

Virtual TUBACHRISTMAS Instructions for Musicians

by David Bugli

(Saved as Virtual_TUBACHRISTMAS_Instructions_v03.doc - Last updated 11/20/2020)

Reno, NV, has been presenting TUBACHRISTMAS performances since 1989. Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, we are not able to perform together in person this year. I have made an arrangement called "Christmas Tuba Fantasy" featuring five Christmas tunes for tuba-euphonium quartet (2 euphonium parts and 2 tuba parts) to be used in a virtual project. We invite musicians from the Reno area, other parts of the United States, and abroad to be involved. If you wish to participate, please send us a video recording you playing one (or two) of the four parts. We encourage you to dress in TUBACHRISTMAS apparel, ugly holiday sweaters, or festive garb of the season.

The featured tunes in "Christmas Tuba Fantasy" are "Deck the Halls," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," "We Three Kings," and "Angels We Have Heard on High." With the exception of "We Three Kings," this four-and-a-half minute fantasy is closely based on arrangements found in *Carols for a Merry TUBACHRISTMAS, Vol. II*. We have received permission from the Harvey Phillips Foundation to make and use this new arrangement.

There is a **project resource page** at DavidBugli.com/tuba2020.htm. PDFs of the parts, audio reference recordings, and other resources are available on the resource webpage. Please read instructions carefully before starting the project. We are dedicating "Christmas Tuba Fantasy" to the memory of Gary Robert Buchanan (1948-2020) who conducted Reno TUBACHRISTMAS performances from 2004 to 2019.

1. First steps:

Please go to the resource page at DavidBugli.com/tuba2020.htm, and get familiar with the materials. Our goal is to produce a performance we can be proud of. Examine the part(s) you want to play. All the parts are available on the resource page. If you are flexible about which part you could play, feel free to contact me at DCBugli@aol.com so we can plan to have adequate coverage on all 4 parts.

Listen to the audio reference tracks listed on the resource page. The one with the click track should be used when you record your video.

2. Registration form

There are two parts to the registration process.

First, send an email to DCBugli@aol (David Bugli, arranger and video coordinator) and tubaxmasreno@yahoo.com (Todd Devito, Reno TubaChristmas Coordinator) with the following information:

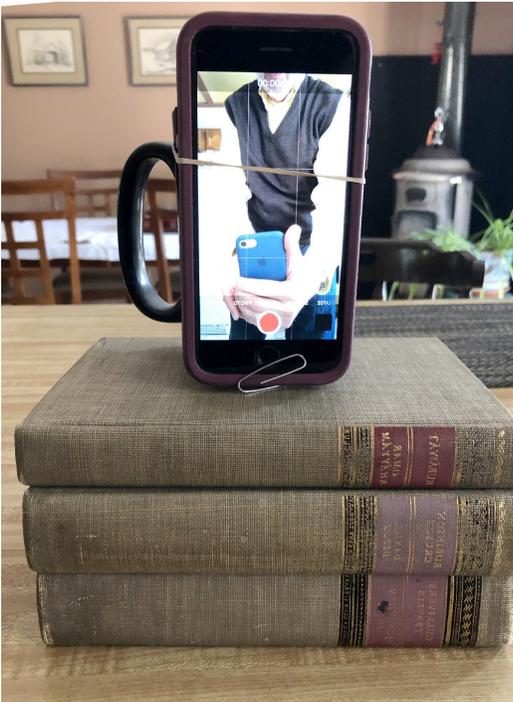
- Name (as you would like it to appear in credits)
- Email address
- Phone number
- Mailing address
- Part(s) you will be playing (limit 2 per individual)
- Current school affiliation (optional)

Second, since this is a TUBACHRISTMAS sanctioned event, we would like you to send a \$5 registration fee by check payable to Todd Devito, 4110 Lousetown Road, Reno, NV 89521. (This is optional but appreciated.)

3. Musicians preparation:

Practice the music. Some of you will be familiar with the tunes used at TUBACHRISTMAS performances in *Carols for a Merry TUBACHRISTMAS*. In order to make the parts familiar, this new arrangement uses writing similar to that found in the book. However, there are significant changes, as well as more subtle changes in dynamics, articulation, and transitional material. The tempo throughout is quarter note = 108; be sure you can keep up and play cleanly at that tempo. On the resource page there are recordings with and without a metronome click track that you can practice with.

4. Camera preparation for the video:



The best way to record your video is have two devices, in most cases two smartphones. One smartphone will be used to record you. If you have better video equipment, feel free to use it for recording. If you have a stand to hold the recording phone in place, try to get the camera to be at eye level. You may need to prop it up on a stack of books to get it to the right height. If you are recording without an assistant around, you may want to record in selfie mode, because then you can see how you fit into the picture. Select a plain background (if you wish) or something that you find appropriate. For most players, I recommend recording in portrait mode (image taller than wider). This will work best for the matrix that will be used to display the final work. *Avoid having the camera on the smartphone or laptop pointing up to the ceiling.* Don't be too close to the camera. Leave some empty space above your head (at least 5 inches) and include your instrument in the picture. We can always trim around the edges, but we can't add to the edges. Being too close to the camera can also overwhelm the smartphone microphone. Do not have more light behind you than in front of you.

If you are propping up your phone in portrait mode, consider that the microphone is often at the bottom of the phone (along with the speakers). The picture shows a phone propped up on books (a way to bring the phone up to eye-level), attached upright to a solid mug with a rubber band, in selfie mode, and with a paperclip at the bottom to expose the microphone for recording the sound better. This might work for you. Be sure the camera either remains statically in place for the whole recording or is held in place by an individual who is holding the camera steady.

A second device will be needed to play the reference track. That could be a second smartphone or a laptop device. Do not play the reference track out loud; listen to it through headphones. (If

you are really confident of your playing and cannot get another computer or smartphone to play the reference track, then listen to a metronome set at quarter note = 108 through a set of headphones. This is more difficult, but you need to very carefully check your recording against the part after the recording is done to make sure it is correct.)

5. The individual recording process:

If possible, turn off fans and radios (background noise). Do not forget to tune to A440 or B-flat466 prior to recording. You may use your own tuner, but be sure to you are calibrated to the A440 frequency. Some tuners can be set to other tunings (e.g., A442, A438). Turn on your recording device; identify yourself by stating your name and instrumental part (e.g., "This is Sally Jones playing euphonium 2"). *Then*, turn on your reference track.

Use the reference recording with the click track. It has a distinct click track with 16 metronome clicks prior to the actual start of the piece. In order to assist in aligning all the parts, I want musicians to clap their hands or make loud taps on the 5th and 6th metronome beats. There are essentially 4 measures of preparation beats for the start of the piece. When you get to the end of the recording, do not move for 8 beats. After that, you can stop the recording. Don't forget to smile at the end.

It may take several attempts to get things right. Send me your best recordings. If you know there is a serious error in an otherwise pretty good recording, let me know the measure and the note. Bad notes can be deleted or sometimes auto-tuned, although I make no grand promises. Chances are that other players in your section has played the note or phrase correctly and your mistake will not be noticed.

7. Sending in your files (~~deadline 11/21/2020~~):

NOTE: Deadline extended to Monday evening, 11/23/2020

If you can name your files, please include instrument, your name, and "xmas2020" in the file name. For example, "euphonium2_Sally_Jones_xmas2020.MOV" or "tuba1_Bill_Bell_xmas2020.mp4". Submit parts in separate files. If possible, use WeTransfer.com for transfers, and make sure ddebugli@aol.com is set up as the recipient. Typically, Dropbox.com will not work with video files that are more than 250MB. (Note: Unfortunately, Filewhopper.com does not work on the receiving end.)

If you wish to transfer files through Gmail using Google Drive, see this article:
<https://filewhopper.com/blog/ways-of-sending-large-files-through-gmail-using-google-drive/>