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A history of the bass clarinet as an orchestral and solo instrument in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and an annotated, chronological list of solo repertoire for the bass clarinet from before 1945

Aber, Thomas Carr, D.M.A.

University of Missouri - Kansas City, 1990

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A HISTORY OF THE BASS CLARINET AS AN ORCHESTRAL AND SOLO INSTRUMENT IN THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES AND AN ANNOTATED, CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SOLO REPERTOIRE FOR THE BASS CLARINET FROM BEFORE 1945

A DISSERTATION IN Performance

Presented to the Faculty of the University of Missouri-Kansas City in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

by

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B.M., Juilliard School, 1976
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1990
A HISTORY OF THE BASS CLARINET AS AN ORCHESTRAL AND SOLO INSTRUMENT IN THE NINETEENTH AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES AND AN ANNOTATED, CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SOLO REPERTOIRE FOR THE BASS CLARINET FROM BEFORE 1945

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ABSTRACT

The bass clarinet made its first appearance in the opera orchestra in 1836 and gradually came to be heard in symphonic music as well, particularly during the later decades of the nineteenth century. It has not, however, become an indispensable, consistently used orchestral instrument. During the nineteenth century the bass clarinet frequently provided programmatic evocations of death, deceit, guilt, and the supernatural. Composers only gradually began using the instrument in a wider variety of musical contexts and freeing it from a position limited to certain programmatic effects. In the later nineteenth century demands of many composers on bass clarinetists lessened, reflecting the instrument's perceived limited agility. This misconception diminished
as composers became familiar with the instrument's characteristics.

Development of a solo repertoire for the bass clarinet was hampered by the conception formed as a result of its orchestral use and by disinterest in solo winds during the mid-nineteenth century. Two solo works remain from before 1890, the year of the first published solo compositions for the instrument. Early published works confirm the then-common assessment of the instrument's characteristics. Large-scale works were written for Werner Reinhart in 1926 and 1929, but remained rare until after World War II, when a few performers began specializing on the bass clarinet.

This paper traces the bass clarinet's acceptance as a member of the orchestra and the growth of its solo repertoire until 1945, after which this repertoire grew more significantly. Since the dramatic situations in which the bass clarinet was first heard in the operas of Meyerbeer, Verdi, and Wagner provided the instrument's first large-scale exposure, programmatic contexts of its use by those composers are considered. Views of the instrument in writings on orchestration from the period and the factors affecting the instrument's acceptance are discussed. Limited recorded information of solo performances and an annotated list of extant repertoire
paint a shadowy picture of the bass clarinet as a solo medium during the period of this study.

This abstract of 340 words is approved as to form and content.

Dr. Gerald E. Kemner

Conservatory of Music
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation entitled "A History of the Bass Clarinet as an Orchestral and Solo Instrument in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries and an Annotated, Chronological List of Solo Repertoire for the Bass Clarinet from Before 1945," presented by Thomas Carr Aber, candidate for the Doctor of Musical Arts, and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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PREFACE

The presence of what is becoming a substantial solo literature for the bass clarinet, "contemporary" in style and dating primarily from the 1970s and later, led me to the question of whether there was any older music available to it, other than transcriptions from the repertoires of other instruments. If, as appears at first glance, there are only a few isolated works for the bass clarinet and no repertoire to speak of, the question "Why not?" came quickly to mind. This question was soon followed by an unwillingness to accept the assumption that there was virtually no use of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument during the first hundred years of its existence and was superseded by the desire to locate any works which might remain and to discover any documentary traces of its solo use from these years.

The first three chapters of this dissertation represent an attempt to provide some answer to the question why the bass clarinet had no more extensive a solo repertoire through describing its gradual acceptance as an orchestral instrument. The status of a secondary, adjunct instrument which the bass clarinet attained in the orchestra quite naturally affected its development as a
solo medium. In a similar manner, the English horn, though used prominently in orchestral settings, has a relatively small solo repertoire in comparison to the oboe. The results of my search for older repertoire and for evidence, other than silence, about the instrument's use outside of the orchestra are described in the final two chapters of the dissertation. My search was assisted greatly by the Harry S. Truman Good Neighbor Award Foundation's presentation to me of the Hy Vile Scholarship for International Studies in 1988 and by the presentation to me of a Helen Kemper Doctoral Fellowship in 1987. I am very grateful for this assistance.

I am appreciative of the research into early repertoire made by several bass clarinetists and very grateful for their generosity in sharing their knowledge and the music which they found with me. I would like to thank Dennis Smylie, who, as an older student, was an inspiration to me during my years at the Juilliard School, gave me copies of otherwise unavailable music in his collection, and spurred my curiosity. I am grateful to Harry Sparaay of Heemstede, Holland, to whose virtuosity the current interest of many listeners and composers in the solo bass clarinet is greatly indebted, for his help in my own development as a musician and in this research. I am also especially grateful to Terje Lerstad of Oslo,
Norway, for sharing with me the results of his research--
the oldest known composition for the bass clarinet and the
only concerto written for it before World War II--both
unpublished manuscripts, the location of which required
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for lighting a spark which led me to several otherwise
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This work is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Paul J.
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CHAPTER 1

THE ROLE OF THE BASS CLARINET IN THE OPERAS OF
MEYERBEER, VERDI, AND WAGNER

The first widely heard appearance of the bass clarinet in an orchestral score occurred in the opera Les Huguenots, first performed in Paris in 1836. Composed by Giacomo Meyerbeer (1791-1864), Les Huguenots is a tragic love story set against the background of the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of Protestants in seventeenth-century France. The dramatic situation in which the bass clarinet was employed in this opera and the emotions which it was chosen to express were influential in determining the perception of later composers of appropriate uses for the bass clarinet and of the type of musical material which could be entrusted to it. The fact that the bass clarinet was first used in the theater, in a scene descriptive of a very particular mood, contributed to the instrument's confinement to dramatic and programmatic situations and its virtual neglect in "absoluta" symphonic music and chamber music throughout most of the nineteenth century. The first significant use of the instrument having been made by Meyerbeer, considered by some to be a master of dramatic effects but a composer of little
musical substance, probably contributed to the reluctance of some composers, especially Germans, to regard the bass clarinet as anything other than an occasionally useful color.

The low standing of Meyerbeer with portions of the German musical public and the lack of interest there in an expanded instrumental palette are illustrated by comments which appeared in two German periodicals. Robert Schumann compared *Les Huguenots* to the work of the well-known Parisian circus director Franconi saying, "I agreed immediately with Florestan, who, with a fist clenched against the opera, said: in the *Crusade* he still considered Meyerbeer a musician, in *Robert the Devil* he had sunk, and from *The Huguenots* on he considered him one of Franconi's people."¹ A review appearing in 1839 in *Europa, Chronik der Gebildeter Welt* states:

> His only effort and goal in art seems to be, with disregard for beauty and naturalness, effect, and nothing but effect, or, better yet, éclat. Therefore, in his works is an unimaginable array of instrumental forces of all types, such as organs,

---

bass clarinets, English and basset horns, all kinds of trumpets, horns and drums beyond imagining.²

The trio in the penultimate scene of Les Huguenots, in which the lovers realize that their fate is inescapable and resign themselves to die together, is introduced by a majestic cadenza for the bass clarinet, which then provides the only instrumental accompaniment throughout the rest of the scene. The text of this crucial section, for which Meyerbeer chose the previously unknown instrument, is:

Marcel
Do you know, that in joining your hands in these shadows,
I am consecrating and blessing
the farewell feast and a fatal marriage?

Raoul, Valentine
We know that in heaven alone
we are to be united.

Marcel
Have you cast aside all mortal chains,
all earthly hopes?
And does faith alone survive in your hearts?

Raoul, Valentine
Yes, faith reigns at last
in our hearts without conflict.

Marcel
Could you see the sword
and the fire flash without quailing?
(turning to Valentine)
And faith alone, in face of martyrdom,
not deny?

Raoul, Valentine
God gives us the courage
in giving us love!

3 Marcel
Savez-vous qu'enjoignant vos mains dans ces
ténèbres
je consacre et bénis
le banquet des adieux et des noces funèbres?

Raoul, Valentine
Nous savons qu'au ciel seul
nous devons être unis.

Marcel
Avez-vous rejété toute chaîne mortelle,
tout espoir d'ici-bas?
Et la foi seulement dans vos coeurs survit-elle?

Raoul, Valentine
Oui, la foi dans nos coeurs
règne enfin sans combats.

Marcel
Verriez-vous sans trembler
le fer, la flamme luire?

Et la foi seulement
la renierez-vous pas en face du martyr?

Raoul, Valentine
Dieu nous donne le courage
en nous donnant l'amour.

(Giacomo Meyerbeer, Eugène Scribe, and Émile Deschamps, Les
Huguenots, [Paris: 1836; facsimile, Early Romantic Opera
Phillip Gosset and Charles Rosen], 847-849).
The setting for this scene is a church yard, or cemetery, of a ruined Protestant church, to which the hero Raoul had fled in order to escape his persecutors. The bass clarinet does not participate in the next portion of the scene, the "Prayer of the Martyrs," but plays again in the final portion, in which Raoul's friend Marcel sings of his vision of a glorious heaven which awaits them. At this point the bass clarinet plays rapid arpeggiated triplet figures together with the clarinet, or harps, or occasionally solo.

The involvement of the bass clarinet with death and otherworldliness was to dominate the contexts of its use until late in the nineteenth century. In opera it was most frequently heard in moments of quiet and resigned melancholy, death scenes, and moments in which supernatural powers, particularly evil ones, are threatening. However, the aspect of death with which the bass clarinet is associated in Les Huguenots is not its most fearsome, but that which places a calm hope in a peaceful afterlife. The bass clarinet is associated, thus, with the solemnity of death and its majesty as an introduction to heaven. This accords with Meyerbeer's description of the bass clarinet in a letter to the clarinetist Carl Baermann, in which he attributes a "very
solemn effect (sehr feierliche Wirkung)" to it.\textsuperscript{4} Hector Berlioz described the instrument and its effect in \textit{Les Huguenots} in similar terms:

These severe questions of Marcel, to which the voices of the two lovers respond piously, the low sounds of the bass clarinet, full of sadness, which are the only accompaniment to Marcel's song; even the silence of the rest of the orchestra, all combine to give the musical ensemble of this scene something grandiose and unexpected in its solemnity.\textsuperscript{5}

Meyerbeer made greater use of the bass clarinet in his later operas, but his employment of it in scenes other than the most dramatically ominous or tragic came about only gradually. The instrument did not become a standard part of his orchestral texture, but was used only in a limited number of scenes in which its presence could be quite clearly perceived. This is not to say that Meyerbeer did not make technical demands on the bass clarinet, or that he limited the instrument to purely cantabile passages. Several passages in \textit{Le Prophète} require speed and fluency not unlike that required of the soprano clarinet.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{4}Meyerbeer, \textit{Briefwechsel und Tagebücher}, 3: 665.

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{5}"Ces interrogatoires sévères de Marcel, auxquels répondant pieusement les voix des deux amants, les sons graves et pleins de tristesse de la clarinette basse, seul accompagnement du chant de Marcel; ce silence même du reste de l'orchestre, tout concourt à l'ensemble musical de cette scène quelque chose de grandiose et d'imprévu dans sa solennité" (Hector Berlioz, \textit{Les Musiciens et la Musique} [Paris: Colman-Lew, Éditeurs; reprint, Westmead, England: Gregg International, 1969], 104).
Meyerbeer's next opera produced in Paris, *Le Prophète* (1843), uses bass clarinet in four of its twenty-nine numbered sections. In two of these it is given important obbligato passages. In another scene the bass clarinet plays at a lower octave a solemn processional march melody together with a solo trumpet. Its non-soloistic use is in a few rapid alberti-bass type figures with the soprano clarinets. The first of the two obbligati provided by the bass clarinet is in a scene of exorcism in which the prophet Jean pretends to cast an evil spirit out from his mother, by forcing her to deny that he is her son. The second, more extended solo appearance is in the cavatina "O, Prêtres de Baal." In this aria Fidès, abandoned by her son, imprisoned, and awaiting her death, curses her son for his disloyalty. In the section of the aria accompanied and embellished by the bass clarinet, however, she regrets her curse, forgives her son, and prepares to sacrifice herself so that he may live:

Oh you who abandon me,
My heart is broken,
My heart is broken;
Your mother forgives you,
(weeping)
Farewell, farewell, farewell!
My poor child,
My beloved, you are forgiven!
You are forgiven.

6 O toi qui m'abandonnes,
Mon coeur est désarmé,
est désarmé;
Thus, Le Prophète expands the use of the bass clarinet somewhat and, although not confining it to solo appearances, its most prominent use remains in scenes in which it is associated with religious solemnity, the supernatural, atonement, and death.

L'Africaine, completed in 1862, after a composition process of more than twenty years' duration, and produced in Paris in 1865, the year following the composer's death, was Meyerbeer's last grand opera. It uses the bass clarinet in nine of its more than twenty numbered scenes. The instrument is given no prominent solo passages of the scope found in the earlier operas. An alberti-bass type figuration, nine measures in length, is the only actual solo passage. The bass clarinet is used most often to reinforce the soprano clarinet's part at a lower octave, or as a member of the woodwind choir providing harmonic support. The Scène et Chœur, #14, in Act IV, calls for two bass clarinets to play together with two soprano clarinets in a chorale passage where the dark tones of the

...Continued...

Ta mère te perdonne,
(pleurant)
Adieu, adieu, adieu!
Mon pauvre enfant,
Mon bien aimé, sois perdonné!
Sois perdonné.

clarinets, all playing in their lower register, are used together with the lower strings to set the scene for a pagan rite of sacrifice. A note in the score advises that, if a second bass clarinet were unavailable, its part should be played by a baritone saxophone, an instrument which, outside France, was in 1865 not likely to be readily available, either.\textsuperscript{7} While limiting the bass clarinet’s solo use, \textit{L’Africaine} does go further in integrating the instrument more fully with the other members of the woodwind choir.

Meyerbeer also used the bass clarinet in one comic opera, \textit{La Pardon de Ploërmel}, which was produced shortly before his death. His use of the bass clarinet in this work is curiously sporadic. He allows it to play extensively only in the last scene. In the overture and four other scenes it is used minimally with the other woodwinds to provide harmonic support or to provide a third clarinet voice. In the final scene, in addition to some alberti-figuration with the clarinet and harp, the bass clarinet is entrusted some melodic solos during the course of a stately religious procession, a setting less tragic, but otherwise similar in its solemnity to those of the instrument’s first appearances in \textit{Les Huguenots} and

Le Prophète.

Meyerbeer's use of the bass clarinet in his later operas seems to indicate a waning of the enthusiasm for the bass clarinet's possibilities as a solo instrument that he had demonstrated in Les Huguenots. Perhaps he was simply reacting to the difficulties of finding capable performers and, outside of Paris, instruments for them to use. Although the cadenza in Les Huguenots was first performed on an early form of bass clarinet used by Franco Dacosta, Meyerbeer later advocated the use of the instrument developed in 1838 by Adolphe Sax. Meyerbeer's advocacy of Sax's instrument inserted the use of the bass clarinet into the controversy over the acceptance of the many inventions of Sax, which were strongly resisted by the earlier established instrument makers, and to a degree inhibited the use of the bass clarinet by some composers. Gaetano Donizetti attempted to include parts for the bass clarinet and for Sax's brass instruments in his opera Dom Sebastien (1843), but, because opposition from the players resulted in disrupted rehearsals, he was forced to withdraw the parts, abandoning any use of the bass clarinet.  


The bass clarinet was first heard in Verdi's orchestra in his opera Ernani, which was composed in Milan in 1843 for the Teatro La Fenice in Venice, preceding Verdi's knowledge of Meyerbeer's use of the instrument. The bass clarinet, playing primarily in its upper register, is given a prominent solo, a largo recitative accompanied by two clarinets and two bassoons, which introduces a secret gathering in a catacomb. This passage could have been intended for the serpent-shaped instrument invented by Nicolò Papalini, or, perhaps more likely, the Glicibarifono, invented by Catterin Catterini of Padova, which was used as early as 1838 in the Teatro Communale in Modena. The lowest note of the solo, C, is not available on Sax's bass clarinet, precluding the possibility of its having been the instrument intended. The performer of the part at La Fenice was Pietro Fortinari, listed in the libretto of the first performance, but now otherwise unknown.

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that a bass clarinet would be available in Venice, changed the music in order to use the dark timbre of the bass clarinet, which more suited his purpose. As the bass clarinet was not common in theater orchestras of the time, subsequent performances in other theaters used other instruments, such as the horn or the oboe, to play the part.\textsuperscript{13}

Although Verdi had not heard \textit{Les Huguenots}, his first use of the bass clarinet was quite similar in its dramatic setting and mood to Meyerbeer's use of the instrument in that opera. In both, the instrument is used to introduce a scene occurring in a place of burial, in which death is discussed, with the hope of a better afterlife in Meyerbeer's work, but in an atmosphere of sinister treachery, greed, and murder in Verdi's \textit{Ernani}.

Throughout his long compositional career, Verdi used the bass clarinet in the occasionally prominent, but limited manner of a special effect, which did not allow it to become a regularly heard voice in his woodwind choir. In eight of Verdi's total output of twenty-nine operas, the bass clarinet is heard most often in scenes dealing with death, supernatural evil, or treachery and the plotting of vengeance for treachery. In all but the last of these

\textsuperscript{13}Guiseppe Verdi and Francesco Mario Piave, \textit{Ernani} (Venice, 1844; reprint, Chicago and Milan: University of Chicago Press and Recordi, ed. by Phillip Gossett, 1985), xxviii.
operas the bass clarinet is found only in those scenes in which it is given a prominent, exposed passage. It does not perform as a part of the general orchestral texture.

In his second opera to use bass clarinet, Simon Boccanegra, premiered in Venice in 1857, Verdi has the bass clarinet provide a sustained, melodic accompaniment to the Duke of Genoa's oath of vengeance and curse against a vile traitor, whom he believes to have discovered. In La forza del destino, first performed in St. Petersburg in 1862, the bass clarinet is used only in the final scene, the death of the heroine Leonora, killed by her brother. Here the bass clarinet is given a melody which is not particularly sombre, but rather more bittersweet, expressing the characters' belief in the bliss and peace to be found in heaven. The 1865 revision of Macbeth for a production in Paris joins the bass clarinet with the bassoons for a twenty measure melodic passage during a witches' dance. Another scene discussing vengeance for treachery gives the bass clarinet its only appearance in Don Carlo, first performed in 1867. Here the bass clarinet provides the principal instrumental color during the colloquy of the Grand Inquisitor, a blind old man of ninety, and King Phillip of Spain. During a brooding largo, the Inquisitor advises Phillip to show no mercy in punishing the treason of his son Don Carlo. Again in Aïda (1871) the bass clarinet is heard in one scene only,
in which it provides an extended, alberti-bass style accompaniment. In this scene Amneris is offering the prisoner Radames a chance to escape death, if he will admit his guilt. Radames, however, refuses, saying that he would prefer to die than confess to a crime which he did not knowingly commit. The seemingly calm, arpeggiated pattern provided by the bass clarinet belies the gravity of the dialogue at this point in Act IV, scene 2:

Amneris: Already the priests, arbiters of your fate are gathering;
yet even from the horrible accusation,
saving yourself is still possible;
confess it, and your pardon
I'll beg from the throne,
and a decree of pardon,
of life, will be yours.

Radames: The sound of my confessions will never be heard by the judges;
by the gods, or by men,
whether commoners, or king, it will not be heard.
That my lips incautiously uttered the fatal secret
is true, but my thought is pure,
and my honor remains to me.

Amneris: Save yourself and confess!

Radames: No.

Amneris: You will die.\(^4\)

\(^{14}\)Amneris: Gia i sacerdoti adunansi,
arbì del tuo fato;
pur dell' accusa orribile,
scolparti ancor t'è dato;
ti scolpa, e la tua grazia
io pregherò dal trono, e
nunzia di perdonno,
di vita, a te sarò.
Only in his two last operas, *Otello* and *Falstaff*, does Verdi release the bass clarinet from its narrow casting as a voice of death and deceit. *Otello*, first performed in 1887, is Verdi's first work which occasionally uses the bass clarinet together with other instruments, but in no sense as a solo voice. One of these instances is a love duet, while the other, more typically, uses the bass clarinet, together with clarinets, bassoons, and horns, in a sinuous melodic line, marked "cupo" (dark), which accompanies Otello's oath of vengeance.

*Falstaff*, Verdi's comic opera of 1893, uses the bass clarinet briefly in its third act, in a scene which, not entirely because of the opera's light, comic tone, treats the instrument in a different manner than the earlier operas. The bass clarinet doubles at the octave,

...Continued...

Radames: *Di mie discolpe i giudici mai non udràn l'accento; dinanzi ai Numi, agli'uomini nè vil, nè re o mi sento. Profferse il labbro incauto fatal segreto, è vero, ma puro puro il mio pensiero, e l'onor mio restò.*

Amneris: *Sàlvati e scèlpati!*

Radames: *No.*

Amneris: *Tu morai.*

or plays briefly alone, portions of a quietly flowing melodic line, which it shares in varying combinations with the flute, English horn, and harp. This forms part of a delicately-hued night scene, in which the soprano, Nanette is describing the enchantment of a forest in moonlight. Although even here the association of the bass clarinet with the supernatural is not completely forgotten, the instrument is not used in a solo capacity, but as an only occasionally prominent part of the orchestral texture during a gentle nocturne. Later in the same act the bass clarinet, together with the second bassoon, provides the bass part in a sustained woodwind chorale passage, played pianissimo, beneath light, scherzo-like figures of the voices on stage and the strings. Playing in only thirty-eight measures of the opera's entire length, it is still apparent that the bass clarinet never became fully integrated as a regular voice in Verdi's orchestra and it is only in his last works that Verdi chose to employ the bass clarinet in a dramatic setting substantially differing from that of his and Meyerbeer's earliest use of the instrument.

Richard Wagner (1813-1883), who first used the bass clarinet in 1845 in his opera, Tannhäuser, was very important in expanding the role of the bass clarinet to that of a frequently contributing element of the orchestral texture, on a par similar to that of other
woodwinds, and in greatly widening the contexts in which the instrument was heard as a solo voice. Perhaps the most influential and controversial composer of the second half of the nineteenth century, Wagner had a profound effect on several aspects of music and musical theater. His harmonic language hastened the evolution, or perhaps even precipitated the decline of the tonal system then current. In his works for the stage, he increased the dramatic importance of the orchestra, the proportions of which he also greatly expanded, to a level far beyond that of accompaniment. The importance of the bass clarinet in Wagner's music dramas assured that the instrument would become a commonly heard voice, rather than a rarely encountered oddity, in orchestral music.

Wagner's use of the bass clarinet in Tannhäuser, which was first performed in Dresden in 1845, is similar in its dramatic context to the instrument's appearances in the operas of Meyerbeer and Verdi. Wagner had lived in Paris from 1839 to 1842. He had there befriended Meyerbeer, whose influence he later repudiated, and had probably heard the bass clarinet in Les Huguenots and Le Prophète. As in Les Huguenots, Wagner used the bass clarinet in only one scene of Tannhäuser, in which it is given some prominent solos during a passage dealing with death.

In Tannhäuser, Act III, scene 1, the bass clarinet
is first heard in a solo interjection between two lines of Elizabeth's prayer to the Virgin:

Let me in the dust disappear,  
oh, take me away from this earth!  

The bass clarinet, together with soprano clarinet and two bassoons, then provides the instrumental accompaniment throughout the prayer, a solemn lento. The bass clarinet is the only of these which plays melodic phrases. Its next melodic phrases are interspersed with Elizabeth's lines:

As I cannot atone for every sin,  
take them mercifully on yourself!

Here the bass clarinet is used in connection with guilt and atonement, a context in which Wagner later used the instrument very prominently in Tristan und Isolde. Verdi, as well, used the bass clarinet in scenes dealing with guilt, but his are ones in which deadly vengeance, rather than personal atonement by the sinner, is being discussed.

After her prayer, Elizabeth walks off, alone, into the distance, in a manner implying that her prayer will be granted. The bass clarinet plays a tranquilly lyric,

\[15\] Lass mich im Staub vergehen,  
o nimm von dieser Erde mich!


\[16\] Doch konnt' ich jeden Fehl nicht büßen,  
so nimm dich gnädig meiner an!

(Ibid).
sixteen measure solo, marked "più lento," accompanying Elizabeth's departure from the stage and, apparently, from earthly life to a better one in heaven. This closes the 154 measure span of the bass clarinet's use in the opera.

Lohengrin, which was first performed in Weimar in 1850, marks the beginning of a gradual increase in the use of the bass clarinet in Wagner's orchestration. In this opera, the use of the bass clarinet is not entirely restricted to that of a solo voice, or to scenes of a certain dramatic content. Although not employed consistently throughout the opera, the bass clarinet is used to varying degrees in seven of the opera's eleven scenes, as well as in the Prelude. In some of these, such as the Prelude and Elsa's march to the cathedral, it plays no solos but is used together with English horn, bassoons, or low strings. Nevertheless, the bass clarinet plays substantially less than the other woodwinds. The second scene of Act II, which lasts 443 measures, uses the bass clarinet in fifty-nine of these. The English horn plays in 105 measures and the first clarinet plays in 237 measures. The first bassoon plays in 253 measures, although, unlike the bass clarinet, it plays no solos in this scene, but rather provides harmonic support, playing melodic passages only occasionally, in conjunction with other woodwinds, including, at times, the bass clarinet, or celli.
As a solo instrument, the bass clarinet, along with the English horn, is given the very specific role of portraying and accompanying appearances of Lohengrin's adversaries, the villainous Friedrich and his wife, the sorceress Ortrud. All the prominent passages given to the bass clarinet occur when one or both of these characters is present or being discussed by others. After Friedrich's death, the bass clarinet is not heard again in a solo context. The bass clarinet and English horn are thus an instrumental voice of evil and sorcery in Lohengrin.

In Act I, scene 2, the bass clarinet in its first solo appearance accompanies Friedrich's claim of authority over Elsa, whom he has displaced from her rightful position. The opening of Act II provides the next prominent passage for the bass clarinet. Here it is used, together with the English horn, bassoons, horn, and celli, to provide a sinister accompaniment to Friedrich and Ortrud's spying from the darkness of a castle courtyard at night on the events in a brightly lit hall. Ominous fanfare-like motives are provided by these instruments, while the disguised and barely visible pair observe the unseen events inside the hall.
Throughout the second act, the bass clarinet is given several brief solos, all in connection with Friedrich, and one, more extended passage, twelve measures in length, which accompanies Friedrich's attempt to persuade Elsa to betray Lohengrin by demanding that he divulge his true name and origin. In the third act Friedrich is killed. The bass clarinet and English horn are again heard prominently at the end of the scene of his death, to which the bass clarinet provides a low, sustained, final tonic note. Although Friedrich's death by no means concludes the story, the bass clarinet plays only one brief, non-solo passage during the remaining portion of the opera in which Elsa, acting on the dead Friedrich's urging, demands that Lohengrin reveal his true origin. Wagner continued thus, in Lohengrin, to confine prominent, soloistic use of the bass clarinet to a restricted dramatic purpose, associating it with characters who can be seen only as villainously evil, but he also used the instrument as a part of the orchestral tutti in a few scenes which did not have any mournful or ominous connotations.

Tristan und Isolde, performed first in Munich in 1865 and the first work which Wagner referred to as Musik-Drama, gives the bass clarinet its most extensive solo passage in the entire operatic literature. Wagner chose the bass clarinet to provide dialogue with King Mark during the lengthy soliloquy in which the King expresses
his grief and sense of betrayal upon his discovery of his 
wife Isolde together with Tristan, his most trusted 
vassal. The bass clarinet introduces, makes intermittent 
interjections throughout, and concludes Mark's speech, 
which extends through 122 lines of poetic text. Wagner 
chose the bass clarinet as the most suitable instrumental 
color for this profound sadness, tinged with self-pity, 
rather than anger.

The passage consists primarily of a series of slowly 
descending, legato lines. The tonality of these is 
obscured through chromatic meanderings and the avoidance 
of strong, final cadences. The range of the solo is from 
the instrument's low E to g, on the bass clarinet pitched 
in A. Non-solo portions of the scene take the bass clarinet 
as high as e-flat'. The directive, immer sehr ausdrucksvoll, 
accompanies the tempo indication, Mässig langsam, at the 
moment when the King asks:

Have you really done so?  
Do you imagine that?  
(gazing sorrowfully at Tristan)  
See him there,  
truest of all dear hearts,  
look on him,  
most devoted of all friends!  
the freest unforced act of his devotion  
has pierced my heart,  
with most hostile treachery!  
If Tristan has betrayed me  
could I hope  
that what by treachery  
has been wounded
might through Melot's counsel be honourably restored to me? ¹⁷

During the middle portion of the soliloquy the bass clarinet is heard at points when King Mark specifically refers to treachery, in a manner similar to Wagner's earlier use of the instrument in Lohengrin and to Verdi's usage, as well. The instrument is heard before the line, "Wohin nun Treue, da Tristan mich betrog?" (Where now is loyalty, if Tristan has betrayed me?), and after the line ending, "da Tristan mich verriet?" (since Tristan betrayed me?). ¹⁸ The soliloquy ends with a long, unaccompanied descent of two octaves by the bass clarinet to its lowest tone, played pianissimo, followed by a similarly set question, asked by the King:

¹⁷ Tatest du es wirklich?
Wähnst du das?
(Feizend an Tristan blickend)
Sieh ihn dort,
den Treu'sten aller Treuen;
den freundlichsten der Freunde:
seiner treuste
defeste Tat
trof mein Herz
mit feindlichstem Verrat!
Trog mich Tristan,
sollt' ich hoffen,
was sein Trügen
mir getroffen,
sei durch Melots Rat
redlich mir bewahrt?

(Richard Wagner, Tristan und Isolde, Handlung in 3 Aufzügen [London: Ernst Eulenburg, ed. #6076], 673-75).

¹⁸ Ibid., 676-678.
The inscrutable deep
mysterious cause,
who will make it known to the world?\textsuperscript{19}

In addition to its appearance in King Mark's
soliloquy, which occurs near the end of the second act,
the bass clarinet is also heard prominently in the
introduction to the second act, in which it plays an
ascending figure representing day. (Wagner was to use the
bass clarinet in scenes depicting daybreak several times
in \textit{Der Ring der Nibelungen}.) Although at first glance it
would appear that the bass clarinet is here being used to
represent a positive, uplifting concept, it is not so.
Because of the reversal of values which is forced upon
Tristan and Isolde by their illicit love, day, which
forces the lovers apart after the protection of night's
darkness, is viewed with fear.

Although the bass clarinet plays more frequently in
\textit{Tristan und Isolde} than it did in \textit{Lohengrin}, it is still
not used consistently throughout the entire course of the
work. The bass clarinet plays a part providing harmonic
support during the Prelude and concludes with the final,
solo statement of the death-longing motive, but it is not
used at all in the first scene. Its first appearance in

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{19}Den unerforschlich tief
geheimnisvollen Grund,
wer macht der Welt ihn kund?
\end{quote}

(Ibid., 691-692).
the second scene is in the lowest voice of two woodwind chords accompanying the word "death" in the lines, "Tod geweihtes Haupt!, Tod geweihtes Herz!" (Mind doomed to death, Heart doomed to death!)\textsuperscript{20} Hereafter the instrument again rests for fifty measures, making only four brief appearances in the second scene. In \textit{Tristan und Isolde} the bass clarinet in its solos and even in tutti passages is most frequently associated with grief and death, continuing its role in earlier operas on a larger scale.

In its non-solo use, the bass clarinet is considered the lowest woodwind, being placed beneath the bassoons in the score. It frequently doubles the bassoon line, particularly the third part, but also occasionally the first part. In a few loud tutti passages the bass clarinet is used to reinforce the horns and in that context is required at times to play in its \textit{altissimo} register. Wagner used the bass clarinet primarily in legato, sustained passages and rarely employed it in staccato or marcato figures. When not functioning as a solo voice, the bass clarinet provides harmonic support and is seldom involved in florid figuration.

In the music dramas of the \textit{Ring der Nibelungen} (1869–1876), the non-solo use of the bass clarinet largely follows the patterns set for it in \textit{Lohengrin} and

\textsuperscript{20}Ibid., 46.
Tristan und Isolde. It appears as the lowest woodwind in the score, separated from the soprano clarinets by the English horn, horns, and bassoons. A seating plan of Wagner’s orchestra at Bayreuth shows that actual performance practice did not treat the bass clarinet primarily as an adjunct to the soprano clarinet, but as a member of the Generalbass of the orchestra, aligned most closely to the bassoons and most frequently taking over the role of soloist among them. (See example 3.)


The bass clarinet is only rarely used in passages requiring incisive or rapid articulation, plays fewer runs and less rapid figuration than the other woodwinds, and is generally used for harmonic support. Its frequency of use is greatly increased, however, over that in Lohengrin. In
Act II of *Die Walküre*, the bass clarinet plays 27 percent of the time, in 583 of the act's 2139 measures. This is more than either the first oboe or the English horn, which play in 26 percent and 25 percent of the act, respectively. The first clarinet plays in 677 measures, or 32 percent of the act, while the first bassoon again has the heaviest burden, playing in 986 measures, comprising 46 percent of the act's total length, although, as in *Lohengrin*, this entails very few prominent passages.

The *Ring* offers the bass clarinet no solo passages on the scale of King Mark's soliloquy in *Tristan und Isolde*, but there are many passages, from one to two measures up to sixteen measures in length, scattered throughout the four dramas of the *Ring*, and especially in *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung*. The dramatic context of these is no longer limited to death, fear, or treachery. A new use of the instrument, which occurs several times, is to provide a softly muted melodic line during moments of silence and dramatic tension on stage, while characters are pondering the effects of their actions or reflecting inwardly on moral dilemmas. The variety of scenes during which the bass clarinet is given solo passages in *Die Walküre* shows that Wagner no longer considered the instrument limited to a narrow dramatic role.

The first solo appearance of the bass clarinet in *Die Walküre* occurs in Act I, scene 2. In this case, the
coupling of the instrument with an ominous dramatic situation, as in earlier operas, is retained. The bass clarinet provides a deep and sustained legato passage when Hunding notes the similar appearance of his wife, Sieglinde, and their guest, Siegmund. A descending figure from the bass clarinet accompanies Hunding's comment that Siegmund's glance resembles that of a "slithery dragon." In the next solo passage, which occurs twenty-four measures later, the bass clarinet, followed by the soprano clarinets, plays while Siegmund ponders Hunding's request that he reveal his name. This solo is derived from the leitmotiv associated with the sufferings of the Wälsung clan. In its last solo appearance in the first act, the bass clarinet extends the compass of the soprano clarinet during a passage in which the divine power of spring is described, a use which certainly differs from the sepulchral tone of the instrument's first operatic appearances.

In the second scene of Act II the bass clarinet plays an extended solo, sixteen measures in length, at pianissimo dynamic level, during Wotan's silence on hearing Brünnhilde ask him what is troubling him after he had been forced to recognize the inevitable consequences of his duplicity. The stage direction describing the

21 Richard Wagner, Die Walküre (London: Ernst Eulenberg, ed. #6119), 46-47.
action during the bass clarinet's solo, which includes the
love motive, clearly describes the context of reflective,
yet troubled musing over a moral dilemma in which the bass
clarinet is heard:

She sadly and worriedly rests her head and hands on
his lap. Wotan, at length, looks into her eyes;
then he strokes her hair with involuntary tenderness.
As from out of deep thought, he finally begins.22

During the third scene of Act II Siegmund and Sieglinde
recognize and acknowledge their love for each other. The
bass clarinet is given three brief solo passages during
this scene, including a solo during an important moment of
silence on stage at the very conclusion of the scene in
which the bass clarinet again gives voice to the characters
lost in their own thoughts, in this case the thoughts of a
couple in love.

Several agitated orchestral passages in the
concluding scenes of Act II and the opening of Act III
include the bass clarinet, making demands on it for speed
and agility not less than those made on the other woodwind
instruments. The next important solo for the bass
clarinet provides a transition from a stormy orchestral
passage, the "Ride of the Valkyries," to the calm evening
depicted thereafter. The bass clarinet again introduces a

22"Sie legt trauerlich und ängstlich Haupt und Hände
ihm auf die Knie und Schoss. Wotan blickt ihr lange in das
Auge; dann streichelt er ihr mit unwilkürlicher
Zärtlichkeit die Locken. Wie aus tiefem Sinnen beginnt er
endlich" (Ibid., 356-357).
moment of quiet reflection between Brünnhilde and Wotan. Joined subsequently by the oboe, English horn, and bassoon, it is one of the voices in an instrumental conversation, during which Brünnhilde and Wotan silently consider the significance of her disobedience.

*Siegfried*, the third drama of the *Ring* cycle, provides the bass clarinet with relatively few solo passages. Nevertheless, what is perhaps the single most telling example of Wagner's emancipation of the bass clarinet from use restricted to sombre, ominous, or evil dramatic situations occurs during its final scene. Here the bass clarinet is used to accompany Siegfried's kiss which awakens Brünnhilde from her enchanted, fire-surrounded sleep.

In *Götterdämmerung* the bass clarinet is heard in a wide variety of dramatic contexts. It figures prominently not only in scenes portraying death and treachery, such as Act II, scene 5, in which Hagen tries to convince Brünnhilde that Siegfried has betrayed her, but also in passages implying tenderness, such as the duet with the soprano clarinet in the Prelude, after which Brünnhilde and Siegfried greet the dawn together. A solo passage concluding the Prelude to Act II combines two contexts in which Wagner had favored the bass clarinet in *Tristan un Isolde* and earlier dramas in the *Ring*. As dawn begins to brighten the sky, the bass clarinet is heard while Hagen
is seen standing motionless, pondering a dilemma. The dynamic range of the solo is from piano to pianissimo. The bass clarinet's fluency at soft dynamic levels and its warm, non-penetrating tone could be a factor in Wagner's frequent use of it during such moments of quiet contemplation.

Parsifal, Wagner's last music-drama, which was first performed in Bayreuth in 1882, uses the woodwinds less soloistically than his earlier works. It combines the winds, or a wind and strings to produce blended, rather than primary colors, with a much greater frequency than in the previous works. The bass clarinet is paired most frequently with the celli, shading and strengthening their tone. The contrabassoon, which had not been employed in the Ring, is used in a similar manner with the basses. As in the Ring der Nibelungen, the bass clarinet is used in a variety of dramatic and emotional contexts. It is not associated with any particular character or concept, in the manner of its linkage with the villains in Lohengrin. Parsifal, written nearly fifty years after the introduction of the bass clarinet into operatic use, and the dramas of the Ring der Nibelungen were the first important works to fully integrate the bass clarinet into the woodwind section and, while not denying the suitability of the instrument's dark tone for sombre and foreboding passages, to allow it to be heard in a wide
range of dramatic and musical contexts. That the bass clarinet had yet to be used in a humorous manner can probably be attributed to scarcity of lightheartedness in Wagner's mythological world, as the instrument was soon to be exploited in a comic guise by Richard Strauss in his tone poems Till Eulenspiegel's lustige Streiche (1895) and Don Quixote (1897).
CHAPTER 2

A CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACCEPTANCE OF THE BASS CLARINET
AS AN ORCHESTRAL INSTRUMENT AND
PATTERNS OF ITS USE

In studying the development of the role of the bass clarinet in the orchestra a chronological list of orchestral works which include the bass clarinet--incorporating operas, ballets, and works for vocal soloists or choir and orchestra--as well as purely orchestral concert music, has been useful in observing the course of its gradual acceptance as a frequently employed orchestral voice. Such a list has also been helpful in categorizing the types of works in which the bass clarinet was commonly used, as well as those in which it rarely figured, and the geographic distribution of its use. I have compiled a list, as comprehensive as possible, of 190 orchestral works which include the bass clarinet, written between 1829, the year of the earliest extant composition using the instrument, a short work for chorus and orchestra by Hector Berlioz, and 1920, a year by which the instrument had gained to a great degree its present position as a frequent, though not inevitable member of the full symphony orchestra. The non-operatic selections
included in this list are derived primarily from
*Orchestral Music: A Handbook* (Metuchen, N.J. and London:
Scarecrow Press, 1982), by David Daniels, a catalog of
orchestral repertoire which provides the instrumentation
of the works included.

The list is chronologically ordered by the date of a
work's first performance, in all those cases where such
information is available, rather than by the date of its
composition or publication. The list also includes the city
where the first performance of a work took place and its
musical genre - opera, ballet, symphonic concert work,
etc. In the case of purely orchestral works a distinction
has been made, separating programmatic and descriptively
titled works from those whose titles imply no extra-
musical, literary, or evocative intentions, i.e.
"absolute" music. This list appears in the text as
Appendix A. Another list, Appendix B, divides the period
surveyed into five shorter periods of twenty years and one
period of ten years, giving the number of works in each
genre and the distribution of these works by the city of
first performance during each of these shorter periods.

A striking characteristic of the body of works
including the bass clarinet is the high proportion of
theatrical compositions, such as operas, oratorios, and
other choral works, orchestrally accompanied songs, and
ballets. During the first forty years of the bass
clarinet's occasional presence in the orchestra, up to 1870, the majority of the works using the bass clarinet were theatrical in nature, opera being the most important genre. This is to some extent explained by the importance of opera in the musical life of the time, but not entirely so, as a large proportion of the current symphonic concert literature also dates from these years. Of the twenty-seven works which utilized the bass clarinet between 1829 and 1870, twenty were theatrical, sixteen of these being operas. The proportion of theatrical works in the entire list is eighty-six of the 190 compositions, or forty-five percent. Between 1871 and 1890 the number of purely orchestral compositions requiring the bass clarinet equalled that of theatrical works, with twelve in each category. After 1891 the number of purely orchestral compositions requiring the bass clarinet exceeded that of theatrical works, reflecting both the increased importance of orchestral music, independent of the opera, and the increased acceptance and availability of the bass clarinet.

Another important distinction which can be made from this list is that in the purely orchestral works in which it is heard, the bass clarinet is used much more frequently in programmatic and descriptive works than in compositions without obvious extra-musical intentions. This is clearly related to the early operatic use of the
bass clarinet, which limited it to dramatic situations of a few certain types, rather than use throughout an entire opera. Of the 104 non-theatrical works in this list, sixty-seven of these have programmatically evocative titles, while only thirty-seven are designated solely by the type of musical form to which they belong. Only one non-programmatic, work, the Symphony No. 1 of Camille Saint-Saëns, written in 1853, included the bass clarinet in the years before 1871. Between 1871 and 1890 eight such works were composed, including the only work before 1900 to use the bass clarinet in an orchestra accompanying a solo instrument, the Fantasie pour piano et orchestre (1890) of Claude Debussy. During the period between 1871 and 1890 the number of non-programmatic compositions exceeded that of programmatic works, which was four. Thereafter, programmatic works again heavily outnumbered the non-figuratively titled works.

The subject matter of these programmatic works, in which the bass clarinet figured, generally corresponds with that of the dramatic situations which prompted its first operatic use, giving the instrument a place, frequently prominent, in works or passages of sombre character, dealing with suffering, death, and supernatural evil. In Berlioz' cantata of 1846, La Damnation de Faust, the bass clarinet appears in three of the work's twenty scenes. All of these scenes involve infernal powers in
some way. They are:

XII Évocation (summoning of spirits)
- Menuet des Follets (sprites)
- Sérénade de Méphistophélès (a devil) et Chœur des Follets

XVIII La Course à l'Abîme (descent into Hell)

XIX Pandaemonium (the many devils of Hell).

The bass clarinet is not heard in the final portion of the work, which takes place in heaven. Franz Liszt, the earliest composer to give substantial solos to the bass clarinet in purely orchestral works, entrusted to the bass clarinet the first unaccompanied statement of a dolorous, melodic theme, which, during the course of the work, is transformed from its initial appearance as a lament into a song of triumph, is his symphonic poem, Tasso: Lamento e Trionfo (1849). In Liszt's Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne (1850), based on a poem by Victor Hugo, the bass clarinet is heard playing material portraying the "voice of humanity," described as "hollow, and full of pain."¹

By the 1890s, after Wagner's use of the bass clarinet in Der Ring der Nibelungen had widened the instrument's operatic role considerably, works with a variety of dramatic subjects began to include the bass clarinet.

¹Victor Hugo, Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne, quoted in Franz Liszt, Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne (London: Ernst Eulenburg, Ltd., Edition Eulenburg #3649), V-VI.
clarinet. Richard Strauss was the first composer to employ the bass clarinet in a distinctly humorous context. In 1895 Strauss used it quite prominently, along with the soprano and piccolo clarinets, in depicting the rogue Till, the subject of the technically demanding, comic tone poem, *Till Eulenspiegel's lustige Streiche*. Even more in the forefront in *Don Quixote* (1896), the bass clarinet shares a soloist's role with the tenor tuba and the viola in portraying Sancho Panza, the faithful, but somewhat simple-minded and lazy squire of the idealistic knight.

With gradually lessening exclusivity, sombre subject matter dealing with the supernatural, continued to be the strongest inspiration for the inclusion of the bass clarinet in orchestral scoring. Antonin Dvořák included the bass clarinet in four tone poems during the 1890s, three of which deal with supernatural powers of evil. In *The Noon Witch* of 1896 the bass clarinet depicts the first appearance of the witch, intent on stealing away a young child. Equally telling is Jean Sibelius' inclusion of the bass clarinet in only those two of his four tone poems based on the *Kalevala* (1896) which depict the hero Lemminkainen's sojourn in Tuonela, the land of the dead.

From the time of its earliest use there by Hector Berlioz and Giacomo Meyerbeer, Paris was an important center in the development of the repertoire using the bass clarinet. Throughout most of the nineteenth century, from
the 1830s on, Paris was the leading capital of operatic production. The lavish and extravagant operatic spectacles at its Académie Royale de Musique insured composers that whatever orchestral forces they desired would be available, while the taste of the opera public for a "profusion of effect at the expense of dramatic truth" encouraged these same composers toward increasingly inventive use of the orchestra. The demand for bass clarinets in the theaters was easily filled because most of the important French instrument makers were, and still are, located in Paris.

More works using the bass clarinet were first heard in Paris than in any other city during all of the twenty-year subdivisions of the list in Appendix B. (Vienna equalled Paris in having the premieres of nine works between 1911 and 1920.) During the first sixty years of the instrument's use the number of Parisian premieres, which, throughout the entire course of the list totaled thirty-nine, double the number of the second ranked city's premieres. Only Vienna and St. Petersburg came close to equaling Paris in the importance of the bass clarinet to composers in those cities after 1890. Among works first

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performed in Paris are twenty-three theatrical compositions and fifteen purely orchestral works. The gradual decline in the importance of opera is evidenced by the fact that all but all but four of the operas among these compositions were given their premieres by 1867 or before, while the five ballets were all written for the Ballets Russes, or its star dancer Nijinsky, during the years 1910 to 1914.

Although symphonic compositions have not figured as strongly in Parisian music as opera, the earliest inclusion of the bass clarinet in a non-programmatic symphony was in a work which had its first performance there in 1853, the Symphony No.1, op. 2, of Camille Saint-Saëns. The instrument was used again in symphonies by Vincent D'Indy and Saint-Saëns in 1886, César Franck in 1888, and Ernst Chausson in 1890. Also in that year, Claude Debussy included the bass clarinet in his Fantasie pour piano et orchestre. Thus, a non-programmatic role for the instrument began to be established and accepted by French composers before composers of other nationalities were inclined to do so. Gustav Mahler and Antonin Dvorak were the only non-French composers to use the bass clarinet in symphonic compositions without programmatic titles before the twentieth century. The symphonic use of the bass clarinet by Saint-Saëns, Franck, and Chausson also departed from norms of the instrument's early
operatic use as a primarily solo voice. It was, in fact, given very few exposed passages in these symphonies, but was used mainly to provide harmonic support and its music made few technical demands on the performer.

In Italy, where opera dominated musical life during the nineteenth century even more exclusively than in Paris, the bass clarinet was not used in a symphonic orchestral composition until around 1900. Around that year Giuseppe Martucci included the bass clarinet in the orchestration of his Tarantella, op. 44, no. 6, composed originally for piano in 1882. A piece heard first in Paris in 1909, the tone poem Italia, by Alfredo Casella, and Fontane di Roma, the first of several works by Ottorino Respighi in which the bass clarinet figured prominently, are the only additional purely orchestral works by Italian composers which appear in this list. Giuseppe Verdi, whose use of the bass clarinet beginning in 1843 has previously been discussed at some length, was, with the exception of Boito in his opera Mefistofele (1881), the only Italian composer to employ the bass clarinet until the 1890s when it came to be frequently used by composers of the verismo style. The bass clarinet is heard in operas by Alfani, Catalani, Leoncavallo, Respighi, and Zandonai, as well as in all the operas of Giacomo Puccini, from Edgar (1889) onwards. Puccini abandoned the dramatic role given to the bass clarinet by
Verdi, making it, instead, a common element in his orchestral texture. Although Puccini occasionally used the bass clarinet melodically, generally in combination with other instruments, his most frequent use of it was to provide sustained harmonic support, often as a solo bass pedal beneath the singers or other instruments.

Although a form of bass clarinet developed by J. H. Streitwolf (1799-1837) was adopted for use by several military bands in German-speaking monarchies during the 1830s, there is no evidence of this instrument having made any impression on composers of orchestral music in those realms. With two notable and important exceptions, there appears to have been little orchestral use of the bass clarinet by German composers until Richard Strauss began his use of the instrument in his tone poem Macbeth in 1888. Strauss, who used the bass clarinet in all of his tone poems except Don Juan and in most of his operas, was very influential on later composers in his handling of the instrument. He made technical demands similar to those required of the soprano clarinet, used the altissimo register, and gave the instrument solo passages in a wide variety of musical contexts. His Tod und Verklärung, composed in 1889, is the earliest work to make use of the

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modern extended bass clarinet, the range of which included written low D. Perhaps, however, because the extended bass clarinets in either B-flat or A were not yet common, he did not require notes lower than written E in his later works. Gustav Mahler's use of the bass clarinet began in the same year as Strauss', with his Symphony No. 1. (Composed earlier, *Das klagende Lied*, which also uses bass clarinet, was not performed until 1892.) The bass clarinet is heard in a variety of passages, ranging from sombre and menacing to tranquil and light-hearted, in Mahler's symphonies, which are ostensibly, yet arguably, non-programmatic. Mahler's early symphonies combined the bass clarinet and the third soprano clarinet in a single part to be played by one musician, while his later works have separate bass clarinet parts.

The two composers who had introduced the use of the bass clarinet to countries where German culture dominated during the late 1840s and the 1850s were Richard Wagner and the cosmopolitan Franz Liszt, who lived from 1848 to 1860 in Weimar. Both had spent time in Paris and were impressed by the expanded orchestra available at the Opéra and by the striking effects of which such an ensemble was capable. Wagner and Liszt became the figureheads of a progressive "New German School" of composition, which included Strauss and Mahler, and which was seen as opposed to the more
traditionally-minded, classical purists known as the "Gewandhaus School," of whom Johannes Brahms was a prime example. Perhaps because of their aesthetic differences, many German composers of traditional bent ignored the innovations in orchestration of Wagner and Liszt, including the use of the bass clarinet, despite its availability to them. In fact, it was only through the wholehearted adoption of the bass clarinet in the works of the even more radical Second Viennese School, which included Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, and Anton Webern, during the first decades of the twentieth century, that the bass clarinet came to have an important position in non-operatic works by later German composers. All three of these Viennese composers used the bass clarinet prominently in the majority of their orchestral works and in works for various small chamber ensembles.

Slavic composers evidenced some attraction to the bass clarinet at an early date, although the comparatively provincial condition of the musical establishment in Slavic countries during the mid-1800s and the difficulty of access to centers of musical instrument manufacture may have hampered widespread use of the instrument before the last years of the nineteenth century. The only manufacture of bass clarinets in Slavic countries before 1900 mentioned by Kalina in his "Structural Development of the Bass Clarinet" was begun by the Kohlert family around 1880.
in Graslitz (Czechoslovakia). In 1861 Bedrich Smetana included the bass clarinet in his tone poem *Hakon Jarl*, which was composed and first performed during one of his stays in Göteborg, Sweden. In this work, which is strongly influenced by the tone poems of Liszt, the bass clarinet is given several *cantabile* solos, largely in the instrument's upper register. Its part is comparable in technical demands and amount of playing to those of the other woodwinds. Perhaps because of its scarcity in Bohemia, Smetana did not include the bass clarinet in any of his later compositions written there.

Somewhat later, Antonin Dvořák included the bass clarinet in two non-programmatic works. In the Symphony No. 5, op. 76, which was first performed in 1879, one brief solo passage for the instrument is incorporated into the second clarinet part, while in the *Scherzo Capriccioso*, the bass clarinet is given a complete part with several solos. Otherwise, however, Dvořák confined his use of the instrument to several of his tone poems based on frightening, supernatural subjects, his *Requiem*, and operas. In these programmatic and theatrical works Dvořák used the bass clarinet prominently, but in the bulk of his symphonic writing he followed the more conservative lines of orchestration of the Gewandhaus School. Leos Janáček

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5Kalina, "Structural Development," 123.
was another Czech composer who used the bass clarinet occasionally in orchestral works and in a woodwind sextet (\textit{Mládi}, composed in 1924), but primarily in opera.

The use of the bass clarinet by Russian composers began almost entirely in a theatrical setting. Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov included the instrument in his operas, beginning with \textit{Pskovityanka} (The Maid of Pskov) in 1873, but never gave it a part in his concert works. Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky entrusted prominent passages to the bass clarinet in three programmatic works from relatively late in his career: the \textit{Manfred Symphony} (1885), the symphonic ballad, \textit{Voyevoda} (1891), and the \textit{Nutcracker Ballet} (1892). Anatol Lyadov continued the association of the bass clarinet with the supernatural in his tone poems based on frightening fairy tales: \textit{Baba-Yaga} (1904), \textit{The Enchanted Lake} (1909), and \textit{Kikimora} (1909). The next generation of Russian composers included Skryabin, Stravinsky, Rakhmaninov, and Prokofiev. These composers differed from each others greatly in style, but were all similar in their extensive use of the bass clarinet in orchestral compositions of many types, both abstract and programmatic.

Orchestral music developed late in Poland. Warsaw
did not have a professional orchestra until 1901. Karol
Szymanowski was the first Polish composer to use the bass
clarinet, in his Konzert-Overture, which was first heard
in 1906. Mieczysław Karłowicz included the bass clarinet
in several distinctly nationalistic works, beginning in
1909.

The earliest extant solo work for the bass clarinet,
Sigismund Neukomm's concert aria with bass clarinet
obbligato, was written and performed in London in 1836,
but English composers made no orchestral use of the
instrument until 1900. Edward Elgar included it then in
his oratorio The Dream of Gerontius and later in his two
symphonies, which were first performed in 1908 and 1911.
Granville Bantock gave the bass clarinet an important solo
in his tone poem Fifine at the Fair in 1901 and Frederick
Delius began his use of the bass clarinet in his choral
composition of 1903, Appalachia. Both Gustav Holst and
Ralph Vaughan Williams, who included it in most of his
symphonies, also began their use of the bass clarinet
during this period, in 1909 and 1918, respectively.

The years around the turn of the century also heard
the first use of the bass clarinet in several countries
which are often considered to be on the cultural periphery

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Stanley Sadie, ed. The New Grove Dictionary of
Lissa and Elżbeta Głuszicz-Zwoźniński.
of Europe because of their relative isolation from important musical capitals such as Paris and the larger German cities. These include Sweden, Finland, Hungary, and Spain. Excepting works by the Swedish composer Wilhelm Stenhammar, whose concert overture *Excelsior!* which employed the bass clarinet was first heard in 1896, the instrument's only impact on Scandinavian composers during the period of this listing was evidenced by Jean Sibelius, who first used it in two tone poems inspired by the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, in 1895. Sibelius gave the bass clarinet lyrical solos in the more darkly-hued passages in several programmatic works, but, like Dvořák and Tchaikovsky, who also rarely used the instrument in their non-programmatic music, Sibelius did not include it in his symphonies, with the exception of his last one, written in 1926. Béla Bartók, who, after the period of this list included the bass clarinet in many "absolute" compositions, as well as programmatic ones, first wrote for the bass clarinet in his dramatic symphony *Kossuth* (1904). His Second Suite (1909), which, though not programmatic, is strongly influenced by Hungarian folk music, gives the bass clarinet one of its most extended solos in the orchestral literature. The andante movement of the Suite begins with a rambling recitative for the bass clarinet, unaccompanied for its first thirty-four measures, the modality and structure of
which make it reminiscent of an improvisation played on the tárógató, a woodwind instrument associated with Hungarian folk music. In most of his scores, including the Second Suite, Bartók combined the bass clarinet part with that of the second or third soprano clarinet, using the bass clarinet only when its tone would be clearly perceived. Bartók was particularly fond of combining the bass clarinet with the English horn, in unison or octaves. This had been a common practice since the time of Wagner's first use of these instruments together in Lohengrin, perhaps both because of their tonal blend and because of the programmatic associations which the two instruments to a degree share. Examples of this combination are the only exposed melodic passages for the bass clarinet in César Franck's Symphony and in Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 2, both of which are shared with the English horn, and many passages for the two instruments together in Arnold Schoenberg's Pelleas und Melisande. Manuel de Falla was the first Spanish composer to make use of the bass clarinet, including it in his opera of 1913, La vida breve. He did not use it in any of his later works, however. In the same year, Joaquín Turina also employed the instrument in his La procesión del Rocío.

The first orchestral use of the bass clarinet by an American composer was by Charles Martin Loeffler in his A Pagan Poem, which was premiered in Boston in 1906. The
bass clarinet had been available to composers in the United States, at least in the larger musical centers of the east coast, for some years before that, however, as it had been used in professional bands, such as those of Sousa and Fillmore, since as early as 1878. Loeffler's work was followed in 1907 by the Symphonic Sketches of George W. Chadwick and in 1908 by the Dance in the Place Congo of Henry F. Gilbert. Three programmatic works by Charles Tomlinson Griffes using the bass clarinet were heard in 1919. Continuing the pattern of use by many European composers, all of these works, with one exception, were descriptive or programmatic pieces.

CHAPTER 3
IMPEDEMENTS TO THE ACCEPTANCE
OF THE BASS CLARINET

As with any new instrument, several factors have affected the course and distribution of the acceptance of the bass clarinet as an orchestral, as well as a solo instrument. The availability of the instrument and of musicians capable of performing on it are necessary conditions to convince composers to use that instrument. This availability, however, is affected by the technicalities of performing on that instrument, its acceptance by players, and the conceptions already formed of the instrument's characteristics and capabilities. To a degree, all of these factors worked against the speedy acceptance of the bass clarinet during the nineteenth century.

During the early years of its use, beginning in the 1830s, the rarity of the bass clarinet dampened enthusiasm for its use. Even those composers who had heard the bass clarinet might well have hesitated before employing an unusual instrument the lack of which would have impeded the faithful performance of their works, except by well-funded, professional organizations in the larger musical
capitals. The journal of Giacomo Meyerbeer makes a number of brief references to his need to arrange for the acquisition of bass clarinets for performances of his operas in several cities in France and Germany during 1837 and 1838 and his need to schedule special rehearsals in order to assure that the parts would be correctly played.\(^1\) The bass clarinet, as well as the English horn and harp, were actually missing from the first performance of Lohengrin in Weimar in 1850.\(^2\) Similarly, Franz Liszt wrote to Wagner during the course of his preparations for the performance of the same opera in Leipzig in 1853 that, "the bass clarinet ordered from Erfurt has not yet arrived; and when it does, it is not certain whether the clarinet player there will be able to play it".\(^3\)

At mid-century there was still a fair amount of confusion remaining about the exact nature of the bass clarinet. According to Koury, Ferdinand S. Gassner confused the bass clarinet with the bass- horn in his Partiturkenntnis, ein Leitfaden zum Selbstunterricht für anehende Tonkünstler..., published in 1842, while in his

\(^1\)Meyerbeer, Briefwechsel und Tagebücher, 3:25, 51, 61, 96, etc.

\(^2\)Oskar Kroll, Die Klarinette—ihre Geschichte, ihre Literatur, ihre grossen Meister, ed. Diethard Riehm (Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1965), 73.

treatise of 1863, the Belgian musicologist, François-Auguste Gevaert, admitted to having had no first-hand acquaintance with the bass clarinet. The confusion between the bass clarinet and the basset horn persisted in German military bands, where both instruments were used, until the early twentieth century.

Budgetary constraints being an unavoidable facet of professional orchestral operations, these organizations did not begin to establish regular-status positions for the bass clarinet until late in the nineteenth century, and then only in the largest ensembles. Most orchestras hired bass clarinetists only when needed for particular works, making the use of the instrument an extra expense and, in all likelihood inhibiting composers from risking the problems which might be involved. The composition of operas using the bass clarinet in Paris is clearly reflective of the influence which the availability of a bass clarinetist as a regular member of an orchestra, rather than as an added reinforcement to it, had on the instrument's use. During the middle third of the nineteenth century, according to personnel listings from both 1845 and 1855, three clarinetists were employed by the Opéra, but in 1890, when there actually could have

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4 Ibid.
5 Kroll, Die Klarinette, 73.
been a much more frequent need for a bass clarinetist, only two clarinetists were regularly employed there.⁶ This institutional policy, which reduced the orchestral forces available, had direct repercussions on the works composed for performance at the Opéra in that during the last thirty years of the century only two operas using the bass clarinet were premiered in Paris, while during the thirty-five years before that eight such works had been composed and performed. (See appendix A.)

A permanent, contracted position with responsibility for the bass clarinet, as well as second clarinet, was established in the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1886. The personnel lists of major European and American orchestras dating between 1904 and 1935 which were cited by Koury all mentioned the bass clarinet specifically, while the personnel lists from after 1935 included enough clarinetists to perform works using the instrument, but did not mention the bass clarinet separately, perhaps reflecting the instrument’s perceived secondary status as a doubling instrument.⁷

Doubling on the bass clarinet, which has been the usual approach to the instrument, presents several difficulties to clarinetists playing the bass clarinet as


⁷Ibid., 90 and 299.
a secondary addition to their more usual instrument. The much greater size of the bass clarinet, its different response, and the embouchure required, which differs from that of the soprano clarinet, make it a doubling combination which seldom provides satisfactory results without adequate preparation and adjustment. The performer is required to reshape several aspects of technique and to alter the concept and expected sensations of tone production from those which would be employed on the soprano clarinet.

Throughout the nineteenth century the manual technique of the bass clarinet was complicated by the necessity for two separate thumb keys in order to provide proper venting for the instrument's upper register. The performer was required to use one key for the notes in the clarion register up to d-sharp' and another key for the notes e' and above, a technique not required of the soprano clarinet. The first mechanism to be developed which automatically shifted from one venting to the other and which required only one thumb key seems to have been invented by the German instrument maker, Wilhelm Heckel, to whom a patent for such a mechanism was issued in 1900. A similar mechanism was first applied to French-type bass clarinets by Léon Leblanc, who patented his design in 1926 and began using it on his company's instruments around
that time. The rarity before this innovation of passages such as those in Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloé*, which require rapid, legato shifting between the two portions of the upper register and the lower register, is to a degree explained by the difficulties involved with the non-automatic register keys.


Another significant difference separating the bass and soprano clarinets is that the fingerings which provide the strongest and most in-tune notes in the *altissimo* register of the bass clarinet differ greatly from those used on the soprano clarinet. Therefore, the use of this range of the bass clarinet requires a particular familiarity with the instrument and the employment of different techniques, rather than the simple adaption of

soprano clarinet techniques to a larger instrument. Composers frequently avoided this problem by making few, if any, forays into the instrument's extreme upper range, and some writers on orchestration stated simply that the instrument was incapable of playing in this range.

These problems, and the consignment of the bass clarinet to the status of a secondary instrument, seem to have produced the perception among some composers of the bass clarinet as an instrument with limited capabilities. This appears to be particularly true during much of the nineteenth century. After the initial enthusiasm displayed by Meyerbeer, who wrote virtuosic cadenze and obbligati in *Les Huguenots* and *Le Prophète*, and by Liszt, whose lengthy recitatives make strong demands on tonal control, most composers were very sparing in their demands on the instrument. The symphonies of Franck, Chausson, and Saint-Saëns, written between 1886 and 1890, which use the bass clarinet primarily to provide harmonic support and give it only a few, briefly prominent passages, typify this view of the instrument. Richard Strauss, whose virtuosic orchestral style was considered impossibly demanding by many orchestral musicians at the time, was the first prominent composer to make technical demands on the bass clarinet consistently comparable with his demands of the other woodwinds.

Commentary on the bass clarinet in orchestration
texts from the period reflects and, to some degree, helped to form the views commonly held about the instrument. It is clear from these writings that the bass clarinet was seen to have characteristics which made its use suitable only in certain musical situations. Some of the writers considered praised the instrument and advocated its use, while others distinctly disparaged it.

Hector Berlioz was the first author of a text on orchestration to mention the bass clarinet, the tone and application of which he recommended in his *Traité D'Instrumentation et D'Orchésration*, which was published in 1844. He praised Meyerbeer's cadenza for the instrument in *Les Huguenots* and gave the range of that solo, from E to g''', as the usable compass of the instrument. He described the then new bass clarinet as being "the same instrument as the soprano clarinet," with the same compass, but built on a larger scale, primarily in order to extend the range of clarinet tone downward, saying, "its best notes are its lowest ones, but owing to the slowness of their vibrations, they should not be made to follow each other too rapidly". In describing the instrument's effect he wrote:

According to the manner of writing for it, and the talent of the performer, the instrument may borrow that wild quality of tone which distinguishes the bass notes of the ordinary clarinet, or that calm, sacerdotal accent belonging to certain registers of the organ. It is therefore of frequent and fine application; and moreover, if four or five be employed
in unison, it gives a rich and excellent sonorousness to the orchestral basses of the wind instruments.⁹

Despite this endorsement, however, Berlioz made relatively little use of the instrument in his own compositions.

Ebenezer Prout, a professor at the University of Dublin, had little to say about the bass clarinet in his Instrumentation, which was published in 1876. He discussed the bass clarinet in a chapter on "Less Frequently Used Instruments," which included, as well, the harp, piccolo, cor anglais, serpent, contrabassoon, and others, the use of which he said should be "exceptional." Describing the range of the instrument as an octave below that of the clarinet, he said, "the lowest octave of the instrument is particularly rich and effective in tone; but as its introduction into the orchestra is not yet general, the student is advised to abstain from writing for it."ⁱ⁰ Although not specifically unfavorable to the bass clarinet, Prout's caution about its use could, at best, do little to hasten that general introduction.

If the views of W. H. Stone, Esq., M.D., who wrote


ⁱ⁰ Ebenezer Prout, Instrumentation (1876; repr., Boston: Oliver Ditson Co.), 103.
about the clarinet in the first edition of the *Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (1879-89), typify those of his countrymen, the rather late adoption of the bass clarinet by English composers is understandable. Stone preferred the basset horn, stating that it is, "perhaps the most beautiful of the whole (clarinet) family," while the bass clarinets, whether in B-flat, C, or A, are "none of them very satisfactory instruments; the characteristic tone of the clarinet seeming to end with the *corno di bassetto*." In his article on the basset horn he continued in this tone, commenting, "It is to be regretted that the basset horn has never taken so prominent a place in the orchestra as its fine tone and facility of execution entitle it to hold," while the bass clarinet, "although occasionally of value for producing exceptional effects, does not present any advantages for orchestral use."

11 Writing around the same time, Dr. Hermann Zopff gives a much more favorable assessment of the instrument in his *Der angehende Dirigent*, which was first published in 1881. Zopff gave the instrument, as did Berlioz, a range extending from E to g, and mentioned its effective use by Meyerbeer and Wagner. Describing the instrument, he stated that "Its quite full tone is of dark color and

is very suited to the depiction of creeping, sinister intrigue; it provides an outstanding bass for soft woodwind harmonies." ¹² He offered no comments on the instrument's ease or difficulty of execution.

Charles-Marie Widor shared the view current at the time of his writing, which limited the bass clarinet to a narrower compass than the soprano clarinet. In his *Technique de L'Orchestre moderne*, which was first published in 1904, he credited the instrument with a range from E to c⁴, saying that the higher notes do not speak and that it is most naturally used in its sonorous low range. ¹³ He attributed to it a dynamic range as wide as that of the soprano clarinet, thus making it the softest bass wind instrument.

Rimsky-Korsakov, who as a teacher of composition influenced Lyadov, Glazunov, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, and others, gave the bass clarinet only faint endorsement in his treatise published in 1912, *Principles of Orchestration*. He included the extended low range, which was then coming into use, in his definition of the instrument's compass from C to d⁴. He characterized this


compass as being full and dark in its lowest octave, dull in the middle octave, clear in the next octave, and bright, but not to be considered for use in its highest range. According to him, the bass clarinet was suitable for the expression of a limited range of emotions. He stated, "The bass clarinet, though strongly resembling the ordinary clarinet, is of darker colour in the low register and lacks the silvery quality in the upper notes; it is incapable of joyful expression."¹⁴

Perhaps the most negative assessment of the bass clarinet among those considered was offered by another Englishman, Cecil Forsyth, whose text Orchestration was published in 1914. Writing at some length about the instrument, he made some favorable comments about the bass clarinet's ability to play softly and its usefulness in depicting the supernatural, but in general seems to be little taken with it. In describing the instrument's range as extending from E to g', he said, "(its) top fifth is scarcely worth writing for, except perhaps when, doubled by some other instrument, it is used to complete the contour of a melodic figure." He seems to have little understanding of the actualities of playing the instrument, saying simply," . . . that Bass-Clarinet

players are all nurtured on the ordinary instrument and that the fingering of the two instruments is the same. A player can pass without difficulty from one instrument to the other." His description of the tone of the bass clarinet would do little to encourage its use:

It is difficult to describe the tone-colour of the Bass-Clarinet. Only a certain type of smooth legato passage is suitable to the instrument, and this has evidently influenced opinion as to its capabilities. Even with regard to its bottom and most characteristic register diametrically opposed statements have been made by acute observers. "The finest part of the instrument is its rich lower register" (Prout). "The tone is hollow and wanting in power, in the lower register, particularly" (Schlesinger).

As a matter of fact, there is a certain windiness and flabbiness in its tone quality throughout its entire compass. This and its total want of "ictus" are probably due to its necessarily large bore. In fact, the fancy title "Bass-Goblin" that has been applied to it pretty well describes its musical make-up.

Simple little scale passages, such as those in Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Suite (Danse de la Fée Dragée), come out well on the instrument. Their goblinsque effect is charmingly unexpected.

Melodies of a certain unctuous type, such as that quoted above from Strauss's Don Quixote Variations, are undoubtedly effective. Solo subjects, however, which call for strong rhythmic energy or heroic expression, are quite unsuited to the instrument.15

The negative comments about the tone of the bass clarinet in all but its lowest register and complaints about the instrument's lack of agility made by several of these writers would seem to imply that the bass clarinet

was frequently not well played at the time of their writing and that its relegation to a secondary status was for that reason perhaps well founded. Writing early in the twentieth century, P. Geoffrey Rendall described the position of the bass clarinet in English orchestras:

But there was long a tendency in England, as probably in many other countries, to regard the bass clarinet as a doubling instrument, safely relegated to any clarinetists not of the first rank. It need hardly be said that the position has long been materially altered. The increasing demands of composers—Wagner began writing for it in 1848—have made specialist bass clarinetists a necessity, and the modern player is now regarded as an artist of the first importance.

It cannot be said, however, that even today sufficient attention is given to it by composers. Its value as a melodic instrument is too often overlooked. It is much more than an auxiliary to the bassoon; a soft general-utility pedal reed to support the woodwind chorus.¹⁶

That this situation has changed greatly remains somewhat in question, as very few conservatories and college schools of music have considered the bass clarinet as an independent area of study, or even as a specifically recognized adjunct to clarinet study. In hiring a bass clarinetist, professional orchestras in the United States during the 1980s were more likely to require candidates for the position to perform the Mozart clarinet Concerto on the soprano clarinet, than to require a bass clarinet solo, and similarly, repertoire lists required for bass clarinet positions frequently required more

¹⁶Rendall, The Clarinet, 145.
soprano clarinet excerpts from the orchestral literature than bass clarinet excerpts to be prepared for the audition.

With response to the orchestral use of the bass clarinet as equivocal as some of the descriptions which have been considered would imply, it is not surprising that little nineteenth century solo or chamber music repertoire for the instrument exists. Unfortunately for the development of such a repertoire, usable forms of the bass clarinet began to be common at a time when composition of music for solo woodwind instruments held little interest for composers. The era of public interest in traveling virtuoso clarinetists, who had written a great deal of music for their instrument and who had inspired composers such as Mozart, Weber, Spohr, and Mendelssohn, was ending by the later 1830s and 1840s. In 1866 the influential arbiter of musical taste Edward Hanslick advised the Italian clarinetist Romeo Orsi, who had given a recital performance in Vienna, to join an orchestra, saying, "That is the place we like to see the players of clarinet, oboe, and bassoon; the times are past when crowds of these artists came from everywhere to perform on their boring little pipes."17 The paucity of

works now remaining in the repertoire of the soprano clarinet also reflects the general disinterest in woodwind instruments from the mid-nineteenth century up until the time of the Brahms sonatas for clarinet and piano.

A new wind instrument, such as the bass clarinet, had little chance of gaining a substantial solo repertoire until composers began to show a renewed interest in wind instruments around the turn of the century. By that time, the bass clarinet had already gained a reputation, through the role frequently assigned to it in operatic and programmatic music and through its position in the orchestra as an auxiliary instrument, which inhibited the growth of a solo repertoire. A few isolated instances of solo performance on the bass clarinet, which will be discussed in the following chapter, were reported during the nineteenth century and solo pieces written expressly for the instrument began to be composed and published in France in 1890.

The earliest large-scale works for the instrument, composed during the 1920s by Othmar Schoeck and Adolf Busch, were written for the Swiss musician Werner Reinhart for whom Stravinsky, Honegger, Hindemith, and others had composed music to be performed on the soprano clarinet. The repertoire of the instrument has grown tremendously since 1945, inspired largely by two European players, the Czech Josef Horák who began performing
during the 1950s, and the Dutchman Harry Sparnaay, beginning around 1970. Both of these performers have inspired the composition of a body of solo works numbered in the hundreds. Although these works, generally in advanced musical idiom, have exploited and extended all aspects of the instrument's capabilities, interest in the bass clarinet is still limited to some players and listeners by the scarcity of works in a more conventional style and by the complete lack of works written by a composer of international prominence before the 1970s.
CHAPTER 4
THE BASS CLARINET AS A SOLO INSTRUMENT
FROM 1772 UNTIL 1945

Evidence of the use of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument during the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century is scarce and provides only a sketchy record of the performers, their repertoire, and the circumstances of their performances. Critical commentary from the 1830s was, in most cases, highly favorable to the then newly developed forms of the instrument and its use by several established clarinetists, but it is not clear from some of these reviews whether these performers merely briefly demonstrated the instrument almost as a curiosity, or whether they performed substantial compositions on it. In all cases but one, an aria with bass clarinet obbligato by Sigismund Neukomm which was played by T. L. Willman in 1836, the music performed by these virtuosí has not been specifically named and has thus remained untraceable. At least five works written between 1830 and 1890, which made use of the bass clarinet as soloist or member of a small ensemble, have since been lost.

The first references to performances using the bass
clarinet seem to involve demonstrations by, or on behalf of, the inventors of the new instrument in its various forms. The written commentaries of these events describe the appearance and range of the instrument, as well as its tone and the musical situations in which its use would be suitable. The earliest such commentary appeared on 11 May 1772 in the Parisian newspaper, L'Avant-Coureur. It was a description of a now lost instrument built by Giles Lot.\footnote{Rendall, The Clarinet, 142.}

In 1807 a bass clarinet known because of its intended suitability for military band as the "Basse-guerrière" was presented by its maker Dumas, who was also a goldsmith, to the faculty of the Conservatoire in Paris. This instrument was praised by Cherubini and Méhul. In 1810 it was adopted for use by the band of the Garde Impériale, but was abandoned by the bandsmen three years later.\footnote{(L.) Ad. de Pontécoulant, De Organographie - Essai sur la Facture instrumentale, 2 vols. (Paris: Castel, 1861; reprint, Amsterdam: Frits Knuf, 1972), 2:106.}

What presumably could have been the first concert performances using the bass clarinet were planned by the Göttingen clarinetist Herr (?) Hebestreit in 1829. In an announcement which appeared in Eutonia I in 1829, Dr. Johann A. G. Heinroth, also of Göttingen, stated that Hebestreit planned to include performance on a bass clarinet recently invented by Gottfried Streitwolf (1779-\ldots)
1837) as a part of his upcoming concert tour. Whether this tour took place and whether Hebestreit actually did play the bass clarinet is now unknown. Heinroth spoke very highly of Streitwolf's instrument, however, saying that whoever heard the instrument would heartily thank Streitwolf for his gift to the orchestra. He said that the instrument's tone "is even fuller than that of the basset horn, has something indescribably mysterious (ungenehm) and is similar in the low register to the most beautiful trombone tone."³

Streitwolf's bass clarinet was very likely the instrument played by Wilhelm Deichert (1799-1873) in the first documented concert performance using the bass clarinet, which took place as one of a subscription concert series in Kassel on 14 January 1830. The likelihood that Streitwolf's instrument was used is confirmed by the inclusion on the concert of a Volkslied für Bass- und Contrabass-Klarinette, performed by Deichert together with J. C. Bänder on the contrabass, as well as an Adagio mit Variationen, played by Deichert on the bass clarinet. Streitwolf had also recently developed a contrabass clarinet, pitched in F, which was perhaps the first member of the clarinet family larger than the bass clarinet.

clarinet to be at all usable.\textsuperscript{4} As the Adagio and Volkslied were performed on a concert given by the court orchestra, of which Deichert and Bänder were both members, it is possible that they had orchestral accompaniments. The reviewer of the concert did not feel obliged to name the composer of these works just as he had not felt himself obliged to hear them. He stated that they were said to have been pleasing to the audience, but then he denied any need for a new instrument such as the bass clarinet, saying:

But whether the invention (of the bass clarinet) may be of any practical value to the orchestra is doubtful, since there are already similar wind instruments, such as the bassoon, basset horn, and trombone. It is remarkable that new instruments are invented, while so many which were very beautiful have been abandoned, such as the lute, theorbo, viola d'amore, viola da gamba, etc. Wouldn't it be better to use these again? So it is also in composition. One hastens incessantly towards novelties, which often are of no value, and spurns the old, which is so often of true value to the ear and heart.\textsuperscript{5}

The Adagio and Volkslied could have been adaptations of music already existing, or could have been composed by any of a number of composers active around Kassel at the time. Ludwig Spohr, who was director of the court orchestra during the 1830s is known to have spoken highly

\textsuperscript{4}Rendall, The Clarinet, 149.

\textsuperscript{5} "Chronik des Opern des Hoftheaters und der Concerten zu Cassel - 1830," Allgemeine Musikalische Zeitung 12 (24 March 1830): 189.
of Streitwolf's contrabass clarinet. He could conceivably have made a humorous arrangement, which did not merit preservation as a serious composition, of a folk tune for the two new-fangled, low instruments. Although several composers, including some who wrote for the clarinet, are listed by Wolf von Gudenburg in his Beiträge zur Musikgeschichte der Stadt Kassel... as having composed works for performance on subscription concerts in Kassel around the time of this performance, there is no evidence among their recorded works of compositions for the bass clarinet. J. C. Bänder, who had an extensive and successful career as a travelling virtuoso before settling in Kassel, left no compositions, but his son Heinrich (1816-1838), could have been the composer of one or both of the pieces performed.

Wilhelm Deichert is also a possible candidate for the authorship of these long-lost works. Born in Eschwege, he is known to have studied composition with Anton André in Offenbach. He was engaged by the court orchestra in Kassel from 1824 until 1846, when he became

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7 Wolf von Gudenburg, "Beiträge zur Musikgeschichte der Stadt Kassel unter den letzten beiden Kurfürsten (1822-66)" (Doctoral diss., Georg-August-Universität (Göttingen), 1958), 74.

8 Weston *More Virtuosi*, 34.
music director at the Philips-Universität in Marburg an der Lahn. His principal instrument was the violin. The performance of his Concertino for trombone on a subscription concert in 1825 indicates that he was already active as a composer at the time of his perhaps brief involvement with the bass clarinet in 1830. There is no trace remaining among his recorded compositions, or in references to him, which would indicate a lasting interest in the bass clarinet.

The next recorded performance using the bass clarinet took place in 1832, this time again in Paris. In the Salle St.-Jean of the Hôtel-de-Ville Isaac Franco Dacosta (1778-1866), one of the most prominent Parisian clarinetists of the time, performed on a bass clarinet designed by him in collaboration with Louis-Auguste Buffet. This instrument was probably an improved version of the instrument invented before 1807 and later given to Dacosta by Dumas. François-Joseph Fétis described the event in his Revue Musicale as a recital, which was well received by the public, but he did not clarify whether Dacosta played only the bass clarinet, or whether he played it in addition to the soprano clarinet. Nor is the


10von Gudenburg, "Beiträge der Stadt Kassel," 73.

11Weston, More Virtuosì, p. 80.
repertoire which he performed recorded. As Dacosta wrote four concerti, fantasies, and sets of variations for the soprano clarinet, it is probable that he performed compositions of his own on the bass clarinet. Fétis praised the tone, flexibility, and ease of performance which Dacosta demonstrated on the bass clarinet and lamented the fact that it had not yet been used by composers of orchestral and military music.\textsuperscript{12}

Sigismund Ritter von Neukomm (1778-1858) was the first composer to write a work for the bass clarinet which is still in existence. Neukomm, who had studied with Michael Haydn, had a successful, wide-ranging career as a composer and performer, which took him throughout Europe, as well as to North Africa and Brazil. In 1809 he settled in Paris, where the manuscript to his "Make haste, O God, to deliver me," for "Counter-Tenor Lady's voice with the Bass-Clarionet concertant" is preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale. After 1829 he spent a good deal of time in England and he composed a great deal of vocal music for audiences there. Although his fame has since faded, he was given the French Legion of Honor in recognition of his more than 2,000 composicions.\textsuperscript{13} His musical style stands at the transition between Viennese classicism and the

\textsuperscript{12}Fétis, \textit{Revue Musicale} 8 (5 June 1834): 329.

\textsuperscript{13}Die Musik in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 1963 ed., s.v. "Sigismund Neukomm."
romantic style typical of the nineteenth century. The bass clarinet provides florid interjections and embellishments through a range of over three octaves around the vocal line in "Make haste, O God" in a manner similar to Mozart's use of the basset horn in the aria "Parto, parto."

Neukomm's aria was performed in April of 1836 in London by Thomas Lindsay Willman (1783–1840). Willman, probably the most highly regarded clarinettist in England during the 1820s and 1830s, performed frequently as a soloist on both the soprano clarinet and basset horn. In playing Neukomm's aria, Willman made the only known use of a bass clarinet invented in 1833 by George Wood, a London instrument maker. Despite its use by the preeminent English virtuoso of the day and favorable commentaries about its tone in two issues of The Musical World, Wood's eighteen-keyed instrument, which, to judge from the requirements of Neukomm's aria, must have lent itself to a high degree of technical fluency, left no trace other than this single composition and a fingering chart printed by its inventor.


\[15\] The Musical World, 4, 8 April 1836, 47,59.
Although bass clarinets based on the design introduced by Adolphe Sax in 1838 gradually superseded the use of other types of instruments, performances using two different instruments of Italian manufacture and design have been recorded. In the *Cronistoria dei Teatri di Modena...* (1873) Alessandro Gandini mentioned the performance on 12 February 1838 in the Teatro Comunale of Modena by Catterino Catterini on an instrument of his own invention for which he coined the name, "Glicibarifono." (Kroll suggests the interpretation, "sweet, low sounder," for this name.\(^\text{16}\)) This was a large clarinet-type instrument folded in the manner of a bassoon. Catterini performed between acts of the opera and the ballet given that evening, obtaining "not a little applause." The selections which he played are, again, not mentioned at all by Gandini, but he described the appearance of the instrument, which he said was being used in wind bands in central Italy. He compared its range to that of the bassoon, but added that the voice of the glicibarifono was "sweeter and more sonorous."\(^\text{17}\) At some point during the 1840s an instrument designed by the Florentine clarinetist Giovanni Bimboni (1810-1895) was used to

\(^{16}\)Kroll, *Die Klarinette*, 73.

perform an obbligato written by Luigi Maria Viviani (perhaps the performer?), which was added to the Grand Ball of Faust, an opera by Antonio Cortesi. Kalina states that the instrument called the bimboclaro, and this single known occasion of its use were described by A. Torosini in his Trattato pratico di strumentazione [sic] (Florence: Guidi, 1850, 27). 18

With the general acceptance of bass clarinets patterned after the design developed by Adolphe Sax as orchestral instruments, critical commentary of solo performances using the bass clarinet virtually disappeared. All the references cited so far have dealt with the appearance of a new instrument. They were primarily concerned with the instrument itself and the ability of the performer to make a seemingly ungainly curiosity function in a musical manner, rather than with the music which was performed. The first reference to Sax's bass clarinet also occurred in this context. The demonstrations by Sax of the superiority of his instrument over previously developed bass clarinets has been recorded by several writers, including de Pontécoulant, in his De Organographie, and Brenta, in his Adolphe Sax et la Facture instrumentale. Brenta relates that Sax convinced Dacosta himself that the older instrument was inferior to

his. Dacosta's wife said, "When M. Sax plays, your instrument sounds like a kazoo (mirliton)."\textsuperscript{19} Beyond the playing of the cadenza from \textit{Les Huguenots}, there is again no mention of what music Sax may have performed in these demonstrations. The usefulness of Sax's instrument allowed the gradual establishment of an orchestral role for the bass clarinet, but interest in it as a solo medium did not accompany its growing orchestral use. More than fifty years separate the introduction of Sax's bass clarinet in 1838 from the first publication of a solo composition written for the instrument in 1890.

Only four compositions for the bass clarinet in a solo or chamber music setting are definitely known to have been written and probably performed between 1836, the year of Neukomm's aria, and 1890. Three of these are now lost. On 3 February 1844 a concert was given in the Salle Herz in Paris by Hector Berlioz, on which a \textit{Hymne} of his own composition was performed using six of the instruments developed by his friend Adolphe Sax. The bass clarinet was one of these instruments. The \textit{Hymne} was probably an arrangement of an earlier choral work, perhaps the \textit{Chant Sacré} from his Opus 2 of 1830, or perhaps the \textit{Méditation religieuse} from his \textit{Tristia} of 1831. Writing in the \textit{Revue instrumentale}, quoted in Wally Horwood, \textit{Adolphe Sax - His Life and Legacy} (Baldock, Herts., England: Egon Publishers, 1983), 23.

et Gazette Musicale of 11 February 1844, Maurice Bourge stated that Berlioz' purpose in making this arrangement appeared to be a public display of the merits of Sax's new or improved woodwind and brass instruments. Bourge felt that the players had not had adequate time to become fully familiar with their new instruments: Further than this, nothing else is certain about the *Hymne.*

A piece from the mid-nineteenth century which survives and is still readily available is the "Romanze" of Friedrich Diethe. Although this piece was first published by Merseburger in Leipzig between 1898 and 1903, its style and the limited information available about Diethe's compositional activity point to an origin for the work substantially before its date of publication. Pazdírek's *Universal-Handbuch der Musik-Literatur aller Zeiten und Völker* (Vienna: 1904-1910) lists seventeen published compositions by Diethe, about whom the various musical dictionaries and lexica provide no biographical information. With the exception of the "Romanze", all of these are marches or choral works, often with patriotic titles, implying that Diethe was perhaps involved with military bands. The titles of two marches help to place

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the period of Diethe's compositional activity between the 1840s and the 1870s. These are the "Reveille zum Constitutionsfeste 1846," and the "Schlacht bei Rezonville, deutscher Siegesmarsch," which refers to a German victory during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. The "Romanze" was originally published with an accompaniment for woodwind octet, in addition to a piano accompaniment. This implies that the work may have first been performed by a military bandsman, perhaps using one of the compact, folded bass clarinets similar to Streitwolf's which were occasionally found in Prussian and Hessian bands. If so, this is the only known solo for the bass clarinet to have originated in direct connection with its use as a band instrument during the nineteenth century, as well as being the oldest extant work for the bass clarinet composed in Germany.

The fact that only one use of the bass clarinet in a recital performance during the entire second half of the nineteenth century is now known gives witness to the previously mentioned rarity of solo wind performance during that period and to the particular disinterest in the bass clarinet, once the curiosity of its newness had lessened. This recital was given on 22 June 1852 at Ella's Musical Union in London by the Belgian clarinetist

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Henri Wuille (1822-?), who lived in England for several years up to 1856, working for the conductor and impresario Jullien. Wuille's well-attended recital included a clarinet piece by Baermann, a bass clarinet obbligato to Frank Mori's "The Last Farewell," sung by Susan Sunderland, and a composition of his own, played on the saxophone.23 As Mori's "Last Farewell" is no longer extant, it is impossible to know whether the bass clarinet obbligato was written by the composer, or perhaps inserted by Wuille. Wuille, who became professor of clarinet at Strasbourg, did leave one published work, a Fantasie brillante, for clarinet and piano. A visit to the Conservatoire in Strasbourg, made by the author in 1988, did not disclose any works by Wuille preserved there.

In his Storia e Litteratura degli Strumenti Musicali (Florence: 1942), Rosario Profeta mentions the existence of a Fantasia per clarinetto basso e orchestra composed by Luigi Federico Ritter, who lived from 1834 to 1891.24 Biographical information about this composer is, however, not to be found in any of the major musical dictionaries. Pazdírek lists several piano pieces, songs, and choral works by Frédéric Louis Ritter (1834-1891), but does not mention any work for bass clarinet. This seems to

23 Weston, More Virtuosi, 277.

24 Profeta, Storia e Litteratura, 508.
indicate that the *Fantasia* was not published commercially.

During the last decade of the nineteenth century several important music publishing houses in France and Germany began to feel that there was a sufficient market to warrant the publication of solo works for the bass clarinet. Between 1890 and 1902 four pieces with piano or orchestral accompaniment were issued by Evette et Schaeffer in Paris. In Germany the C. F. Schmidt company in Heilbronn published three works and the Merseburger firm in Leipzig published the "Romanze" by Diethe, all during the years from 1898 until 1903.

The publication for the first time of works for the bass clarinet in France and Germany during the 1890s and the rather sudden appearance of a market for such works cannot be easily explained, as very little is known about the composers of the works, their motivation to write for the bass clarinet, or the performances of the works. The French works are dedicated to two bass clarinetists who performed with Parisian orchestras, but about whose activities as soloists no information remains, while the German pieces give no indication for whom they were intended, or even definite indication that they were originally written for the bass clarinet, since in some cases they were also published in versions for bassoon or trombone. These pieces, which are small in scope and make relatively light technical demands, reflect the conception
of the bass clarinet's capabilities and characteristics which was prevalent in orchestral writing at the time. They tended to be either devotional or wistfully melancholy, bearing such titles as "Offertoire," "Lacrymosa," "Élégie," or "Romanze." They exemplify the sentimental salon style which was popular around the turn of the century.

All these works, with the exception of Diethe's, have several characteristics in common. They are short, ranging from sixty-seven to 116 measures in length, and all are in slow tempi, generally andante. They make very little, if any, use of the instrument's altissimo register, and provide the bass clarinet with uncomplicated, stately melodies. Judging by their published works listed by Pazdírek, the composers, some of whom were quite prolific, wrote primarily for winds. These composers are today, however, unknown, with the exception, perhaps, of August Klughardt (1847-1902), who served for a time as Kapellmeister in Weimar and whose opera, Die Hochzeit des Mönches, was revived fairly recently.

The musical simplicity and light technical demands of these pieces, which are all described in the subsequent Annotated List (Chapter V), as well as the presence of alternate versions for trombone or bassoon for two of the German pieces, imply that these works could have been intended for amateur performance. Nevertheless, the
French works all bear dedications to professional orchestral bass clarinetists. The "Premier Offertoire" (1890), by J. Pillevestre, is dedicated to Sallingue, bass clarinetist at the Opéra, while three pieces composed by A. S. Petit, D. Bontoux, and C. Franchi, are dedicated to Pierre Sainte-Marie, who performed with the orchestra of the Concerts Colonne. The "Offertoire" composed for Sallingue is extremely conservative in its demands on the bass clarinetist, while the pieces written for Sainte-Marie require smooth, expressive playing and good control of the instrument. It is probable that Sainte-Marie performed these in a concert setting, as they all were published originally with orchestral, as well as piano accompaniment. Despite the skill and musicality which the three pieces written for him seem to imply, Sainte-Marie did not gain the attention of more prominent composers, nor was any other French composer attracted to the bass clarinet as a solo instrument until 1939.

One other work, similar in its length and straightforward melodiousness to these turn-of-the-century French and German pieces, was written by the Belgian composer François Rasse (1873-1955) and published by Evette et Schaeffer in Paris in 1921. "Lied" was dedicated to Alphonse Bageard (1873-?), who was professor of clarinet at the Conservatoire Royal in Brussels from 1904 until
1911. The description, "pièce de concours," which forms part of the work's title, indicates that it could have been used as an examination piece for conservatory students. The small scope and ease of execution of the work also indicates that the study of the bass clarinet was a field of secondary importance, to which high standards of virtuosity, similar to those required for the soprano clarinet, were not applied. "Lied" is the only pièce de concours to have been written for the bass clarinet.

The first musician to inspire the composition of ambitious, multi-movement works for the bass clarinet, which are still extant, was the Swiss businessman, patron of contemporary music, and highly regarded amateur clarinetist Werner Reinhart (1884-1951). Reinhart's successful career as an international merchant allowed him to subsidize works by Stravinsky, Honneger, Schoeck, and others. He was known as an outstanding performer in orchestral and chamber music settings on the clarinet, basset horn, and bass clarinet. Stravinsky wrote his Three Pieces for clarinet solo for him, as did Honegger his Sonatine, and Hindemith his Quintet for clarinet and strings. His skill as a bass clarinetist inspired the

25Weston, More Virtuosi, 39.

composition of the Suite, op. 37a, for bass clarinet solo (1926) by Adolf Busch, and the Sonata, op. 41 for bass clarinet and piano (1927-28) by Othmar Schoeck, both of which are technically and musically complex works. The Suite by Busch is inspired by those for solo cello of J. S. Bach and similarly, through its implied counterpoint, seems frequently a polyphonic composition, while Schoeck's Sonata incorporates quartal harmonies and jazz elements, frequently with a humorous effect. Reinhart, to whom the work is dedicated, gave the first performance of the Sonata at the Schweizerische Tonkünstlerfest in Luzern in 1928. His performance caused the critic K. H. David to refer to the bass clarinet as a "wonderful instrument of the future (ein herrliches Instrument der Zukunft)."  

Although there is no specific evidence, it would not be unreasonable to conjecture that the Concerto for bass clarinet and orchestra written by Josef Schelb (1894-?) of Karlsruhe may have been intended for Reinhart, as well. The first version of this work dated from 1932 or earlier, according to the composer's widow Lotte Schelb.  

The second version of the unpublished work was written after the destruction of the original, which was caused by


28 Lotte Schelb, Freiburg, to Terje Lerstad, Oslo, dated 17 February 1979. Used by permission.
bombed in 1943. This version bears no dedication or indication of who may have performed the work.

With the exception of several works intended for student performance, which, in response to the need caused by extensive music education in public schools, began to be published in the United States during the later 1930s, only two other works which were subsequently published were written for the solo bass clarinet before 1945. These were the Phantasy Quintet for bass clarinet and strings (ca. 1940) by the English composer York Bowen and a concert etude, "Angustia," written for Cayetano Bibbo by the Argentinian composer Estéban Eitler in 1943.

Pauline Juler, to whom Bowen dedicated his Sonata for clarinet in 1943 could perhaps have been intended as the first performer of the Quintet, although, again, a dedication or further information is lacking. Perhaps because of the disruptions brought about by World War II, the Quintet, which was published by the London firm De Wolfe, was only briefly available in print.

Throughout the course of this survey virtually no evidence was found of a performer active before 1945 having made the bass clarinet his or her primary instrument. Those musicians known to have played the bass clarinet in recital did so in addition to the soprano clarinet, with the possible exception of Pierre Sainte-Marie, whose activity as a soloist is documented only
through the works written for him. The scarcity of repertoire for the bass clarinet would seem to have insured it a secondary position, as an added feature, in any recital programming. This situation has been changed since 1945 through the efforts of a few virtuoso performers who have sufficiently demonstrated the potential of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument and who have commissioned or inspired a rapidly growing repertoire for it.
CHAPTER 5

AN ANNOTATED, CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF SOLO REPertoire
FOR THE BASS CLARINET FROM BEFORE 1945

The following list describes and provides historical information about the early repertoire of solo works for the bass clarinet. References to recital performance using the bass clarinet are found as early as 1829, yet there is no record of published works for the instrument from before 1890 and only one work verifiably composed and performed before that date is still extant. In addition to their scarcity, the earliest published compositions for the bass clarinet reflect a narrow conception of the instrument's musical character, employ a narrow tessitura, and make limited technical demands on the performer. The chronological organization of this list allows a gradual lessening of the limiting stereotype of the bass clarinet as a darkly-hued instrument of limited agility, suitable for expressing grief or setting a mysterious mood, which was derived from the instrument's early orchestral use, to be observed by description and comparison of the growing repertoire. 1945 has been chosen as a cut-off point, simply because it has been used frequently to mark the beginning of our own modern era, both politically and

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culturally, and because in the years after World War II several virtuosi, most notably Josef Horák and Harry Sparnaay, have elevated the status of the instrument and inspired the composition of hundreds of works, many of them of high musical quality and demanding great virtuosity.

Included here are solo works, both accompanied and unaccompanied, and chamber works in which the bass clarinet takes a primary, leading role. Works for multiple clarinets, such as clarinet quartets, have not been included. Transcriptions and works clearly intended originally for other instruments have also, with one exception, not been included. This excludes the first work published for the bass clarinet in Germany, the "Romanze," op. 3, of Julius Weissenborn, a work originally intended for bassoon, which was published between 1880 and 1885 by Forberg in Leipzig.¹

The description of each composition, in addition to information about the composer and circumstances of first performance, where possible, will include the following information:
1. duration
2. tempo designations and form

¹Handbuch der musikalischen Literatur oder Verzeichnis...Erschienenen Musikalien 9 (Leipzig: Friedrich Hofmeister, 1887), 703.
3. key center(s)
4. tessituras
5. character of piece and its musical idiom
6. level of difficulty
7. purpose.

In order to further describe the use of the instrument's tessituras, the annotations have given the percentage of employment of each fifth of the instrument's range against the work's total length. This was determined by adding together the number of beats played in each portion of the range and comparing it to the total number of beats played in the piece. The use of notes lower than the & of a tessitura comparable to that of the standard soprano clarinet is also observed.

In an effort to avoid confusion and the necessity for two methods of designating pitches throughout the list, all pitch designations, including the tonal center of each work, are given transposed to the key of the bass clarinet employed in each work. This is B-flat in all cases except that of the aria by Neukomm, which uses a bass clarinet pitched in C. Since the notation of the bass clarinet is not standardized, the term, "French notation," or "French system," is used to designate the use of treble clef sounding down a major ninth from the written pitch.

Only one work in this list is written using bass
clef in the sounding octave throughout. (See appendix C - Notation of the Bass Clarinet.)

"Make haste, O God, to deliver me," by Chevalier Sigismund Neukomm (1778, Salzburg - 1858, Paris), for a Counter-Tenor-Lady's voice with the Bass-Clarionet concertant (for alto voice, bass clarinet, and string orchestra), op. 556, composed in London, 1836, manuscript in Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

This earliest extant work, written by a very prolific composer, who in his day was highly respected and who can be seen as a transitional figure between classicism and romanticism, is an aria, 157 measures in length, for alto voice, bass clarinet obbligato and strings. The principal tempo indications are: Andante (\(\text{\textit{j}}=96\)), Vivace (\(\text{\textit{j}}=116\)), a very little slower (\(\text{\textit{j}}=100\)), Maestoso, and 1st movement (\(\text{\textit{j}}=96\)). The tonality which progresses from C major to A minor, C minor, and E-flat major, before returning to C major, accords with the use of the bass clarinet pitched in C, which was built by George Wood, a London instrument maker, and for which this is the only known composition. The range of three octaves and a major second extends from C to \(\text{d''}\). French notation is used.

The bass clarinet provides a bel canto obbligato, much in the manner of the obbligati for basset horn in

Mozart's *La Clemenza di Tito* and Beethoven's *Die Geschöpfen des Prometheus*. The aria is operatic in style, in a dignified and exalted mood. The solo line is generally more florid and embellished than that of the voice. On two occasions the bass clarinet and the voice move together in harmony, but generally the bass clarinet provides figured punctuation between the vocal phrases, as well as a lengthy introduction and a coda. The principal lyric tessitura of the bass clarinet is the instrument's upper register. The low register is used in arpeggiated figures leading to or from melodic phrases in the clarion register, or, less frequently, to provide sustained pedal tones. The percentage of use of successive fifths of instrument's range is as follows:

Extension notes
(below E)..... less than 1%
E-B ...................... 18%
C-g ....................... 21%
a-e'....................... 36%
f'-c"....................... 24%
d" and above ... less than 1%.

This aria, the first surviving work for the bass clarinet, is technically more demanding than any of the works written for the instrument during the next ninety years. It gives no impression of having been written for an instrument of limited capabilities, but is very comparable to works of the same time for clarinet or bass clarinet. Scales and arpeggio patterns in sixteenths,
Example 7. Continued.
sixteenth-sextuplets, and thirty-seconds, as well as turns and trills, appear throughout. A dynamic range of p to f is indicated with occasional sforzato, staccato, and maracato designations.

The work was written for Thomas Lindsay Willman (?-1840), the foremost clarinetist in England at the time.³ It was performed by him on several of his benefit concerts. Although Mr. Willman's performance and the tonal properties of the new instrument were praised in two reviews in The Musical World, George Wood's bass clarinet appears to have attracted no further interest.

"Romanze," by Friedrich Diethe (Germany - nineteenth century),
(for bass clarinet and wind octet
[2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, and 2 horns]
or bass clarinet and piano), composed as early as ca. 1840, first published by Merseburger, Leipzig between 1898-1903, later published by Cundy-Bettony, Boston.

The "Romanze" by Diethe was published between 1898 and 1903, and the date of its composition is uncertain.⁴ Biographical information on the composer is lacking. Stylistically, the work is reminiscent of music composed by the wind virtuosi of the second quarter of the nineteenth century in its overt display of the technical possibilities of the instrument to elaborate a simple

³Ward, "Thomas Lindsay Willman,": 37-41.
⁴Musikalischen Literatur 12, Hofmeister, 173.
melody. The work was originally published with a wind-octet accompaniment, which suggests an association of the composer with military bands.

This assumption is corroborated by the fact that, with the exception of the "Romanze," the seventeen published works by Diethe listed in Pazdírek's Universal-Handbuch der Musikliteratur aller Zeiten und Völker are marches and choral works, frequently with patriotic titles. The titles of two of these works help to define the period within which Diethe was active as a composer. The "Reveille zum Constitutionsfeste 1846" indicates that he was composing during the 1840s. The "Schlacht bei Rezonville, Deutscher Siegesmarsch" refers to a battle on 16 August 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War. Diethe could therefore have been involved with military music for as long as thirty years. Yet another march title, "Beliebter Defiliers-Marsch der Kommunalgarde Leipzig," combined with the initial publication of the "Romanze" by the Leipzig firm of Merseburger, suggests that Diethe could have been attached to a unit based in that city. An early form of bass clarinet designed by G. Streitwolf was in occasional use in Hessian and Prussian military bands as early as 1833. The octet accompaniment, combined

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5Pazdírek, U-HM 3: 688-89.

with the evidence provided by Diethe's other compositions, suggests that "Romanze" was first performed by a bandsman, possibly using Streitwolf's bassoon-shaped bass clarinet. This is perhaps the oldest remaining work for bass clarinet composed in Germany.

One hundred fifty-three measures in length, the "Romanze" is the largest-scale work remaining from the nineteenth century, other than the aria by Neukomm. It is an adagio in F major, preceded by a quasi Recitative andante moderato in E minor. A tranquil, smooth melody, frequently with a dolce indication, appears generally in the upper register, while the lower register is used more often for forceful, dramatic effects. A dynamic range of pp to ff is indicated, with ff appearing at the lowest extremity of the range and pp appearing only in the upper register. The range of two octaves and a major sixth extends from E to d-flat". The altissimo register is used sparingly, with only two appearances of d-flat", near the end of the piece. The percentage of use of portions of the instrument's compass are:

E-B .................... 15%
c-g ...................... 15%
a-e'..................... 42%
f'-c"..................... 28%
d-flat"............less than 1%.

Other than this sparing use of the upper register, the "Romanze" requires a fluidity and velocity equal to that
in works of a similar type for the soprano clarinet.

"Premier Offertoire," by J. Pillevestre,  
(for bass clarinet with piano or  
organ accompaniment)  
published by Evette et Schaeffer, Paris,  
in 1890.  

Pillevestre's "Premier Offertoire," the first work  
published for bass clarinet in France, is an andante in C  
major, seventy-nine measures in length. The range of two  
octaves and a minor third extends from E to g'. The  
largest portion of the work falls within a more narrow  
gamut from g to e'. The proportions of use of the  
tessitura are as follows:

E-B ....................... 23%  
c-g  ....................... 43%  
a- e' ....................... 32%  
f'and above .............. 2%.

The mood is solemn and stately. As the title  
and suggested use of the organ accompaniment would imply,  
the piece was intended to be used in a devotional context.  
A recitative introduction is followed by a lyric air  
marked bien chanté. A slightly more animated tempo is  
indicated in two sections. Few technical demands are made  
by the flowing hymnlike melody, which moves primarily in  
quarters and halves, without elaboration. When the melody  
becomes more agitated, moving in eighths during an un peu  
animé section, it is given to the keyboard. The bass  
clarinet stays close to the roots of the harmonies,
strongly emphasizing the tonic and dominant tones. There are few accidentals or implied shifts in the harmony.

Biographical material about the composer is lacking, though Pazdírek's *Universal-Handbuch der Musikliteratur*... credits him with 105 published works. These include works for one or two solo instruments with piano or string quartet accompaniment, for band, and for orchestra. Many of these pieces were published in versions for several different solo instruments. In addition to the "Premier Offertoire," four of the "Fueilles d'Album - Morceaux faciles et concertants," intended primarily for saxophones, although published in versions for other wind and stringed instruments, were designated as being appropriate for the bass clarinet. They are: "Contemplation," "Lacrymosa," "Luther," and "Trappiste." All of them are the slow *cantabile* melodies which their devotional titles would suggest. The four works are listed by the *Bibliographie Musicale Française* as having been published for orchestra in 1897. This listing, compiled quarterly by an association of French music publishers, makes, however, no mention of the original piano accompanied versions of these works. "Premier

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Offertoire" bears the dedication "à mon ami Sallinque de l'Opéra" and was probably first performed by him.

"Évocation," by Alexandre Sylvain Petit, solo cornetist with the Garde Républicaine band, (for bass clarinet with orchestral or piano accompaniment) published by Evett and Schaeffer, Paris in 1897.

Somewhat more adventurous in its use of the bass clarinet than Pillevestre's "Offertoire," the "Évocation" of A. S. Petit is similar to it in its overall form. Sixty-seven measures in length, it begins with a recitative introduction followed by a melodic air marked andante mysterioso. The melody becomes rather passionate with some large leaps and a dynamic range of p to ff. The range of three octaves and a minor second, from E to f", uses all the registers, though the predominating tessitura is the fifth between a and e', in which 48% of the melody lies. The percentages of range use are:

```
E-B ...................... 14%
c-g ........................ 15%
a-e' ...................... 48%
f'-c" ........................ 22%
d"-f"...................... 1%.
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The tonality is F major. French notation is used.

This is the first of several published pieces written for Pierre Sainte-Marie, the bass clarinetist of the Concerts Colonne orchestra. It calls for expressive playing, smooth legato, and good control of the
instrument throughout its range, up to and including the altissimo register. Sainte-Marie appears to have been a very convincing performer on the bass clarinet, certainly the first in Paris to inspire several lyrical compositions for his instrument. He may have originally performed this piece with orchestra, because cues in the bass clarinet part indicate that an orchestral version of the accompaniment existed in addition to the piano version.

"Intermezzo," by Daniel Bontoux, (for bass clarinet with piano or orchestral accompaniment) published by Evette and Schaeffer, Paris in 1899.

The singing quality and expressive flexibility of the bass clarinet, particularly at soft dynamic levels, are the principal focus of Bontoux's "Intermezzo." The seventy-eight measure piece, marked "Moderato assai (♩ = 66)," has a printed dynamic range of ppp to mf and includes numerous expressive directions such as majesteux, avec abandon, en caressant, fièremen, and calme et solennel. The principal tonality is B minor, though the middle section is in B-flat major. French notation is used for a range of three octaves and a major second, extending from F to f-sharp". Melodic activity, though favoring the lower register somewhat, is distributed fairly evenly throughout this range, as indicated by the distribution percentages:
E-B ........................ 23%
c-g ........................ 28%
a-e' ........................ 27%
f'-c" ........................ 18%
d"-f-sharp" ............... 4%.

Although not of a larger scale than previously published French works, this piece is more demanding of fluent technique, expressive flexibility, and control throughout the instrument's range. The altissimo register is used at points of greatest delicacy. The primarily slow, plaintive melody is augmented with frequent embellishments and flourishes and requires an overtly emotional, rubato style. Dedicated to Pierre Sainte-Marie, the "Intermezzo" had an orchestral accompaniment, as well as the published piano accompaniment. Bontoux wrote two other works using the bass clarinet: the "Bénédiction Nuptiale," for clarinet, bass clarinet, and organ, and the "Hymne à Sainte-Cécile," a sextet for two soprano, alto, bass, and contrabass clarinets. Both of these works were published in 1900.9


Franchi's "Élégie" was the last of three works

9BMF_117:8 (for "Bénédiction Nuptiale") and 118:10 (for "Hymne à Sainte-Cécile"), 1900.
dedicated to Pierre Sainte-Marie to be published. Its lyrical emotional style, with occasional flourishes and figuration, is similar to that of the other works for Sainte-Marie, though its sweetly mournful mood, combined with intense f and ff climaxes, give it what currently might be considered more dramatic sentimentality than the earlier two works. Using a range of three octaves and a major second, from D-sharp to f''', the "Élégie" exploits the contrasts of timbres between the dark lower register and the upper register in a manner resembling the use of similar wide leaps by Mozart and Weber in their concerti for soprano clarinet. A descending tenth followed by an ascending skip of two octaves and a major third form a pivot in the main thematic motive, while skips of as much as three octaves occur at several cadences.

The distribution of use of portions of the range is as follows:

below E...................... less than 1%
E-B ...................... 10%
c-g ...................... 14%
a-e'...................... 48%
f'-c''...................... 25%
d''-f''..................... less than 1%.

D-sharp, which extends the compass one half-step lower than that of the soprano clarinet, makes its first appearance in a solo work in one of these cadential leaps between registers. The D-sharp appears to have come into use in France in order to supplant the bass clarinet
pitched in A for orchestral use.

The tempo of the "Élégie," which is ninety-four measures in length, is adagio mesto. It is in the key of F major. The degree of legato technique required and the richness of the harmonic language, with its modulations, modal shifts, and use of chromatic tones, seem to imply that Franchi was familiar with the other works written for Sainte-Marie and the bass clarinet. Franchi is not tentative or reserved in his demands on the bass clarinetist, which are certainly much greater than those of Pillevestre's "Offertoire," published twelve years before.

"Romanze," by August Klughardt,
(for bass clarinet with piano or orchestral accompaniment)
published by C. F. Schmidt, Heilbronn, between 1898 and 1903.

The "Romanze" by August Klughardt (1847-1902) is similar to the first French publications for bass clarinet in its stately and simple hymnlike character. The range of the piece, which extends two octaves and a minor third from G to b-flat', is somewhat higher than that of Pillevestre's "Offertoire," but, with the exception of an occasional measure moving in eighths, the technical demands are similarly light. The distribution of use of this compass is:
This concentrates the greatest portion of the piece to a narrow tessitura centered on the break between the instrument's upper and lower register. The "Romanze" is an andante in B-flat major, seventy-nine measures in length, using French notation for the bass clarinet part. The vast majority of motion in note-values shorter than one beat is provided by the accompaniment, for which an orchestral version was published in addition to that for piano. A brief, unaccompanied recitative appears before the final statement of the principal melody by the bass clarinet, emotionally heightened in this last appearance by the indications "drängend (urgent)" and "langsamer (slower)."

Klughardt's inspiration for writing a work for bass clarinet is unknown. He was employed as music director in the court of Weimar and there composed a great deal of music. Pazdírek's *Universal-Handbuch...* lists ninety-nine published works by him. Pazdírek lists the "Romanze" as a work for bassoon, while the publisher, C. F. Schmidt, provided versions for bassoon, trombone, or bass clarinet. The only indication that the work was likely intended

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10 Pazdírek, U-HM 6: 567-569.
primarily for bass clarinet and not for one of the other
two instruments is the fact that the earliest reference to
the work, Hofmeister's *Handbuch der musikalischen
Literatur...* 12 (1898-1903), mentions only the bass clarinet
and does not include versions of the work for other
instruments.\(^\text{11}\) Hofmeister's catalog deals primarily with
publications from German-speaking countries and was also
closer in time to the first publication of the "Romanze."
Therefore, it more likely lists the instrument for which
the work initially appeared, the other versions having
been provided somewhat later in order to increase the
possibility of sales. The limited market potential of a
work for bass clarinet would have prompted the composer
and publisher to make it available for other instruments
of similar range, which appears to have happened. This
seems also to be true for another of the works published
during the same period by Schmidt, the Adagio by Kühn. It
is listed by Hofmeister in 1903 as a work for the bass
clarinet, while in Pazdírek's catalog of 1910 versions for
bassoon and trombone are mentioned as well.\(^\text{12}\)


Adagio aus dem Militärconcert, by J. Kühn,
(for bass clarinet with piano
or orchestral accompaniment)
published by C. F. Schmidt, Heilbronn
between 1898 and 1903.

The Adagio aus dem Militärconcert by J. Kühn cannot
be precisely dated, nor is the reason for the military
appellation readily apparent. Presumably a part of a full
concerto, it is the only published work by Kühn. It was
first published by C. F. Schmidt between 1898 and 1903 but
was acquired by them when they bought the rights to a
catalog of music owned by the Verlag Kremer, a Viennese
publishing firm.\textsuperscript{13} As with the other works published by
Schmidt, Hofmeister lists it as a work for bass clarinet,
while later catalogs list it also for bassoon and
trombone.

Uncertainty about the originally intended solo
instrument for this work is not relieved by the name of
Robert Müller, who is credited under the composer's name
as the editor of the work. A Robert Müller wrote several
study works for trombone, including a Schule für
Zugposaune (Wilhelm Zimmermann, 1902) and could also have
been the same Robert Müller who was listed as a trombonist

\textsuperscript{13}Carl Friedrich Dreher of C. F. Schmidt Verlag,
Heilbronn, interview by author, July 1988.
in Leipzig's Gewandhausorchester in 1881. Whether the editor of the Kühn work is this same trombonist is an open question.

The movement in B-flat major is ninety-eight measures in length. Excluding two appearances of C (in one case an *ossia*), the range is from G to c"', a span of two octaves and a fourth. The portion of the range used most extensively is the octave between g and g'. The distribution of range by fifths is as follows:

(below E)............less than 1%
E-B ........................ 13%
c-g ........................ 28%
a-e'........................ 52%
f'-c"........................ 5%.

With the exception of two cadenze, one of which is twelve measures in length and, accompanied by sustained tremolo pedals, has the indication "Nach und nach schneller" followed by rallentando, the adagio tempo is maintained throughout. In a floridly embellished operatic style, arpeggiated and scalar figures in thirty-seconds and gruppetti occur frequently. Smoothness and tonal control, rather than agility, are important to successful performance. A dynamic range of *p* to *f* is indicated.

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14See Pazdírek, U-HM 8:547; and Alfred Dörfel, *Geschichte der Gewandhausconcerte zu Leipzig...*, (Leipzig, 1884; reprint, 6229 Walluf bei Wiesbaden: Dr. Martin Sändig, oHG., 1972), 181.
"Romance," by J. G. Orlamünder, (for bass clarinet with piano or orchestral accompaniment) published by C. F. Schmidt, Heilbronn (later by Cundy-Bettony, Boston) between 1898 and 1903.

The entry of J. G. Orlamünder in Pazdírek’s Universal-Handbuch... does little to explain the composer's choice of bass clarinet as a solo instrument. Orlamünder's two other published compositions are a concerto for trombone or tuba and the Fantasie über schwedische Lieder for band. The "Romance" is listed as a composition for piano solo or for bass clarinet with piano or orchestral accompaniment. Unlike the other Schmidt publications for bass clarinet listed in Pazdírek, no versions for bassoon or trombone are mentioned. In the published score of the "Romance" the solo instrument is designated only as "Solo" and is notated untransposed in bass clef. The bass clarinet part provided uses French notation and is transposed for a B-flat instrument.

The tempo of the 116 measure-long piece in 3/8 meter is andante cantabile. A middle section of forty measures, marked "più lento," is in the key of F-sharp major, while the principal tonality is B-flat major. A moderate amount of figuration and written-out turns embellish a sweetly lyric air. Groups of four or six staccato thirty-seconds occur frequently. A cadenza of two measures elaborates the

15Pazdírek, U-HM 8: 961.
final return to the tonic harmony.

The range of two octaves and a minor sixth extends from F-sharp to d'', though the lowest octave of that range is infrequently used. The tessitura is primarily in the lower portion of the clarion register. Use of the instrument's compass is proportioned as follows:

- E-B .................. 5%
- C-G .................. 13%
- A-C' .................. 63%
- F'-C'' .................. 18%
- D'' .................. 1%

Again, as with several of the works composed around the turn of the century, the fifth a-e' carries the greatest portion of the melody. The use of this tessitura deprives the listener of the instrument's rich chalumeau register which was frequently exploited in orchestral music. The printed dynamic range indicated is from pp to ff. Legato technique and expressive playing style, largely in the upper register, are the main requirements for successful performance. Triple divisions of the beat in the accompaniment must frequently be coordinated with duple divisions in the solo voice, but otherwise the relation between soloist and accompanist is quite straightforward.
Air "O beaux rêves évanouis," extrait de Étienne Marcel, by Camille Saint-Saëns, transcribed by Alfred Piguet, (for bass clarinet and piano) published by Durand et Fils, Paris, in 1912.

The significance of this piece and the reason for its inclusion in this list lies in the fact that it represents the first time that the bass clarinet was included among the possible solo instruments in an arrangement of a popular melody. This indicates that an important publisher, as well as the arranger, thought that there would be sufficient market for such a publication for the bass clarinet. The arrangement is the same as that for the soprano clarinet. It was not printed separately, but rather was included with the part for the clarinet, which is labeled "Clarinette en Si b ou Clarinette Basse." The bass clarinet version was, however, listed separately in the Bibliographie Musicale Française.16 The dedication "à Monsieur A. Perrier" raises the question of whether Perrier, who was a professor of clarinet at the Paris Conservatoire, played the work on soprano or bass clarinet.

A smooth, controlled, legato technique and expressive playing are the requirements for performance of this piece, which is transcribed virtually exactly from the aria of the opera's soprano heroine Beatrix. Other

16 BMF 168: 9.
than transposition one tone higher, the inclusion in the clarinet part of a seven-measure interlude which was originally orchestral and the displacement of the recapitulation one octave lower are the only changes from the original soprano aria. 17

The tempo of the aria, which is seventy-four measures in length, is andantino. The clarinet/bass clarinet version is in C major, with a range of two octaves and a major seventh, extending from E to d'. The clarion register predominates, except in the recapitulation, which is centered in the chalumeau. The distribution of range use is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E–B</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c–g</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a–e'</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f'–c''</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d''</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


This lyrically sentimental waltz was written as a pièce de concours for the Conservatoire Royal of Brussels. It is the only examination piece to have been written for the bass clarinet and used at either the Brussels or Paris

17 Camille Saint-Saëns, "O beaux rêves évanouis" (Chant et piano) (Paris: Durand et Fils, 1912).
conservatory in both of which the bass clarinet was not considered an independent field of study. As the pièces de concours served as display pieces demonstrating students' degrees of virtuosity, the limited scope and technical demands of this piece imply that the bass clarinet was not considered appropriate for, or even capable of, use as a virtuosic solo instrument. The work is dedicated to Louis (Alphonse) Bageard (1873- ?), who had perhaps performed as one of six bass clarinetists in the complement of Gustav Poncelet's clarinet choir while he was a student at the Brussels conservatory. Bageard served as professor of clarinet at the Conservatoire Royal from 1904 until 1911. The dedication of "Lied" gives him this title, which indicates that the work could have been written well before its publication in Paris in 1921. It is possible that it was written during the years in which Rasse, who was director of the conservatory in Liège between 1925 and 1938, worked as a performer and conductor at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels after his completion of conservatory studies with Ysaÿe in


20 Weston, More Virtuosi, 39.
violin and Huberti in composition and before his assignment as a harmony instructor at the Conservatoire Royal in 1920.21

"Lied" is an andante molto espressivo ninety-five measures in length. The tonal center of the piece is F using both major and minor modes. Modulations to A major and A-flat major occur, as well. The range of two octaves and a major third extends from F to a'. The upper half of the range is used slightly more than the lower half. The proportions of use are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-B</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-G</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-E</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F'-A&quot;</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The solo part is notated in bass clef. It is the only work in this list so notated, although this system of notation was used quite frequently in orchestral bass clarinet parts written during the time of this survey and has been commonly used in solo works written in more recent years. The melody moves primarily in quarters, with only occasional eighths and sixteenths. Smooth and mellifluous tone is required, but no great agility is needed. A dynamic range of p to f is indicated.


Adolf Busch's Suite, op. 37a, is the first large-scale, multi-movement work still extant for the bass clarinet. Both musically and technically ambitious, it appears to have no precedent closer than the unaccompanied partitas and suites of Bach and Telemann. It has a wide emotional gamut, which does not limit the bass clarinet to a narrow range of moods or emotional guises, and it makes no concessions to any supposed technical limitations. Busch, who lived from 1891 until 1952, is primarily remembered as a violinist and quartet player, but also composed orchestral, choral, and chamber works influenced by the style of Max Reger, a friend and mentor.22 The Suite, although having no dedication, was almost certainly written for Werner Reinhart (1884-1951), a successful businessman and friend of the composer, who was a very influential patron of several composers and supporter of contemporary music, as well as a respected amateur performer on the clarinet, basset horn, and bass clarinet. Stravinsky's Three Pieces for clarinet solo, Honegger's Sonatine, and Hindemith's Quintet for clarinet and strings, as well as Schoeck's bass clarinet Sonata.

were all written for him. The manuscript of the Suite is in the possession of the *Rychenberg-Stiftung*, a foundation established at Reinhart's death in order to continue his support of the arts.\(^\text{23}\)

The tonal center of the work, which shifts between the minor and major modes, is E. Its tonal language is a harmonically complex, late-romantic idiom, while the frequent hemoloe and implied counterpoint are reminiscent of the style of Reger. The first movement, andante tranquillo, is clearly inspired by the preludes of Bach's suites for solo cello. The second movement, adagio, is a rhapsodic lament with arpeggiated flourishes extending over three octaves in one hundred and twenty-eighth note values. The scherzo movement, molto vivace - molto meno vivace - Da capo, contrasts strong dynamic surprises and hemoloe with tranquilly meandering eights in a pastoral trio. The final vivace movement has the character of an exuberant symphonic finale. The total length of the work is 667 measures. The range extends three octaves and a minor second from E to f\(^\#\), using French notation. *Altissimo* notes are used to good effect, but sparingly, while full and evenly distributed use of both the *clarion* and *chalumeau* range is made. The range distribution of the second movement (adagio), which has the broadest

compass is:

E-B ..................... 13%
c-g ..................... 40%
a-e' ..................... 28%
f'-c'' ................... 12%
d''-f .................... 7%.

Sonate für Bassklarinette oder Fagott (Violoncell)
und Klavier, op. 41, by Othmar Schoeck (1886-1956),
(composed in 1927-1928)
published by Breitkopf und Härtel, Leipzig
in 1931.

Werner Reinhart's musicality and skill were the
inspiration for the first important work of structurally
complex chamber music: Schoeck's Sonate, op. 41, in the
German-romantic tradition of Brahms for the bass clarinet.
Reinhart, to whom the Sonata was dedicated, was a close
friend, as well as patron, of Schoeck (1886-1956). The
Sonata was, according to Schoeck's biographer, Hans
Corrodi, the first result of a period of deep study by the
composer of the works of J. S. Bach.²⁴

Cast in three movements totaling 386 measures in
length, the Sonata is in the key of D major, though its
harmonic language is richly inflected and highly modulatory.
The range extends three octaves and a minor third, from D
to f'', and makes particularly frequent use of the lowest
chalumeau tones. Use of the compass is distributed in the

²⁴Hans Corrodi, Othmar Schoeck (Frauenfeld: Verlag
Huber, 1956), 175.
first movement as follows:

below E .................. 4%
E-B ........................ 20%
c-g ........................ 34%
a-e' ........................ 29%
f'-c" ...................... 12%
d"-e-flat" ................ 1%.

This is the first solo work written for a modern-type bass clarinet to use the low extension note D, although this had been used in orchestral parts as early as 1889, when Richard Strauss called for it in his tone-poem _Tod und Verklärung_.

The first movement, _Gemessen_ (\( \downarrow = 92 \)), is lyric and pastoral, flowing smoothly with a few rapid passages. A brief, sharply articulated passage foreshadows the mood of the final movement. The second movement, _Bewegt_ (\( \downarrow = 96 \)), has a neo-baroque flavor, with much contrapuntal interplay between the bass clarinet and piano. Two recitative passages for the bass clarinet interrupt the general mood of a _scherzo fugato_. The use of an inventionlike subject, as well as the mordents and trills which occur throughout the Sonata, also gives the last movement, _Bewegt_ (\( \downarrow = 112 \)), a neo-baroque feeling, but this time with a humorous handling which incorporates the syncopations and contours of popular dance hall music of the 1920s. Velocity is an important element in this movement. Indications of staccato and accented staccato articulations occur frequently in contrast to legato
passages. The importance of humor in the Sonata distinguishes it from all earlier works for the bass clarinet, except the Suite by Adolf Busch, and shows a more generous assessment of the instrument's versatility than had been common in those earlier works.

Although not intended as a means of virtuoso display, the Sonata does require rapid finger-technique throughout the instrument's range, often in harmonically convoluted passages. Clear and varied styles of articulation are required. The work's greatest requirement, however, is for musical understanding and ensemble playing, as coordination with the densely complex piano part requires alignment of interlocking hemiolen, contrasting subdivisions of the beat, and frequent rubati. The pianist and the bass clarinetist are equal partners in the performance of this Sonata.

"Deepwood," by David Bennet, (for bass clarinet with piano accompaniment) published by Carl Fischer, New York in 1937.

"Deepwood", by David Bennet, was the first bass clarinet solo by an American composer to be published in the United States. It, and others that followed, can be seen as the result of the prevalence of music education in the public school and the need to provide solo material, with both didactic and display purposes in mind, for bass
clarinet players in school bands. This didactic intention differentiates these American pieces from the early European publications which, though technically not demanding, were probably composed for professional musicians. The works of Pillevestre, Petit, Bontoux, and Franchi all bore specific dedications to members of Parisian professional orchestras.

David Bennet, born in Ida Grove, Iowa in 1892, was a clarinetist who worked as both player and leader in various pit orchestras and bands and who was successful as a composer and arranger for commercial radio programs. Under contract to Carl Fischer, Inc., he wrote numerous works for bands and solos for band instruments, especially clarinet and saxophone.\textsuperscript{25} His emphasis in "Deepwood" is on display of technique which is quite virtuosic in regard to finger-agility, but which is limited to a rather narrow conception of the instrument's capabilities, using primarily the low register, with limited articulation and little disjunct motion.

Loosely A-B-A in form, the piece is a free fantasy in one movement, 208 measures in length. The tempi are vivace- lento-vivace, with brief introductory recitatives and cadenza passages between the major sections. The principal tonality is F major. As the emotional tone of

\textsuperscript{25} ASCAP Biographical Dictionary, 4th ed., s.v. "David Bennett."
the work is not pronouncedly sombre, tempestuous, or witty, but rather neutral, the primary interest is velocity and fluency in the many extended running passages. While primarily legato, two of the passages are to be played staccato, which had not been seen in earlier works for the bass clarinet. A dynamic range of ppp to f, with the softer dynamics predominating, is indicated.

The compass of two octaves and a minor sixth extends from E to c". Use of the upper register is rare, however, as in only three passages, totaling eighteen measures in length, do any upper register notes appear. The distribution of the employment of successive fifths of the instrument's range is:

E-B ...................... 24%
c-g ........................ 56%
a-e' ........................ 17%
f'-c" ........................ 3%.

This concentrates 80% of the piece within the span of a tenth. French notation is used.

Rondino, by Albert D. Schmutz, (for bass clarinet with piano accompaniment) published by Cundy-Bettony, Boston in 1938.

The Rondino, by Albert D. Schmutz, limits the bass clarinet to a narrow range, similar to that employed in "Deepwood", but makes stronger demands on articulation and incisiveness. The range used is two octaves and a major
second, extending from F to f-sharp'. The lower half of the range predominates. Use of the compass is proportioned as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-B</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c-g</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-e'</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f'-f-sharp'</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

French notation is employed. Frequent short bursts of rapid notes, often staccato, as well as sharply articulated octave skips, call for a bouncy agility in the aggressively tempestuous portions of the piece.

The piece is in the A-B-A form of a traditional scherzo movement in 3/4 time, with a tempo indication of presto (\(\text{\textit{\textbf{\textdagger}}}=180\)). The incisive outer sections of the scherzo, which is 291 measures in length, are in E minor, while the more flowing, waltzlike middle section is in E major. A dynamic range of p to f is indicated.

Albert D. Schmutz, born in Halstead, Kansas in 1887, served as director of the music departments of Bethel College in Newton, Kansas and of the Kansas State Teachers College. He also served on the faculty of the National Music Camp in Interlochen, Michigan. He composed several pieces for band, a choral work on Robert Frost's poem "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening," and solos for
the clarinet and saxophone. Although it bears no dedication, Rondino was probably written with the bass clarinetists of the bands which he directed in mind.


"Ballade" is the first work for the bass clarinet by a French composer which incorporates a degree of the brilliant agility so common in French compositions for the soprano clarinet. Cast in a single movement one hundred and forty-three measures in length, the piece is in two large sections. The first section is a rhapsodically expressive development of a majestic and rather martial theme. This section displays expressive flexibility, without having the sombre or melancholy feeling found in the pieces of nearly forty years earlier by Bontoux and Franchi. The second section, allegro, followed by allegro vivo, contains fairly rapid passage work and emphasizes bouncy and clear articulation, which had not been seen in previous French compositions. Its subject, reminiscent of J. S. Bach's Two-part Inventions, treated in a fugato manner with the piano accompaniment, and its continuous motor-rhythm give this portion of the piece a neo-baroque

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effect. The allegro section is in the key of A-minor, while the rhapsodic first section passes freely through several tonal centers.

Avoiding the altissimo register, "Ballade's" compass extends over two octaves and a tritone from E to b-flat'. In the first section, which is designated "allegro moderato-lento-tempo I," the proportions of range used are:

- E-B .................. 29%
- C-g .................. 37%
- G-e' .................. 23%
- F'-b-flat' .......... 11%

French notation is used. The dynamic range is from p to ff. Although there is considerable rapid motion, unusual interval patterns and leaps do not present any great difficulty. The musical language is typical of the richly harmonized French style of the period.

Eugène Bozza, born in Nice in 1905, composed prolifically for wind instruments, in addition to his duties as director of the conservatory at Valenciennes. He would seem to have had close association with Albert J. Andraud, the original publisher of "Ballade," who was an oboist and English hornist with the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and to whom he dedicated a composition, "Divertissement," op. 39, for English horn. "Ballade" was

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composed in Paris during July, 1939 and published by Andraud in Cincinnati during that year. The work is dedicated to five clarinetists; R. M. Arey, J. E. Elliott, M. Fossenkermer, E. Schmachtenberg. and G. E. Waln. None of these has a distinctly French name and at least two are Americans. Rufus M. Arey served as principal clarinetist with the Philadelphia Orchestra during 1923 and 1924.\textsuperscript{28} George E. Waln was professor of clarinet at the Oberlin College Conservatory from 1929 until 1969.\textsuperscript{29} Whether any of the dedicatees was particularly associated with the bass clarinet is now uncertain. The work's title also states "(Original Version)," implying a need to confirm that the composer had actually intended the piece for bass clarinet and not another instrument: in 1941 Bozza used the same title for a different work for trombone.

\textbf{Andante and Allegro, by Yvonne Desportes}
\textit{(le Grand Prix de Rome),}
\textit{(for bass clarinet with piano accompaniment)}
published by Albert J. Andraud, Cincinnati in 1939.

This work's purpose as a display piece for students is clearly stated by the heading, "Contest Solo - For the National School Music Competition - Festivals," which


appears above its title. As Desportes' biographies do not mention any lengthy stay in the United States, it would seem that her Andante and Allegro, as well as Bozza's "Ballade" were sought and perhaps commissioned by the Cincinnati publisher, Andraud, in order to fill a need for original compositions for the bass clarinet suitable for educational contest use. The words, "(Original Version)," again make clear that the work was not a transcription from the repertoire of another instrument. The piece is written in a traditional musical language, which would certainly contribute to its appropriateness for student contest use.

A melody constructed of short, arching phrases in E minor leads through the Andante section into the Allegro, which develops a two-measure long motive, this time arching above and then similarly below a central tone, with varying scalar figuration. The Allegro section has considerable motion in sixteenths, but the short phrase lengths cause this to be in bursts of two or three beats in duration. Staccato eighths occur occasionally. Large skips are quite rare. The dynamic range is from pp to ff.

The work, which is notated in the French system, has a range of two octaves and a fifth, from E to b'. Surprisingly little use, however, is made of the chalumeau range. Nor is juxtaposition of contrasting registers
exploited. The distribution of range use is as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
E-B & \quad \text{11}\% \\
C-G & \quad \text{33}\% \\
a-e' & \quad \text{51}\% \\
f'-b' & \quad \text{5}\%.
\end{align*}
\]

In addition to imposing a musical limitation, the extensive use of the portion of the instrument's range chosen by the composer creates some technical problems which would hinder all but the most competent students. Repeated crossing back and forth from the upper to lower register is required, and the melody emphasizes a portion of the range prone to intonation problems because of the tendency toward sharpness of the lower fourth of the upper register, which the author has found to be a problem to many students of bass clarinet.

Phantasy Quintet for Bass Clarinet
and String Quartet, op. 93, by York Bowen (1884-1961),
published by De Wolfe, London ca. 1940.

York Bowen's Phantasy Quintet is the first chamber ensemble work to fully display all aspects of the bass clarinet's capabilities and characteristics. Composed in a style influenced by the English impressionist Delius and reminiscent of Debussy's string quartet, op. 10, its sweeping melodic lines, which vary from a darkly mysterious to a rich singing tone, require a great agility throughout a wide tessitura. Bowen (1884-1961) is
remembered primarily as a composer for the piano, though he also composed a sonata for the clarinet and piano, dedicated to Pauline Juler, in 1943.\textsuperscript{30} It is possible, though not certain, that Juler was the first performer of the Phantasy Quintet, as well. Although the work was published around 1940 by the London firm De Wolfe, it did not remain in print long and has become difficult to obtain.\textsuperscript{31}

A virtuosic lyricism is needed to produce a wide variety of moods; tranquilly pastoral, mysterious, impetuous, and fiery. The melodies frequently arch over a span of two and a half octaves. Motion in sixteenth and sixteenth-sextuplets is common throughout the instrument's range, which extends from E to g\textsuperscript{n}. Although the lowest chalumeau tones predominate, all portions of this compass of three octaves and a minor third are used effectively. In the middle allegro con spirito section, the proportions of the range use are:

\begin{center}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interval</th>
<th>Proportion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E-B</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-g</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a-e'</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f'-c''</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d''-g''</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\end{center}


Great demands are not made on articulation, but legato in the sometimes long phrases is important. The requirements for delicate color shadings, ensemble blend, agility, and intonation in frequently very high passages made of the string quartet are considerable.

The work is in one movement, 336 measures in length. Its A-B-A form has a tempo structure of allegro moderato (♩ = 104) with several varied subsections, allegro con spirito (♩ = 144), and a return to the opening material in a slightly more relaxed tempo designated as "allegro moderato ma più tranquillo (♩ = 80)." The tonal center is E, with shifting, though predominantly minor modality. The bass clarinet part uses French notation.

"Angustia" (No. 9 de la Serie Sentimental), by Estéban Eitler (b 1913), (for bass clarinet solo) published by Ediciones Musicales "Politonia," Buenos Aires in 1946. Composed in 1943.

This is one of a series of twelve concert-etudes, each for a different instrument and each having a specific emotional character or mood. The bass clarinet has been chosen to embody anguish, distress, and affliction, a role which has frequently been assigned to it, beginning with its earliest use in the operas of Meyerbeer and Verdi, and continuing today with its most typical use in mystery and suspense sound tracks in motion pictures and television. Although it had occasionally been used in small
chamber ensembles by several Latin-American composers, this appears to be the first solo work published for the bass clarinet outside Europe and the United States. Its composer, Estéban Eitler, was born in Bozen (South Tirol) in 1913 and had been a flutist with orchestras in Budapest before moving to Buenos Aires in 1936.\(^{32}\) The work is dedicated to Eitler's friend and colleague, the clarinetist Cayetano Bibbo.

Anxiety is convincingly evoked by the piece's interwoven large intervals and its rapid runs ascending from a \textit{pp} low \(E\) to a high \textit{ff} trill in the manner of a violent outburst. The middle section of the A-B-A form has a feeling of lurking anticipation at a very soft dynamic level before returning to another outburst of the opening material. The tempi indicated are \textit{muy movido} (\(\textit{j}=152\)), \textit{comodo} (\(\textit{j}=\text{j}\)), and \textit{movido como antes}. A very rapid legato technique, as well as light articulation and clarity at \textit{ppp} dynamic level are required in the instrument's deepest range while a \textit{ff} is required at the upper end of the tessitura.

The work is constructed entirely from an octatonic scale, the major and minor seconds of which are arranged according to the pattern 1-\(\frac{1}{2}\)-\(\frac{1}{2}\)-1-\(\frac{1}{2}\)-1-\(\frac{1}{2}\)-1-\(\frac{1}{2}\). The piece, as

well as both its outer subsections, begins and ends with the pitch E, while the middle section concludes with B. The range extends two octaves and a major seventh, from E to d-sharp". The instrument's dark, low octave predominates. Proportions of range use are:

E-B ...................... 18%
c-g ....................... 21%
a-e' ....................... 36%
f'-c" ....................... 24%
d"-d-sharp" ............... 1%.

French notation is used.

Bassklarinettekonzert, by Josef Schelb, (for bass clarinet and chamber orchestra [flute, oboe, 2 bassoons, timpani, and strings]) unpublished, second version composed in 1943.

The only work of its type remaining from the period of this survey, Josef Schelb's Concerto for bass clarinet is unusual in both musical and technical aspects of its treatment of the bass clarinet. It is dominated by bright colors and a buoyant light-heartedness seen only occasionally in earlier solo works for the instrument, which tended to frequently confirm the dark role given to it in dramatic and programmatic music. Its outer movements, a marchlike allegro giusto and a vivace waltz, both display a casual verve, while the middle movement, molto tranquillo e cantabile, is pensive and introspective, but not sombre. It is also unusual in its
very minimal use of the *chalumeau* register and the importance of light, quick articulation.

Totaling 486 measures in length, the Concerto is written a neo-classic style, employing quartal harmony. B is the central tone of the outer two movements, in which the melodic line has pronouncedly major flavor. The second movement, which is modally ambiguous, focuses on C-sharp. The piece requires reasonable, but not overwhelming virtuosity, as was typical of the practical and not particularly emotional *Gebrauchsmusik*, which was being written in Germany during the thirties. It does, however, require a greater skill of articulation than was frequently encountered in earlier works. Extended non-legato triplet and sixteenth passages occur, particularly in the first movement. Articulation unusual for woodwinds, but common for stringed instruments in which the longer pitch values of a slow moving melody are divided into rapid repeated tones in order to enhance a feeling of movement and vitality, is also found in the first movement.

Although the range of three octaves and a major third, extending from D to F-sharp, is not wider than that found in some other works in this list, its focus on the upper register is unusual. The distribution of range use in the first movement is:
Extension notes (below E) 2%
E-B ........................ 4%
c-g .......................... 16%
a-e' .......................... 45%
f'-c'' .......................... 29%
d''-e'' .......................... 4%.

The third movement pushes the tessitura still further away from the chalumeau:

E-B .......................... 1%
c-g ............................ 6%
a-e' ............................ 40%
f'-c'' ............................ 46%
d''-f-sharp'' .................. 7%.

Schelb's specific motivation for composing a bass clarinet concerto is not known. The work, which has remained unpublished, bears no dedication or indication of who may have first performed it. Born in 1894, Josef Schelb was a pianist and self-taught composer who taught both of those subjects at the Badische Musikhochschule in Karlsruhe. Lotte Schelb, the composer's widow, stated in a letter to the bass clarinetist Terje Lerstad that the work was probably written before 1932. This first version was lost when the composer's house was destroyed by bombing in 1942. The work was of enough importance that

Schelb composed the extant version in 1943. Although Schelb stayed in Germany during the years of the Nazi regime, he was not in good graces with the authorities and his compositions from that period were not published and seldom performed.

34Lotte Schelb, Freiburg, to Terje Lerstad, Oslo, 17 February 1979. Used by permission.
## APPENDIX A

### A CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ORCHESTRAL WORKS USING THE BASS CLARINET TO 1920

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of First Performance</th>
<th>Work and Composer</th>
<th>City of First Performance</th>
<th>Genre</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1829</td>
<td>Chant Sacré H. Berlioz</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>sacred choral work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>&quot;Make haste, O God, to deliver me&quot; S. Neukomm</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>sacred concert aria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Les Huguenots G. Meyerbeer</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td>Benvenuto Cellini H. Berlioz</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Symphonie Funèbre et Triomphale H. Berlioz</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>programmatic symphony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>Le Prophète G. Meyerbeer</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ernani G. Verdi</td>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>opera</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Tannhäuser R. Wagner</td>
<td>Dresden</td>
<td>opera</td>
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<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>La Damnation de Faust H. Berlioz</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>cantata</td>
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<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>Te Deum H. Berlioz</td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>sacred choral work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of First Performance</td>
<td>Work and Composer</td>
<td>City of First Performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1849) Tasso</td>
<td>F. Liszt (orch. by Joachim Raff)</td>
<td>Weimar</td>
<td>tone poem</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850 Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne</td>
<td>F. Liszt (orch. by Joachim Raff)</td>
<td>Weimar</td>
<td>tone poem</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lohengrin R. Wagner (bass clarinet, English horn and harp were missing at premiere)</td>
<td>Weimar</td>
<td>opera</td>
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<td>1853 Symphony No. 1, op. 2 C. Saint-Saëns</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td>symphony</td>
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<td>1854 Mazeppa F. Liszt (orch. by Joachim Raff)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Weimar</td>
<td>tone poem</td>
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<tr>
<td>1857 Eine Sinfonie zu Dantes Divina Commedia F. Liszt</td>
<td></td>
<td>Venice</td>
<td>opera</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Simon Boccanegra G. Verdi</td>
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<td>opera</td>
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<td>1859 Faust C. Gounod</td>
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<td>Paris</td>
<td>opera (ballet music only)</td>
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<td>1861 Hakon Jarl B. Smetana</td>
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<td>Göteborg</td>
<td>tone poem</td>
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<td>1862 La Forza del destino G. Verdi</td>
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<td>opera</td>
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<td>1863 Les Troyens à Carthage H. Berlioz</td>
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<td>1865 L'Africaine G. Meyerbeer</td>
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<td>Date of First Performance</td>
<td>Work and Composer</td>
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<td>R. Wagner</td>
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<td>G. Verdi</td>
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<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Lašské tance (Dances of Lašsko) [b. clar. part optional] L. Janáček</td>
<td>Prague</td>
<td>symphonic movements</td>
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<td>La Wally A. Catalani</td>
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<td>opera</td>
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<td>T.-rin</td>
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<td>The Wooden Prince B. Bartók</td>
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<td>Scythian Suite S. Prokofiev</td>
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<td>Il Trittico G. Puccini</td>
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<td>1919</td>
<td>Bacchanale C. Griffes</td>
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<td>Sinfonia sevillana J. Turina</td>
<td>Madrid</td>
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APPENDIX B

TYPES OF WORKS USING THE BASS CLARINET AND
GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THEIR
FIRST PERFORMANCES

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<tr>
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<th>1829-1850</th>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>Choral and vocal works w orchestral accomp.</td>
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<td><strong>programmatic works</strong> (purely orchestral)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td><strong>13</strong></td>
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<th>1911-1920</th>
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<tr>
<td>Choral and vocal works w orchestral accomp.</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>incidental music</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>ballets</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td><strong>programmatic works</strong> (purely orchestral)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>88</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
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155
86 theatrical works (operas, choral and vocal, incidental, and ballets) = 45%.

104 non-theatrical works - 67 programmatic = 36% - 37 non-programmatic = 19%.

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<th>1871-1890</th>
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<td>Berlin</td>
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<td>Eberfeld</td>
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<td>Essen</td>
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<td>Dresden</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hamburg</td>
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<td>Köln</td>
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<td>Mainz</td>
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<td>Munich</td>
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<td>Weimar</td>
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(contd.)
1911-1920

Paris  9  Moscow  2
Nice  1  Ivanovka  1
London  4  Budapest  4
Leeds  1  Warsaw  1
Rome  1  Madrid  3
Turin  1  Boston  1
Dresden  2  Chicago  1
Munich  2  New York  2
Vienna  10  Philadelphia  2
Helsinki  2  unspecified
        cities in
        U.S.A.  \( \frac{2}{51} \)
APPENDIX C

NOTATION FOR THE BASS CLARINET

The notation of the bass clarinet, the broad
tessitura of which extends through the baritone and tenor
range and could imply the use of several clefs, has yet to
be completely standardized. Two systems, now known as the
French and the German, each having its own advantages, are
in common use. Actual pitches played by the bass clarinet
and their notation in each of the two systems are shown
below.

Actual pitches:  

are notated in the
French system as:
and in the German
system as:

The more commonly used notation for the bass
clarinet is the French system, which allows the player to
use fingerings corresponding to the written pitches of the
soprano clarinet. In this manner a written pitch would be
fingered in the same way (in most cases) for both
instruments, sounding an octave lower on the bass than on
the soprano. Of greater convenience to players, who
generally play both instruments at times, this system
requires the reader of a score to consider an octave
displacement, as well as a transposition of a whole step, or occasionally a minor third, to allow for the transposition of the instrument.

The German system of notation, perhaps so named because of its use by Wagner, avoids the octave displacement of the French system. It notates the bass clarinet in the sounding octave, using a combination of bass and treble clefs, written only a step or step and a half above the sounding pitch, thus accommodating the transposition from B-flat or A. As this system has to be learned by clarinetists in order to play the bass clarinet, it has been less popular, in spite of its advantage of reducing the number of ledger lines required for extremely low or extremely high passages.

The fact that several systems of notation are in use has led occasionally to confusion. Some composers, including Liszt and Stravinsky, have combined features of the German and French systems, using bass clef for passages primarily in the instrument’s lower register and treble clef, sounding down a ninth, as in the French system, for passages primarily in the instrument's upper register. This combination economizes on ledger lines beneath the staff. Atypically, Paul Creston used treble clef sounding a major second beneath the written pitch without making any use of bass clef in his Third Symphony.
An employment of bass and tenor clefs, used by other instruments of a similar range to the bass clarinet, has never been adopted. Verdi's first use of the instrument in the third act of Ernani (1844) makes use of this combination of clefs, but his later works use the French system. The first orchestral appearances of the bass clarinet in Meyerbeer's Les Huguenots and Neukomm's aria, "Make haste, O God, to deliver me," which were both heard in 1836, were notated in treble clef written in the octave above the sounding notes, in the manner now described as French notation.
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Schelb, Lotte, Freiburg, to Terje Lerstad, Oslo, 17 February 1979. By permission of Terje Lerstad.


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VITA

Thomas Carr Aber, born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1954, received his Doctor of Musical Arts degree in clarinet at the Conservatory of the University of Missouri at Kansas City in December, 1990. While studying at UMKC he was awarded the Graduate Achievement Award in woodwind studies in 1984 and a Helen Kemper Doctoral Fellowship in 1987. He earned his Bachelor and Master of Music degrees, studying bass clarinet with Joseph Allard, at the Juilliard School. He was awarded a Walter and Elsie Naumberg Scholarship in Orchestral Instruments there in 1976. With the aid of a Fulbright-Hays grant, he then studied contemporary solo literature for the bass clarinet with Harry Sparnaay at the Sweelinck Conservatorium in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. In 1979 he was a prize winner in the Gaudeamus Foundation Competition for Interpreters of Contemporary Music. During his three-year stay in The Netherlands he played extensively with several orchestras including the Rotterdam Philharmonic and the National Ballet Orchestra. Since returning to Kansas City in 1981, he has played frequently with the Kansas City Symphony and is a member of a progressive jazz-dance group, the BCR, whose first album "Which Earth Are We On?" appeared in

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June, 1987. Mr. Aber is currently the bass clarinetist with the Omaha Symphony and the Cedar Rapids Symphony.

Mr. Aber has given American and regional premiere performances of several works for bass clarinet including most recently Isang Yun's *Monolog* and Joan Tower's *Wings*. In 1980 the Dutch composer Adriann van Noord wrote his *Reggae* for Mr. Aber, and in 1987 the Miami-based composer Kevin Hiatt, wrote a solo work, *Garuda* for him. Several of Mr. Aber's performances have been broadcast on National Public Radio stations. He has arranged more than a dozen works for woodwind trio including waltzes by Johann and Josef Strauss. His article, "Altissimo register fingerings for the bass clarinet," appeared in the Summer 1982 issue of *The Clarinet*. Mr. Aber recovered from the Bibliothèque Nationale several long-forgotten works for bass clarinet and piano, written by French composers around the turn of the century. His teachers of bass and soprano clarinet have included Joseph Allard, Harry Sparnaay, Patricia Kostek, Raymond Luedke, John Parrette, and Jim Meyer.