MICHEL BLAVET’S

SONATA IN G MAJOR OP. 2, NO. 1 FOR TRANSVERSE FLUTE AND CONTINUO:

A CRITICAL EDITION OF THE FLUTE PART

CONSIDERING FRENCH BAROQUE CRITERIA

A CREATIVE PROJECT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF MUSIC

BY

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After practicing Baroque flute repertoire for many years, I discovered the importance of understanding the musical styles from the era. The flute repertoire includes extensive Baroque music, thus Baroque repertoire is essential to all flutists. Even beginning flutists are exposed to Baroque music as soon as they have learned a few scales. I was the least familiar with the French Baroque style in flute performance practice, so this was the focus of my review.

The musical style of the Baroque era can be distinguished by ornamentation of the music. Flutists often play Baroque music from performance editions, which include ornamentation by the editor. Creating one’s own original edition can be a valuable educational opportunity for a performer. Producing novel but accurate ornamentation in a flutist’s own edition adds variety and the performer’s personality to frequently performed repertoire.

The purpose of my research project was to provide a deeper understanding of French Baroque ornamentation for the flutist. Michel Blavet’s *Sonata in G Major Op. 2, No. 1 for Transverse Flute and Continuo* was used to develop my performance edition of the flute part of the third movement.¹ The G major sonata was part of Blavet’s second volume of sonatas, which were dedicated to Madame la Duchesse de Bouillon. She was a Duchess in the court of King Louis XIV of France when Blavet worked under the Count of Clermont in Paris. Each sonata represents a prominent female figure during the time, following the tradition of 18th-century composers’ desire to please and entertain the king.²

The second volume of Blavet’s sonatas displays the influence of the sonata da camera. Blavet’s G major sonata was a modified dance suite that contained four movements: *Adagio* in G major; *Allegro* in G major; *Aria I (rondeau), “L’Henriette”* in G major - *Aria II* in g minor - *Aria I da capo* in G major; and *Presto* beginning in D major, ending in G major. All of the

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movements end in the same key, following in the sonata da camera tradition. The movements of this type of sonata were suitable for dancing. The term “sonata da camera” translates to chamber sonata, and this work was meant for a small chamber group. In Blavet’s sonata, the harmonic accompaniment occurs in the basso continuo, while the transverse flute part contained the melodic lines.

The history of the flute will be discussed next, since the transverse flute was a fundamental instrument used during the Baroque era. One aspect that served to elevate Michel Blavet as a performer was his ability to play in tune on the flute that was available in 1732. The one-keyed wooden transverse flute was transformed in the early 1720s. The instrument had a simpler external design and was made with four pieces, not the previous three-piece models. The head joint was cylindrical, while the body was a conical bore. There were six finger holes and one key, for Eb/D#, on the foot joint. The range of this instrument was roughly two-and-a-half octaves, which was fully chromatic from the pitch D4 to A6. The four-piece model at the time often contained between three and seven interchangeable upper-center joints of different lengths. These separate joints were called corps de rechange. There were three corps de rechange in the model as seen in example 4.

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Example 4: *Corps de rechange* (Denner/Rudolf Tutz Model)

The *corps de rechange* helped to cope with pitch inconsistency and provided more flexibility with pitch options with moveable mean-tone tuning, which differentiated between enharmonic tones. In modern temperament, enharmonic spellings of the same note, for example the pitches $E^b$ and $D#$, sound and are played as the same pitch. In moveable mean-tone temperament, there was an extension of the octave range to facilitate the inconsistency between intervals on every instrument. Enharmonic pitches in moveable mean-tone temperament were played and heard as two distinct pitches, which allowed for improved intonation with other instruments. This provided an improved sound in the early flute.\(^5\) As Blavet was well known for his ability to play in tune, it is likely that the flute at the time of Blavet’s G major sonata would have had *corps de rechange*.

The use of ornaments during the Baroque era will now be discussed. Understanding the differences in ornamentation styles of various countries is important when writing a new edition of a piece from the Baroque era. A performer must know these variances in order to properly portray the style in performance because France, Italy, Germany, and England each promoted individual characteristics in ornamentation. The criterion for each style begins with the

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\(^5\) Brown, *The Early Flute*, 16-17.
distinction between ornaments and graces. Ornaments are variations and/or embellishments that vary or adorn the skeleton of the music, while graces are more concise little notes, trills, or vibratos added by the composer/performer. The French Baroque style included ornamentation using graces where the performer could change or omit ornaments upon repeats. The graces would have been written out in the music. In the Italian Baroque style, ornamentations were used only in the skeleton of the music. Italian composers set slow movements where sections were repeated with little ornamentation to allow for personal style and virtuosity. Baroque composers in Germany and England followed the Italian influence, which typically left the ornamentation up to the performers.⁶

French Baroque music can be affected by the Italian ornamentation style. The practice of performing added ornaments to the essential ornaments in an improvisatory manner was often seen in Italian music. Italian ornamental techniques could be applied to French Baroque pieces, such as those by respected French Baroque composer and flute virtuoso Michel Blavet (1700-1768).⁷

My education on French Baroque ornamentation began with research on standard French Baroque ornamentation techniques. Blavet’s style in the G major sonata consisted of mainly graces: the pincè, or mordent, seen in Example 1, the port de voix in example 2, and the tremblement, or trill, in example 3.

Example 1: Pincè

Example 2: Port de voix

Example 3: Tremblement

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⁷ Zaslaw, "Blavet, Michel."
The *pincè* is a single alternation or two/more alternations between two notes. Different symbols were used by composers to indicate the *pincè*. As seen in example 1, the symbol Michel Blavet used for the *pincè* was a plus sign. Another example of a grace was the *port de voix*, which sounds in the place of a principal note to create tension and release. The *port de voix* is played shorter in the French style. Blavet’s *port de voix* notation was a small note slurred to the principal note that follows as seen in example 2. The *tremblement* is an alternation between two pitches but for a longer duration than a *pincè*. As seen in example 3, the *tremblement* was notated by Blavet with a plus sign as well. These graces are added to crucial parts in the harmonic structure, which include cadences or change in harmony.\(^8\) Blavet’s particular use of ornaments and graces in his music served to identify him as a well-known composer and performer of his time.

The sonata in G major by Michel Blavet was selected for the following reasons. His works are infrequently performed, and I hoped to bring a new awareness to his music. Blavet’s music provides a melodic display of French Baroque music for the flute. There are other French Baroque flute pieces performed and recorded more often, for example, Couperin’s *Concert Royal No.4* and Marais’ *Les Foiles d’Espagna*. However, I found Blavet’s sonata stunningly beautiful and thought the piece would lend well to adding my own ornamentation. The simple melodic lines are accessible to the listener, making it an enjoyable experience. Blavet’s piece delivers a joyous atmosphere and seems more lyrical than other music from that era.

Now that a background on the historical context of the music selection has been provided, review of pertinent literature will be discussed. The focus for my edition of Blavet’s sonata was the selection of ornamentation and articulation markings. These were developed by examining Baroque performance practice, with a focus on the criteria of the French Baroque

\(^8\)Veilhan, *The Rules of Musical Interpretation.*
style. The criteria were based upon the harmonic structure of the piece and execution of the ornaments. The choices for ornamentation in my edition were based on rules as indicated by Blavet’s musical contemporaries: Johann Joachim Quantz’s *On Playing the Flute* and Jacques Hotteterre’s *Principles of the Flute, Recorder & Oboe*. Secondary sources for reference include those from Betty Bang Mather, David Lasocki, and Jean Claude Veilhan.

A vital resource to flutists is Quantz’s *On Playing the Flute*. This primary source from 1752 gives a thorough description of transverse flute technique at the time and includes useful charts of ornamentation options. Praised for its detailed descriptions of a wide variety of topics, Quantz’s treatise is frequently referenced not only by flutists but by other musicians interested in the Baroque era. Quantz’s intention in this treatise was to provide information for teachers to train their students to be well-rounded and informed performers, not just mechanical players. Quantz’s treatise includes the following sections that relate to the ornamentation. The first pertains to *appoggiaturas* and the necessary graces related to them. The first section goes into great detail regarding the purpose, proper application, and notation of *appoggiaturas*.

The second section on extemporaneous variations on simple intervals was useful for the ornamentation process of the Blavet sonata. This section begins with a table of the most common types of intervals paired with figured-bass notation. This table can be transposed into any other key. Quantz then expands this table and creates a separate table for each set of simple intervals included in the first table with the associated bass lines. He proves that it is necessary for performers to know the harmony of the music they wish to ornament in order to do so in a proper manner. These charts alone make this treatise invaluable to flutists and musicians interested in Baroque ornamentation.

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Another notable primary source of Baroque ornamentation is Hotteterre’s *Principles of the Flute, Recorder, and Oboe*, written in 1707. Hotteterre’s treatise on the flute is useful for interpreting Blavet because he focuses on French performance practice, whereas Quantz tends to focus on the Italian. Hotteterre’s book is not as detailed as the Quantz, and while it provides important information, it is only a brief overview.

The next two references are secondary sources by Betty Bang Mather. The first is an anthology written in 1976 with David Lasocki. This anthology of Baroque ornamentation examples is a useful tool for woodwind performers working on the challenging task of using proper ornamentation techniques. Performers in this century study manuscripts and publications of the types of ornamentation that performers of earlier times would have used. This book contains many examples of such publications and refers to other available works not included in the anthology. The sources used by the authors of this book include works by Quantz, Telemann, Babell, and Corelli. This book is concise and well-organized, which makes it a useful, quick reference on proper examples of 18th-century ornamentation.

The second book by Mather was *Interpretation of French Music from 1695 to 1775*, published in 1973. This is an instructional manual about playing in the proper French Baroque style. There are three sections that include information on rhythmic inequality, articulation, and ornamentation. The information in the book was collected from various primary sources by composers of the time, including Hotteterre, Montclair, Corrette, and Quantz. The book is in depth and useful for the modern woodwind performer seeking a historically informed performance. The book concepts can also apply to vocal, string, and keyboard performers.

Another helpful resource used in the process of researching ornamentation was Jean Claude Veilhan’s book *The Rules of Musical Interpretation in the Baroque Era (17th-18th*
Centuries), Common to All Instruments, published in 1979. This book is an accessible source of simple descriptions of typical ornaments used in the Baroque era. Veilhan gives terms and descriptions for ornaments used in the French, Italian, and German Baroque styles. He provides a comprehensive overview of each style of ornamentation. Veilhan’s ornamentation descriptions were applied to this project. The book contained the most concise collection of Baroque ornamentation definitions.

All of the references mentioned are important resources to performers working on the French Baroque music of Blavet from the 18th century. The Quantz, Hotteterre, and Veilhan writings are similar in content, providing a basic explanation of Baroque principles. The Mather books provide some basic Baroque principles, but also include analytical musical examples.

I examined several editions of Michel Blavet’s sonata in G major to facilitate the research process of creating my edition. These were the first edition in 1732 by Blavet, Boivin, & Leclairc; a Bärenreiter publication edited by Walter Kolneder in 1969; a Schott publication edited by Hugo Ruf in 1994; and a Schirmer publication edited by Louis Moyse in 1983. These edition examples revealed ornamentation inconsistencies.

The first publication evaluated, and the main source for the editorial process, was the earliest copy of Blavet’s sonata in G major from 1732, published by Blavet, Boivin, & Leclairc. Of note, Blavet’s sonata in G major shows one interesting aspect that was not typical of the time: breath marks. Blavet indicated where to take a breath in appropriate measures to direct the performer in showing a phrase. He included breath marks, which are indicated by a lowercase letter h. Example 5 is an excerpt from the first twelve bars of the third movement of this edition. The letter h stands for the term “haleine,” which means breath in French. For example,
the fourth complete measure in example 5 displays the h symbol between beats 3 and 4 on the top treble line.

Example 5: Blavet, Boivin, & Leclairc Edition mm. 1-12

This 1732 edition is typical because the complete, realized figured bass is not present. It was common for the harpsichord player of a continuo to be expected to realize the figured bass on the spot. The bass line in example 5 displays the figured-bass notation above the notes, shown by using small numbers. It is only modern practice to see the figured-bass, as well as a fully realized harpsichord and cello part in the score.

The second edition that I examined was by Walter Kolneder, a Bärenreiter publication from 1969. It is similar to the 1732 edition and contains all six sonatas from the second volume. The Bärenreiter publication the G major sonata was compared directly to the first edition. Three things were found that were dissimilar. Example 6 shows an excerpt from the first eleven bars of the third movement of the Bärenreiter edition of the sonata, which shows all of these differences. The first difference was that the harpsichord part was fully realized for this modern edition. The second was that Blavet’s original breath marks were notated with what looks like an apostrophe instead of the “h” marking that was used in the first 1732 edition. The third was that there were
no dynamic markings in the first edition but there were in the Bärenreiter edition. The Bärenreiter edition was used with the first edition to learn the piece initially and to experiment with further ornamentation. This was found to be user friendly for the modern performer, except for the fact that there are no measure numbers, as example 6 indicates.

Example 6: Bärenreiter Edition mm. 1-11

The third edition I examined was by Hugo Ruf, published by Schott in 1994. This edition only includes the first sonata from the second volume of Blavet’s flute sonatas, as example 7 indicates.
Example 7: Schott Edition Cover

The Schott edition is similar to the first edition in that the breaths are marked with an “h” as illustrated in m. 22 of example 8. This edition differs from the Bärenreiter and the first edition in the incorporation of dotted slur markings. Alterations from the Blavet’s original articulation markings are indicated with a dotted slur line instead of a solid line, seen in m. 22 in example 8.

Example 8: Schott Edition mm. 21-22

The use of dotted slur lines gave the performer discretion as to whether they would change the articulation from the original markings. The decision was made to use the solid slur line in my edition because this was easier for the performer to read. The music was printed in a compact manner to facilitate page turns, as seen in example 9. This format can be helpful to the performer during rehearsal.
The fourth edition I examined was by Louis Moyse, published by G. Schirmer, Inc. in 1983, in which only the first sonata is included, seen in example 10.

Example 10: Schirmer Edition Cover

This edition looks more like a performer’s edition than the others. The editor has taken liberties in an attempt to create a more modern and interpretive edition. The Schirmer edition is very specific with tempo, dynamic, and expressive markings, as seen in examples 11 and 12 below.

Example 11 shows the metronome marking of “c. 138” indicated above the staff. This marking is not historically accurate because metronome markings would not have been found in standard Baroque music because the metronome was not widely used until after 1800.\textsuperscript{12} Example 11 also displays the specific dynamic marking of \textit{piano}, shown with a “p” below the staff.

expression marking of “dolce con tenerezza” occurs after the piano marking below the staff in example 11. Example 12 shows a crescendo marking, many of which occur throughout this edition. Dynamic markings were used only sporadically in the Baroque Era, and the first edition of the sonata from 1732 does not contain any dynamic markings. \(^{13}\) Tempo, expression, and dynamic markings would have been implied, rather than marked as they were in the Schirmer edition.

Example 11: Schirmer Edition m. 1

Example 12: Schirmer Edition m. 17

Another major issue with the Schirmer edition is the articulation of the third movement, Aria Ia and IIa. The articulation is distinctly marked in the first edition and in all of the other editions. The general pattern of the articulation for groups of three eighth notes is two notes slurred, followed by one note articulated. Example 13 displays the intended articulation markings in mm. 1-4 as seen in the Blavet, Boivin, & Leclairc edition, as well as in the Bärenreiter and Schott editions. The first four bars from the Schirmer edition are displayed in example 14. The markings are different from those seen in example 13.

The alteration of some phrase markings makes the flow of the music awkward. In example 13, there is no slur in the second full measure. The eighth-note G on beat three of that measure is a pickup note to the second half of the phrase. In example 14, the slur from the quarter note on beat 1 of measure 2 to the eighth note on beat 3 changes the original phrasing in example 13 by an eighth note. The eighth-note G on beat three of the second bar is no longer a pickup note. It is the last note of the first half of the phrase that begins the movement. The edition strays too far from Blavet’s original intent for this movement.

The Schirmer edition may be well suited for a younger performer who does not yet understand the expressive implications in Baroque music. However, this edition would not be suitable for the more advanced player due to the specificity of the notations. Study of Baroque music requires knowledge of ornamentation used in the era, and Schirmer’s edition removes the performer’s ability to incorporate their own concept of tempo, dynamic expression, and articulation markings.
I made decisions for this project after reviewing all of the editions mentioned, using editorial methodology. Standard editing procedures were taken in the process of creating an original critical edition of Blavet’s Sonata in G Major Op. 2, No. 1. The first step of this process was to consider what type of edition to create: a scholarly edition, performance edition, or a combination of both. The final product serves as both a performance edition and a critical edition. It is a performance edition because of editorial decisions, which allow for ease of performance, such as including measure numbers that serve to help with the rehearsal process. It is a critical edition because a scholarly explanation of the editorial process is provided through the creative-project paper. Through the use of primary and secondary sources, my original edition was compiled.

My edition of the Blavet sonata was created using the first 1732 edition and Bärenreiter edition as guides. My ornamentation decisions were placed into my edition using music notation software. I used articulation markings, discerning dynamic markings, and measure numbers. The markings were borrowed from existing editions that I evaluated. The main goal of the ornamentation placement was to retain the purity of Blavet’s original intent with his markings, while also inserting my personality into the piece. Most of the original ornaments remained intact in my edition because the original markings exemplify the use of tremblements and pincès typically found in the French Baroque style. However, my edition includes the addition of tremblements, pincès, individualized ornaments, and alteration of articulation.

The addition of tremblements and pincès can express lyricism, especially in minor keys. The second section of the third movement, Aria IIa, is in the key of g minor. Occasions where pincès were added in Aria IIa are found in mm. 9 and 14, examples 15 and 17. Pincès occur on beat 4 of m. 9 and beat 4 of m. 14. Examples 15 and 17 display the same rhythmic motive of two
sixteenth notes, followed by two eighth notes. *Pincès* were added when that particular rhythmic motive is repeated with the same pitches later in the phrase, which provides variety in that repeated rhythmic motive. A *tremblement* was added in m. 13, example 16, on beat 1 of the measure to follow the pattern of *tremblements* in the context of the music in this section. There was originally a *tremblement* on beat 1 of m. 12 but not on beat 1 of m. 13. I wanted to maintain consistency between mm. 12 and 13.

Example 15: Smith Edition m. 9

Example 16: Smith Edition m. 12-13

Example 17: Smith Edition m. 14

Several phrases are repeated in this movement, and the addition of individualized ornaments in the Smith Edition increases variety upon repeated phrases. The intention was to insert my ideas to the piece through the addition of ornaments that were not *tremblements*. In example 19, a *port de voix* was added in m. 11 of *Aria Ia*. Example 18 displays m. 11 without the *port de voix*. A *port de voix* sounds in the place of a principal note to create tension and release. The note G sounds before beat 1 at the beginning of m. 11 creating tension before the principal note. The release of tension occurs on the A on beat 1. The *port de voix* is played short in the
French style. The *port de voix* is notated by Blavet with a small note slurred to the principal note that follows. The *port de voix*, an ornament that was commonly used in French Baroque music, was added to emphasize the half cadence at the beginning of m. 11.

Example 18: Bärenreiter Edition mm. 10-11

![Example 18: Bärenreiter Edition mm. 10-11](image)

Example 19: Smith Edition mm. 10-11

![Example 19: Smith Edition mm. 10-11](image)

Ornamentation in the Smith Edition was also added to vary the main theme that occurs several times in the third movement of the sonata, which is seen in the bracketed area of example 20. Example 20 is used to discuss variations on the main theme later in the movement.

Example 20: Smith Edition mm. 1-8: Main Theme

![Example 20: Smith Edition mm. 1-8: Main Theme](image)

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As noted in m. 25 of *Aria Ia*, triplets were added to beats 5 and 6 of the measure, instead of sixteenth notes, as seen in m. 3 of example 21. Example 21 shows m. 25 of *Aria Ia* from the Bärenreiter edition in comparison with example 22 from my edition, with the triplet additions. The triplet figure was added to show variety in a motive that occurs previously in the movement, seen in example 20. The figure was developed by using passing tones to get from the G on beat 4 in m. 25 to the B on beat 1 of m. 26. The passing tones occur on the pitches E and C, in the middle of each triplet. Quantz’s treatise and the anthology by Mather and Lasocki support this performance practice.

Example 21: Bärenreiter Edition m. 25

Example 22: Smith Edition m. 25

The main theme seen in Example 20 was also altered in m. 44 of *Aria Ia*, by adding a *double port de voix* before beat 4, seen in Example 24. A *double port de voix* is similar to the *port de voix* but with two ascending notes played upwards and originating on the notes beneath that on which the sound will settle.\(^6\) Inspiration for this idea was found in Quantz and the Mather/Lasocki anthology. For this ornamentation, sixteenth notes A and B were added in example 24 to provide contrast to the movement in general, as well as to emphasize the chordal movement from a I chord to a vii\(^{°}\) chord written in example 23.

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\(^6\) Veilhan, *The Rules of Musical Interpretation.*
The last statement of the main theme was altered in m. 47 of *Aria Ia* by adding a dotted eighth note, tied to two thirty-second notes, followed by two sixteenth notes in example 26. This was in place of two eighth notes, seen in example 25.

An ascending scalar figure was used, including a lower neighbor note (D) to E and a lower neighbor note (F) to G, on the IV chord on beat 1 of m. 47. Ascending scalar figures are seen throughout the movement, but particularly in the first six bars of *Aria Ia*, seen in Example 20.

There was only one occasion in the third movement where the original articulation was altered. This was in m. 26 in *Aria IIa*, shown in example 27, where a slur was added between
beats one and two to maintain consistency. The previous articulation markings consist of two eighth notes slurred, followed by one articulated eighth note as seen in the first three notes in example 27 and example 28. This slur also appears in the first 1732 edition and it was maintained, although removed in the Bärenreiter edition. The Bärenreiter edition may have removed the slur for emphasis on the change in harmony on beats 1 and 2 of m. 26.

Example 27: Bärenreiter Edition m. 26

Example 28: Smith Edition m. 26

I encourage the advanced performer or future teacher to develop an original edition of a piece. Through this process, flutists will become confident with their well-rounded musical knowledge of historical and modern practice on the Baroque flute and modern flute. This study helps the performer have a respectful knowledge of the characteristics of the music, specifically ornamentation markings. With this knowledge, the Baroque style may be preserved over time.

Performances of personalized editions can an exciting experience for the performer as well as the audience. These standard pieces are frequently performed, but hearing a performer’s own interpretation provides diverse ideas and interest for the listener. One may find enjoyment in creating their own edition because they are able to assert their own ideas into their music. If a personalized edition were published, it would be preserved. There have been significant editions
compiled by renowned flutists. These legacies are a testament to performers’ extraordinary skill and knowledge.

Researching and reviewing Baroque music was a valuable experience which changed my perception of music of this era. Through the editorial process of developing a personalized critical edition of a piece of flute literature, my knowledge of French Baroque criteria was advanced. The education of all flutists in Baroque ornamentation should be encouraged. I hope to inspire fellow flutists to follow this example in creating their own original editions of Baroque repertoire. The finished product of my edition of Michel Blavet’s flute part of the third movement is included in example 29 below.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


