..................................................................................................................................30
  6. MONTAGUES AND CAPULETS ...............................................................................................32
  7. THE DEATH OF TYBALT (MERCUTIO) ..................................................................................33
  8. ROMEO AT FRIAR LAWRENCE’S ..........................................................................................34
  9. ROMEO AND JULIET AT PARTING .......................................................................................35
 10. JULIET’S DEATH AND FUNERAL .........................................................................................36

CHAPTER 4: PRACTICE GUIDE ......................................................................................................42

CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GUIDE ............................................................................................55

CONCLUSION .................................................................................................................................69

BIBLIOGRAPHY ...............................................................................................................................71

APPENDIX A ......................................................................................................................................73
Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my doctoral committee for their guidance, flexibility, encouragement, and patience during my time at West Virginia University. I would also like to thank my wife, Amanda, for her continued support and patience as I juggled multiple things. Lastly, I owe a great deal of gratitude for my parents in always being supportive of me in any endeavor I was on. I am very fortunate to be surrounded by such amazing people. I would also like to thank Gordon Cherry for allowing me to use the part in this dissertation.
INTRODUCTION

As the most recent brass instrument to be added to the standard orchestra, the tuba’s solo repertoire is relatively new compared to other orchestral instruments. Ralph Vaughan Williams composed the first major concerto for tuba in 1954, over 100 years after the tuba’s creation in 1835 by Wilhelm Friedrich Wieprecht and Johann Gottfried Moritz. Though many composers — including Bruce Broughton, Eric Ewazen, Paul Hindemith, Gunther Schuller, and John Williams — have written solos for the tuba since Vaughan Williams, performers rely on arrangements and transcriptions of existing works to fill gaps in the repertoire. In 2011, Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s bass trombonist Charles Vernon arranged ten movements of Sergei Prokofiev’s ballet *Romeo and Juliet* for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra’s Principal Tuba, Gene Pokorny.

Sergei Prokofiev is one of the most well-known composers of the 20th century. His works include concerti, chamber music, orchestral music, operas, and ballets; one of his most popular works is the ballet *Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare’s timeless story of star-crossed lovers. Prokofiev composed *Romeo and Juliet* in 1935 for the Kirov Ballet, but due to political unrest, it premiered in 1938 at the Ballet of The National Theatre in Brno, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic). He also used movements and material from the ballet to create two orchestral suites. This performance guide serves as a detailed resource for Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* Suite No. 1, Op. 64, arranged for Tuba and Piano by Charles Vernon.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many resources that provide historical details and context on the life and works of Sergei Prokofiev, but there are few performance guides for tuba solos, let alone transcriptions of his works. Though the breadth of literature on tuba solos is limited, what is available will be referenced as best as possible. This paper fills a gap in tuba performance guides and provides a
needed resource for tubists. There have been transcriptions of *Romeo and Juliet* movements for other instruments, including trombone, piano, and viola, but no performance guide or literature can be found for tuba.

One useful performance guide for tuba is Ryan Robinson’s *A Performance Guide for the Unique Challenges in Concerto for Tuba and Chamber Orchestra by Jan Bach*. Robinson goes into detail on the technical challenges in this piece, including trills, and glissandi. Robinson’s dissertation begins with background on the composer, then spends most of the paper outlining the challenges in the piece. He provides musical samples and visual guides to make his case, especially when it comes to planning for trills and ornamentation. A prospective performer reading this will gain a better understanding of the piece but may be looking for a more thorough approach to every technical challenge.

George Palton’s *An Analysis and Performance Guide to the Tuba Music of Alice Gomez* is much more detailed. Palton’s dissertation is significantly longer than Robinson’s, going in depth on each piece. His is a more comprehensive approach to a performance guide, analyzing form, meter, tempo, melodic organization, thematic materials, and texture for each piece. The information he provides is extremely useful because he analyzes multiple parts of the piece, not just the challenges. In addition to this he provides performance considerations, which are very useful. Palton focuses on style and sound for each piece but provides very few technical considerations or tips for the performer to negotiate passages.

Michael Fisher’s *Ralph Vaughan Williams: An Interpretive Analysis of Concerto for Bass Tuba* takes an entirely different approach from Robinson and Palton. Fisher compares how different performers interpret Vaughan Williams’ tuba concerto, discussing the difference in tempo, style, and musical interpretation, which is useful for a player to examine different ways
the piece can be played. It is possible to use this as a resource for suggested tempi for each movement of the piece, but it is the least relevant resource for this performance guide on *Romeo and Juliet*.

Perhaps the most useful resource regarding the original melodies of Prokofiev is Kenneth Stephenson’s *The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev*. Stephenson goes into great detail on tonality, phrase length, cadences, keys, scales, melodic structure, melodic tendencies, and the drama, and his insights are referenced throughout this paper. This reference is very useful for anyone looking for a full analysis of the piece.

Stephenson’s dissertation provides valuable analysis on every movement in the Charles Vernon transcription. The drama section is especially useful, and it is frequently cited in this performance guide. This resource should be referenced for a more detailed analysis of the piece.

**NECESSITY FOR A DETAILED PERFORMANCE GUIDE**

The tuba wasn’t invented until 1835, making it the most recent member of the orchestral brass section, and the first concerto for the instrument wasn’t written until 1954. Since Ralph Vaughan Williams’ concerto in 1954, the tuba has seen immense growth as a solo instrument. Major composers such as Eugene Bozza, Eric Ewazen, and Paul Hindemith have written solos for the tuba. Even though repertoire is increasing for the tuba, players still lean on transcriptions and arrangements to have a larger body of work to choose from; it is common to play transcriptions of works by Bach, Mozart, Strauss, Vivaldi, and others. This isn’t necessarily the case for other instruments that have a larger body of original works. When performing transcriptions, the player must take the extra step to understand the composer’s original intentions for the piece.
Since *Romeo and Juliet* was written for orchestra, there are many things to consider when performing a transcription. The player should know what instrument the original melody was written for to inform musical decisions, what character is represented by the theme they are playing, and what drama is accompanying that movement. This arrangement is for solo tuba and piano, so important orchestral lines are played by the piano. This guide helps decipher when the “solo” voice has the melody and is playing a background role. There are also technical challenges since the piece was not originally written for the tuba.

In addition to the analysis of the transcription itself, the tuba player will run into technically challenging aspects of the music. The included practice guide gives the tubist a path toward working through the difficulties with various methods, techniques, and practice tools to aid in learning the piece.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The first resources referenced in this paper are books, dissertations, and articles related to the composer Sergei Prokofiev and his music. These are used for historical context and biographical context. These also provide information on his ballets, including *Romeo and Juliet*. Performance guides for other solos are also examined to illustrate past approaches and ideas.

The second methodology predominately used in this paper are musical scores of the original orchestral parts to *Romeo and Juliet* and the Charles Vernon tuba solo. Scores of Prokofiev’s earlier works are also cited in order to understand how he usually wrote for the tuba in an orchestral setting. Analysis of the original ballet score alongside the Vernon arrangement provides important information for the performer on the similarities and differences between the two.
CHAPTER 1: BIOGRAPHIES

SERGEI PROKOFIEV, composer

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953) was born in Sontsovka, Ukraine to a family of agriculturalists. His mother, Maria Grigorevna, was an amateur pianist and his first piano teacher. He was labeled a wunderkind early in his life and was accepted into the St. Petersburg Conservatory when he was 13 years old, spending ten years in the conservatory from 1904 to 1914.

From a young age, Prokofiev would sit and listen to his mother play piano but was not given formal training until he was seven for fear of boring him. He attempted composing music before he even knew how to write notation and by the time he was eight, he had composed several marches, waltzes, a polka, and a rondo. By the age of nine he was playing easy Beethoven and Mozart sonatas. Marina Raku says “Almost from birth, Prokofiev seems to have had a natural creative gift: he was indeed a musical prodigy.”\(^1\) It was clear that Prokofiev had exceptional talent and his mother nurtured his skill, introducing him to his first live concerts in 1900. The family traveled by train to Moscow to see Gounod’s Faust, Borodin’s Prince Igor, and Tchaikovsky’s Sleeping Beauty. Prokofiev quickly became too advanced for his mother to teach him, so in 1902 he started studying with Reinhold Gliere.

In 1904, Prokofiev began studying at the St. Petersburg Conservatory at the young age of 13. During his time at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, he studied piano with Alexander Winkler and Anna N. Esipova. His orchestration teacher was none other than Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, an important figure in Russian classical music who composed many works that are played frequently to this day, most notably, Capriccio espagnol, Russian Easter Festival Overture, and

Scheherazade. Prokofiev continued composing during his time at the conservatory and wanted to get works published. Conflicts arose with faculty because he didn’t want to conform to their standards. They were frustrated with him, and he was also frustrated, believing they were holding him back. Biographer Harlow Robinson attributes this to Prokofiev’s diminishing reliance on the school as he garnered fame.

As Prokofiev became more sure of himself as a composer, the Conservatory ceased to occupy a central position in his life. Lyadov and Glazunov had written him off as an impudent rebel who did not want to be taught; he regarded them as unimaginative and old-fashioned. Esipova thought him demanding, arrogant, and inflexible, and he found her lessons for the most part unenlightening.²

In order to graduate he had to learn to conduct, which broadened his familiarity with orchestral repertoire. He studied conducting under Alexander Tcherepnin (1899–1977). Prokofiev wasn’t very interested in conducting, and Tcherepnin didn’t think he was naturally talented at it.³ Tcherepnin encouraged him to learn because he would eventually need to conduct his own works. He conducted Beethoven’s Symphony No. 7, excerpts from Verdi’s Aida, and Mozart’s Marriage of Figaro, to name a few. His sour reputation with faculty continued when he received the Anton Rubinstein Prize, awarded for winning a competition between the graduating year’s best piano students. The performer is supposed to play a classical composition and Prokofiev decided to play his First Piano Concerto. He won the vote and was awarded the Rubinstein Prize even though the older professors and Alexander Glazunov scrutinized his choice of music and voted against him.⁴ Prokofiev was not afraid to go against the older professors at the conservatory and did not want to stick to the status quo. His First Piano Concerto is one of the most notable compositions during his time at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

³ Ibid, 72.
⁴ Ibid, 99.
One of the biggest breaks Prokofiev had as a young composer was connecting with the great Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929). Prokofiev traveled to Paris for the first time in 1913, where he saw Diaghilev’s Ballet Russes. He went to many performances during this trip, seeing Stravinsky’s *Petrushka*, Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*, the Schumann/Fokine *Carnaval*, Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade*, and Florent Schmitt’s *La tragédie de Salomé*. He returned to Paris in 1914 to begin his professional career after school. Just one year after seeing the Ballet Russes for the first time, Prokofiev was introduced to Diaghilev by a mutual friend. The first time they met, Prokofiev played some of his original compositions as some post-lunch entertainment. Diaghilev was impressed, particularly by the Piano Concerto No. 2. The two began working together and Diaghilev became one of Prokofiev’s earliest patrons. The first Diaghilev commission was *Ala i Lolli* in 1914. Diaghilev did not like the piece and it was never premiered. Diaghilev gave him another chance with a ballet called *The Buffoon*. Prokofiev was supposed to have completed it in 1916, but he moved back to Russia for three years and wasn’t able to get the piece done in time. This jeopardized his professional relationship with Diaghilev, though *The Buffoon* eventually premiered in 1921 at the Ballet Russes with Sergei Diaghilev. Diaghilev thought highly of Prokofiev and said “After Stravinsky there is only one composer in Russia, and that is you. No one else is in the picture at all. How is it that a country that has produced so many national composers like Borodin, Musorgsky, Dargomyzhsky has completely dried up?”

Prokofiev moved to the United States in 1918 after the Russian Revolution. During his time in the United States, he received a contract from the Chicago Opera Association and Cleofonte Campanini for *The Love for Three Oranges*. Unfortunately, Campanini unexpectedly

---

died before the opera could be premiered. Prokofiev’s time in America was short lived and he left in 1920 to return to Paris. He immediately reconnected with Stravinsky and Diaghilev, inserting himself back into the arts scene. Even with the setback, The Love for Three Oranges premiered in 1921 while he was residing in Paris. Prokofiev’s spent 1922 in Ettal, Bavaria with his ailing mother, where he focused most of his efforts on the opera The Fiery Angel. He married the Spanish singer Carolina Codina in 1923 before moving back to Paris, where he would reside until 1936.

Prokofiev enjoyed a steady flow of work while he was living in Paris. He frequently returned to the United States and started touring Russia with his music during this time. Boston Symphony Orchestra’s Music Director Serge Koussevitzky (1874–1951) was one of the biggest advocates for Prokofiev’s music in America, performing seven of Prokofiev’s works with the Boston Symphony Orchestra. The Love for Three Oranges saw its Russian premiere at the Mariinsky Theatre in 1926, and he was given wonderful reviews and positive public support.

Things were going well for Prokofiev when he received the commission for Romeo and Juliet from the Kirov Theatre in Leningrad, under the direction of Sergei Radlov (1892–1958) and Adrian Piotrovsky (1898–1937). The staging of Romeo and Juliet hit some bumps along the way for a few reasons. The biggest delay was caused when Radlov unexpectedly resigned from the Kirov Ballet, postponing the ballet’s premiere. On top of that, Prokofiev wrote a happy ending for Romeo and Juliet, completely changing the story of William Shakespeare’s classic tragedy. This did not go over well, so he reverted to Shakespeare’s ending, composing a version with both Romeo and Juliet dying tragically.

---

6 Robinson, Sergei Prokofiev: a Biography, 192.
7 Ibid, 196.
Prokofiev permanently moved to Moscow in 1936 with his wife and two sons. He already had an apartment there and was working in Russia frequently, so it was fitting to relocate back to his home country. The timing wasn’t ideal for his arrival as composers were under scrutiny from the Soviet government. Dmitri Shostakovich’s opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* was under attack from Stalin and the public after the editorial “Muddle Instead of Music” was published, condemning him for the opera. Composers were under fire, and Prokofiev knew that if he wanted to survive in this political climate, he would have to adapt his musical language.

Robinson states:

> Just as Stalin had intended, the assault on Shostakovich shook the Soviet musical world to its foundations, sending a chill through every Soviet composer, and strongly influencing the subsequent evolution of Soviet music and musical life... What Prokofiev had said in 1932—that no one wanted to make a mistake in seeking the musical language appropriate for Soviet life—was more true than ever in the winter of 1936. The fate of those who made “mistakes” had now been graphically illustrated.

Stalin was trying to demonstrate his absolute power over Soviet culture and its creative output. Shostakovich later wrote that “‘Muddle Instead of Music’ changed my entire existence”. It was at this point that Prokofiev’s music turned more tonal, shying away from the dissonance of his earlier works and taking less professional risk after seeing what happened to Shostakovich. In 1938, Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948) asked Prokofiev to compose music for the film *Alexander Nevsky*. Robinson describes the significance of *Alexander Nevsky* with the following: “*Nevsky* would open an important new stage in the careers of both director and composer. It would be Eisenstein’s first well-received film in almost ten years, and inspire Prokofiev’s first unambiguously successful ‘Nationalistic’ music.”

---

10 Ibid, 390.
11 Ibid, 350
for artists in Moscow, halting much of the creative output from Russia, but Prokofiev was very productive during this time, composing the music for *War and Peace*, *Cinderella*, *Ivan the Terrible*, and Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major, to name a few. Attacks on Moscow were getting worse and the Soviet Artistic Affairs Committee decided to evacuate important cultural figures, including Prokofiev. After the war ended, Prokofiev won Stalin prizes in 1946 for two of his works: Symphony No. 5 and Piano Sonata No. 8. Unfortunately, the last few years of his life were lived in poverty with very little income after 1948. Soviet communist party leader Andrei Zhdanov (1896–1948) led an ideological attack on music, and Prokofiev found it very difficult to find performances and commissions. Prokofiev died in Moscow on March 5, 1953.

Prokofiev’s artistic output is usually placed into three categories based on where he lived. The Russian Period (1891–1917) includes his birth to his first move after finishing conservatory, The Foreign Period (1918–1935) is when he was living abroad, and the Soviet Period (1936–1945) is when he returned to his homeland. Notable pieces from each period:

**Russian Period (1891–1917)**
- Piano Sonata No. 1. in F minor (1909)
- Piano Concerto No. 1 in D-flat major (1911–12)
- *Scythian Suite* from *Ala i Lolli* (1914–15)
- Violin Concerto No. 1 in D major (1916–17)
- Symphony No. 1 in D major (1916–17)
- Piano Sonata No. 3 in A minor (1917)
- Piano Sonata No. 4 in C minor (1917)

**Foreign Period (1918–1935)**
- Piano Sonata No. 5 in C major (1923)
- Symphony No. 2 in D minor (1924–25)
- *The Love for Three Oranges* (1919)
- Symphony No. 3 in C minor (1928)
- *The Prodigal Son* (1928–29)
- Symphony No. 4 (1929–30)

---

12 Ibid, 390.
13 Ibid, 390.
14 Deborah Annette Wilson, “Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet*: A History of Compromise.” (PhD diss., The Ohio State University, Columbus, 2003), 16.
Lt. Kije Film Score (1933)
Violin Concerto No. 2 in G minor (1935)

Soviet Period (1936–1945)
Romeo and Juliet (1935–36)
Peter and the Wolf (1936)
Alexander Nevsky (1938)
Cinderella (1940–44)
Symphony No. 5 in B-flat major (1944)
Symphony No. 6 in E-flat minor (1945–47)
Symphony No. 7 in C-sharp minor (1951–52)
CHARLES VERNON, arranger

Charles “Charlie” Vernon, bass trombonist of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, was born in Asheville, North Carolina. Vernon attended Brevard College and Georgia State University before starting his orchestral career with the Baltimore Symphony in 1971, where he stayed for nine years. He then went to the San Francisco Symphony for a season. His third orchestral job was with The Philadelphia Orchestra under maestro Riccardo Muti. Vernon joined the Chicago Symphony Orchestra in 1986, where he remains to this day. Vernon has been on the faculties of Catholic University, Brevard Music Center, Philadelphia College of Performing Arts, Roosevelt University, the Curtis Institute, and Northwestern University. He is currently professor of trombone at DePaul University.

He created this arrangement of *Romeo and Juliet* by Sergei Prokofiev for Gene Pokorny, the Principal Tuba of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Vernon used ten movements from the popular ballet suite to make up this arrangement.

ERIK SARAS, editor

Erik Saras is a producer, writer, and musician working in New York City. Studying trombone performance and composition at Northwestern University and Manhattan School of Music, Saras performs with and writes music for several organizations. He is also a freelance conductor and clinician leading workshops and lectures.
CHAPTER 2: PROKOFIEV AND BALLET

Sergei Prokofiev composed iconic ballets that have become staples of ballet repertoire to this day. Best known for Cinderella and Romeo and Juliet, Prokofiev wrote nine ballets over the course of his career. Prokofiev experienced ballet for the first time in 1900 at the age of nine when his family took him to Moscow for his first trip to a big city and he saw Tchaikovsky’s Sleeping Beauty at the Bolshoi Theatre.\(^{15}\) When Prokofiev graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatory in 1914, he traveled to Paris to begin his professional career. This is where he met the famed Sergei Diaghilev, founder of the Ballet Russes.\(^{16}\) Not only was Diaghilev a titan in the ballet world, he was a well-connected member of the arts community. The two began a relationship that would blossom into work for Prokofiev for years to come. Diaghilev commissioned four ballets from Prokofiev, Ala i Lolli (1914–1915), The Buffoon (1915, revised 1920), Le pas d’acier (1925–1926), and The Prodigal Son (1928–1929). Their relationship was so close that Diaghilev would later reference Prokofiev as his “second son”.\(^{17}\)

Prokofiev wrote his first ballet, Ala i Lolli, in 1914. This was his first commission from Sergei Diaghilev and one of the first major breaks for the young composer. The ballet was written to the story of a Russian poet, Sergey Gorodetsky (1884–1967). Diaghilev did not like the piece and turned down the score before it was completed, so it was never actually used.\(^{18}\) It was reworked into the Scythian Suite, which was first performed in 1916 in the Mariinsky Theatre. Although Ala i Lolli never saw the stage, the Scythian Suite is still performed by orchestras today.

\(^{15}\) Robinson, Sergei Prokofiev: a Biography, 15.
\(^{17}\) Ibid
\(^{18}\) Ibid, 25.
Prokofiev’s first completed score for Sergei Diaghilev was *Chout*, or *The Buffoon*, which was premiered in 1921. He was asked to write a score based on a folk tale recorded by Alexander Afanasyev (1826–1871). Prokofiev had a difficult time finishing the score to Diaghilev’s liking. The piece, meant to be started and completed in 1915, took him six years to finish, postponing the premiere to 1921. The delay wasn’t entirely Prokofiev’s fault, as wartime restrictions did not allow Prokofiev to travel to Italy to work on the score with Diaghilev, so he had to send copies via courier.¹⁹ Stephen Press writes that “The two versions of *Chout (The Buffoon)* tell us that Prokofiev possessed an innate, *dansant* lyricism in the nineteenth century sense, a keen theatrical sensibility and an individualized Russian soul, but that he needed to be taught, as Stravinsky had been by Fokine, that choreographers and dancers were ready collaborators who needed flexible support, not rigid direction.”²⁰

Prokofiev’s most unusual ballet *Trapeze* was written for a small group of musicians. The instrumentation is a quintet consisting of oboe, clarinet, violin, viola and double bass. The piece was written for the Russian Romantic Theatre in 1922 for Boris Romanov (1891–1957). The Russian Romantic Theatre was a touring operation which mandated the small instrumentation.²¹ Later, Prokofiev incorporated the ballet music into two pieces: *Quintet*, Op. 39 (1924) and *Divertimento*, Op. 43 (1925–29).

*Le pas d’acier* (1926–1927) is the third ballet commissioned by Diaghilev and the Ballet Russes. Prokofiev used a different style and language when composing *Le pas d’acier*, as he wanted to explore a more avant-garde, futuristic compositional approach. Press states,

---

“Prokofiev acknowledged a change in style beginning with this ballet, placing more emphasis on the diatonicism and lyricism, and utilizing a contemporary, as opposed to a fantastical, Russian musical idiom.”22 The textures in this ballet were also much thinner than he had used in his previous two compositions. Unlike The Buffoon, Le pas d’acier was easier for the dancers to dance to as it wasn’t so thickly orchestrated. The production was successful enough to be used in three consecutive seasons, marking a victory for Prokofiev as a ballet composer.

The last ballet of the Prokofiev/Diaghilev collaboration was The Prodigal Son (1928–1929). Diaghilev died in August 1929, only three months after the premiere in May. Diaghilev wanted Prokofiev to go simpler and more timeless in his compositional style in this ballet, unlike Le pas d’acier. There was a popular wave of criticism toward the avant-garde at this time and audiences were wanting something easier to digest. Prokofiev stated in 1930 to The New York Times, “I think we have gone as far as we are likely to go in the direction of size, or dissonance, or complexity in music.”23 Diaghilev hired George Balanchine (1904–1983) to do the choreography, having worked together on multiple occasions since 1924. Prokofiev and Balanchine did not see eye to eye on this production, and Balanchine openly complained about the score. Press states: “For the first time in his collaboration with the Ballets Russes the composer strenuously objected to the choreographic interpretation of his music.”24 George Balanchine’s stylized modern movements conflicted with Prokofiev’s realistic vision. The choreographer later complained that the composer was “‘passe’, wanting it to be done in an

---

22 Ibid, 206.
23 Ibid, 239.
24 Ibid, 245.
outdated manner.”25 Prokofiev was later quoted saying, “I was not altogether satisfied with the choreography; it did not always follow the music.”26

Romeo and Juliet is perhaps one of Prokofiev’s most famous works. Prokofiev’s main collaborator on this production was Sergei Radlov, who was a well-known avant-garde director in Leningrad in the 1920s, specializing in staging Shakespeare tragedies.27 Radlov was a student of famed Russian director and actor Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940), the director of the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1908, and staged plays at Alexandrinsky Theater and operas at the Mariinsky Theater. He was known for innovation and experimentation in his productions.28

The premiere of Romeo and Juliet in 1934 was delayed due to political turmoil in Russia. The State Academic Theater was renamed the Kirov State Academic Theater after the late communist party leader Sergei Kirov (1886–1934). Radlov unexpectedly resigned from the newly named theater, and the Kirov pulled the production of Romeo and Juliet. The Bolshoi Theatre took over the contract, and Prokofiev and Radlov worked on finishing it with the new company. Mysteriously, this production was canceled as well, and the premiere of the ballet was at the Brno State Theatre in Czechoslovakia on December 30, 1938. The Kirov didn’t produce Romeo and Juliet until 1940, which was the Soviet premiere.

There are a few hypotheses as to why the 1936 Bolshoi production was canceled. In Prokofiev’s autobiography, he wrote that the planned 1936 Bolshoi production was canceled due to the score not being danceable. “During the course of the summer the music was written, but

25 Ibid, 245.
26 Ibid, 120.
27 Wilson, Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet: A History of Compromise, 43.
28 Ibid, 41.
the Bolshoi Theatre found the ballet undanceable and broke the contract”. They had the same issue later with the Kirov Theatre when the dancers threatened to strike due to the score being “undanceable”.

Another hypothesis from Deborah Annette Wilson’s dissertation, *Prokofiev’s Romeo and Juliet: History of a Compromise*, relates to Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*. The production drew waves of controversy from the government. Stalin himself was at the Bolshoi to see *Lady Macbeth* earlier in 1936, and he was very critical of the work. The hypothesis by Wilson has to do with librettist Adrian Piotrovsky (1898–1937). Piotrovsky had been one of the librettists for Shostakovich’s *The Limpid Stream*, which had premiered that year at the Bolshoi. Wilson suggests that Piotrovsky’s involvement with *The Limpid Stream* could have contributed to *Romeo and Juliet* being canceled in 1936.

Challenges continued for Prokofiev and *Romeo and Juliet*, as there was controversy about the ending. Prokofiev wrote a happy ending in the original 1935 version of the ballet. The story was adjusted so that Romeo entered the room before Juliet takes the sleeping potion. Prokofiev wrote:

> There was quite a fuss at the time about our attempts to give *Romeo and Juliet* a happy ending — in the last act Romeo arrives a minute earlier, finds Juliet alive and everything ends well. The reasons for this bit of barbarism were purely choreographic: living people can dance, the dying cannot. The justification was that Shakespeare himself was said to have been uncertain about the ending of his plays *King Lear* and *Romeo and Juliet*.

Prokofiev wasn’t able to get *Romeo and Juliet* on stage in ballet form until its premiere in 1938, but he used numbers and material from the ballet to create two orchestral suites that were performed all around the world in the two years between the

---

29 Ibid, 137.
30 Ibid, 11.
Bolshoi cancelation and the premiere in Brno. He later composed a third suite in 1946 with material from the ballet. No movements from the third suite are in the Vernon transcription.

*Cinderella*, Prokofiev’s last ballet, premiered in November 1945 at the Bolshoi Theatre, with choreography by Rostislov Zakharov (1907–1984). The Kirov commissioned this work prior to German invasion, but had to cancel on Prokofiev again as things escalated. Prokofiev finished most of the score to *Cinderella* while he was living in Perm in 1943. He uses more traditional melodies and ballet dance numbers in *Cinderella* than in his earlier ballets. It is not surprising after his issues with the dancers of *Romeo and Juliet* that Prokofiev simplified the music to accommodate the choreography. Robinson says, “Prokofiev had concentrated on writing a ballet that was ‘as danceable as possible’”. It is filled with conventional ballet numbers such as pas de deux, a gavotte, waltzes, a pavane, a passepied, a bourrée, a mazurka, and galops. Robinson observes that Prokofiev writes this ballet more along the lines of how Tchaikovsky would have written it, rather than writing like his own prior works. The story is based on the well-known Charles Perrault (1628–1703) fairy tale.

---

CHAPTER 3: ANALYSIS OF ROMEO AND JULIET

Charles Vernon took artistic liberties that give the tubist the best chance of success when performing this piece, and his transcription of *Romeo and Juliet* is very close to the original in many ways. Vernon originally wrote this piece for Gene Pokorny of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra. Pokorny would have performed this piece on a contrabass tuba in the key of C (CC tuba), so this is the instrument Vernon would have had in mind when writing this transcription. It is common practice today to perform this piece on a CC tuba.

Sergei Prokofiev writes memorable themes in *Romeo and Juliet*, and the composer uses them frequently throughout the ballet. The drama built into the themes tell a story, and each one has its own style and character. It is important to recognize what the themes portray or are trying to accomplish before performing a piece like this.

It is also important to recognize the differences between the ballet and Charles Vernon’s transcription. Vernon took many liberties when creating this transcription, especially when it comes to key. The main reason he would have had to change the key is to accommodate range limitations that goes along with writing for a solo instrument instead of an entire orchestra. Vernon mostly changes the key from B-flat major to F major, which puts the solo line more in the middle of the staff. This allows the player to make longer musical phrases in a more comfortable part of the instrument. On occasion, Vernon changes the key to help with fingers or intonation. Form is also an area where Vernon differs from the original. Most of what Vernon decides to mimic is from the suite versions, not the ballet. He sometimes takes liberties with exact form to make the movement more concise. It is possible that some differences are errors instead of artistic choices (see Example 3.6) and it is important to recognize the discrepancy. The orchestral reduction is well done but has some issues. The texture is often too low on the
instrument, which will cause clarity issues, and sometimes it is impossible to play with the spacing. The pianist will have to use their best judgement when choosing what to include and leave out. Overall, Vernon does a great job of transcribing the ballet for a solo instrument. A table on page X should be consulted for suggested edits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballet</th>
<th>Suite No. 1</th>
<th>Suite No. 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Act 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>1. <em>Folk Dance</em></td>
<td>1. <em>Montagues and Capulets</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Romeo</td>
<td>2. <em>A Scene</em></td>
<td>2. <em>Juliet the Young Girl</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <em>The Street Wakens</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <em>Morning Dance</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <em>The Quarrel</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <em>The Fight</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. <em>The Duke’s Command</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. <em>Interlude</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. <em>At the Capulets’</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. <em>The Young Juliet</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. <em>Arrival of the Guests</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. <em>Masks</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. <em>Dance of the Knights</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. <em>Juliet’s Variation</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. <em>Mercutio</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. <em>Madrigal</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. <em>Tybalt recognizes Romeo</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. <em>Gavotte</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. <em>Balcony Scene</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. <em>Romeo’s Variation</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. <em>Love Dance</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. <em>Folk Dance</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. <em>Romeo and Mercutio</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. <em>Dance of the Five Couples</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. <em>Dance with Mandolins</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. <em>Nurse</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. <em>The Nurse and Romeo</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. <em>Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. <em>Juliet at Friar Lawrence’s</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. <em>Public Merrymaking</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. <em>Further Public Festivities</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. <em>Meeting of Tybalt and Mercutio</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. <em>The Duel</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. <em>Death of Mercutio</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. <em>Romeo decides to avenge Mercutio</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. <em>Finale</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. <em>Introduction</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. <em>Romeo and Juliet</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. <em>Romeo bids Juliet Farewell</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. <em>Nurse</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. <em>Juliet refuses to marry Paris</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. <em>Juliet alone</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. <em>Interlude</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. <em>At Friar Lawrence’s Cell</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. <em>Interlude</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. <em>Juliet’s Room</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. <em>Juliet Alone</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. <em>Aubade</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. <em>Dance of the Girls with Lilies</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. <em>At Juliet’s Bedside</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. <em>Juliet’s Funeral</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. <em>Juliet’s Death</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Madrigal
4. Minuet
5. Masks
6. Romeo and Juliet
7. The Death of Tybalt
3. Friar Lawrence
4. Danse
5. Romeo with Juliet before Parting
6. Dance of the Antillian Girls
7. Romeo at the Tomb of Juliet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Charles Vernon transcription for Solo Tuba and Piano</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The City Awakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Public Merry-Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Young Girl Juliet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Masks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Montagues and Capulets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The Death of Tybalt (Mercutio)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Romeo at Friar Laurence’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Romeo and Juliet at Parting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Juliet’s Death and Funeral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Introduction**

The *Introduction of Romeo and Juliet* is a lush orchestral painting of youth and innocence. The first theme that Prokofiev uses can be heard multiple times throughout the ballet (see Example 3.1). Ken Stephenson describes the *Introduction* with the following:

The *Introduction* is full of the inconstancy, innocence, and optimism of youth. Several uncomplicated themes in several keys appear, one following the other almost as quickly as Romeo’s attraction to one young woman is replaced by passion for another. The first three melodies are nearly completely diatonic, reflecting the simplicity that accompanies inexperience, although the fourth, more sinuous and chromatic, makes pretensions toward grandeur. While there is this hint of nascent maturity, there is no foreboding of the tragedy to come. All is resolved here as each melody finds its way to a tonic chord. Even the first theme, beginning with a prolongation of pre-dominant harmony, resolves safely within four measures, serving as a model of the typical adolescent’s belief that any situation other than unrequited love in which he suddenly finds himself will have a happy ending.36

---

36 Kenneth D. Stephenson, “The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet*” (PhD diss., The University of Iowa, Iowa City, 1989), 181.
Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

Prokofiev writes the Introduction in the key of C major and Vernon writes in G major, a fifth apart from the original. This key works better on CC tuba due to the wide range. It would either go too high or too low (depending on the octave) in the key of C. This movement matches the form and melodies of the original exactly with nothing removed or altered. Vernon scores the left hand of the piano in a way that is not playable. The pianist will have to adjust the lowest octave or drop notes (see Example 3.1).

**Example 3.1:** Unplayable Piano Spacing, *Introduction* (mm. 43–45), Vernon Score

Themes:

The theme heard right at the beginning of the piece is used often throughout the ballet (see Example 3.2). This theme doesn’t signify a specific character or moment in the piece, but its frequency should be noted. The writing encapsulates Prokofiev’s writing perfectly, with large leaps, and a melody that modulates. Melodies throughout this piece have similar characteristics and are unique to Prokofiev. Prokofiev excels in his orchestration and makes masterful decisions that give this piece so much nuance. The melody in the Introduction theme (see Example 3.2) starts with a lush violin tutti. The second part of the phrase is drastically different when the texture thins to a quieter woodwind texture. The tubist can portray this orchestration decision by playing the first
part very full and then drop down to a quieter dynamic to try and show the difference.

This theme is used during movement number 10 of this transcription, *Juliet’s Death and Funeral*. The first of Juliet’s themes can be heard in the *Introduction* (see Example 3.3). It begins four measures after rehearsal number 1 and continues for 20 measures. It returns during the last four measures of the movement for a brief moment. The theme consists of large leaps and perfect authentic cadence finishes, which signify her exuberant youth and pureness. This theme is more straightforward from an orchestration standpoint, because the entire melody is in the violins. Prokofiev’s use of leaps in the melody can also be seen in *Cinderella* (see Example 3.4). This isn’t the only similarity between the two leads, *Juliet* and *Cinderella*. Carolyn Zoe Brouthers says “Juliet and Cinderella have disparate large-scale forms, use of phrase structures, melodic tendencies, and number and use of motives.”

**Example 3.2: Recurring Theme, Introduction (mm. 1–8), Solo Tuba**

---

37 Carolyn Zoe Brouthers, “Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* and *Cinderella*: A Comparison of Leads”, (PhD diss., Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, 2011), 101.
Example 3.3: Juliet’s First Theme: *Introduction* (mm. 13–28), Solo Tuba

Example 3.4: Large leaps in *Cinderella’s* theme: *Cinderella*, Act 1 No. 3

*The City Awakes*

The second movement in the transcription is the third number in the full ballet. Vernon skips over the *Romeo* number for the transcription, and his theme is actually never heard. *The City Awakes* paints an exuberant picture of Verona in the morning, and it is clear that no one has a clue what is about to come. The whole movement is joyful and is in major harmony until it ends with a loud dissonant chord. Stephenson says, “The opening melody of number 3 perfectly depicts the simple, happy character of the folk of Verona.”\(^{38}\)

\(^{38}\) Stephenson, “*The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet,"*” 183.
Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

The original number is in the key of D and the Vernon transcription is in C, one step from the original. It is unclear why he chose this key, but it lies better within the harmonic series of the CC tuba in this key. Vernon removes 15 measures from the movement by not repeating measures.

Public Merry-Making

This movement is performed attacca from The City Awakes in the ballet and has a similar feeling of exuberance and joy. Stephenson says, “This situation is an essential element of the plot, of course, but it is also important for the tone of the story that the tragedy is set in relief by the portrayal of people for whom life is continuing merrily as always”. 39

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

The original version is in the key of D-flat while the Vernon solo version is in the key of G, a tri-tone apart. The form is changed when Vernon removes 12 measures from the coda. The ending is also different, sounding more like a concert finish and not a movement that is leading somewhere else. This makes more sense for this transcription, because Prokofiev originally wrote a chromatic line that leads nowhere and does not sound final. It should be noted Vernon alters the rhythm in the first measure by adding sixteenth notes that are not in the score (see Example 3.5 and Example 3.6). Additionally, he removes a prominent countermelody between rehearsal numbers 11–13 in favor of the

39 Ibid, 184.
rhythmic figures found in the contrabassoon. This leaves the texture a little more thinly scored than the original (see Example 3.7 and Example 3.8). There is no evidence that this change is warranted, and it is possible this is an error.

**Example 3.5:** Original Rhythm, *Public Merry-Making* (mm. 1), Original Ballet Score

**Example 3.6:** Vernon Altered Rhythm, *Public Merry-Making* (mm. 1), Tuba Solo
Example 3.7: Countermelody, *Public Merry-Making* (mm. 174–200), Original Ballet Score
The fourth movement of the solo transcription is the tenth number of the ballet. The movement is a perfect portrayal of the youth and energy of a young, 13-year-old Juliet. In the ballet, Juliet is scurrying around her room playing games with her nurse. Stephenson says, “The quick tempo, the playful cadences, the regular two-measure phrases, the running scales, and the use of orchestral bells all point to Juliet’s youth” (see Example 3.10). Prokofiev uses similar orchestration in this melody as he did in the introduction. The melody starts off with violins playing an agile scale, and he adds and subtracts woodwind and brass voices to bring out certain

---

40 Stephenson, “The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet,"” 192.
parts of the phrase. Part two of this movement is when things start to get more serious for Juliet, and her transformation into a woman is portrayed. Her mother enters in rehearsal number 16, and Juliet’s first theme from the Introduction is reintroduced. Stephenson says this theme is associated with Paris in the next few scenes and the tradition of passionless courtship and arranged marriages he represents. After the mother’s entrance, the youthful theme returns to remind everyone that she is not an adult quite yet. Juliet’s mother talks to her about coming of age and tells Juliet that she was married at her age. At this point, things start to get more serious in the music, and development happens with her character. The flute solo playing longingly at rehearsal number 18 is a symbol of Juliet’s budding maturity (see Example 3.11). This is the longest phrase in the movement and leaves the listener without a full conclusion before the next melody enters.

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

This movement is the first of this transcription to be in the original key. The form is also exactly the same as the Suite No. 2 version. This movement overall is a very pure representation of the original. At rehearsal number 16, Vernon decides to prioritize the low string countermelody instead of the upper-string harmony in the orchestral reduction (see Example 3.9).

______________
Stephenson, “The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet,‖” 192.
Example 3.9: Missing Violin Texture, *The Young Girl Juliet* (mm. 231–239), Vernon Score

Themes:

**Example 3.10:** Juliet’s Second Theme, *The Young Girl Juliet* (mm. 1–8), Solo Tuba

**Example 3.11:** Juliet’s Third Theme, *The Young Girl Juliet* (mm. 44–49), Vernon Score

*Error in Vernon piano reduction corrected below*

**Masks**

The fifth movement of the transcription is *Masks*. This is the 12th number in the full ballet and the sixth in Suite No. 1. The *Masks* movement introduces Mercutio, as he and Benvolio decide to attend the Capulets’ party. Mercutio has a theme that appears four measures before rehearsal number 27 in the transcription. This theme is used later in the ballet but is not used again in this transcription (see Example 3.13). Stephenson says, “The ugly youth who makes light of learning and love is present in the crude repetitions of the raised fourth scale degree in
measure 2, the flippant leaps in measure 3, and the cynical shift to the minor mode in measure 5.”

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

Vernon moves away from the original key again in this movement, from B-flat major to F major, a fifth away. F major definitely lies better on a CC tuba, which is the instrument that Vernon would have had in mind. The form is similar between the two and nothing is removed from the suite concert version. There is an addition in the piano reduction that is not seen in the ballet part. Vernon adds a flourish in the right hand that (see Example 3.12). This addition occurs in measures 303, 312, and 328.

Example 3.12: Addition by Vernon, *Masks* (mm. 303, 312 and 328), Vernon Score

---

42 Stephenson, “The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet,"” 195.
Themes:

**Example 3.13:** Mercutio’s Theme, *Masks* (mm. 314–320), Solo Tuba

Montagues and Capulets

*Montagues and Capulets* is probably the most widely programmed movement from this ballet to this day. Vernon decides to use it as the sixth movement in this transcription. It is the 13th number in the ballet and the first movement in Suite No. 2. The music portrays a powerful and boastful scene with the B-flat minor arpeggios and powerful bass. Juliet has a dance with Paris at rehearsal number 34 and the mood completely changes to a quieter, more playful melody. Stephenson says:

After a slower interlude and a final cadence, this boastful music is followed by Juliet’s dance with Paris. Juliet’s theme here begins with the same E-minor (Bb-minor) and B-minor (F-minor) arpeggios that launched the Knights’ dance, but the rhythmic and metrical transformation, the slow staccato articulation, and the mysterious glissandi in the violins make this music coy rather than brash.⁴³

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

Vernon decides against using the original key of E minor and uses B-flat minor instead, a fifth apart. It is likely that he chose this key because E minor would be very low on the instrument. It would be playable, but breathing, range, and projection would suffer. The form is

---

⁴³ Stephenson, “*The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet,"*” 195.
actually identical to the orchestral suite version outside of the introduction. Prokofiev used his Act 4 introduction as an introduction for this movement in Suite No. 2.

**The Death of Tybalt (Mercutio)**

Vernon decides to use Mercutio as the seventh movement of the transcription. Mercutio is the 15th number of the complete ballet and the final movement of Suite No. 1 for orchestra. The movement is Mercutio’s dance number in the ballet, and his youth and exuberance are evident. Stephenson says, “His witty character is represented by the quick tempo, the subtle hemiolas, the wide leaps, the short forceful gestures, and the chromaticism.”

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

Vernon decides to use the key of B-flat major instead of A-flat major, making the transcription a whole step higher than Prokofiev intended. B-flat major is much more manageable from a fingering perspective for these difficult passages. The form of this movement is exactly the same as the full ballet. The orchestral reduction is written in the extreme low register of the piano. This register is not explored in the ballet orchestration, and it is unclear why Vernon decided to use this (see Example 3.14).

**Example 3.14:** Low Register Piano Writing, *The Death of Tybalt (Mercutio)* (mm. 427–434), Vernon Score

---

44 Stephenson, “The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet,*” 197.
**Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s**

*Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s* is number 28 in Act 2 of the full ballet and is the third movement of the orchestral Suite No. 2. The Friar’s character is represented by two slowly moving chordal melodies (see Example 3.15 and Example 3.16). Prokofiev uses an effective orchestration technique in the second melody (see Example 3.16) when he adds solo horn six measures into it. The horn timbre fortifies the string sound and boosts the overall dynamic of the phrase. Vernon wrote a crescendo in the part and the tubist should be aware of the sound change that would happen in the full orchestra.

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

The main difference between the two versions is the key. Prokofiev writes this movement in B-flat major, and Vernon decides to write in F major, a fifth away. The key choice is likely due to range. B-flat major would either put this movement too high to comfortably play, or too low to be effective. The solo and suite versions are both shorter than the ballet version, ending nine measures early.

Themes:

Two melodies are used in this movement for Friar Lawrence. Both are simple, slow, and use chordal harmonies.

**Example 3.15:** Friar Lawrence’s First Melody, *Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s* (mm. 525–533), Solo Tuba
Example 3.16: Friar Lawrence’s Second Melody, Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s (mm. 533–549), Solo Tuba

Romeo and Juliet at Parting

The ninth movement of the Vernon transcription is a short and simple number in the ballet. Romeo and Juliet at Parting is movement number 38 in the full ballet and the fifth movement in Suite No. 2. This is a short, simple movement with an easy melody. Romeo must say farewell to Juliet and live in exile or die.

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

The original key is B-flat major and Vernon decides to use F major, a fifth apart. The reason for the change in key is likely due to range again, as B-flat major would be too high or low. The form is right in line with the ballet. There is one melody that he decides to alter in regard to range. He probably has to do this or else it will either start too low or enter the extreme register on the tuba (see Example 3.17 and Example 3.18). Vernon keeps this movement a standalone like Prokofiev originally had in the ballet.
The tenth and final movement of the transcription is *Juliet’s Death and Funeral*. This movement almost identically follows the form of the ninth movement of Suite No. 2. The ballet is very different, as Prokofiev incorporates many numbers into one for the suite. The beginning is from movement number 39 (*Romeo bids Juliet Farewell*), then No. 44 (*At Friar Lawrence’s Cell*), then No. 51 (*Juliet’s Funeral*), and No. 52 (*Juliet’s Death*). The movement incorporates the introduction theme (see Example 3.2). Prokofiev brings the melody full circle, from a hopeful beginning to a mournful ending. At rehearsal number 50 a new love theme is introduced and is more grand and powerful than previous themes (see Example 3.20). This melody has an interesting orchestration because Prokofiev uses the french horn for only the first two beats. This orchestration decision makes that statement more of a proclamation because the clarinet that follows will not be as present. The clarinet seemingly appears out of the horn sound and it is very effective. The tubist could make the first figure of that melody louder and more like a statement before continuing onto the smoother clarinet slurs. Stephenson says “As do so many of the love
themes, this melody rises nearly two octaves in its opening gesture. The first phrase ending on a supertonic harmony, the opening phrase of the entire ballet provides the perfect consequent."

The next newly introduced theme is at rehearsal number 55 and it signifies the poisoning while Juliet is at the Friar’s cell. The low strings, clarinet, and tuba have a brooding “Death Melody” (see Example 3.23), while the strings can be heard with a slow sound of poison bubbling (see Example 3.22 and Example 3.23). This is a great moment in the transcription when the tuba soloist plays something that is in the ballet part. It is not in the same key, but it is the original material the tubist gets to play when performing the ballet (see Example 3.24). This melody is the “Death Melody” as it accompanies the music when Juliet takes the poison, and it also appears at Juliet’s funeral. Prokofiev’s low lyrical writing for the tuba can be seen in many other pieces of his, most prominently Symphony No. 5 (see Example 3.25), and Symphony No. 7 (see Example 3.26). There is a notable reference to a Juliet theme that was introduced in The Young Girl Juliet between mm. 645–648. Prokofiev introduces this theme to signify Juliet’s character development from a young girl (see Example 3.11). He inserts this theme between two “Death Melody” statements as one final reference to Juliet (see Example 3.27).

The transcription ends exactly like the ninth movement of Suite No. 2 when the poison theme continues, and the music slowly dies away. Prokofiev adds this ending to the suite and this exact music cannot be found in the full ballet. There are hints of this material in number 47, called Juliet Alone, but it is not the exact material. In this moment you can hear the heartbeat slowly fade away as the poison theme continues to be played in the flute and strings.

---

45 Stephenson, “The Tonal Style of Sergei Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet,"

Differences Between the Ballet and Transcription:

Vernon uses the key of F major again to start this movement and Prokofiev starts in B-flat major, a fifth apart. This key relationship is used multiple times throughout this transcription as it helps with range issues. All key relationships throughout the movement are intact. The form is very similar to the Suite No. 2 version, and it is drastically different than the ballet. The only variation is between rehearsal numbers 55–57 when Vernon adds ten measures of content. In these ten measures, he adds the tutti horn “Death Melody” material from Juliet’s Funeral, which is measure number 51 in the full ballet (see Example 3.20). The orchestral reduction is written very low in multiple occasions, and the pianist may need to adjust octaves for clarity.

Example 3.19: Added “Death Melody” Statements, Juliet’s Death and Funeral (mm. 628–645), Solo Tuba

Themes:

Example 3.20: New Love Theme, Juliet’s Death and Funeral (mm. 577–560), Solo Tuba
Example 3.21: The Love Theme, *Juliet’s Death and Funeral* (mm. 589–597), Solo Tuba

Example 3.23: The Death Melody, *Juliet’s Funeral* (mm. 640–645), Solo Tuba


Example 3.25: Low Lyrical Melody, Symphony No. 5 Movement 1, Tuba Part

Example 3.26: Low Lyrical Melody, Symphony No. 7 Movement 7, Score
Example 3.27: Juliet Theme Reference from *The Young Girl Juliet, Juliet’s Funeral* (mm. 645–647), Solo Tuba
Charles Vernon’s arrangement of Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* for solo tuba is a tour de force for the tubist. This arrangement is technically and musically demanding, and it will be a challenge for even the most accomplished player. Challenges to be specifically considered are range (C0–E3), multiple tonguing, and long lyrical playing. This piece may be performed on contrabass or bass tuba, and challenges arise with either decision. If the tubist decides to use contrabass tuba, some of the higher, more technical passages may be more difficult. The bass tuba will make those specific things easier, but at a cost. The bass tuba, in the final movement, *Juliet’s Death and Funeral*, will struggle to provide the depth of sound and ease in low register of a contrabass tuba. Overall, it would be more fitting to the ballet piece to play this on a contrabass tuba. Prokofiev would have originally written this piece for a contrabass tuba in the key of B-flat, so it is more appropriate to play the piece on a contrabass tuba than on a bass tuba. This movement includes solo lines from the score in the contrabass tuba (see Example 3.15). This should be taken into account when deciding which instrument to use to perform this piece.

**Introduction**

The *Introduction* is a challenge for the performer right at the beginning with long, lyrical lines in the mid-upper register. The biggest challenge of this movement is maintaining very long phrases and breathing when appropriate musically. Vernon adds phrase markings that clearly
outline the phrases, but the performer should also consult recordings and the score to find the optimal place. The tubist should also be aware of color changes as different instruments enter. For example, the first melody changes drastically in the ballet score when the strings drop out and the quiet woodwinds take over the melody (see Example 4.1). The second challenge of this movement is maneuvering large interval leaps and slurs. The tubist must cover two octaves of the instrument in a relatively short period of time (see Example 4.2). Since this melody changes direction and has large leaps, it is useful to make a skeleton of the melody and slur through it at a reasonable speed (see Example 4.3). Prokofiev uses large leaps frequently in his music. This practice technique can help the player hear the intervals and lock in more manageable jumps before attempting the entire thing. It would also be helpful for the player to practice octave lip slurs since they happen multiple times in this movement (see Example 4.4). Octave lip slurs provide a challenge for the brass player due to the number of partials possible in between. The larger the leap, the more chances the player has to hit a wrong note on the way up to it.

**Example 4.1: Texture and Dynamic Change, *Introduction*, Solo Tuba**

![Example 4.1]

**Example 4.2: Arpeggiated Slurs, *Introduction*, Solo Tuba**

![Example 4.2]
Example 4.3: Melody Skeleton

Example 4.4: Octave Lip-Slur Exercise

The City Awakens

The City Awakens is one of the physically easier movements of this arrangement. The tubist will need to have a clear articulation and pay attention to the accents in order to portray the energy of the movement. The slurs in measure number 85 can be a challenge and the tubist needs to blow through the phrase and anchor themselves on the lowest notes (see Example 4.5). Although the accents are written on the arriving note, the player will want to make sure to have a good start by placing a slight accent on the first note as well.
Example 4.5: Low Eighth Note Figure, *The City Awakens*, Solo Tuba

![Example 4.5: Low Eighth Note Figure](image)

Public Merry-Making

The third movement immediately opens with virtuosic and challenging multiple tonguing (see Example 4.6). This movement is the most energetic so far, portraying the lively Verona streets in the ballet. The tubist will need to make sure their double tonguing is able to meet the marked tempo of 152 BPM. Prokofiev writes “Vivo” in the score and the tempo marking is added by Vernon in the transcription. A strategy to make an excerpt like this easier is to play the rhythm on a single note. It is helpful to remove all other variables and only focus on the multiple tonguing and accents (see Example 4.7).

Example 4.6: Fast Multiple Tonguing, *Public Merry-Making*, Solo Tuba

![Example 4.6: Fast Multiple Tonguing](image)

Example 4.7: Exercise for Multiple Tonguing

*Quarter = 100, 120, 130, 140, 150*

![Example 4.7: Exercise for Multiple Tonguing](image)
The Young Girl Juliet

This movement is a continuation of techniques needed in Public Merry-Making. The movement opens with a quick C-major scale at 144 BPM, and the scale changes throughout the movement (see Example 4.8). Unlike Public Merry-Making, Prokofiev does specify Vivace 144 BPM in the score. The tubist will need a quick double tongue and accurate fingers as Prokofiev changes keys with each flourish. A challenge when playing this movement on the tuba is keeping it light and energetic, as you are portraying an innocent, young Juliet. Prokofiev gives this melody to the violins and woodwinds in the original score. It is helpful to take a similar approach as the previous movement (see Example 4.7) when working up the articulation and finger dexterity. Example 4.9 is a useful tool in achieving a gradual approach to these passages in The Young Girl Juliet. The section between rehearsal numbers 18–20 have flexibility challenges that the tubist hasn’t encountered yet (see Example 4.10). The C1–C0 slur at rehearsal number 19 will also be a challenge and the tubist must cover a massive range within six measures (C0–C#3). Example 4.11 is added as a guide for the tubist to address the technical issues of Example 4.10.

Example 4.8: Fast Double-Tongued Scale Passages, The Young Girl Juliet, Solo Tuba
Example 4.9: Multiple Tonguing Scale Exercise

*Quarter = 100, 120, 130, 144*

Example 4.10: Cello Soli Line with Large Slurs and Extended Range, Solo Tuba

Piu Tranquillo \( \text{\textit{\textbullet}} = 84 \)
The fifth movement, *Masks*, portrays a party and is a much-needed break from the technical and range challenges of movement four. The only real physical challenge of this movement involves moving the valves fast enough and blowing air through the slurred 32nd notes. The tubist should consider alternate fingerings for some of these passages to aid in clarity. The grace notes in measures 301, 319, and 326 should be treated as flourishes and the player should try to achieve an effect over note perfection.

*Montagues and Capulets*

*Montagues and Capulets* is one of the most popular and recognizable movements of the entire ballet. The movement has multiple challenges for the tubist with the dotted eighth-sixteenth figure being the top priority (see Example 4.12). The melody in this movement (starting mm. 334) is particularly difficult on a brass instrument. Since the brass player has multiple partials to maneuver, the large and agile arpeggios are hard to play with accuracy. The violins have this melody in the original score and it is much easier for them to handle the intervals. The tubist has the challenge of playing snappy dotted eighth-sixteenths that are a sixth and greater apart, with the opening line alone spanning F1–Bb2. The second challenge in this movement is playing long, technical passages and sneaking breaths without disrupting the line.
The scale melodies between rehearsal numbers 30–33 require quick breaths to not disrupt the melody (see Example 4.13). The challenge with quick breaths will be providing enough tone on the note before breathing to disrupt the line as little as possible. Example 4.14 is a practice technique to work on this problem specifically. The tubist should try to match the quick breath to the full breath as best as possible (see Example 4.14).


Example 4.12: Practice Approach to Arpeggios

*Quarter = 70, 80, 90, 100*

Example 4.14: Quick Breath Practice

*Quarter = 94–100*

The seventh movement brings speed and multiple tonguing back for the tubist to maneuver. The tempo marking of “Allegro Giocoso” gives the tubist some flexibility, but multiple tonguing will still be necessary. The performer will need to spend a considerable amount of time on measure number 464. The section between rehearsal numbers 42–44 offer a different set of challenges. The tempo slows down to quarter=92 and the tubist must be confident and clearly articulate in the lowest register of the instrument (see Example 4.15). In the original composition, the bassoons are playing this up an octave. It will be an almost impossible task to
play as staccato as the bassoons in that register, so the tubist should strive to play as short as they can with a good tone. In this register, notes will not want to speak quick enough, so the player must work on immediate response in that register. Example 4.16 is a low-register exercise that will help the tubist get the quick response required for those notes. The air attack should help set the embouchure and then the tongued notes should be exactly the same. The tubist should strive for tone above all else, because this is what will be audible to the listener.

**Example 4.15:** Staccato Piano Low Register Notes, *The Death of Tybalt (Mercutio)*, Solo Tuba

**Example 4.16:** Low-Register Response Exercise
Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s

This movement is pretty simple compared to the previous ones and only offers a couple of physical challenges to the performer. One difficulty of this movement is the heavy use of perfect intervals between the bass and solo voice (see Example 4.17). Intonation discrepancies will be highlighted in this movement due to the slower tempo and more simple textures. The second challenge is playing with a good sound and articulation in a soft dynamic. Example 4.16 can be used in this register as well to help the tubist with soft articulation response.

Example 4.17: Intervals Between Bass Line and Solo Voice, Vernon Score

Romeo and Juliet at Parting

Movement number nine is another short and simple movement with few technical challenges. The one challenge that will come up is making the long phrase between measures 561–566. The tubist could actually break the phrase mark (see Example 4.18), because the violins take over the melody in the original score.
Example 4.18: Broken Slur/Phrase Mark for Breath, Solo Tuba

This is the most substantial movement of the entire arrangement and it offers multiple challenges for the player. The movement brings back the introduction theme (see Example 3.1). The “Love Theme” at rehearsal number 51 has a tempo change, large slurred leaps, and arpeggios that continue through rehearsal number 52 (see Example 4.19). This offers multiple challenges as the tubist must slur into the high register and “sing” through the triplet figure. Rehearsal number 55 requires the tubist to provide and sustain power and drama. This is the “Death Melody” and carries much significance throughout the ending of this piece (see Example 3.15). Rehearsal number 57 gives the tubist the opportunity to play something that is originally written for the instrument in the ballet. This statement is given to the double bass, tuba, and bass clarinet. The final challenge will be playing the last two lines quietly and gently, as this music signifies Juliet’s dying.
Example 4.19: Large Slurred Leaps, *Juliet's Death and Funeral*, Solo Tuba
CHAPTER 5: PERFORMANCE GUIDE

The following performance guide is intended to help the tubist recognize Prokofiev’s original intention when writing *Romeo and Juliet*. It is important to have knowledge of the original score when playing a transcription so that informed musical decisions can be made. Prokofiev is a master of orchestration and is constantly changing colors of sound. Unfortunately, this effect is lost when doing any solo instrument with piano reduction. The tubist should take into account what instrument was originally playing the melody and let that inform their musical decisions. The easiest way to accomplish this task is to make dynamic changes very noticeable. Prokofiev often times accompanies dynamic changes with instrument changes, and this should be as clear as possible when performing the solo work.

There are multiple changes that Vernon made in this transcription. Some of the changes are due to limitations on the tuba, some may be intentional, and some may be accidental. The following lists all changes between the two versions. There are no errors or significant changes to the solo part in *The City Awakes* or *Masks*.

**Suggestions and Errata**

*Introduction:*
1. Missing piano dynamic in measure 3, the texture thins dramatically as the oboe and flute drops out and the strings are quietly playing this phrase.
2. Missing forte in measure 5 due to texture filling back up again. Oboe and flute reenter on melody.
3. Missing piano in measure 34 when solo clarinet takes over the melody.
4. Missing diminuendo in measures 54–58 to simulate instruments dropping off and texture thinning. The diminuendo represents the horn and bassoon dropping out.

*Public Merry-Making:*
1. Missing countermelody in piano part (see Example 3.7).
2. Added rhythm in the first measure (see Example 3.6).
3. Slurs removed and accent added in measures 179 and 187.
The Young Girl Juliet:
1. Missing dynamic in measure 209.
2. Missing octave leap in measures 210, 228, and 281.
4. Wrong note in piano reduction (see Example 3.11).

Montagues and Capulets:
1. Missing dynamic bump-up in measures 340 and 376. The violas, oboes, and English horn are added on here.
3. Missing dynamic increase pick-up to measure 419.

The Death of Tybalt (Mercutio):
1. Tie added in measure 447 and 503.
2. Missing eighth notes in measures 491, 492, and 495.
3. Dynamic too loud in measure 512 to simulate muted trumpets.

Romeo at Friar Lawrence’s:
1. Notes missing in measure 536.
2. Note and rhythm missing in measure 541.
3. Octave should be dropped to match beginning in measures 549–552.

Romeo and Juliet at Parting:
1. Octave displacement measure 612.

Juliet’s Death and Funeral:
1. Octave displacement in measure 577.
2. Octave displacement in measure 612.
Tuba

Romeo and Juliet

Suite No. 1 Op. 64 for Tuba and Piano

Sergei Prokofiev

arr. Charles Vernon

ed. Erik Saras

1. Act One Introduction

Andante assai  Meno mosso  \( q = 60 \)

Copyright © 1938 (Renewed) by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP)

This arrangement © 2011 by G. Schirmer, Inc. (ASCAP)

International Copyright Secured. All Rights Reserved | Used by Permission

www.CherryClassics.com
2. The City Awakes

Prokofiev - Romeo and Juliet
Suite for Tuba and Piano

Allegretto \( q = 126 \)

2. ... poco piu animato

p

Cello + Brass

120

p C1. brass and tuba

130

Cello + Bass

dim.

pp

sf

Downloaded from www.CherryClassics.com
Please respect the rights of our composers & arrangers

58
3. Public Merry-Making
Prokofiev - Romeo and Juliet
Suite for Tuba and Piano

4. The Young Girl Juliet

Vivace  \( q = 144 \)

\[
\text{mf} \quad \text{Viola} + \text{Fl/Ob/Tpt} \quad - \text{Fl/Obae} \quad \text{p} \quad + \text{W.W.}
\]

\[
\text{Ob + Violin} \quad - \text{Ob} \quad + \text{Cl/Bsn} \quad \text{p} \quad \text{mp} \quad \text{nf}
\]

\[
\text{pp} \quad \text{14} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{Violino} \quad \text{Winds}
\]

\[
\text{f} \quad \text{Viola} \quad + \text{Fl/Ob/Trp} \quad - \text{Fl/Ob} \quad \text{p} \quad + \text{Fl/Ob}
\]

\[
\text{Ob + Violin} \quad - \text{Ob} \quad + \text{Cl/Bsn} \quad \text{p} \quad \text{mp} \quad \text{nf}
\]

\[
\text{pp} \quad \text{14} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{Violino} \quad \text{Winds}
\]

\[
\text{f} \quad \text{Cl. Solo}
\]

\[
\text{poco rit.} \quad \text{a tempo}
\]

\[
\text{Tempo I}
\]

\[
\text{mf} \quad \text{Violino} \quad + \text{Ob/Trh} \quad + \text{W.W.} \quad \text{mf} \quad \text{Violino} \quad \text{p} \quad \rightarrow \text{Cl.}
\]

\[
\text{pp} \quad \text{17} \quad \text{Tempo I}
\]

\[
\text{Cl.} \quad \text{Strings} \quad \text{pp}
\]

\[
\text{Bass Cl.}
\]
5. Masks

Andante marciale  q = 72

Prokofiev - Romeo and Juliet
Suite for Tuba and Piano
Prokofiev - Romeo and Juliet
Suite for Tuba and Piano

6. Montagues and Capulets

Allegro Pesante

Tuba 1st
Violin + CL.

29
Violin + CL.

30
Horns

31
Tuba 1st
Violin + CL.

32
Tuba 2nd

33
ff
Tuba 1st
Violin + CL.

34
Moderato \( q = 84 \)

p dolce

Fl.
7. The Death of Tybalt
(Mercutio)

Allegro Giocoso

Low Strings

fff

Low Strings
8. Romeo at Friar Lawrence's

Andante espressivo

532

p tranquillo

539

mf Strings

545

mf molto espressivo

551

p tranquillo

9. Romeo and Juliet At Parting

Lento \( \text{\textit{e}} = 80 \)

Pno. p Fl. + Bells

563

mf Violins

567

mf Fl. + Bells pp
10. Juliet's Death and Funeral

Andante  \( q = 50 \)

Adagio

Poco piú animato

espressivo e dolce

ff
CONCLUSION

The goal of this detailed performance guide is to educate the player and provide useful information needed for a successful performance. A basic understanding of the composer, arranger, and piece gives the tubist a well-rounded foundation. This foundation will influence the way the piece is prepared and ultimately performed. The practice guide included gives the tubist creative solutions to maneuver the challenges of the transcription. Since only one of the melodies was originally written for tuba, the player must execute melodies that are not always idiomatically written for the instrument.

Having biographical information on the composer and arranger gives the player a more well-rounded understanding of the piece. *Romeo and Juliet* is one of Sergei Prokofiev’s most well-known compositions, and is a staple in the ballet repertoire. He has an extensive oeuvre, including symphonies, chamber music, solos, operas, ballets, and film scores. *Romeo and Juliet* experienced some setbacks, but it eventually found its way to the stage in 1938. The joy when Juliet is dancing in her room and the pain when she takes her last breath should all be portrayed when playing the piece.

Charles Vernon wrote the transcription for his colleague in the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Gene Pokorny. Vernon would have been very familiar with what the tuba could do, and what worked best for the instrument. Prokofiev wrote the ballet with a contrabass tuba in B-flat in mind, and Vernon wrote for a contrabass C tuba. Both instruments provide the depth of sound that works so well with his music.

Charles Vernon’s *Romeo and Juliet* for solo tuba is a welcome addition to the tubist’s solo repertoire. He chose ten movements from the ballet that are well suited for the instrument. Vernon took liberties with regard to key and form, and he even altered some melodies and
rhythms. It is important to know why these changes were made and if they were intentional. The tubist should be able to make informed musical decisions based on what they find in this performance guide.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDIX A
Permission to use the full solo part

John DiCesare <johndicesare24@gmail.com>

Hi Gordon,

I am finishing up my DMA at West Virginia University, and I am writing a performance guide on your Prokofiev Romeo and Juliet by Charlie Vernon. I was wondering if it would be possible to get written permission to use the solo PDF in this. It would only be for the educational purpose only and it will not be distributed to anyone. I will also have my notations all over it. I look forward to hearing from you, and thank you for the consideration. I also hope to meet you someday.

Best,
John DiCesare
Seattle Symphony
University of Washington

Gordon Cherry

Mon, Nov 22, 8:48 AM (2 days ago)

Hello John, Thank you for your email. Yes, you have permission to use “parts” of the solo pdf for your DMA dissertation. Please give credit to Mr. Vernon and Ch

johndicesare24@gmail.com

Mon, Nov 23, 9:01 AM (2 days ago)

Gordon, I’d be happy to send it over when I was finished. I was actually hoping to include the entire part at the end with my markings of orchestration etc. I u

Gordon Cherry

Mon, Nov 23, 9:09 AM (2 days ago)

Sure...I see now.
Thanks...yes you may use the entire solo part.
Gordon Cherry