



# Método: Music of the Americas for Bassoon

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Studies or collections of exercises for instruments or voice have been largely comprised of materials and teaching methods developed in Europe. While these models have served music education well for centuries, they neglect important pedagogies and literature from the billion people in the Americas. Rich and varied cultural traditions in addition to innovative pedagogical methods have been developed in the “New World,” yet these are scarcely presented in pedagogical materials throughout the world. *Método: Music of the Americas for Bassoon* (*Método: Música de las Américas para fagot*) seeks to address this oversight for one instrument (bassoon) with the hope that other instruments and voices can benefit from this example. *Método* is organically formed from the wealth of melodies, literature, and methodologies that make up the musical heritage of the Americas. Technical studies, etudes, melodies, duets, and excerpts in *Método* are drawn from the music composed in the 1600s to the present day from the whole of the Americas: Canada to Argentina, The Caribbean to Hawai'i. European pedagogies and literature also supplement *Método*. *Método* is presented with Spanish and English text. Materials in *Método* are donated from the public domain, or under the Creative Commons license. *Método* is an online resource with PDFs that may be printed out for offline usage.

*Método* differs significantly from prior pedagogical methods not only with the selection of materials but also with its multimedia approach to instruction. Pedagogical videos are linked throughout the collection. Within the 700 pages of materials, each of the 80 lessons has echo-playing exercises and assignments to practice with accompaniments. An echo-playing exercise is one where a melody or short selections are played without the student seeing the example in notation and the student plays the music back as an echo. The assignments with accompaniments help students with

intonation and rhythmic precision. These two skills are important in ensemble playing. The accompaniments are comprised of piano, guitar, organ, percussion, and ensembles. In the future, *Método* will also feature recordings for students to play along with for the duets.

*Método* is in four volumes, which roughly coincide with levels 1-5 of the Maryland Music Educators Association (USA) solo list for bassoon that was developed before the COVID pandemic. This corresponds with performance grades 1-7 of the Associated Board of Royal Schools of Music. Each volume contains twenty lessons comprised of training in practice techniques, technical studies, solos and duets, and excerpts from orchestral and other literature. Methods of training are unified by Terry Ewell's application of “drives,” a concept taught by Marcel Tabuteau of the Curtis Institute and Principal Oboe of the Philadelphia Orchestra (USA).<sup>1</sup> Technical training includes materials from Eugène Louis-Marie Jancourt (France), Andrés Riera Estaban (Venezuela), Gonzalo Brusco (Cordóba, Argentina), and Christian Julius Weissenborn (Germany). Rhythmic studies from George Anson Wedge (The Julliard School, USA) also form an important part of the collection.<sup>2</sup> Ewell further draws upon his unique pedagogy that has been developed during studies with some of the USA's great 20<sup>th</sup>-century bassoon instructors (Grossman, Herzberg, Rosenberg, Sharrow, Weisberg), his forty-plus years of teaching, and his online, video, and journal publications. The majority of materials in *Método*-solos, duets, and excerpts—are principally drawn from music from the Americas.

*Método* is an online resource that is available for free at <https://www.2reed.net/Metodo/>. It is currently available in a Beta testing version awaiting Spanish translations of all of its text. Bass-clef instruments can use the collection as is, and if there is interest in producing a treble-clef edition then interested parties should contact Terry Ewell.



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<sup>1</sup> Terry B. Ewell "A Bassoonist's Expansions upon Marcel Tabuteau's "Drive," The Journal of the International Double Reed Society 20 (July 1992): 27-30. Ewell, "Employing Tabuteau's Drives as Methods of Practice." The Double Reed 45/2 (Summer 2023): 76-84. "Marcel Tabuteau First-Hand." <https://marceltabuteau.com/>.

<sup>2</sup> George Anson Wedge. *Advanced Ear-Training and Sight-Singing as Applied to the Study of Harmony: A Continuation of the Practical and Coordinated Course for Schools and Private Study.* (New York: G. Schirmer, Inc. 1922).