

# Die Meistersinger, Overture

*Transposition Inquisition No. 79*

Richard Wagner  
arr. Martorano

## About the Composer:

"German Composer. One of the key figures in the history of opera, Wagner was largely responsible for altering its orientation in the 19th century. His programme of artistic reform, though not executed to the last detail, accelerated the trend towards organically conceived, through-composed structures, as well as influencing the development of the orchestra, of a new breed of singer, and of various aspects of theatrical practice." -Groves Music Dictionary

## About the Composition:

"The Master-Singers of Nuremberg" is a music drama (or opera) in three acts, written and composed by Richard Wagner. It was first performed at the National Theatre Munich, today the home of the Bavarian State Opera, in Munich, on 21 June 1868. The conductor at the premiere was Hans von Bülow. The story is set in Nuremberg in the mid-16th century. At the time, Nuremberg was a free imperial city and one of the centers of the Renaissance in Northern Europe. The story revolves around the city's guild of Meistersinger (Master Singers), an association of amateur poets and musicians who were primarily master craftsmen of various trades. The master singers had developed a craftsmanlike approach to music-making, with an intricate system of rules for composing and performing songs. The work draws much of its atmosphere from its depiction of the Nuremberg of the era and the traditions of the master-singer guild. One of the main characters, the cobbler-poet Hans Sachs, is based on a historical figure, Hans Sachs (1494–1576), the most famous of the master-singers.



Torchinsky, A. (1976). Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 73. In *The Tuba Player's Orchestral Repertoire* (Vol. I, pp. iii-iv). Hackensack, NJ: Joseph Boonin.

"Of all Wagner's music this is probably the surest bet to appear at an audition and certainly should be as much a part of the orchestral tuba player's repertory as any work I can think of. There is much to study in this overture, starting at the beginning. Although the opening chord is not difficult, I feel it deserves mention- because it has been said that this is the greatest C major chord ever written. I agree with this because when the orchestra plays the opening it surely must send chills up and down one's spine. From the beginning to letter A it is straightforward, full and majestic. A difference from the written text might occur at letter A. Although there is no dynamic marking at this point, most conductors ask for a subito piano there. At letter C I have always preferred taking a breath after the dotted quarter note. This section should be played as fluidly as possible, at least until measure 72 where it becomes detached. At letter J comes the famous tuba solo. Actually this is soli and not solo because it is played with other instruments: basses, celli, etc. Most conductors I have played under prefer that this section be played almost on the piano side, although I have played under one noted conductor who asked that it be played quite marcato and in a good solid forte. I'll not express an opinion as to how it should be played since it is a conductor's prerogative to ask for whatever he or she desires and it is up to the performer to do as the conductor wishes. Even though a crescendo is not indicated leading up to the high E, most conductors invariably seem to prefer one and the music does have markings asking for a bit stronger sound starting at number 166. Upon arriving at the trill I feel it is best to try to match the strings as much as possible so I used a measured trill. If the player has a really good lip trill at his disposal, I see nothing wrong with using it here. The section starting at one beat before letter K should also be played very fluidly. When a breath is necessary I suggest taking it after the half-notes tied to the eighth and/or after the dotted quarter-notes. I certainly do not mean that one should breathe after every one of these places but use these spots when breath is needed. Finally it is usual that two additional quarter-note C's are added at the end of the work, i.e. quarter-note, quarter-rest, quarter-note, quarter-rest, half-rest and fine.

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①

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

②

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

③

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

④

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

⑤

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

⑥

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

⑦

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

⑧

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

9

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

10

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

11

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

12

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

13

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

14

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

15

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*

16

*molto legato*

*f* *piu f*