

*Cambridge Companions to Music*

**The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet**

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# The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet

*Edited by*

**COLIN LAWSON**

*University of Sheffield*



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# Contents

<i>List of illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>Notes on the contributors</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xv
<i>List of abbreviations, fingering and notation</i>	xvi
1 Single reeds before 1750	1
COLIN LAWSON	
2 The development of the clarinet	16
NICHOLAS SHACKLETON	
3 The clarinet family	
<i>Introduction: clarinets in B<math>\flat</math> and A</i>	33
<i>The C clarinet</i>	38
COLIN LAWSON	
<i>The high clarinets</i>	43
BASIL TSCHAIKOV	
<i>The basset horn</i>	57
GEORGINA DOBRÉE	
<i>The bass clarinet</i>	66
MICHAEL HARRIS	
4 The development of the clarinet repertoire	75
JO REES-DAVIES	

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
5	Players and composers PAMELA WESTON	92
6	The mechanics of playing the clarinet ANTONY PAY	107
7	Teaching the clarinet PAUL HARRIS	123
8	Playing historical clarinets COLIN LAWSON	134
9	The professional clarinettist NICHOLAS COX	150
10	The contemporary clarinet ROGER HEATON	163
11	The clarinet in jazz JOHN ROBERT BROWN	184
12	The clarinet on record MICHAEL BRYANT	199
	<i>Notes</i>	213
	<i>Appendices</i>	
1	Sources and tutors for the early clarinet in modern edition or facsimile	219
2	A select list of tutors	219
3	Recommended studies	220
4	Orchestral excerpts and studies	220
	<i>Select bibliography</i>	222
	<i>Index</i>	230

# Illustrations

1.1	Tenor chalumeau by Johann Christoph Denner	page 5
1.2	Two-keyed D clarinet by Jacob Denner	7
1.3	Title page and excerpt from the chalumeau part of Dittersdorf's <i>Divertimento Notturmo</i>	9
1.4	Opening page of the solo part of the chalumeau concerto by Johann Friedrich Fasch	11
2.1	Two-keyed D clarinet by J. G. Zencker	18
2.2	Clarinets	20
	(a) in C by Heinrich Grenser, Dresden, c. 1810	
	(b) in B $\flat$ by Heinrich Grenser, Dresden, c. 1810	
	(c) in B $\flat$ by Jacques François Simiot, Lyons, c. 1815	
2.3	Clarinets	21
	(a) in B $\flat$ by François Lefèvre, Paris, c. 1835	
	(b) in A by Eugène Albert, Brussels, c. 1860	
	(c) in A by Wilhelm Hess junior, Munich, c. 1870	
2.4	Clarinet in A with alternative joint in B $\flat$ by Johann Baptist Merklein, Vienna, c. 1810	22
2.5	Clarinets	23
	(a) in A by Godfridus Adrianus Rottenburgh, Brussels, c. 1760	
	(b) in B $\flat$ by Stephan Koch, Vienna, c. 1825	
	(c) in B $\flat$ by Richard Bilton, London, c. 1840	
	(d) in A by Oskar Oehler, Berlin, c. 1935	
	(e) in C by Auguste Buffet <i>jeune</i> , Paris, c. 1850	
2.6	Bore characteristics of some representative clarinets	29
3.1	Members of the modern clarinet family: sopranino in E $\flat$ ; German-system soprano in B $\flat$ ; sopranos in B $\flat$ and A; alto in E $\flat$ ; basset horn in F; bass in B $\flat$ ; contrabass in B $\flat$	35–6
3.2	Allegro moderato from the first sonata from <i>Méthode de Clarinette</i> (Paris, 1802) by J. X. Lefèvre	40
3.3	Henri and Alexandre Selmer testing clarinets at the Selmer (Paris) factory, c. 1932	67

5.1	Richard Mühlfeld with Johannes Brahms, Berchtesgaden, 1894	98
5.2	Alois Hába with Josef Horák and Emma Kovárnová, Prague, 1971	101
5.3	Benny Goodman with Paul Hindemith, 1947	103
5.4	Suzanne Stephens with Karlheinz Stockhausen, London, 1985	105
6.1	Exercise for the control of dynamic and timbral variation	113
6.2	Schematic representation of articulation	115
7.1	Weekly practice schedule	132
8.1	Diagram of the component parts of the clarinet, from Lefèvre's <i>Méthode de Clarinette</i>	138
8.2	The method of holding the clarinet; lithograph of Thomas Willman from his <i>A Complete Instruction Book for the Clarinet</i> (London, c. 1825)	141
8.3	Willman's profile view of the clarinet; lithograph	142
8.4	Lefèvre's chromatic fingering chart	144
8.5	Handbill for a Vienna concert by Anton Stadler, 20 February 1788	148
9.1	An alternative fingering system for $c\sharp''$ to $e'''$	158
10.1	Notation by Hans Joachim Hespos	171
10.2	Fingering notation	173
10.3	High notes for B $\flat$ clarinet	174
10.4	'Short lip'	175
10.5	Notation for quarter-tone and eighth-tone scales	175
10.6	Quarter-tone fingerings for B $\flat$ clarinet	177–9
10.7	Multiphonic fingerings for B $\flat$ clarinet	180
10.8	High notes for bass clarinet	183
11.1	Eddie Daniels	189
11.2	Transcription of Artie Shaw's version of Vernon Duke's <i>April in Paris</i>	196



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MICHAEL BRYANT trained as a metallurgist, but switched to broadcast engineering and has worked for the BBC World Service for over twenty-five years. Having taken a special interest in rediscovering forgotten and unpublished chamber music for the clarinet, basset horn and bass clarinet, he has provided advice on rare repertoire and research methods to students, collectors and professional players.

NICHOLAS COX is Principal Clarinet of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. As a soloist he has appeared at Britain's most important festivals and concert halls, and several composers have written him commissions, including Hugh Wood, Richard Rodney Bennett, Jonathan Lloyd and Andrey Eshpay. Solo tours and masterclasses have taken him to Europe, the Far East and Russia.

GEORGINA DOBRÉE From early in her career, Georgina Dobrée took an interest in the more unusual members of the clarinet family, and in 1951 the firm of Henri Selmer undertook to make a basset horn especially for her. This instrument accompanied her summer visits to Darmstadt, where for almost ten years from 1953 she gave performances of new music. In recent years the repertoire written especially for her has increasingly been specifically for the basset horn and has been premièred in Britain, the USA and what is now the Czech Republic.

MICHAEL HARRIS is principal bass clarinet with the Philharmonia Orchestra. He also pursues a vigorous freelance career in orchestral and chamber music, appearing regularly with groups such as the Nash Ensemble, the London Sinfonietta and London Winds. He has developed a keen interest in early clarinets and is professor of classical clarinet at the Royal College of Music.

PAUL HARRIS studied clarinet, composition and conducting at the Royal Academy of Music and music education at the University of London. He has now established a reputation as a teacher, composer, writer, performer, examiner and adjudicator, with well over one hundred publications to his name, many of which deal primarily with stimulating and helping young players to develop their musical skills. Paul Harris has also undertaken research into specialist music education for the highly talented – an interest that has taken him to many musical institutions around the world.

ROGER HEATON has worked closely with many leading composers, including Feldman, Bryars, Volans, Ferneyhough and Henze, and has performed with the Arditti and Balanescu Quartets, Ensemble Modern, the London Sinfonietta, the Gavin Bryars Ensemble and many other groups. Since 1982 he has been Clarinet Professor at the Darmstadt Ferienkurse für Neue Musik and was Music Director of Rambert Dance Company, 1988-93.

COLIN LAWSON has played principal clarinet with most of Britain's leading period orchestras, notably The English Concert, The Hanover Band and the London Classical Players. He has given period performances of concertos by Mozart, Weber and Spohr at a number of international venues, including Carnegie Hall and the Lincoln Center, New York; he has also published widely on various aspects of historical performance practice. His writings on the history of the clarinet include *The Chalumeau in Eighteenth-Century Music*. He is currently senior lecturer in music at the University of Sheffield.

JO REES-DAVIES's life has been fairly equally divided between the worlds of libraries and of music, the latter as performer and teacher. She has been librarian of the Clarinet & Saxophone Society of Great Britain since 1984 and is currently editor of the society's quarterly magazine. Her clarinet repertoire lists, translations and compilations cover most of the countries in Europe.

ANTONY PAY was born in London, studied at the Royal Academy of Music and read Mathematics at Cambridge University. He has been principal clarinet of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the London

Sinfonietta (of which he was a founder member) and the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, and a member of several chamber ensembles. Since 1984 he has concentrated mainly on solo playing and conducting, recording Spohr concertos and period performances of Mozart, Weber and Crusell concertos on specially reconstructed instruments. He currently plays in the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment.

NICHOLAS SHACKLETON is a Fellow of the Royal Society with a long interest in the clarinet and its history; his interest in the acoustics of the clarinet helped him elucidate the cause of ice-age cycles. He has examined clarinets in virtually all the major collections of musical instruments in the world. He has played on a wide range of instruments and advises Daniel Bangham on making replicas of historic clarinets. He has written several authoritative articles on the history of the clarinet.

BASIL TSCHAIKOV was successively a member of the London Philharmonic and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras and then became a member of the Philharmonia (1958-79), where he played clarinet and E $\flat$  clarinet. A former Professor at the Royal College of Music, he was Director of the National Centre for Orchestral Studies for ten years from 1979. He is currently editor-in-chief of the journal *Musical Performance*. His numerous publications include the chapter 'Performance and audience' for *How Music Works*.

PAMELA WESTON began her career as a clarinet soloist and was a professor at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama for eighteen years, before turning to writing about the history of the instrument and its players. She travels widely as lecturer and broadcaster, and is the author of books and articles on clarinet virtuosi past and present. A prolific contributor to *The New Grove*, she holds honorary membership of clarinet societies worldwide.



# Preface

The chapters which make up this volume were commissioned from various friends and colleagues, all experts in their respective fields. Our purpose has been to stimulate constructive, penetrating thought about the past, present and future of the art of clarinet playing. Our survey includes a great deal of historical information, including discussion of the clarinet's structure and development, its fundamental acoustical principles, its chief exponents and its repertoire, as well as discussion of its role in jazz and on record. A particular focus of attention has been the relevance of our material to the individual player, reflecting the performing skill and experience of several of the authors. The chapters relating to the early clarinet and to the contemporary clarinet contain a deliberately practical bias, as indeed do the sections pertaining to individual members of the extensive clarinet family. Chapters on the mechanics of playing the clarinet, the professional clarinetist and on teaching the clarinet contrive to combine in varying degrees a practical and philosophical approach. I believe that this special combination of historical perspective and professional experience has not been attempted on such a scale in any previous book relating to the instrument. Overall, we have sought to encourage the kind of performer – much valued throughout musical history – for whom mental agility complements digital dexterity.

In this sense the book is intended as a true 'companion'; it is not, however, a 'compendium'. Comprehensiveness would require a volume many times the size of this. My contributors and I have therefore had to be selective in our essays and overall scheme, and in our illustrations, music examples and bibliographical references. But this has been balanced by the opportunity for each of us to address our subjects from a personal viewpoint, and this policy has been actively encouraged, subject to reasonable editorial constraints. As a result I am hopeful that the book will provoke thought, discussion and even argument about the world of the clarinet, as it reaches out to some unaccustomed (as well as more conventional) branches of the subject.

There are one or two conscious omissions (such as extensive investigation of the continuing role of the clarinet as a 'folk' instrument), but we have aimed to investigate most significant areas relating to the instrument. As editor, I must of course take full responsibility for the volume's overall proportions and various subdivisions, which were devised to comply with the understandable limitations of length imposed by the publisher. Our text is intended for all who have an interest in the clarinet – 'amateurs' as well as students and professional musicians. Exhaustive lists of repertoire or pedagogical literature have not been attempted, though our appendix lists early tutors and relevant sources available in facsimile, as well as a selection of modern teaching materials. In general, references have been chosen for inclusion where they have some special bearing on practical considerations.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the help given so willingly by so many in the preparation of this book. I am indebted to all my contributors for their co-operative attitude and prompt response to various problems and queries. As can readily be imagined, the circle of performers and writers whose advice has been sought is much more substantial than the mere list of contributors might imply, and this book would have been much poorer without their unstinting help. I am especially grateful to my wife Hilary for her encouragement throughout the project, since its development has entailed long periods of absence at the word-processor, even throughout normal bouts of concert preparation and frantic searches for a playable clarinet reed. Lastly, I must extend my sincere thanks to Penny Souster and her team at Cambridge University Press, for their helpful advice and firm but unobtrusive guidance in bringing the book to fruition.

Colin Lawson

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## Illustrations

Bayerisches Nationalmuseum, Munich: Fig. 1.1

Clive Barda, London: Fig. 5.4

Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg: Figs. 1.2, 2.1

Archiv der Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde, Vienna: Fig. 1.3

International Music Publications: Fig. 11.2

The Merlin Company: Fig. 11.1

Mühlfeld family collection: Fig. 5.1

Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna: Fig. 8.5

Sächsische Landesbibliothek, Dresden: Fig. 1.4

Clarinets from the Shackleton collection in Figs. 2.2–2.5 were photographed by Dona Haycraft

Fig 3.1 is reproduced with the consent of the publishers from *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* ed. by Stanley Sadie, 20 vols. (c Macmillan Publishers Ltd, London, 1980)

## Music examples

Boosey and Hawkes: Exx. 3.3 and 3.10

Breitkopf & Härtel: Ex. 10.3

Chantry Publications: Ex. 3.14

Peters Edition: Ex. 10.1

Universal Edition: Ex. 10.2

# Abbreviations, fingering and notation

The following books are identified in the text only by their authors' surnames:

ANTHONY BAINES, *Woodwind Instruments and their History* (London, 1957; 3rd edn, 1967)

JACK BRYMER, *Clarinet* (London, 1976)

OSKAR KROLL, *The Clarinet* (tr. Hilda Morris, ed. by Anthony Baines, London, 1968)

GEOFFREY RENDALL, *The Clarinet* (London, 1954; 3rd edn rev. by Philip Bate, 1971)

Clarinet fingerings are assigned the following digital indicators: Lth, L1, L2, L3 and L4 (left hand thumb and four fingers); Rth, R1, R2, R3 and R4 (right hand).

Pitch registers are indicated in the usual manner: middle C just below the treble staff is indicated as  $c'$ , with each successive octave higher shown as  $c''$ ,  $c'''$ ,  $c''''$  etc. and the two octaves below shown respectively as  $c$  and  $C$ . Under this scheme the lowest written note of the clarinet is represented as  $e$  and the top of the clarinet register as  $c'''$ , the extreme high register extending to  $c''''$  and beyond.