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A master's recital in clarinet

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A MASTER'S RECITAL IN CLARINET

An Abstract of a Recital

Submitted

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Music

Stacia Kay Fortune

University of Northern Iowa

May 2016

This Study by: Stacia Kay Fortune

Entitled: A MASTER'S RECITAL IN CLARINET

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
Degree of Master of Music

Date

Dr. Amanda McCandless, Chair, Thesis Committee

Date

Dr. Angeleita Floyd, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Ann Bradfield, Thesis Committee Member

Date

Dr. Cayla Bellamy, Thesis Committee Reader

Date

Dr. Kavita R. Dhanwada, Dean, Graduate College

This Recital Performance by: Stacia Kay Fortune

Entitled: A MASTER'S RECITAL IN CLARINET

Date of Recital: February 26, 2016

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
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ABSTRACT

Stacia Kay Fortune performed a graduate clarinet recital at 6 o'clock in the evening on Friday, February 26, 2016 in Davis Hall at the Gallagher Bluedorn Performing Arts Center. The recital was presented in partial fulfillment of a Master of Music in clarinet performance. The program opened with Mozart's *Parto! Ma tu ben Mio*, an aria for soprano and clarinet obbligato from *La Clemenza di Tito*. The second piece on the first half was Claude Debussy's *Premiere Rhapsodie* for clarinet and piano. Following intermission, the later part of the twentieth century was explored beginning with Shulamit Ran's *For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet*. Scott McAllister's high energy, grunge-inspired *X Concerto* for clarinet and piano ended the recital. A wide and exciting variety of classical and modern music was explored in preparation for this performance.

Parto! Ma tu ben Mio, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was one of the first and most influential composers to write for clarinet in the classical period and is largely responsible for the clarinet's popularity and quick transition to a permanent member of the orchestra. His first piece involving clarinets was the *Divertimento K. 113* written in 1771 for a patron in Milan. In 1777, Mozart wrote to his father and described what he heard from the Mannheim court orchestra and a *harmonie* in Munich. This letter included the following quote: "Ah, if

only we too had clarinets! You cannot imagine the glorious effect of a symphony with flutes, oboes and clarinets".¹

Between 1778 and 1780, Mozart wrote mostly modest parts for clarinets in his symphonies, concertos and sinfonias, and would often substitute oboe parts with clarinets. As Mozart wrote for more experienced clarinetists, his compositions for the instrument became more complex and virtuosic. Beginning in 1781, Mozart wrote prominent parts for clarinets and basset horns in operas and symphonies for the courts at Munich and Vienna.

Mozart wrote many clarinet pieces for his favorite clarinet player, Anton Stadler. Stadler was born in 1753 and died in Vienna in 1812, and has the fortune of being remembered as the clarinetist who inspired some of Mozart's most beautiful works. Stadler performed most of his career alongside his brother Johann, who also played clarinet and basset horn. The first recorded performance of a Mozart work by Stadler was in 1784 in a thirteen piece wind serenade.² In 1787 the two Stadler brothers were the first clarinetists to be appointed to the Imperial court orchestra of Vienna. Stadler had begun adding keys to the lower end of his clarinet by 1787, giving Mozart a more complex instrument to experiment with in his works. Stadler's extension created what was called the basset clarinet and could reach four new low notes. The new instrument and Stadler's skill on it, inspired Mozart to write the *Clarinet Quintet K. 581* and the *Concerto K. 622*

¹ Eric Hoeprich, *The Clarinet* (London: Yale University Press, 2008), 100.

² Pamela Weston, *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (Great Britain: Emerson Edition Ltd., 1971), 48-49.

in the following years.³ Stadler and Mozart were great friends despite the debts and deceit that surrounded the two near the end of Mozart's life. Mozart was inspired by the artistry and skill of Anton Stadler. The enduring popularity of works written for Stadler helped to cement the clarinet as a solo and orchestral player, propelled into popular music by one of the greatest composers of the classical period.

La Clemenza di Tito was written during the summer of Mozart's final year, 1791. He was commissioned to write an opera for the festivities surrounding the coronation of King Leopold II as Emperor Bohemia. The only obbligato instruments Mozart uses in *La Clemenza di Tito* are clarinet and basset clarinet. *La Clemenza di Tito* had its premiere on September 6, 1791 at the National Theatre in Prague, with Anton Stadler on both obbligati parts. The premiere performance was actually not received well, but the last performance in Prague on September 30 received a very good response with large amounts of applause and cheers.⁴

"Parto! Ma tu ben mio" is a famous aria for soprano and clarinet obbligato from Act 1 of the opera *Titus* or *La Clemenza di Tito*. In the aria, Sesto (a trouser role) agrees to obey the orders of Vitellia, who wants revenge on the Roman emperor Titus. In return for Titus's death, Vitellia promises marriage to Sesto, who is in love with her. Sesto's love for Vitellia is not mutual, but he agrees to carry out her plans anyway. In the aria,

³ Ibid 51.

⁴ Ibid 53.

Sesto displays the depths to which he would go to prove his love and obedience to Vitellia – even murder.⁵

The aria is in three distinct sections – slow, fast, and faster, and the whole piece is very firmly in the key of B-flat major. The first section is marked Adagio and sounds improvisatory. In this section, Sesto sings a sweet message to Vitellia:

Sesto	Sextus
Parto, parto, ma tu ben mio	I go, I go, but you, my love,
Meco ritorna in pace;	make peace with me.
Sarò qual più ti piace;	I shall be as you wish me,
Quel che vorrai faro.	I shall do as you like.

The accompaniment and melody are lyrical and alluring, displaying the desperation for affection that influences Sesto's future actions. The accompaniment is simple and withdrawn which allows the voice and the clarinet to flow between each other's statements.

The next section is marked Allegro and is energetic and determined, supporting Sesto's resolve and determination. Sesto sings of how one look from Vitellia would be enough for him to forget everything and fly to her aid, accompanied by heroic music.

⁵ Herbert Glass, "About the Piece: Parto, Parto, Ma Tu Ben Mio from La Clemenza di Tito", Los Angeles Philharmonic, accessed January 14, 2016, <http://www.laphil.com/philpedia/music/parto-parto-ma-tu-ben-mio-from-la-clemenza-di-tito-wolfgang-amadeus-mozart>.

Guardami, e tutto obbligo,	Just look at me, and I will forget everything
E a vendicarti, io volo;	I shall fly to avenge you;
A questo sguardo solo da me si penserà	another glance and I will take care of the rest

The accompaniment is more heroic and bright in this section. The lyrical voice of the Adagio has been replaced by a pledge of defense and devotion. The clarinet symbolizes a quick, fluttering voice that enhances the line “and fly to avenge you” (See example 1).

Example 1: Allegro section m. 53-56

Before Sesto sings “A questo sguardo dolo da me si penserà” after rehearsal letter B, the clarinet has a calm, flowing line which grounds the fast-paced tempo for a moment. The soprano returns to the words from the beginning of the aria in a more frantic style. They reach a suddenly slow, declamatory high point on “Guardami” before returning to the “A questo sguardo dolo...” melody. The heightened emphasis on “Guardami” or “Just look at me” is indicative of Sesto’s desperate need for Vitellia’s acknowledgement. This quickly segues into the final, fast-paced section with one last statement of “Guardami” followed by “A questo sguardo solo da me si penserà” as the tempo picks up speed.

The final section is marked “Allegro assai” and is dominated by triplet runs in both clarinet and soprano. The soprano sings “Guardami, e tutto obbligo, e a vendicarti io volo” one final time. At the end of the final statement of that line, the clarinet begins the triplet pattern that is present throughout the rest of the piece. The soprano is singing the final two lines of the text during the first triplet run in the clarinet, and through the rest of the piece.

A qual poter, o Dei!
Donaste alla beltà.

O gods, what power
You have given to beauty!

The clarinet and voice pass the triplet motive back and forth, leading to a simpler declamation of the final two lines in the voice. During all of this, the piano has a simple quarter note accompaniment. Five measures before rehearsal letter F, the vocal part has one last run of triplets, and the push to the end becomes more energetic. At letter F the clarinet and voice dovetail between each other’s motives while the piano has a steady quarter and eighth note accompaniment (see Example 2). The piano and clarinet drive the piece to the end with the eighth note motive that we saw at the beginning of the section, landing on a triumphant concert B flat chord.

Example 2: Dovetailing, m. 129-135

The clarinet acts as a wordless narrator in this aria, assisting in the development of the different characteristics of the three sections. Mozart has written an aria with an obbligato that allows the clarinet to display its sweeter tones as well as its impressive technical capabilities. The clarinet plays as an interjectory voice, and uses short motives rather than developing full thoughts. It answers the phrases the vocalist sets forth in each section, and acts as a moving force in the quick finale. Most of the clarinet's motives are around three or four measures, and many motives are repeated at least once. Although it is a relatively brief piece, it opens the door to character development and practice in precision. Mozart's writing for the clarinet in this aria shows a bit of the progression of the clarinet's use as a solo and ensemble voice.

Premiere Rhapsodie, Claude Debussy

French composer Claude Debussy (1862-1918) was born in Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France. He began studying piano at a young age, and was accepted into the Paris Conservatoire at 10 years old. In 1880, Debussy was hired to teach piano to Nadezhda von Meck, who was a patron of Tchaikovsky. He traveled throughout Europe with Mme von Meck's family and servants, gaining exposure and musical experiences.⁶ He returned to Paris in November of 1880 and joined Ernest Guiraud's composition class at the Conservatoire.⁷ Debussy won the *Prix de Rome* with his cantata *L'Enfant Prodigue*, which allowed him to study in Italy for three years. After his time in Rome, Debussy

⁶ Code, David J., "Claude Debussy," Critical Lives series (London, UK: Reaktion Books 2010), 22-24.

⁷ Ibid.

returned to France. His interest in the work of impressionist painters began to influence his music, and he began to find his compositional style in 1893. His only complete opera, *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902), was a success that solidified his reputation. Debussy occupied a leading position in the musical transition of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁸ His music reached in new directions while also building on the traditions of the past. His creation of natural settings, imagery, and emotion in his music was revolutionary and redefined the limits and possibilities of instrumental use.

Debussy drew his inspiration from many musical genres and composers. He admired Wagner's music, but disliked his ego and musical philosophy. Debussy preferred sensibility and restraint and adopted ideas in Russian composers, medieval organum, and Asian music. His music is often called impressionist, as it is influenced by symbolism and focuses on musical timbre or color. He also borrowed impressionist poetry as texts for his songs. Like impressionist painters and writers, Debussy's music often evokes a delicate mood or atmosphere, in contrast to the passionate music of the Romantic era. He uses whole-tone, octatonic, and pentatonic scales to create an exotic sound. Debussy's music focuses on evoking moods and ideas using color, motives and unexpected techniques. He influenced many composers in the twentieth century, and his emphasis on sound itself as a vital part of music opened the doors for later musical development.⁹

⁸ Livingston, James. "Claude Debussy." *Salem Press Biographical Encyclopedia* (January 2014): *Research Starters*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 30, 2015).

⁹ J. Peter Burkholder, Donald Jay Grout and Claude V. Palisca, *A History of Western Music*, 8th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010) 790-795.

In 1909 Debussy was appointed to the governing council of the *Concours* at the Paris Conservatory. Debussy was required to write the piece for the 1910 exams, and two pieces came out of this: *Petite Pièce* and *Prèmiere Rhapsodie*, which were both originally written for clarinet and piano. The *Solo de Concours* were intended as an exit exam for students, but they were treated more as a serious competition. Winning the *Premier Prix* gave the musician prestige and easier access to orchestral jobs. The *Concours* allowed composers to work closely with great clarinetists in France, resulting in some of the most important literature in the repertoire.¹⁰ During the *concours* in 1909, Debussy remarked “to judge by the expression on the faces of my colleagues, the *Rhapsodie* was a success!”¹¹ The version for the *concours* is dedicated to the clarinet teacher of the Paris Conservatory, Prosper Mimart, who gave the premiere performance on January 16, 1911.¹² Debussy orchestrated the piece in 1911, and it was premiered by Gaston Hamelin in St. Petersburg, Russia on May 3, 1919 (a student of Charles Turban and former *concours* winner).¹³

Premiere Rhapsodie is a free-form piece, and can be divided into two large sections. Debussy builds *Premiere Rhapsodie* from a series of intervals seen in the first

¹⁰ Harry R. Gee, *Clarinet Solo De Concours, 1897-1980: An Annotated Bibliography* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1981), 1-2.

¹¹ Atlantic Classical Orchestra Program notes, March 2014, www.atlanticclassicalorchestra.com/mahler-debussy-program-notes/.

¹² Boston Conservatory Orchestra program notes, April 1, 2012, [https://www.bostonconservatory.edu/sites/all/files/programs/Orchestra%234\(Apr.1\)ProgramWEB.pdf](https://www.bostonconservatory.edu/sites/all/files/programs/Orchestra%234(Apr.1)ProgramWEB.pdf).

¹³ Harry R. Gee, *Clarinet Solos de Concours, 1897-1980* (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1980), 18-19.

four bars of the accompaniment and develops this motive throughout the various sections of the piece (see example 3).



Example 3: Accompaniment m. 1 - 4

The piece begins in the key of G-flat major and use of rubato helps to evoke a dreamy, covered atmosphere. At rehearsal marking 1, the main theme of the entire piece appears in two parts (see example 4). The piano provides a rolling triplet pattern under the flowing, lyrical line presented by the clarinet.

Example 4: First part of main theme, m. 11 - 20

The second, briefer part of the main theme begins at rehearsal marking 2 along with a key change to D major (see example 5). The main character of this first section focuses on dynamics and color, while maintaining a fluid feeling. The *scherzando* section begins in measure 31 and lasts until measure 39. At the beginning of the *scherzando*, the key changes to D flat major and is twice as fast as the previous section. This section acts

as a short interruption of the main theme, alluding to the upcoming character changes. A shortened version of the main theme returns in a higher octave at rehearsal marking 3. At measure 45, the tempo picks up again (*Le double plus vite*), and the key signature changes to C major, but with extensive use of chromaticism. The material in measures 45 through 50 is similar to that used in the transitional period earlier (measures 26-28) with a few interval and note differences (see examples 6 and 7).



Example 5: Second part of main theme, m. 21 – 24



Example 6: m. 26 – 28



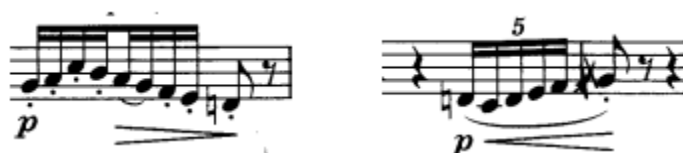
Example 7: m. 48 – 49 (partial motive from m. 46 – 50)

When considered with the accompaniment, these flurries sound like sharp beams of light flashing. The transitional flurries lead to an altered *scherzando* character at

rehearsal marking 4. At rehearsal marking 5, the key changes to A major, and the motive seen at rehearsal marking 4 is altered into a continuous and more delicate character. In measure 73 an altissimo C sharp is held for three measures before folding into the second part of the main theme. The partial theme is transposed up a major second from the original statement. At measure 84 (rehearsal marking 6), a portion of the motive from rehearsal marking 5 appears (see examples 8 and 9), finishing out the first section with a dwindling *scherzando* character. The character of this section began as a simpler, light motive and was developed into a much more complex motive. By the end of this section, the character returned to a simpler, changed motive that foreshadows the style of character to come. There is a six measure transitional section from measure 90 through 96 where the accompaniment has a short fanfare that dissolves into a simple rhythm.



Example 8: m. 58 scherzando character



Example 9: m. 84 and 88, partial scherzando motives

The new section begins in measure 94, and in measure 96 the clarinet enters with fragments of a new *scherzando* character. The fragments build to a short crescendo on an altissimo E flat to measure 108 where a subito piano full *scherzando* motive enters. The new motive is interrupted at rehearsal marking 7 with downward tumbling fourths. The accompaniment has the second half of the main theme at measure 124 while the clarinet

has a lilting melody that quickly evolves into a brief mention of the current *scherzando* theme. At rehearsal marking 8, an altered version of the second part of the main theme appears but with a more active, passionate accompaniment. After rehearsal marking 8, the clarinet and piano slow into dreamlike and hazy tempo. Rehearsal marking 9 brings a reappearance of the main theme in the original key, along with a statelier accompaniment. There is a gradual increase of motion at the peak of this main theme where the clarinet is in its highest range at a soft dynamic. The piano gradually picks up the pace into the next section. The character of this section seems to fight between two characters – the main theme of the beginning and the new, interruptive *scherzando* character.

Rehearsal marking 10 brings a new, fast motive followed by a return to the *scherzando* from the beginning of the second section. Instead of dissolving into falling fourth intervals, the motive tumbles into a series of *subito* piano half note trills followed by eighth notes which helps to drive the rhythmic action forward. (see examples 10 and 11).

The image shows a musical score for Example 10, covering measures 108 to 115. The score is written in G-flat major (one flat) and 3/4 time. The top staff (measures 108-115) features a melodic line with trills and eighth notes. The bottom staff (measures 108-115) features a piano accompaniment with downward fourths. Handwritten annotations include 'p sub' and 'più p léger'.

Example 10: m. 108 – 115 *scherzando* motive and downward fourths

The image shows a musical score for a clarinet and piano. The top staff is the clarinet part, and the bottom staff is the piano part. The music is in 3/4 time and features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplet motives and repetitive sixteenth note runs. The dynamics are marked 'p' (piano) and 'p' (piano). The lyrics 'p e cre - scen - do molto' are written below the piano part.

Example 11: m. 169 – 184 altered scherzando motive return

The rhythmic action aids in what feels like a tempo increase as the clarinet moves through triplet motives followed by a series of repetitive sixteenth note runs. There is a general feeling of unstoppable energy building up in this final section. At measure 197 the accompaniment has a powerful, more dramatic version of what was heard in the transition before the second section, leading to the strong entrance of the clarinet at measure 201. The clarinet has an upward flourish, accompanied by two piano chords in the last three measures.

The use of different images and colors is evident in Debussy's *Premiere Rhapsodie*. The extreme ranges of dynamics that he writes in this piece allows the performer to play around with creating different timbres and colors to develop a variety of characters. *Premiere Rhapsodie* has remained one of the most challenging and beautiful pieces in the repertoire since its premiere due to the endless palette of color and technical facility he demands. He exploits all possible dynamics for the clarinet and requires utmost control of the instrument. It works well as a contest piece due to the wide range of dynamic manipulation, technical ability and artistry that can be displayed. It is

widely considered one of the most challenging pieces written for clarinet in the early 20th century.

For An Actor: Monologue for Clarinet, Shulamit Ran

Israeli composer and pianist Shulamit Ran (b. 1949) began composing songs set to Hebrew poetry at the age of seven. Soon after she was studying with Israel's best known musicians, including Alexander U. Boskovich and Paul Ben-Haim. Some of her earliest pieces were performed by orchestras and professional musicians throughout Israel. With scholarships from the Mannes College of Music in New York and the America Israel Cultural Foundation, Ran was able to continue her education in America. She studied with Nadia Resienberg, Dorothy Taubman and Norman Dello Joio. Ran spent a year as artist in residence at St. Mary's University in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Shortly after this, she decided to focus mainly on composing and her works soon attracted the attention of Ralph Shapey, a professor at the University of Chicago. Shapey invited Ran to join the faculty in 1973, and also gave her composition lessons for about nine months.¹⁴ At the University of Chicago, Ran taught doctoral composition students, coached chamber music and taught classes for non-music majors. Ran has been awarded many prizes and commendations, most notable being the Pulitzer Prize in 1991 for her work *Symphony*, commissioned by the Philadelphia Orchestra. She has been commissioned by many foundations, musicians and ensembles throughout America including the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Baltimore Symphony,

¹⁴ Neil W. Levin, "Shulamit Ran," Milken Archive of Jewish Music, accessed November 11, 2015, <http://www.milkenarchive.org/people/view/all/576/Shulamit+Ran>.

Israeli violinist Ittai Shapira, among others. She served as Composer in Residence for seven seasons with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (beginning in 1990) and with the Lyric Opera of Chicago from 1994 to 1997, where she composed her widely acclaimed opera *Between Two Worlds (The Dybbuk)*.

In 2015, Ran announced her retirement from the University of Chicago. In addition, she has served as music director for “Tempus Fugit”, an international biennial for contemporary music in Israel (1996, 1998 and 2000). Since 2002, Ran has served as the artistic director of Contempo, a group of contemporary chamber musicians at the University of Chicago. Ran has received honorary doctorates from five universities, and has been elected a member of American Academy departments.¹⁵

In an interview in 1995, Ran split her compositional style into three periods. The first period includes pieces that she considers student works, which are no longer allowed to be performed. Her second period, beginning in 1968, is self-described as “Freely atonal”. The second and third phases of her compositional style are mostly differentiated by the organization of pitch material. The second period has a “freely atonal” feel with more chromatic use while her third phase uses more modal movement, some of them being Ran’s own, made up modes.¹⁶ Ran wrote many pieces for clarinet in her second and third phases, but it was by no means her preferred instrument. She states, “I fall in love with different instruments at different times... It depends on where I am at”,

¹⁵ Shulamit Ran, “Shulamit Ran, composer: About,” accessed November 7, 2015, <https://shulamitran.wordpress.com/>.

¹⁶ Christine Allegra Banks, “Shulamit Ran’s Compositions for Solo Clarinet” (DMA diss., University of Nebraska, 2005), 8-9.

indicating that her focus on clarinet during 1978-1979, and throughout her second period was based on an intense fascination with the possibilities involved in the sound of the instrument.¹⁷ The third period, beginning around 1990, is greatly influenced by Ran's Israeli and Middle Eastern heritage, and began with her solo flute piece, *East Wind*.

Shulamit Ran's music has been described as developing from the expressionist style, and her methods of creating expression in music have been called undefinable and freely atonal.¹⁸ Ran feels that her music is ever-changing and different each time it is heard or studied. Her works focus on the function of motives and cells, rather than beginning with an overlying idea. Ran has a special interest in bringing out the individual character in each instrument, and writing in such a way that the instruments are interacting, or as if they were speaking on the stage. In an interview she explained her approach to composing as finding a balance between intuition and discipline: "...I find myself always engaged in a search, trying to tune into what needs to happen next, where the music wants to go...It is as though to every phrase I compose there are powerful consequences as to what is to happen next."¹⁹

Shulamit Ran received support from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation when she first arrived in the United States. Through this foundation she met Hazel Flax and her daughter, Laura Flax. Many years later, Laura wrote to Ran in Chicago, requesting a piece in honor of her mother who had recently passed. Laura Flax was

¹⁷ Ibid 10.

¹⁸ Neil W. Levin, "Shulamit Ran," Milken Archive of Jewish Music, accessed November 11, 2015, <http://www.milkenarchive.org/people/view/all/576/Shulamit+Ran>.

¹⁹ Karin Anna Pendle, "Women and Music: A History," (Indiana University Press, 2001), 285.

preparing for her debut recital at the Carnegie Recital Hall with the Da Capo Chamber Players, and wanted to commission a piece in memory of her mother for the event. *For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet in A* was Ran's first work for solo clarinet, and it was premiered in May of 1978 by Laura Flax. The program notes included by Ran explain her thoughts about the piece:

For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet owes its inspiration in large part to the intensely personal ethos with which the clarinet is associated in my mind. To me, the instrument in its contemporary usage suggests an incredible gamut of gestures, dynamics and emotions. Accordingly, in *Monologue*, the player assumes the role of a virtuoso actor who, by purely musical means, goes through a kind of wordless "monodrama."²⁰

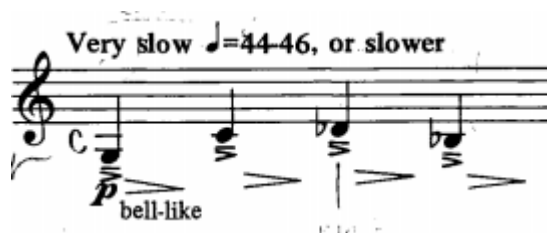
The basic form of the piece is also outlined in Ran's program notes. "Though not literally in sonata form, the parts of *Monologue* nevertheless roughly parallel that form, consisting of: exposition or unfolding in two stages; development-disintegration including a cadenza; coda echoing the opening materials."²¹ There have already been several interpretations and analyses based on Ran's description, all with different views of where the boundaries of each section lie.

The exposition ("unfolding in two stages") is relatively brief in regards to the length of the rest of the piece, and is split into two sections. The basis of the entire piece is in the first four notes of stage one, G-C-Db-Bb (see example 12). Throughout the

²⁰ Shulamit Ran, *For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet*, (Theodore Presser Co., 1978).

²¹ Ibid.

piece, this cell is developed and transformed, but never exactly returns to its original form.



Example 12: Original cell

Stage one is from system 1 through 8 with the above mentioned cell, marked “bell-like”. This initial cell repeats in various lengths, articulations and orders four times in the first three systems alone. The soft and slow bell tones of the beginning lead into a wild outburst from the end of system 4 through system 7. The second stage of the exposition is shorter than the first, lasting only from system 9 through the beginning of 10 and is an echo of the first cell introduced in the piece (see examples 13 and 14).

Example 13: First stage of the Exposition System 1-2



Example 14: Second stage of the Exposition System 9-10

The development begins in system 10 after the ending of stage two of the exposition, and lasts through system 42. There seem to be four sections within the development, interrupted by a cadenza. The first section lasts from system 10 to system 14 and is four systems long and has a trembling and anxious character. The first three notes use a quiet, intense trill to create a menacing atmosphere, following by a series of timbre trills and tremolos that explode into a loud and nervous outburst. The four note outburst accompanied by grace notes seen in the second system of this section is replicated and ends with a fast run upwards to the peak of this stage in system 12. A piercing altissimo note dissolves down to a chalumeau E with a fermata, bringing the performer back to the trembling and quiet character. This character of the first stage seems to be building the courage to speak out, utilizing quiet low trilling passages interjected with loud bursts that eventually gain dominance in system 14. The loud character almost seems to be restraining itself throughout the second half of stage 1.

The second stage of the development begins in system 16 and is interrupted by the cadenza in system 20. This section behaves as the “disintegration” section. The musical

materials here are fragmented and uncertain (see example 15). The clarinet jumps between extreme intervals at an intense pace, creating a confused and panicked feeling.

Example 15: Disintegration section

Systems 19 and 20 act as the build-up for the cadenza. With the help of flutter tonguing, system 20 builds to a peak where a statement of the transformed original cell appears (see example 16).

Example 16: System 20 transformed call

The aggressive use of flutter tongue and altissimo notes is in sharp contrast to the beginning of the cadenza which begins softly and in a lower register, leading to use of multiphonics at the end of the system. The same motive that appeared in system 20 appears again and marks the end of the second stage. The abrasive cadenza continues in

system 23 and uses more multiphonics and pitch bending to transport the melody from the lower voice of the instrument into the altissimo register before the clarinet falls back down to the lowest part of its range.

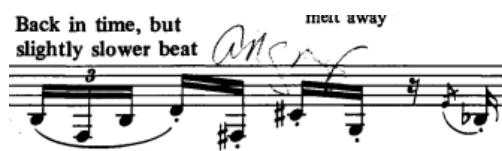
A transformed cell appears at 25 and is seen throughout the rest of the page, helping to unify an otherwise erratic and chaotic section. The initial cell seen in system 25 is scattered throughout stage 3, hidden by the addition of notes, grace notes, rhythmic manipulation and transposition (see example 17 - 21). There are several statements that begin slowly, quickly speed up to a high point (rhythmically or pitch-wise) and just as quickly die away. In system 30, Ran has marked “Draw back ‘for last encounter,’” which refers to the last motive of stage 3. The peak of the piece occurs at the end of this stage with three altissimo fermatas followed by a final multiphonic note. The altissimo C which is the highest note in the piece occurs during this peak, and should be echoed one octave below in the multiphonic note.



Example 17: original transposed cell, System 25



Example 18: transposed cell, completed using the grace notes. System 26



Example 19: appearance of transformed cell, System 28

Example 20: Fourth appearance of transformed cell, System 29

Example 21: Final appearance of transformed cell, System 30

Stage 4 begins after a brief pause, and acts as a final declarative statement to finish the development section. It begins “ceremoniously” at a triple forte with a transformed original cell statement followed by a series of timbre trills that become slower in the middle of system 35. The ceremonious motive is repeated at a different pitch level. Similarly to the first statement there is a brief timbre trill followed by a series of runs marked “furiously”, “without measure”, and “Wild!!” indicating a feeling of complete loss of control. The chaos of this part of stage 4 continues through to system 41. The final aggressive statement focuses the low F sharp and involves flutter tongue and improvisation (see example 22). At the end of system 41 there is a quiet pitch bend

accompanied by a crescendo-decrescendo that is reminiscent of a sigh. This is an important character change from all of the forceful motives that occurred before, as it foreshadows the coda. The final motive of the development is intended to sound like harmonics and each ascending note disappears more into nothing, leading to the end of the piece.

Example 22: Improvisatory instructions

The coda begins in the end of system 42 with a reappearance of the original theme from the exposition. The notes of the cell are not the same (G-F#-C-A) and are opposite in motion, symbolizing the transformation the cell experienced. The form of the coda is similar to the exposition with some alterations and extensions of melodic movement. The coda is quiet and tranquil, contrasting the often violent and chaotic mood of the development. The mood is reflective and ethereal, using the alteration of the original cell notes and rhythmic patterns to display the change that has been inflicted by the action of the development. The final statement seems to disappear into nothing using an ascending and diminishing line, followed by a very soft, held note.

For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet succeeds in evoking vivid characters and images. Ran wrote very specific notes into the piece as a guideline, but allows much freedom after the notes are learned. She suggests initially learning it with the designated tempos, but when the notes have been learned and are rhythmically accurate, one should

get away from strict interpretation. This piece is all about dialogue and drama, and should be digested as a series of characters rather than a series of difficult motives. The transformation of the beginning cell is startling and extensive, and introduces many new characters and ideas. By the time we reach the coda, the whole motive from the beginning is disturbingly altered. The most difficult part of *For an Actor* is finding the characters and the right way to give them all a voice that can vividly display the transformation of the cell. Creating a storyline and characters that make sense is the goal.

X Concerto, Scott McAllister

Scott McAllister (b. 1969) was born in Vero Beach, Florida to a musical family. His mother played flute and his grandfather, who greatly influenced his performing career, played the trumpet. As a child, he studied clarinet at the Chautauqua Music Festival, where he heard professional musicians and experienced and performed repertoire from various genres. McAllister received degrees in clarinet and composition at Florida State University, where he studied with Frank Kowalsky, John Boda, Ladislav Kubik and Edward Applebaum. He continued studying composition at Rice University as a student of Paul Cooper and Ellsworth Milburn. In 1994, McAllister was in a car accident that ended his orchestral performing career as a clarinetist. In 1996 he was hired at Florida Southern College as composition teacher. This is where he wrote the *X Concerto*. Four years later, he was hired at Baylor University where he remains Professor of Composition. Scott McAllister receives commissions for wind band pieces, solos, chamber pieces and orchestral works, and has written for many well-known organizations and ensembles.

McAllister's compositional style can be divided into two periods.²² The compositions written during his time studying at Rice University can be labeled "academic", due to their scholarly and measured characteristics. McAllister has described his academic style as "how to write a certain way to win awards and get a job".²³ His academic style generally has fast and loud sections that abruptly shift to a slow section which ends quietly. He began to move away from this style when he left Rice University. His new style uses characteristics from two contrasting genres of composition, minimalism and maximalism. Minimalism is the style of composition which uses purposely simplified rhythmic, melodic and harmonic terminology²⁴. Maximalism relies on the collision and juxtaposition of diverse genres such as folk songs, popular music, jazz, classical pieces and more to create a familiar piece of a hybrid nature.²⁵ McAllister's love for characteristics from minimalist and maximalist music drove him to combine elements from the two genres into what he calls "middlemalism". His use of popular music, simplified melodies, and repetitive notes and motives is evidence of his use of both types of composition in a cohesive style. The *X Concerto* was one of the first products of his use of middlemalism in composition. McAllister believes his pieces

²² Patterson, Tori L., "A Performance Analysis of Stylistic Features of Scott McAllister's Selected Works for Solo Clarinet: Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind, Black Dog: Rhapsody for Clarinet (and piano), and BlingBling" (2008). *Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations*. Paper 2124. <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/etd/2124>.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Keith Potter. "Minimalism" *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed January 14, 2016, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/40603>.

²⁵ David A. Jaffe, "Orchestrating the Chimera: Musical Hybrids, Technology and the Development of a "Maximalist" Musical Style," *Leonardo Music Journal* 5, (1995): 11, accessed January 14, 2016, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1513155>.

written in the new style resemble Gunther Schuller's "Third Stream" idea, infusing different genres of music to create a new but familiar genre.²⁶

X Concerto was written in 1996 and was inspired by the music of Alice in Chains and Nirvana heard from nearby house-builders. McAllister's experimentation with this music led to his new style.²⁷ *X Concerto* is a work in three movements that is heavily influenced by grunge music. Grunge music was most popular in the late 1980's and early 1990's and can be defined as a sub-genre of alternative rock music. This music was characterized as reacting and rebelling against society, leading to music that was angst-filled, and driven by the desire for more freedom.²⁸ Key features of grunge music include distorted guitars, apathy-filled lyrics, and clashing chords. *X Concerto* embodies all of the features of a grunge guitar work with contrasting, psychedelic passages, explosive sections, and dynamic shifts in energy.



Example 23: Movement One of *X Concerto* Resonance Trills

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Seattle Wind Symphony Program Notes, May 6, 2012, www.seattlewindsymphony.org/Concerts/2011-2012/Program-2011-2012-03.pdf.

Movement one is in ternary form. It begins slowly with low resonance trills (see example 23) that are also used in McAllister's *Four Preludes on Playthings of the Wind*.²⁹ McAllister includes specific trill fingerings (see example 24).

Trill 1---play a low "e" then trill right index finger (may tend to squeak if too much air is applied)

Trill 2---play a low "e" then trill right middle finger

Trill 3---play a low "e" then trill left ring finger

Trill 4---play given note "c" and trill left index finger

Trill 5---left middle and ring finger down as if playing a "c" then use left index finger to trill the g-sharp side-key above that "c"

Example 24: Instructions for Movement One resonance trills

Resonance trills use alternate trill fingerings to produce different tone colors on the main note. The trills are interrupted by a brief explosion from both the clarinet and accompaniment parts, which are quickly reigned in for another set of resonance trills in the upper range. The trills and the seemingly sporadic accompaniment part sets an ethereal, unmetred mood. The B section switches between slow sections reminiscent of the beginning and a very rhythmic and driving style. This section uses resonance trills, flutter tongue, chromatic glissandos, and smears to imitate the style of an electric rock guitar. After the whiplash action of the B section, the A' section returns and is similar to the A section but in retrograde. The upper range resonance trills occur first, followed by the low range resonance trills. The movement ends on the first resonance trill.

²⁹ McCandless, Amanda. "An Interview with Scott McAllister." *The Clarinet* 35, no. 1 (December 2007): 62-63.

Movement two is based on the song “Where Did You Sleep Last Night” by Nirvana. It almost seems to be in a Theme and Variation form, with the four big improvisatory sections being the variations. There is a short opening which leads to the introduction of the main melody in the piano part. The clarinet mimics the main melody the piano just introduced, which is very similar to the main motive in the grunge song (see Example 25 and 26)

(1.) My girl, my girl, don't
lie ————— to me. Tell me where did you sleep last night?

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in 3/4 time and contains the vocal melody for the first line of lyrics. The bottom staff is in 3/4 time and contains the piano accompaniment for the second line of lyrics. The piano part features a prominent bass line that is the main melody of the piece.

Example 25: Opening lyrics from Nirvana’s “Where Did You Sleep Last Night”

p

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The top staff is in 3/4 time and contains the clarinet melody. The bottom staff is in 3/4 time and contains the piano accompaniment. The clarinet melody is a variation of the main melody, featuring a more ornate and improvisatory style. The piano part provides a steady bass line.

Example 26: McAllister movement 2 melody in clarinet

The piano retains the melody’s bass line throughout the piece, while the clarinet plays in an improvisatory manner. Initially the clarinet plays the same melody that the piano introduced, but with each repetition the clarinet part becomes increasingly more ornamented. After the last explosive variation, the clarinet plays the unadorned original main melody. The main melody is repeated, first jumping down to the lowest register, with each repetition in a higher register. The peak of the movement occurs when the

clarinet plays the melody at the highest limit of its range. After this final building passage, the clarinet repeats the main melody one last time in the lowest register of the clarinet at a slower tempo, feeling weak and defeated.

The third movement is nonstop and high energy, in sharp contrast to the subdued last line of the second movement. The main motive repeats four times with alternating endings before ending with a codetta using material borrowed from the first movement. After the first two repetitions of the main motive, McAllister parodies two excerpts from the first and third movement of Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* (see examples 27 - 30 below).



Example 27: Mozart Clarinet Concerto Movement 1 m. 57 - 59



Example 28: McAllister Movement 3 m. 68-70



Example 29: Mozart Clarinet Concerto Movement 3 m. 1-3



Example 30: McAllister Movement 3 m. 72-74

McAllister did this as a personal joke, thinking it would be interesting if someone won a concerto competition using a piece quoting Mozart out of context over the full Mozart concerto.³⁰ After the quote, the main motive repeats two more times, leading to the finale. The end of the piece uses a small bit of material seen in the first movement (see examples 31 and 32). This material is stretched and repeated to create a high-energy finale.



Example 31: McAllister Movement 1 material m. 64-65

Example 32: McAllister Movement 3 finale m. 131-137

³⁰ Ibid.

Scott McAllister's *X Concerto* unifies many characteristics of classical and modern music. He uses classical forms like theme and variation, rondo and sonata form. He fuses these forms with twentieth century techniques and quotes from popular grunge music and a classical concerto. The result of these combinations is a piece full of familiar motives and paths with surprises and a consistent build of energy. The extended techniques involved create a challenge beyond the already difficult notation, but the piece would not be nearly as exciting without the glissandos, flutter tongues, and resonance trills. What began as an intimidating challenge in skill, endurance and technicality became an exhilarating adrenaline rush of a concerto.

Each piece on this recital offered a new challenge and set of skills to practice. The classical era was touched upon in the Mozart aria and focused on accompanimental and collaborative skills as well as finding the right tone and style to fit the era. Debussy's *Prémère Rhapsodie* is considered one of the most difficult and influential clarinet pieces of the early 20th century, and was a perfect connecting piece between the classical and the upcoming modern in the second half. *Monologue: For an Actor* allows the performer to explore different roles on the stage, essentially performing as an actor flipping through different personalities. The *X Concerto* used extended techniques and driving passages to create a nonstop, energy filled finale for this graduate level recital.

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“Parto! Ma tu ben mio” (from *La Clemenza di Tito*) (1791) Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756 – 1791)

Première Rhapsodie (1910) Claude Debussy
(1862 – 1918)

Intermission

For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (in A) (1978) Shulamit Ran
(1949)

X Concerto (1996) Scott McAllister
(1969)
I.
II. To the Pines...
III.