

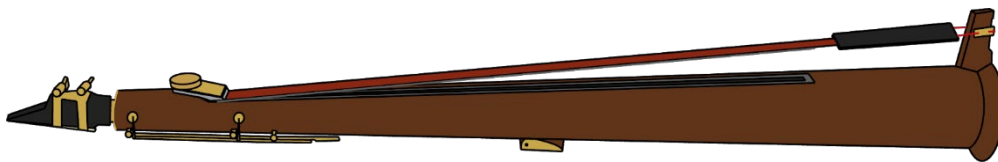
Glissonic tarogato (glissotar)

Description for the call for scores issued by the Sonus Foundation

General description

The glissonic tarogato or glissotar is a woodwind instrument with conical bore, simple reed and octave keys. The body is made of tropical hardwood and the short neck is out of brass. It can be used with an ordinary soprano saxophone mouthpiece.

The main novelty is that instead of tone holes it uses a longitudinal gap or slot on the tube of the instrument. The two sides of the slot are covered with magnetic foil which attract a magnetized ribbon on top. The ribbon is fixed on the upper end, stretched and lifted up from the lower end as a string on a violin. You can push down the ribbon anywhere, it will seal up perfectly above it, so you can produce any note in the pitch continuum. It can be played with eight fingers of the two hands or by sliding one finger up and down. The two octave keys can be operated with the left hand's thumb.



Range

The range of the instrument is the same as of the traditional Hungarian tarogato or the soprano saxophone, it is about 2.5 octaves:



ab – d3

Transposition

Unlike the tarogato and the soprano saxophone, it is not a transposing instrument, the music should be written in C.

Registers

Similarly to the tarogato, it has two octave keys, the lower serves h2–f2 and the higher ab–c2, with a rather harsh sound near the top.

Pitches

Not only the notes of the chromatic scale can be produced on the glissotar but any notes in between as on the violin family. The precise intonation of the microtonal notes depends on the player's knowledge and skills.

Fingering

During the process of learning a new piece the player has to work out an optimal fingering for a smooth performance.

Glissando

One of the main virtues of the glissotar, from where its name comes from, is that it is very easy to play a glissando. In the lower register, from ab to c#1:



And in the higher from ab1 to d3:



Trill and Tremolo

Trills and tremolos can be produced in the same range as glissandi, even gradually sliding upper or lower notes.

Vibrato

Beside the mouth-vibrato, a finger-vibrato can be used as on the bow instruments.

Special effects

Among the unusual glissandi and tremoli or in a combination of them, plucking and lug of the tensed ribbon will produce such new and odd effects which are reminiscent of electronic music. Holding freely the ribbon and lifting it up and down it sounds like the musical saw. Covering the bell with the left hand while closing the slot with the right one, the lowest note can be lowered a half note (g).

Note

The development of the glissonic family started in 2016. The first glissotar similar to the current one was made in 2018, so I consider myself as a third-year student glissotar player.

Dániel Váci