

Complete and Systematic Method for Serpent

Containing

The elementary principles of music, tablature, progressive lessons, scales with lessons on all intervals and in the most common keys.

Scales with their arpeggios, exercises with detailed explanations on syncopation, appoggiatura, trills, slurs, etc.

Twenty-four Studies

In the favorite keys of the serpent

Eight easy duets, a selection of arias for unaccompanied serpent

And duets on themes from

**The Jewess
Robert the Devil**

**The Lightening Flash
The Huguenots**

by

Schiltz

From the Royal Academy of Music

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I dedicate this edition to Michel Godard and Stephan Berger who so kindly showed me the way, and all the participants of the 2022 Serpent Journey in Saignelégier who welcomed me into the fold.

Searching for Schiltz

In September 2021, after listening to Douglas Yeo's splendid recordings of Étude 1 *Andante* /Des Huguenots/ and Étude 3 *Allegretto* /de L'Éclair/ on his *Le Monde du Serpent* (2002) project, I wanted to find the music score. The notes referenced, "from Schiltz: *Méthode complete et raisonnée de serpent*, Paris, c. 1836 p. 30". Unlike the beautiful edition of Métoyen's 1810 "Ouvrage Complet pour l'Éducation du Serpent" prepared by Benny Sluchin in 2002, the Schiltz book was not readily available. My goal for publishing this edition is to make it easier for Serpentists and scholars when they go searching for Schiltz in the future.

Production note

The consensus from prominent serpent scholars was to produce a partially restored (cleaned up) copy of the available Schiltz original, rather than completely resetting this book. Therefore, small areas of illegibility and imperfection were unavoidable and every effort was made to keep these to a minimum.

Serpents for the future:

The editor's royalties for this edition will be directed to the Serpent Journey Association in Switzerland for supporting their music courses and concerts, helping to bring the serpent to a wider audience.

Marc Lindy
Editor
Vancouver, Canada
2024

Introduction

Complete and Systematic Method for Serpent by Jean-Baptiste Schiltz: An Appreciation

by Douglas Yeo

The introduction of the serpent as a reinforcement to the singing of chant in the Roman Catholic Church in France came by 1590. Whether the serpent was invented there as a fully developed instrument, or it evolved from large serpentine-shaped cornetti in Italy is something about which scholars are not in agreement.¹ But no matter its origin story, from the late sixteenth century, the serpent was the most robust bass instrument available to composers and performers. This being the case, it was no surprise when the serpent wandered from the Church to military bands, chamber music groups, and symphony orchestras. What is surprising about this is that from the serpent's introduction in France until the beginning of the 19th century, there were no published method books for the instrument. Fingering charts for the serpent began appearing as early as 1772, but the first method book for the instrument—written by Jean-Baptiste Métoyen—was not written until 1792. While Métoyen's book was bowdlerized by Nicholas Roze, Joseph Gossec, Étienne Ozi, and Joseph Borel-Rogat—who published parts of it around 1812 in a method under their names for the Paris Conservatory—Métoyen's serpent method was not published in its entirety until the twenty-first century.² Others followed in Métoyen's footsteps, including M. G. Hermenge, and A. Héral, who published methods for serpent in the early nineteenth century. Clearly, the increasing ubiquity of the instrument in French musical life called for better training of serpent practitioners.

Jean-Baptiste Schiltz's *Méthode complete et raisonnée de serpent* (Complete and Systematic Method for Serpent) was published sometime between 1836 and 1838 and was probably the last of the nineteenth century serpent methods. It was one of several methods that Schiltz published for various wind instruments including his method for the serpent's descendent, the ophicleide, *Grande Méthode d'Ophicléide–Basse et d'Ophicléide–Quint et sans clefs* (Paris, no date).

Biography of Jean-Baptiste Schiltz

by Dr. Kenneth Jimenez

Succeeding as a professional musician requires not only strong musical ability, but a variety of soft skills -- an ability to network and market oneself, the fortitude to face continual setbacks, and a keen awareness of when to voice a musical opinion or keep quiet. The author of this method, Jean-Baptiste Schiltz (1807-1868), was a musician who in the span of a few short years went from the top of the Parisian music scene to quite near the bottom -- and in so doing codified instruction on a variety of instruments, left behind a substantial repertoire for cornet and other brass instruments, and left us today with a greater understanding of just how important those soft skills are to musical success.

Schiltz began his professional musical journey as a military musician, performed alongside the famed Francois Dauverné (1799-1874) in the Paris *Opéra* orchestra, and further supported himself through composing, arranging, and conducting. Schiltz maintained a connection to military music-making throughout his life, particularly military bands. He maintained strong and strident opinions about how this music should be made. While this opinionated nature doubtless inspired him to compose methods such as this *Méthode complète et raisonnée pour serpent* (1836). However, that same nature led to continual professional turmoil that ultimately collapsed his promising professional career. Schiltz's fascinating and colorful story helps to humanize him to us today and gives us valuable insight into the life of a working musician in the Romantic era.

Schiltz was born January 26, 1807, in the city of Luxembourg, capital of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.¹ Like Schiltz, Luxembourg has a colorful and dramatic history. Though we know it today as a small, independent nation, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has been at various times under Spanish, Austrian and French rule, as well as being subject to territorial claims by the Netherlands, Belgium, and Prussia.² At the time of Schiltz's birth, Luxembourg was under French rule, and the earliest records of Schiltz's professional activities come from his time in the French garde nationale.

MÉTHODE DE SERPENT

PAR
SCHILTZ.

MANIÈRE de TENIR L'INSTRUMENT.

L'instrument doit être soutenu au col, par un cordon au bout duquel il doit y avoir un crochet que l'on passe dans l'anneau qui est fixé à la grande branche. L'instrument doit être soutenu par la main gauche, le support qui est fixé à la petite branche s'appuie entre le pouce et l'index de la main gauche de manière à laisser les doigts boucher librement les trous et mouvoir les clefs.

POSITION du CORPS.

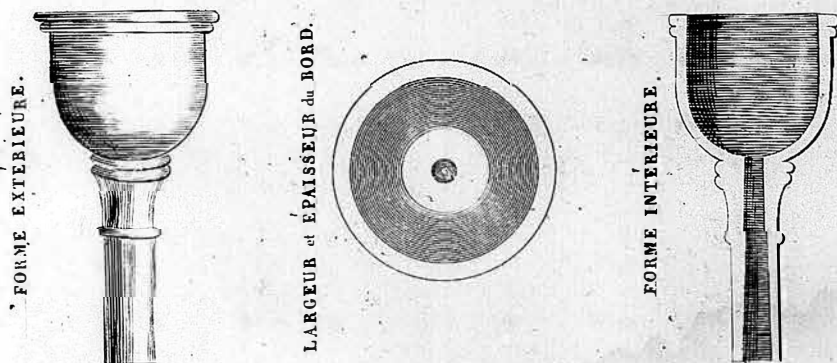
Le corps doit être droit sans raideur, il faut éviter autant que possible, de faire des contorsions, et surtout d'enfler les joues en jouant, car outre la mauvaise grâce que donnent ces défauts ils empêchent l'exécutant d'articuler avec facilité.

DE L'EMBOUCHURE.

L'embouchure doit se poser au milieu de la bouche, les deux tiers à peu près sur la lèvre supérieure et l'autre tiers sur la lèvre inférieure. cette manière de poser l'embouchure donne beaucoup de facilité à l'exécutant.

Quant à la forme de l'embouchure, il faut suivre à peu près le modèle ci-dessous, cependant on pourra varier un peu soit en plus petit soit en plus grand, selon la conformation des lèvres.

Les embouchures en ivoire sont généralement adoptées par les serpentistes.



De la QUALITÉ des SONS.

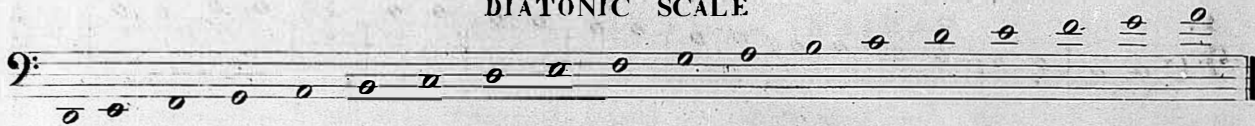
L'élève ne saurait jamais trop s'attacher à avoir une belle qualité de son; il y parviendra en faisant beaucoup de gammes et en filant des sons de la manière suivante. Commencer la note *Piano*, l'enfler jusqu'au milieu et diminuer jusqu'à la fin.

Soutenez chaque note autant que la respiration le permettra.

ÉTENDUE GÉNÉRALE DU SERPENT.

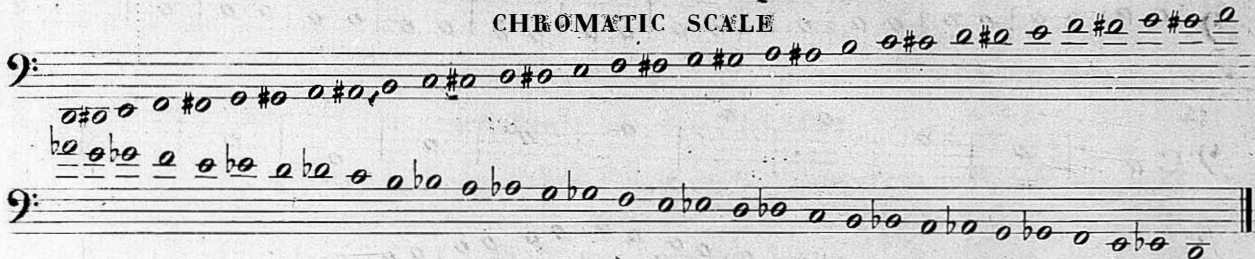
GAMME DIATONIQUE.

DIATONIC SCALE



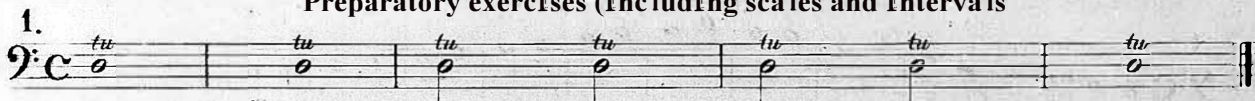
GAMME CHROMATIQUE.

CHROMATIC SCALE

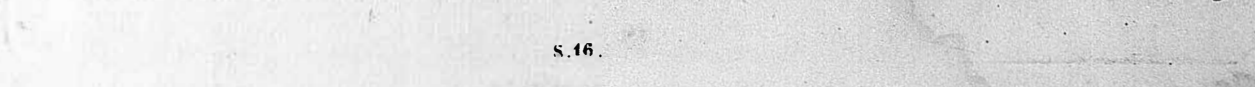
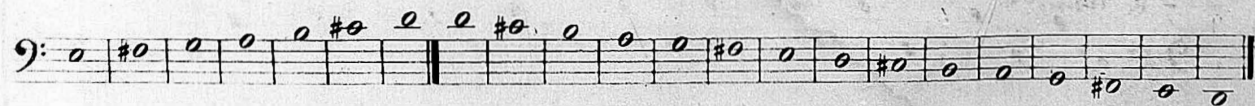
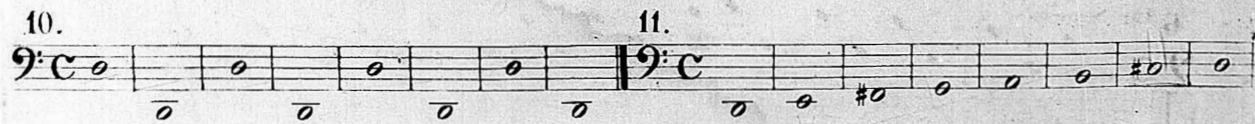
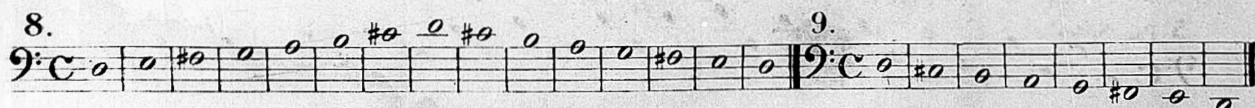
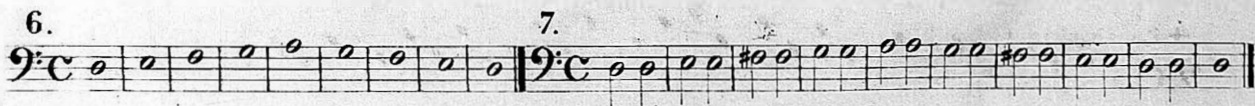
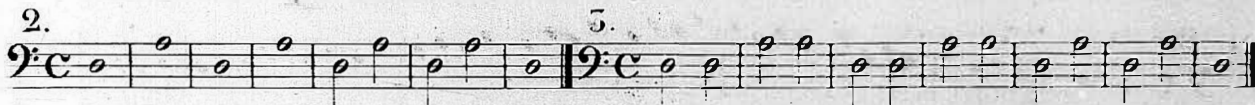


LEÇONS PRÉPARATOIRES.

Preparatory exercises (Including scales and Intervals)



Prononcez *tu* à chaque note que vous attaquez.



Comments regarding the technical and theoretical sections of Schiltz's method

by Volny Hostiou

This method is both quite comprehensive given the variety of different themes covered, and very succinct in the quantity of elements proposed for each section. In the technical and theoretical part, we find details on playing technique, musical elements such as range, articulation, scales, ornaments (called “enjoyments”) and even some theoretical elements regarding tempo indications. The part devoted to scales is quite developed, all the tones are detailed there. The short examples highlighting the different approvals help to illustrate the point. The elements specific to the serpent are tenuous and mainly concern the holding and playing mode of the instrument, the exercises and examples could find their place in any method for wind instruments of the brass family.

In the short text about trills, the author concludes that it is better to simply avoid trills on this instrument. Given the importance of the ornaments (notably the tremors) and their presence in particular in plain chant which the serpent has accompanied in its most common use since the 17th century, one may be surprised that Schiltz brushes aside this element with the back of his hand in a work devoted to the serpent. Likewise, there is no mention of the specific repertoires of the serpent in either sacred or secular music.

This work presents a fairly general learning method, such as can be found for various wind instruments, and which Schiltz himself has adapted for a number of different instruments (piston cornet, saxhorns, etc.). While he does not really focus on the specificities of the serpent, by publishing this method, Schiltz seems above all to give the serpent its place in the large family of wind instruments with mouthpieces.

PROGRESSIVE EXERCISES in the most common keys

16

LEÇONS PROGRESSIVES dans tous les tons les plus usités.

1.

First staff of exercise 1: Treble clef, common time (C). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting on G4 and ascending to D5.

Second staff of exercise 1: Bass clef, common time (C). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting on G3 and ascending to D4.

2.

First staff of exercise 2: Treble clef, common time (C). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting on G4 and ascending to D5.

Second staff of exercise 2: Bass clef, common time (C). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting on G3 and ascending to D4.

Third staff of exercise 2: Treble clef, common time (C). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting on G4 and ascending to D5.

Fourth staff of exercise 2: Bass clef, common time (C). The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, starting on G3 and ascending to D4.

3.

First staff of exercise 3: Treble clef, 3/4 time. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, starting on G4 and ascending to D5.

Second staff of exercise 3: Bass clef, 3/4 time. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, starting on G3 and ascending to D4.

Third staff of exercise 3: Treble clef, 3/4 time. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, starting on G4 and ascending to D5.

Fourth staff of exercise 3: Bass clef, 3/4 time. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, starting on G3 and ascending to D4.

HUIT DUOS PROGRESSIFS.

EIGHT PROGRESSIVE DUETS

1^{er}
N^o 1.
2^d

The image displays a page of musical notation for eight progressive duets. The score is organized into four systems, each containing two staves. The first two staves of each system are for the first and second instruments, while the last two are for the piano accompaniment. The first system is marked 'N^o 1.' and features a 3/4 time signature. The key signature is one flat (B-flat). The first instrument part (top staff) consists of a continuous eighth-note melody with slurs. The second instrument part (middle staff) features a similar eighth-note melody with slurs. The piano accompaniment (bottom two staves) provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines. The second system continues the duet with similar rhythmic patterns. The third system includes a repeat sign (double bar line with dots) in the first instrument part. The fourth system concludes the piece with a final cadence in the first instrument part, marked with a double bar line and repeat dots.

CHOIX D'AIRS extraits des plus beaux motifs des opéras.

De la JUIVE, L'ECLAIR, ROBERT le DIABLE, et les HUGUENOTS.

30.

A selection of arias from the most beautiful themes from operas
The Jewess (Halévy), The Lightening Flash (Halévy), Robert the Devil (Meyerbeer)
The Huguenots (Meyerbeer)

Andante.

1.

Des HUGUENOTS.

DUOS extraits des Opéras.

De ROBERT le DIABLE, L'ÉCLAIR, la JUIVE et les HUGUENOTS.

Duets taken from operas

Robert the Devil, The Lightning Flash, The Jewess, The Huguenots

Allegro.

1.

De ROBERT le DIABLE

The musical score consists of three systems of two staves each, all in bass clef. The first system is marked '1.' and 'De ROBERT le DIABLE'. The tempo is 'Allegro.' and the time signature is 2/4. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, with some triplet patterns. The second system continues the piece with similar rhythmic patterns. The third system concludes the piece with a final cadence.