**Trombone Mutes**

**Nomenclature**

*Con sordino*(It)*/sourdine*(Fr)/*mit dampfer*(Ger) *–* with mute

*Senza sordino*(It)/*sourdine*(Fr)/*ohne dampfer*(Ger) – without mute

Note: If a piece of music has only *con sordino* (or equivalent), the default mute is the straight mute.

**Straight**- the straight mute is named after its shape, however, many “straight” mutes have taken on different shapes. The most common derivation from “straight” is the bulb at the bottom of the mute.

Metal- Used for a metallic sound. When the indication appears to mute the

instrument, most players will use a metal straight mute.

Fiber- Fiber mutes offer a softer tone quality and can be used when the director wants the sound muted, but wants a mellow tone quality without the edge a metal mute provides.

**Cup Mute**- named for the cup fixed to the bottom of the mute. Not seen very often in the orchestral literature, but used from time to time in band repertoire, and quite often in jazz. Gives a mellow, distant sound, based on material used in construction.

**Harmon**- The *Harmon* mute is most often used in jazz/commercial music, but does

sometimes make its away into band literature. The term for using a *Harmon* is usually “Wa-Wa mute” or simply “harmon.” By default, the player will take the stem out of the mute unless “stem-in” appears on the page. Notation for the *Harmon:*

0 = Open

+ = Closed (with the hand)

Note: If these markings appear, that indicates the stem is to be left in the mute.

**Bucket**- also named for the shape of the mute. The bucket mute gives a very muffled, mellow and distant sound. Used primarily in jazz.

**Plunger**- straight from the local hardware store. It is notated the same as the *Harmon* mute. Composers usually ask for plunger specifically.

**Mute Manufacturers:**

Humes & Berg (Stonelined) cheap – you get what you pay for

Denis Wick

JoRal

Alessi-Vacchiano

Trumcor

Best Brass (practice mutes)

Tom Crown