The Swing Era Clarinetists and Their Contributions to Twentieth-Century Clarinet Repertoire

D.M.A. Document

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Abstract

Due to its popularity in the swing era and its established reputation as an orchestral, chamber, and solo instrument, the clarinet played an important role in continuing the fusion of jazz and classical music in the decades that followed the initial explosion of the jazz influence on American and European cultures. Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Woody Herman became famous for their roles as bandleaders and clarinetists of the swing era; they also expanded the repertory for the clarinet by commissioning and inspiring many works with clarinet as solo instrument. The fame of these musicians, along with the freshness and popularity of jazz, attracted the attention of composers of art music at the time. The commissions of these swing era clarinetists are partially responsible for a significant expansion of the clarinet repertoire during the second half of the twentieth century.

The use of jazz elements in the works composed for these clarinetists make them useful as clarinet repertory pieces. Study and performance of these works allow classically trained clarinetists the opportunity to expand their techniques. Through the use of extended techniques such as growls and glissandi, new scale patterns, complex rhythms, and tone colors that move beyond those needed for Classical and Romantic period chamber works, the clarinetist becomes a well-rounded musician.
This document explores significant works written for the clarinet in the late 1940s; specifically, those commissioned by Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Woody Herman. The elements of jazz used in concert works by both American and European composers reveal the influence that jazz had on compositional tradition at the time will be illuminated. In addition to establishing background for each of the swing era’s most prominent clarinetists and each composer’s hand in the jazz world, this research includes context and analyses of Béla Bartók’s *Contrasts*, Darius Milhaud’s Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, Aaron Copland’s Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra with Harp and Piano, Norman Dello-Joio’s Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra, Igor Stravinsky’s *Ebony Concerto*, and Leonard Bernstein’s *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs*. 
Dedication

This document is dedicated to my dear friend and jazz piano genius, Paul Johnston, and to my miniature, Alison Mackenzie Watkins.
Acknowledgments

The following document benefited from the insights and directions of several people. For this document, I must first thank my co-advisor and clarinet professor, Professor James M. Pyne, whose musicianship, guidance, and wisdom has inspired me since I met him. I owe equal gratitude to the co-advisor of my doctoral committee who graciously served as the advisor for this document. Dr. Danielle Fosler-Lussier exemplifies the high quality of scholarship to which I aspire, and she guided my research in ways I could not have imagined. She helped me find new directions, and the priority that she gave my work encouraged me to bring a long project to an end. Next, I would like to thank the complete doctoral committee and outside reader: Professor James Pyne, Dr. Danielle Fosler-Lussier, Professor Robert Sorton, and Dr. Stephen M. Gavazzi.

I must also thank my family for their continued support throughout my academic endeavors. My mother, Marilyn Allen Feathers, has been a beacon throughout my life, constantly reminding me that all things are possible. I am also indebted to Jackie Bretz for serving as my on-campus agent. I certainly could not have done this from afar without her assistance. I owe a wealth of gratitude to all of my friends and colleagues who have provided endless support and encouragement throughout this process. Finally, I would like to thank my clarinet students for their support, inspiration, good reeds, and smiling faces.
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Chapter 1: Background and Methodology

As jazz emerged as a new musical genre in the early years of the twentieth century, it influenced many aspects of art. From the poetry of Langston Hughes, to the artwork of Pablo Picasso, to movies such as *The Jazz Singer*, this new music shaped culture on both sides of the Atlantic and had a noticeable impact on music of the twentieth century. In America, prominent composers such as Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein integrated elements of jazz, an indigenous popular music, in their compositions. In France and England, composers Darius Milhaud, Constant Lambert, and Maurice Ravel fused jazz and classical idioms.¹ Milhaud’s jazz-influenced works include *La création du monde, Le Boeuf sure le Toit, Rag Caprices*, and later, a concerto composed for Benny Goodman. Ravel’s ballet-opera, *L’Enfant et les Sortilèges*, is another example of a French composition that incorporates jazz music. In France, due in part to the country’s expansion into parts of Tunisia, composers like Milhaud interpreted American jazz as “authentic music which had its roots in the darkest corners of the Negro soul.”² The result of the African influence, “art nègre,” became synonymous with primitivism. Igor Stravinsky used elements of ragtime in works such as *l’Histoire du Soldat, Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo, Ragtime for Eleven Instruments, and the Ebony*.

Concerto. Stravinsky, a modernist composer who claimed that he had never heard jazz, but had only seen it in print, used elements of ragtime as a novelty in his own jazz-influenced compositions.³

In Germany, it was the white American dance bands, not African-American jazz that proved influential. After World War One, American musicians were less likely to tour this country at the outset of jazz; thus, jazz performances occurred when German musicians imitated the recordings of jazz music that had become available. It was only in the later 1920s that American jazz groups, such as Paul Whiteman’s band made their way into Germany.⁴ To the German composers, American jazz was considered popular (American) music. In his article about the composer, Willi Reich said that Paul Hindemith “suffered the influence of jazz.” This influence was evident in his Kammermusik No. 1 for small orchestra and in his Suite 1922 for piano.⁵ Likewise, Kurt Weill’s Threepenny Opera, Mahagonny Songspiel, and its resulting full-length opera, Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny, were works that combined a modernist musical language, popular jazz, and dance idioms.⁶

Due to its popularity in the swing era and established reputation as an orchestral, chamber, and solo instrument, the clarinet played an important role in continuing the fusion of jazz and classical music in the decades that followed the initial explosion of the

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³ Ibid., 183.
⁴ Ibid., 190.
⁵ Willi Reich, “Paul Hindemith,” The Musical Quarterly 17, no. 4 (October 1931): 487.
jazz influence on American and European cultures. Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Woody Herman became famous for their roles as bandleaders and clarinetists of the swing era; they also expanded the repertoire for the clarinet by commissioning and inspiring many works with clarinet as solo instrument. The fame of these musicians, along with the freshness and popularity of jazz, attracted the attention of composers of art music at the time. The commissions of these swing era clarinetists are partially responsible for a significant expansion of the clarinet repertoire during the second half of the twentieth century.

**Jazz and the Clarinet**

Jazz began in New Orleans, a melting pot of African, Caribbean, and European cultures, around the turn of the twentieth century. Jazz was originally considered popular music, not art music. Seldom were jazz musicians trained in the art of performing classical music. In fact, the members of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band (ODJB) were often very clear about their lack of musical training in interviews. Larry Shields, the clarinetist in the ODJB, introduced an entirely new style of clarinet playing. Listeners heard a “repeated squeal, a high E-flat…thin, abrasive tone sounds like a wild cry as it carries above the rest of the band,” along with his frequent use of brash glissandi and tone laden with vibrato. The use of the clarinet’s upper register was habitual in Dixieland jazz.

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7 Terry Teachout, “Jazz,” *The Wilson Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (Summer 1988): 68.
because clarinetists were not always fluent in technique that included passages that moved from the chalumeau register of the clarinet to pitches “above the break” that included the register key. In the early New Orleans jazz groups, the clarinet played a very prominent role. Because of its distinctive tone color and loud dynamic capabilities, the clarinet emerged as the only instrument capable of competing with the cornet. Standard instrumentation in these ensembles included a bass brass instrument (tuba or euphonium), a trombone, a trumpet or cornet, an alto and a baritone (brass) horn, a clarinet, a snare, and a bass drum. The trumpet, clarinet, and trombone were used together as the featured melodic wind section in these early New Orleans jazz groups. The trumpet or cornet served as the lead instrument and stayed close to the melody, and the trombone was used to reinforce the harmony. The clarinet’s role in the ensemble was to embellish the melody above the trumpet line, functioning as a coloratura soprano line.\textsuperscript{9} The earliest jazz musicians introduced the concept of swing, based on a rhythm section with a regular, recurring pulse, with syncopated and improvised melodies in the horn lines.\textsuperscript{10}

Gunther Schuller called the clarinetists of early jazz the “prima donnas of the band, second only to a few outstanding cornet players.”\textsuperscript{11} The most famous clarinetists in New Orleans jazz included Larry Sheilds, Jimmie Noone, Barney Bigard, Leon Roppolo, and finally, Sidney Bechet, who was the most distinguished of these.\textsuperscript{12} When these

\textsuperscript{9} Leroy Ostransky. "Early Jazz," \textit{Music Educators Journal} 64, no. 6 (1978): 36.
\textsuperscript{10} Teachout, “Jazz,” 67.
\textsuperscript{12} Ullman, “The Clarinet in Jazz,” 586.
clarinetists took their music to the Chicago nightclubs, it had great influence on young jazz enthusiasts, including young Benny Goodman.\(^\text{13}\) When the ODJB toured the country, making stops in New York and Chicago, the group secured the reputation as one of the most important white jazz bands active in the early jazz age. In an article on the creation of early jazz, Court Carney said that the ODJB’s “success represents the beginning of the diffusion of early jazz from New Orleans to the rest of the country.”\(^\text{14}\) Due to the invention of the phonograph, the earliest jazz recordings were produced by the ODJB and made their way to parts of Europe.

Bechet was one of the most important early jazz clarinetists to merge the early jazz styles of ragtime with brash clarinet and soprano sax solos. Bechet, like Larry Shields, was known primarily as a clarinetist who possessed an exceptional clarinet technique and also used a strong vibrato. He only received a few formal clarinet lessons, modeling his sound of that of older clarinetists in New Orleans. Further, he toured parts of Europe with the Southern Syncopated Orchestra in 1919, and gained a bit of fame in France.\(^\text{15}\) Along with the other early jazz clarinetists, Bechet contributed significantly to the role of the clarinet as a solo instrument in jazz and influenced the style of clarinet playing used in jazz in the years following. The contributions of early jazz clarinetists paved the way for the clarinet’s role in the swing and big band jazz of the 1930s.

\(^{14}\) Court Carney, “New Orleans and the Creation of Early Jazz,” *Popular Music and Society* 29, no. 3 (July 2006): 308.
\(^{15}\) Ibid., 307.
The swing era, defined by the big band where the clarinet was less prominent, clarinetists doubled the saxophone parts in the reed sections. The vibrato of the New Orleans clarinet did not fit into this setting, and it was required of the musicians to be proficient in reading music. The clarinet, considered the “prima donna” of the New Orleans jazz ensembles, assumed the same role in the swing era because of its ability to be heard over an entire big band.16

Elements of Jazz

Early jazz was a hybrid of ragtime, early Afro-American folk music, European hymns, and light classical music.17 The musical elements that characterized early jazz include specific instrumentation and textures, improvisation, syncopation, repetition and variation of motives, and new timbres created by instruments through the development of new techniques.18 Timbres specific to jazz include mutes, growls, vibrato, pitch bending, flutter tonguing, and the use of glissandi, namely in the clarinet and trombone. Also among the sounds heard in jazz is the mixture of the major and minor modes to create a blues scale.19 These early elements of jazz have remained staples of the jazz idiom throughout history. In order to understand how these elements may be used in compositions of art music to suggest the influence of jazz, it is useful to formulate a definition of jazz.

17 Teachout, “Jazz,” 67.
18 Ostransky, “Early Jazz,” 36-38.
19 Ibid., 36.
The elements of jazz are important mostly because it is so difficult to give jazz a concise definition. In an article with Robert Maxham and Robert Hoff, Mark Gridley, the author of *Jazz Styles: History and Analysis*, offered three approaches to defining jazz. The first of the three approaches offered is a strict definition approach. In this approach, we should consider two elements: improvisation (spontaneous composition by the player) and swing (easily flowing music with vigorous rhythm). This seems to be a concise and useful definition, and in at least fifteen of the leading texts used to introduce and teach jazz, these two elements are included.\(^{20}\) The second approach offered is that of “family resemblances,” in which the presence of any element that has ever helped create jazz music may qualify a performance as jazz. Precisely, “at least one (element) must be present for any performance to be called jazz, but no one particular element must always be present.”\(^{21}\) As Gridley, Maxham, and Hoff themselves state, this approach is problematic. By using this approach to define jazz in the present day, one could easily mislabel a musical genre, since elements of jazz are present in a variety of music that most musicians would not consider to be “jazz.” However, this definition may be useful in searching for jazz elements in art music. Since jazz has been so influential for both European and American composers, to observe the use of the jazz influence, even if only minimally used, in compositions of art music requires a broad perspective on the jazz elements that may be used in this fusion of styles. The final approach that this article


\(^{21}\) Ibid., 525.
offers is to define jazz loosely. Most simply stated, “jazz is not an all-or-none event, but is a continuum, a dimension: jazzness.”\textsuperscript{22} This approach defines jazz by including all of the historical elements that have been used to create jazz music. Since jazz developed from a fusion of musical styles that already existed, and has been a historically progressive style all together, this approach could also be very useful in observing jazz influences in all music. However, it may not be as useful for research because it seems to consider jazz more as a state of mind, rather than something that can be pinpointed.

“Improvisation is the heart and soul of jazz,” according to Gunther Schuller.\textsuperscript{23} Musicologist Sigmund Spaeth, who specialized in popular music, said that “it is possible to take any conventional piece of music and jazz it.” He went on to say that jazz is merely a method of treatment, not a musical form.\textsuperscript{24} Leonard Bernstein’s definition of jazz offers a different perspective:

Jazz is a very big word; it covers a multitude of sounds, all the way from the earliest Blues to Dixieland bands, to Charleston bands, to Swing bands, to Boogie-Woogie, to crazy Bop, to cool Bop, to Mambo—and much more. It is all jazz…it is an original kind of emotional expression, in that it is never wholly sad or wholly happy…Rhythm is the first thing you associate with the word ‘jazz.’…But jazz could not be jazz without its special tonal colors, the actual sound values you hear…A Popular song doesn’t become jazz until it is improvised on, and there you have the real core of all jazz: improvisation.\textsuperscript{25}

Because of Bernstein’s reputation as a composer, his impression of jazz is of particular interest. While he spoke to the importance of improvisation and rhythm in jazz, he also

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 527.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Schuller, \textit{History of Jazz}, 58.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Gridley, “Three Approaches to Defining Jazz,” 513.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
touched on the importance of the expression and special tone colors that are associated with the music.

**Jazz and The Composer**

Jazz had a noticeable effect on the compositions of European and American classical music. In Europe, the reasons for this include the end of the First World War and fascination with Africa and the resulting “art négre;” as evident in the artwork of Picasso, and the music of Milhaud.\(^{26}\) Stemming from principles of primitivism and exoticism, composers in Europe were more fascinated with the jazz musicians than with the serious composers in the United States. In a letter to his wife, Paul Hindemith raved about Duke Ellington. Similarly, Sergei Rachmaninoff was inspired after hearing Fats Waller in Harlem. From a standpoint of primitivism, it was the “rhythmic vitality” of jazz that provoked and inspired these composers.\(^{27}\) The perceived genuineness and foreign qualities of the African-American roots of jazz music piqued the interest of European composers, for whom these elements seemed to revitalize their own musical culture. Other musical reasons for the use of jazz in European classical music point to modernism. To many composers who had reached the “exhaustion of tonal harmony,” borrowing jazz harmonies was a natural solution; it “was unmistakably of its time yet

\(^{26}\) Scott, *From the Erotic to the Demonic*, 179.

unrepentantly tonal.” Further, by using melodies that were syncopated and improvisatory in nature, composers were able to use the academic forms already available to them and create something alluringly modern.

There is an important difference in compositional practices between the traditional jazz musician and the composer of art music: the earliest jazz musicians, such as Joe “King” Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Johnny Dodds, and Sidney Bechet, did not learn how to read music, nor did they receive substantial formal training in their respective instruments. Art-music composers, by contrast, worked in a literature tradition, composing for musicians who would play music in a fixed form from printed parts. By the 1930s, it was not uncommon for the jazz musician to have a background in classical music. This trend made it more probable that the jazz musicians of the swing era were able to read music. Clarinetists in the swing era, namely Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Woody Herman, had varying degrees of skill in performance of classical music. Benny Goodman studied with a number of leading clarinet teachers, while the amount of formal training that Artie Shaw and Woody Herman received is questionable. However, their success as big band leaders paired with their respective commissioning and successful performances of concert works gives evidence that they were trained to some degree, even if only to read music.

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28 Scott, *From the Erotic to the Demonic*, 179.
29 Ibid.
Given this difference between the musical practices of the jazz and art music traditions, how does the composer of classical music use the jazz influence? To what extent are the elements of jazz used in a composition shaped by its influence? According to Frank Salamone:

for European composers whom jazz influenced, there seemed to be a highly personalized epiphany, an epiphany and conversion that were suited to the individual temperament of the composer. 32

If it was indeed primitivism that produced the intrigue associated with jazz for the composer, jazz rhythms—dance-like, driving and steady, or syncopated—may be considered a dominant example of “jazzness” in classical music. The relationship between the composer and the jazz performer could also serve as a clue. If a composer particularly enjoyed the performance of a certain jazz musician or group, then specific instruments, tone colors, textures, melodic ideas, and harmonies could serve as a model for piece of classical music fused with jazz elements. The swing-era clarinetists discussed in this document offered inspiration to art-music composers especially through their characteristic use of timbre, their skill as improvisers, as well as their respective technical and lyrical abilities as musicians.

32 Ibid., 732.
Methodology

The clarinetists Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Woody Herman thrived in the swing era of jazz, a period that officially began in 1935, when Benny Goodman performed swing music with his big band at the Palomar Ballroom in Los Angeles. Though swing had been developing in the previous decade, it was this performance that popularized the concept and led to its spread across the Western Hemisphere. In addition to their contributions to jazz, these clarinetists commissioned many works, including significant works by Bela Bartók, Darius Milhaud, Aaron Copland, Norman Dello Joio, Igor Stravinsky, and Leonard Bernstein. Still other works were composed that were not commissions, but composed with these players in mind. Because these clarinet performers specialized in jazz, we would do well to ask: in what ways do the elements of jazz shape the compositions written for these clarinetists?

This diverse collection of music offers a broad perspective on the treatment of jazz within classical music. The works chosen for this discussion were commissioned for different media, including a chamber music setting, concertos written for clarinet and orchestra, and clarinet solos with the accompaniment of a traditional jazz band. The presentation of each work will include biographical information about the performer and composer, historical background pertinent to the commission, and finally, an assessment of each work, including the degree to which each composer used the jazz influence in the composition. The nature of these compositions confirms the influence of jazz in classical
music and also reveals pertinent information about the musicianship of Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and Woody Herman as clarinetists in both the jazz and classical settings.
Biographical Sketch

Benny Goodman was a leading jazz musician and clarinetist throughout most of the twentieth century. He put forth collaborative efforts in hundreds of jazz recordings and is responsible for a wealth of clarinet works composed all over the world during the 1900s. Rising against the economic hardships associated with the Great Depression, Benny Goodman was one of the first popular musicians to achieve stardom, a phenomenon that was similarly seen in the career of Frank Sinatra.\(^{33}\) Leading composers in both Europe and the United States composed significant works that were commissioned by the “King of Swing.” Benny Goodman worked to become a consummate musician through clarinet study, commissions, and performances, in both art music and jazz venues, resulting in a number of recordings of art music.

Benjamin David Goodman was born May 30, 1909, in Chicago, Illinois, the third of twelve children in a family of Jewish immigrants from Poland.\(^{34}\) At a very young age, the three eldest children were enrolled in free music lessons at Chicago’s Kehelah Jacob Synagogue. They soon moved on to study music at the Hull-House, where Goodman studied with Franz Schoepp. Schoepp was a German clarinetist, a former symphony

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player, and the teacher at Chicago’s Music School. From the very beginning, Goodman received instruction in the art-music tradition. It became very difficult for him to practice regularly because his family lived very close to Mount Sinai Hospital, where most of the patients were very sick and did not want to be bothered with the “racket” that was Goodman’s daily regimen. He remedied this problem by enrolling in a private school where classes did not begin until 11:30 in the morning. Ultimately, Goodman’s study with Schoepp in his formative years had great impact on his concept of clarinet playing and tone.

Because of the difficulties that came along with managing school and a professional music career, at the age of fourteen, Goodman made the decision to drop out of school. He was playing late-night big band gigs in the Chicago area at least four nights a week to help support his family. Thus, his professional career began, set in motion by his initiation into the Ben Pollack Band in 1925. With this group, he toured and recorded extensively, in a time when it was a struggle for any musician to make a name for himself. Soon after leaving Pollack’s band, Goodman met John Hammond, a violist and member of the wealthy Vanderbilt family, who wished to employ Goodman in recording contracts under the Columbia and Parlophone labels. This relationship also proved to be an important element in Goodman’s promotion as a classical musician.

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36 Ibid., 50.  
37 Ibid., 12.  
38 Gioia, The History of Jazz, 140.
Goodman's first classical performance took place in 1935 after Hammond approached Goodman about possibly learning the clarinet part for Mozart's Clarinet Quintet, K. 581. Goodman stated:

one day early in spring, John asked me if I had ever played any legitimate clarinet music. I said: “Well, I used to play cadenzas with the orchestra on the Hoffman Ginger Ale Hour.” But John said that wasn’t what he meant. He said he was thinking of something like the Mozart Clarinet Quintet which I don’t think, up to that time, I had ever heard, or even known about.\textsuperscript{39}

Hammond formed a string quartet and the group, along with Goodman, rehearsed once every week for three months. This group’s first performance of the quintet was at a party in the mansion of John Hammond’s mother. There were at least two hundred people in attendance, many of them jazz enthusiasts.\textsuperscript{40} On November 5, 1938, Goodman gave another public recital in New York City’s Town Hall. He performed Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet with the Budapest String Quartet, and in the same year, released a recording of this work with the same group under the Victor label.

In the year leading up to his recording of Mozart’s Quintet with the Budapest String Quartet, Goodman made his first attempt at recording the work with the Pro Arte Quintet. In Chicago the morning after a big band gig, Goodman abruptly left the studio after playing only a few bars. He was not satisfied with the sound he was making and felt that it was directly related to his reed selection. Before reattempting any recordings, he

\textsuperscript{40} John Albert Snavely, "Benny Goodman's Commissioning of New Works and Their Significance for Twentieth-Century Clarinetists" (DMA Dissertation, The University of Arizona, 1991), 16.
\textsuperscript{41} Collier, \textit{Benny Goodman and the Swing Era}, 339.
spent a great deal of time practicing, perfecting his reed supply, and expanding his knowledge of reed adjustment. Though the recording he produced with the Budapest String Quartet in 1938 was more successful than his first attempt, it was not well received by all listeners. Patrick Hughes, an English composer and early jazz critic, noted that as a player of Mozart, he has not yet developed a personality. There is nothing in his playing individual enough to make the listener say the next time he hears a Goodman recording: That is Benny, of course…Taking the performance as a whole, Goodman’s share is frankly undistinguished.

In his *New York Times* review of Goodman’s album with the Budapest quartet, Compton Pakenham said that

> from the very first evenly blown clarinet arpeggio, it is obvious that the player is a musician in the right place. Throughout a beautifully proportioned performance, Goodman’s playing is quite the most restrained, even and lucid.

Though his recording of Mozart’s music received mixed reviews, Goodman was critical of his classical performance and understood his own inadequacies; as a result, he found means to correct his shortcomings.

Benny Goodman had several different teachers in the years following. He was under the tutelage of Simeon Bellison, principal clarinetist of the New York Philharmonic, in the years 1938-39. Between 1940 and 1941, he studied with Gustave Langenus. It was through his friend, John Hammond, that Goodman met and studied with Eric Simon, a clarinetist, composer, and conductor with close ties to important figures

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and institutions in the art music world. As a conductor, Simon worked with Leonard Bernstein, Pablo Casals, and Leopold Stokowski and he played with the Moscow Philharmonic and the Vienna State Opera orchestra before emigrating to the United States. He then taught at the Mannes College of Music in New York City. In his obituary, Benny Goodman and Artie Shaw were both listed as his clarinet students. In an interview with John Snavely, Eric Simon said the following:

he [Goodman] was a very intelligent pupil. Whatever I told him, he never forgot. He learned very fast, and that can be a drawback as well as an advantage. When you play classical music, you have to live with a work for a while, sometimes a whole lifetime. As far as I’m concerned, you cannot be a one hundred percent wonderful jazz clarinetist and a one hundred percent good classical clarinetist, because classical music in itself takes one hundred percent of your thinking.

Despite the challenge in working in both classical and jazz idioms, Goodman continued to pursue creative outlets in both genres.

Perhaps one of the most important periods of Goodman’s clarinet study is the time he spent studying with Reginald Kell, beginning in the late 1940s. Aside from being a classically trained virtuoso clarinetist, Kell played with double-lip embouchure. Through private study, Goodman grew as a classical artist and learned the double-lip-embouchure technique, a method of clarinet playing used by Kell. While most clarinetists play the clarinet with their bottom lip curled over the bottom teeth and the top teeth pressed against the top of the mouthpiece (single-lip embouchure), a small number

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47 Collier, Benny Goodman and the Swing Era, 340.
48 Ibid., 340-341.
of clarinetists, such as Regina Kell, play the clarinet with both the bottom and the top lips covering the teeth (double-lip embouchure). Double-lip embouchure enables the clarinetist to open the throat, in turn offering a better ability to control pitch. This technique also helps with articulation and resonance.\textsuperscript{49} The switch to double-lip embouchure allowed for less vibrato and took some brightness out of Goodman’s clarinet tone. More importantly, it created a new concept of tone for all jazz clarinetists that had not been considered before.\textsuperscript{50} In addition to his embouchure adjustments, Goodman also found that in order to play classical music, he had to find a reed that was better suited for playing chamber music.\textsuperscript{51} It may be deduced that the reeds Goodman chose had a stronger tip than the reeds that he used for his jazz playing; the sounds produced in his recordings of classical music is much more refined than the sound he used in jazz recordings.

Throughout the late 1930s, 1940s, and 50s, Benny Goodman recorded works by Bartók, Debussy, and Mozart; some of these recordings remained unreleased. He performed Mozart’s Concerto for Clarinet with numerous orchestras, including the NBC Symphony Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic, the Tanglewood Festival Orchestra, and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. With the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston String Quartet, he released an album including Mozart’s Concerto, K. 622, and the Quintet, K. 581, in 1956. Though Goodman’s name is synonymous with the Swing

\textsuperscript{49} Ibid., 341.
\textsuperscript{50} Crowther, \textit{Benny Goodman}, 50.
\textsuperscript{51} Snavely, “Benny Goodman’s Commissioning of New Works,” 16.
Era, he was also made a name for himself as a well-known legitimate clarinet soloist who performed serious works with major orchestras. He was one of the first famous American clarinetists, and it is important to recognize how preeminently Goodman influenced twentieth-century chamber music and concerti that were written for the clarinet by composers who had little or nothing to do with jazz. Because of his iconic status and commitment to artistry, Goodman was highly esteemed not only in jazz circles, but also in the classical realm. Goodman commissioned Morton Gould to compose Derivations for clarinet and band. As gifts, Gould also composed Benny’s Gig for clarinet and double bass, and Recovery Music for solo clarinet. Further, Goodman commissioned Malcolm Arnold, Aaron Copland, Paul Hindemith, Gordon Jenkins, Allen Shawn, Sir William Walton, Alex North, Benjamin Britten, Ingolf Dahl, and Darius Milhaud to compose concertos for clarinet and orchestra. Of these concertos, the Britten and Dahl never fully materialized. Other successful commissions include Francis Poulenc’s Sonata for Clarinet and Piano, Rendezvous for Clarinet and Strings by Alan Shulman, and Béla Bartók’s Contrasts for clarinet, violin and piano. Aside from Goodman’s commissions, there are works written in homage of his artistry. Respectfully Yours, Mr. Goodman! by Kamilló Lendvay, and a movement in David Baker’s Heritage Trio entitled “BG,” are two pertinent examples.

The three works that have been chosen for discussion are Contrasts by Béla Bartók, Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra by Darius Milhaud, and Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra (with Harp and Piano) by Aaron Copland. Contrasts was
the first in the series of commissions linked to Goodman. It is a significant work, one of
the most eminent chamber works written for the violin, clarinet, and piano trio, and
continues to receive significant attention as a repertory work. Copland’s Concerto is
likewise frequently performed and recorded, and stands alone as a significant piece of
music, as well as a clarinet concerto.

By contrast, Milhaud’s Concerto was not well received by Goodman when it was
composed in 1941. Goodman said that the piece was too difficult, and consequently, he
never performed it. Since this concerto is so difficult for the clarinetist, and since it was
not recorded early on, it does not share the same reputation as the aforementioned works.
(However, it serves as a difficult study piece for the clarinetist, and has since been
recorded a handful of times.) The transcription of Milhaud’s Scaramouche, for
Saxophone and Orchestra that occurred alongside the commission of this concerto, at the
request of Goodman, is noteworthy. Goodman eagerly performed this transcription in
1941. There has been detailed documentation linked to the correspondence between
Milhaud and Goodman regarding the commissioning of the concerto. The business
connection between Milhaud and Goodman shows us the financial and personal risks
composers take when agreeing to commission a work.
The Commissions

*Contrasts* by Béla Bartók

In January of 1939, Goodman premiered the first in a series of works that he commissioned for the clarinet. This was a work composed by Hungarian composer Béla Bartók, *Contrasts* for piano, violin, and clarinet. The first page of the score reads, “Written for and dedicated to Benny Goodman and Joseph Szigeti.” This trio was composed for Bartok’s friend and fellow Hungarian, Szigeti; and also for Goodman, who had previously requested a rhapsody in two movements of equal length so that he could fit each movement on the side of a 78 rpm record.\(^{52}\) Joseph Szigeti was the violinist who premiered Bartók’s Rhapsody for Violin, No. 1, in Budapest, in November of 1929, and also the violinist to whom that work was dedicated.\(^{53}\)

Though he obviously composed this piece for clarinet as a result of Goodman’s commission, Bartók’s use of the clarinet in a chamber work also suggests a hint of nationalism. His first experience with the instrument can be traced back to the influence of an instrument used in military bands in Bartók’s homeland called the tárogató. The tárogató is a conically bored double reed instrument played in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by these traveling musicians. In 1896, instrument maker Wenzel Josef Schunda modernized the instrument by replacing the double reed with a mouthpiece that resembled the existing clarinet mouthpieces. The new version of the tárogató


produced a more mellow sound that could blend easily with other instruments, and it has remained very important to Hungarian folk music.\textsuperscript{54}

The premiere of this work was on January 9, 1939, in Carnegie Hall. In its first performance, only the outer movements were performed, and the work was referred to as \textit{Rhapsodies}. This is the title that Goodman chose for the piece. The \textit{New York Times} reported after the premiere that

the Hungarian composer has here taken some of the most earthy and boisterous tunes of his native peasantry, decorated them with garlands of improvisational cadenzas and spiced them up with the rollicking rhythms of rude, stampeding feet and whirling skirts. In so doing, he spared neither the fingers nor ears nor lips of the performers, nor cared little what he asked from the harassed instruments.\textsuperscript{55}

This reviewer’s opinion on the most “earthly and boisterous tones of his native peasantry,” was likely formed by the clarinet writing and resulting performance. In an interview with Goodman’s daughter, Rachel Edelson, John Snavely found that Goodman filled the seats of Carnegie Hall that night by handing out complimentary tickets.\textsuperscript{56}

Goodman later recorded the piece with Szigeti for Columbia Records.

Bartók did not compose this work in the jazz style, and it would be very difficult to relate a piece based primarily Hungarian folk music to jazz. However, if we look closely, we can find footprints of jazz elements, suggesting that Bartók wrote this piece for Benny Goodman, the jazz clarinetist. The harmonic basis of \textit{Contrasts} is rooted firmly in Hungarian folk music. The use of the Hungarian minor scale (a harmonic minor

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 97.
\textsuperscript{56} Snavely, “Benny Goodman’s Commissioning of New Works,” 41.
scale with a raised fourth scale degree) paired with the major and minor modes give the work a wide range of harmonic language, in many ways challenging that of progressive jazz.\textsuperscript{57} \textit{Contrasts} is the only chamber work of Bartók’s that included a wind instrument.

Around the time of this composition, Bartók composed the Sonata for Two Pianos and Percussion (his only chamber work to include percussion) and his Sixth String Quartet.\textsuperscript{58}

The first movement of the work, “Verbunkos,” a “recruiting dance,” is in ternary form. The tempo is moderato ($\dot{=}100$). The Verbunkos was a traditional Hungarian dance performed by musicians and dancers that traveled between villages to recruit members for the army. Szigeti recounted that Bartók told him that, “the beginning of the work was suggested to him by the pizzicato opening of the ‘blues’ section in Ravel’s Sonata, which we had played together so often.”\textsuperscript{59} Szigeti was referring to the second movement of this 1927 work, an example of French music melded with African-American blues. After the two-measure Ravel quote, the clarinet enters with a four-note motive, a major triad followed by an augmented fourth (flatted fifth). This motive (shown below in concert pitch) is played by the solo clarinet at its entrance in the third measure of the movement.

Example 2.1, Béla Bartók \textit{Contrasts}, Movement I, mm. 3-4; opening clarinet motive (in concert pitch)

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 34.
Consequently, played by the violin at measure 18, is a four-note descending motive with a major triad preceded by a flatted third.

Example 2.2 Béla Bartók, *Contrasts*, Movement I, mm. 18-19; descending violin motive

Since the flatted fifth and third are used to create blues scales in jazz, Bartók’s use of these intervals to shape motives in this movement was not accidental. Each of the outer sections of the form begin with the clarinet’s statement of the primary motive, beginning with the major triad followed by an augment fourth, which we have already labeled a “blue” note. (See ex. 2.3) (The examples used below in this discussion of Contrasts are for Clarinet in A.)

Example 2.3 Béla Bartók, *Contrasts*, Movement I, mm. 3-5; opening clarinet motive, expanded
Throughout the first movement of *Contrasts*, the clarinet writing exemplifies Bartók’s familiarity with Goodman’s brilliant technique coupled with his ability to achieve a bright clarinet tone. The first movement ends with a clarinet cadenza that reinforces the altered pitches we have mentioned. Though the result reminds the listener more of gypsy music, the repetitive nature, fluid scale passages, and use of the altissimo register is similar to clarinet riffs in a jazz solo. The technical difficulty of this passage speaks to Goodman’s technical ability.

Example 2.4 Béla Bartók, *Contrasts*, Movement I, Clarinet Cadenza

The second movement of the work, “Pihenô,” which means ”relaxation,” was the last part of the work to be composed and serves as a slow middle movement, and did not appear until after the premiere. The tempo marking is “Lento,” and the meter shifts from 4/4 time to 3/4, 6/4 throughout. The general tonal center of the movement is B-flat, and unlike the title suggests, sounds far from relaxing for the clarinetist. It is 51 measures
long and lingers mostly in the pianissimo to mezzo-piano dynamic range. The phrases are very long and oddly paced, always moving very rhythmically close to the violin line. In the entire movement, there is no rest for the clarinet.

The last movement, “Sebes” means “fast dance,” and refers to the improvised dance performed by the young recruits, signifying their induction into the army. The movement is fast ($\textit{f}=140$), and in 2/4 time. It opens with two sets of tritones in the violin, which requires the use of a second, scordatura violin that is replaced during a clarinet and piano vamp at measure 30.\(^6\) This detuned violin, along with the slightly brighter sound of the B-flat clarinet, replacing the A clarinet, give this movement a more brazen tone color. The “Sebes” character is captured in this movement by measures of running sixteenth notes and syncopation, in both the clarinet and violin parts. Again, the demands of this work speak to Goodman’s technical facility.

Goodman requested this commission because he wanted to establish a reputation as a performer of both classical and jazz music. The clarinet writing in this piece, though idiomatic in some regards, is very difficult. There are many ensemble challenges including cadenzas, mixed meters, hemiolas, fast tempos, awkward scale passages, and unison passages. The recording of Contrasts released by Bartók, Szigeti, and Goodman is a good resource for musicians wishing to perform the piece; it is a primary source of a performance of a composition by the musicians for whom it was written. In regard to Goodman’s performance of the clarinet line, it was respectable. The true difficulties lie in

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areas of intonation, particularly in the unison lines. In the original recording, there are places where the intonation between the violin and clarinet leaves much to be desired. Goodman’s clarinet tone is also disappointing, particularly during the lyrical slow movement, the extreme low register of the clarinet, and during the awkward scale passages in the first and last movements. Considering that this piece was based on Hungarian folk songs, the clarinet tone in this performance, often quite brash, may be appropriate.

**Concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra by Darius Milhaud**

Goodman next commissioned a work from French composer Darius Milhaud. At the outset, Milhaud was very enthusiastic about the project. Milhaud’s initial admiration for Goodman was rooted in his long-standing interest in jazz and other forms of popular music. When Milhaud traveled to Brazil in 1917, he expressed his fascination with the popular dance music he heard there:

> I was intrigued and fascinated by the rhythms of this popular music. There was an imperceptible pause in the syncopation, a careless catch in the breath, a slight hiatus, which I found very difficult to grasp.\(^6\)

Milhaud wanted to implement these new musical elements into his own compositions. Between 1918 and 1920, Milhaud composed music to accompany a Charlie Chaplin film, using music from a popular Brazilian tune, “O boi no tehado.” The resulting piece,

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entitled *Le boeuf sur le toit*, was infused with boisterous rhythms: it was never used in a Chaplin film but was performed instead as concert music.  

In late 1920 Milhaud experienced American jazz firsthand; he heard Billy Arnold’s Novelty Jazz Band perform in Hammersmith. Milhaud recorded his perceptions of this performance in his autobiography:

> The new music was extremely subtle in its use of timbre: the saxophone breaking in, squeezing out the juice of dreams, or the trumpet, dramatic or languorous by turns, the clarinet, frequently played in the upper register, the lyrical use of the trombone, glancing with its slide over quarter-tones in crescendos of volume and pitch, thus intensifying the feeling…punctuated by the complex rhythms of the percussion, a kind of inner beat, the vital pulse of the rhythmic life of the music. The constant use of syncopation in the melody was of such contrapuntal freedom that gave it the impression of unregulated improvisation.

In 1922, Milhaud traveled to America, where he experienced African-American jazz at a club in Harlem. His impression of the music is that it was truly authentic, and that “we find the source of this formidable rhythmic, as well as of such expressive melodies, which are endowed with a lyricism which only oppressed races can produce.”  

Milhaud attempted to use jazz timbres and effects, syncopations and complex rhythms in his own compositions, namely his 1923 chamber work, *La Création du Monde*, which is considered one of the first successful attempts to meld the early elements of jazz with modern classical

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music. The specific jazz elements that Milhaud found useful, particularly for chamber music, were the “jazz instruments and rhythms and melodic combinations.” In the year that La Création du Monde, was composed, he explained that, “we (French composers) are all very enthusiastic over this American music. All the melodies of the Blues are so well defined and melody is the prime essential in music.” Milhaud’s interest in composing with jazz elements lasted from his first exposure in Harlem in 1920, until 1926, when jazz was no longer considered fashionable among French composers. Though his preoccupation with jazz had passed, Milhaud’s concerto for Goodman retained the imprint of jazz in its rhythm and harmony.

Goodman had connections with Milhaud through his teacher, Eric Simon, and used Simon as a liaison to request a clarinet concerto. Goodman was also interested in obtaining an arrangement of Milhaud’s saxophone piece, Scaramouche, for clarinet and orchestra. Once this arrangement was made, it received much more attention from clarinetists than the concerto, likely because it is not as difficult to perform. In his dissertation covering the works commissioned by Benny Goodman, John Snavely included letters between Simon and Milhaud that are very useful in understanding why the concerto was not Milhaud’s most successful composition. These letters also reveal the

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65 Ibid., 83.
66 Ibid.
68 Gendron, Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club, 94.
disagreements between Goodman and Milhaud regarding pay, orchestration, and exclusivity rights.

Simon first wrote to Milhaud in October of 1941 regarding the concerto that Goodman wished to commission. Goodman was planning a tour, of both jazz and classical works, that was to begin in January of 1942 and according to the letter from Simon, “thought it would be very interesting to have in the repertory a contemporary concerto for clarinet and orchestra.” He turned to Milhaud, perhaps because of the connection he had through Simon. Milhaud’s response was a positive one; he was an admirer of Goodman’s clarinet playing and wished to compose the work for him.

Milhaud offered to compose this work for $1000 and give the sole performing rights to Goodman for one year. In further negotiations, Goodman offered $750 (though he was virtually a millionaire at the time), and requested exclusive rights to perform it for three years. His reason for requesting extended exclusivity rights was because, due to his big band engagements, the amount of time he could spend playing with an orchestra was limited. Furthermore, Goodman was also spending a great deal of money on commissions from other composers; it would be some time before he could perform all of the commissioned works.

Goodman was very specific about what he wanted Milhaud to compose. He wanted the concerto to be a twenty-minute composition for solo clarinet and string orchestra. He also requested that this work be written very quickly, as he was making the

69 Snavely, “Benny Goodman’s Commissioning of New Works,” 42.
request only two months before the tour for which he was requesting the work. In response to Goodman, Milhaud said:

I don’t see why he doesn’t want any clarinet in the orchestra. It is useful for the tutti. You do not do away with violins in a concerto for violins. I would of course avoid doing solos for the clarinets of the orchestra!70

Ultimately, Milhaud did use clarinets in the orchestra, and in regard to Goodman’s negotiation of the price of the work, Milhaud expressed the feeling that his work was not being valued appropriately:

Regarding the commission, I was surprised that B.G. would not accept my price since he knows that my prices are reasonable. I am aware of the great advantage it is to work for him as well as the admirable performances that would be given, and the great publicity that my work would receive. You might mention to him nicely that I am willing to prolong the duration of exclusivity free of charge and that I am a little disappointed he wants to decrease the amount I am asking for. However, given the great pleasure I will have to write this concerto for such a great artist, I am willing if he doesn’t change his mind to accept the deal for $750.00.71

Milhaud eventually accepted the offer for $750 and agreed to both a speedy rate of composition and three-years exclusive performing rights for Goodman.

Following Goodman’s wishes, Milhaud composed this concerto very rapidly. He worked non-stop for much of November 1941 so that Goodman would have the music in time for his upcoming tour. On November 24, 1941, Milhaud wrote to Simon asking when he would receive his contract for the work

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70 Snavely, “Benny Goodman’s Commissioning of New Works,” 43.  
71 Ibid.
from Goodman. By February of 1942, Goodman had still not performed Milhaud’s concerto. Milhaud wrote to Simon again inquiring as to when Goodman would perform it. In March, Simon responded to Milhaud stating that Goodman had sent his final payment but that he had not yet had time to perform the piece. The following quote from Milhaud’s letter back to Simon illustrates the disdain of the composer:

> I was delighted to write this piece for Benny Goodman. But remember with what haste I had to do this work! I would like to know Benny Goodman’s intentions and why, after rushing me so much, he has not played my concerto yet. Has he designated a date for the first performance, and where? Since he does not answer his letters quickly, I thought I would better address myself to you in order to have some news about my Concerto and to put your kindness to use.73

Milhaud’s Concerto was neither recorded nor performed by Goodman. When asked by clarinetist Mitchell Lurie why he never performed it, Goodman stated that there were “too many notes.” Goodman went on that the concerto was “non-stop with no place to breathe,” and that he simply “didn’t like it.”75

This work was composed early in Goodman’s classical career, and one might deduce that is the reason that he found the music too difficult. Ken Peplowski, one of the few clarinetists who has recorded Milhaud’s concerto, said that “on a technical level, it remains one of the most challenging pieces ever written for the instrument, and there are

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72 Ibid., 45.
73 Ibid., 46.
74 Ibid., 47.
75 Ibid., 46.
passages that are virtually unplayable as written in terms of breathing and phrasing.”

This concerto demands that the clarinetist play almost continuously in the first movement; in this 127 measure movement, there is only a three-measure break for the clarinet after its entrance in the ninth bar. The premiere of this work did not take place until January of 1946 by clarinetist Richard Joiner and the United States Marine Band.

The concerto was scored for solo clarinet, strings, pairs of woodwinds, and brass, percussion, and harp. The work contains four movements. The first movement, “Lively,” is in 6/8 time with an occasional measure of 9/8, and dance-like rhythms. In ABA form with a coda, the opening theme in the clarinet is a lyrical, playful one that is used to begin each of the outer sections of the movement (Ex. 2.3).

Example 2.5 Darius Milhaud, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement I, mm. 9-11; opening clarinet theme

The dotted rhythm from example 2.5 is repeated throughout the movement, mixed with intricate scale passages and arpeggios in the solo clarinet that are

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improvisatory in nature. Recalling that characteristics of jazz that Milhaud found usable in his own chamber works, especially syncopated rhythm, we can identify allusions to the jazz idiom in this movement. In measures 29 and 30 (Ex. 2.4) of the movement, the clarinet has a syncopated melody.

Example 2.6 Darius Milhaud, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement I, mm. 29-30; syncopated clarinet melody

At measure 103, there is an outburst in the clarinet line that is also characteristic of jazz; this line’s repeated triplet pattern built on a chromatic leaping sequence has a distinctive improvisational quality (Ex. 2.7).

Example 2.7 Darius Milhaud, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement I, m. 103; clarinet outburst

The second movement of Milhaud’s concerto is a rondo, in the key of G, and played, “in very strict time.” The rondo theme, played by both the tutti
orchestra and the soloist, includes a descending articulated sixteenth-note passage in the clarinet (Ex. 2.8).

Example 2.8 Darius Milhaud, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement II, mm. 2-4; rondo theme in the clarinet

The steady, driving sixteenth notes and syncopated rhythms that are used throughout the movement are reminiscent of ragtime; as is the alternation between arpeggiated and half-step melodic motion. One of the clearest examples of this in the clarinet solo may be seen beginning at measure 24 (Ex. 2.9).

Example 2.9 Darius Milhaud, Concerto for Clarinet, mm. 23-28; arpeggiated and half-step melodic motion

The lyrical third movement, marked “Slowly,” is in many ways, the most challenging of the four. The movement encompasses 112 measures, with long
sustained phrases throughout all registers of the clarinet, and only provides the clarinetist with two places to rest, each lasting two beats. (Milhaud does make up for this with a twelve-bar orchestral introduction to begin the fourth movement.) The movement is in ABA form and contains blues elements with orchestral ostinatos throughout. At measures 19-20 and again in measures 99-100, we can observe a distinct example of blues influence: an A-flat major chord in the accompaniment with a C-flat “blue note” sounding in the solo clarinet (Ex. 10).

Example 2.10, Darius Milhaud, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement III, mm. 99-100 (blue notes in the clarinet line)

The final movement of Milhaud’s concerto, “Lively,” brings back the flashy, improvisatory nature of the clarinet solo from the first movement, with syncopated melodies in both the clarinet and orchestral accompaniment. The movement is in sonata form, using seven themes, and begins with bold descending glissandi in the trombones. The use of glissandi is an example of Milhaud’s use of timbres and effects specific to jazz.
This concerto contains Milhaud’s clarinet writing at its finest; yet because of its technical and physical demands, it is not often performed. To date, it has been recorded only a couple of times. In 1994, clarinetist Eduard Brunner recorded Milhaud’s concerto with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. It is included on the album *Hommage a Benny Goodman*. In 1996, clarinetist Ken Peplowski recorded the work with the Bulgarian National Symphony, on *The Other Portrait*, an album that also features music by Miles Davis, Billy Strayhorn, and Duke Ellington.

**Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra with Harp and Piano by Aaron Copland**

It is undeniable that the most beloved of all of Goodman’s commissions is the Concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra with Harp and Piano that he asked Aaron Copland to compose for him in the late 1940s. This has become one of Copland’s best-known compositions. For clarinetists, this piece is one of the gems of the solo repertoire, though it is very difficult for both the soloist and the orchestra. This concerto was influenced in part by Copland’s exposure to jazz while he was studying in Paris. Copland, who attended the premiere of Milhaud’s *La Création du Monde*, was familiar with the effect that jazz had on French music of the Twenties. 78 Copland had a strong admiration for Milhaud’s compositions;

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namely for his use of “unpretentious yet stylish harmonies,” “earthly and dashing polyrhythms,” and the incorporation of the traits of French, Jewish, and American music in his compositions.\textsuperscript{79} Like the leading European composers of art music at the time, Copland found it impossible to ignore the jazz influence. For Copland though, using jazz in concert works was not for purposes of exoticism, but could be considered nationalism. On jazz, Copland said that

\begin{quote}
Jazz is not exotic here (United States) but indigenous, since it is the music an American has heard as a child, it will be traceable more and more frequently in his symphonies and concertos.\textsuperscript{80}
\end{quote}

Further, Copland’s perception of jazz and use of its elements in his compositions stem from his belief that “the essential character of jazz is its rhythm.”\textsuperscript{81} America lacked a “vital concert tradition” from which to build musical works, and because of that, Copland found it appropriate that serious composers consider jazz (and popular music) an “appealing folklore,” from which compositional ideas may be drawn.\textsuperscript{82} Copland’s own jazz-influenced compositions were \textit{Music for the Theatre} (1925) and his Piano Concerto (1926). Throughout his Clarinet Concerto, also written in the jazz spirit, there are many examples of jazz rhythms: including syncopation and swing melodies. On the jazziness of the concerto, Copland said:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{79} Howard Pollack. \textit{Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man} (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press), 67.
\textsuperscript{80} Aaron Copland. “Jazz Structure and Influence,” in \textit{Aaron Copland: A Reader, Selected Writings 1923-1972} (New York: Routledge), 87.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid., 83.
\textsuperscript{82} Pollack, \textit{Aaron Copland}, 113.
\end{quote}
The decision to use jazz materials was mine, inspired, of course, by Goodman’s playing. Although I didn’t mention this to him, I was certain that he would approve. Contrary to certain commentators, the jazz elements in the Clarinet Concerto have nothing to do with the “hot jazz” improvisation for which Benny Goodman and his sextet were noted.\textsuperscript{83}

Goodman did not make any specific instructions that the concerto was to be jazzy, nor did he seek out Copland because of his jazz-influenced compositions.

In addition to the presence of jazz elements, the concerto also displays a Latin American influence, as Copland spent the summer of 1947 in South America working for the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs and for the State Department. While he was there, he immersed himself in the national qualities of the music surrounding him.\textsuperscript{84} He developed a friendship with composer Alberto Ginastera in Argentina, and interacted with Heitor Villa-Lobos in Brazil. During his tour of Latin America, he began working on the Clarinet Concerto. After completing the first movement, he put it aside. Upon his return to the United States, he composed the film score to accompany a movie based on John Steinbeck’s book \textit{The Red Pony}, and then composed his \textit{Four Piano Blues}.\textsuperscript{85} After these, he completed the second movement of the Clarinet Concerto.

Fellow jazz clarinetist Woody Herman, who had become aware of Goodman’s commissioning of works from leading composers, was the first to request a concerto from Copland in 1946, but Copland denied his request.

\textsuperscript{83} Yeo, “Copland’s Clarinet Concerto,” 10.
\textsuperscript{84} Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, \textit{Copland Since 1943} (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1989), 78-82.
\textsuperscript{85} Ibid., 87-88.
Ultimately, Copland composed for Goodman because he had been a long-time admirer of his clarinet playing. It seemed only natural to write a concerto with him in mind. Copland said he thought this would give him a “fresh point of view.”

Upon receiving the music for the concerto, Goodman found it to be extremely difficult. He requested that Copland simplify parts of the opening and the cadenza so that he could perform it. As usual with Goodman’s commissions, he requested sole performing rights, this time for two years after the composition was complete. Copland completed the concerto in 1948, and it was not until Ralph McLane, principal clarinetist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, announced that he would premiere the work on November 18, 1950, that Goodman announced his first performance of the concerto. Goodman premiered Copland’s Concerto in New York on November 6, 1950, with the NBC Symphony, three weeks before McLane’s scheduled premiere.

Initially, Copland’s Concerto was not well received. Critics considered it lightweight in comparison to his previous output. A reviewer for the New York Herald Tribune remarked that, “It sounds as if some essential explanation were lacking, as if a ballet or a film belonging to it had been left out.” This listener may not have been far off, since the first movement has been compared to

86 Pollack, Aaron Copland, 424.
87 Copland and Perlis, Copland Since 1943, 94-96.
88 Ibid., 96.
Copland’s earlier music from *Our Town*.\(^{89}\) Copland was pleased that in spite of the lukewarm reception of this concerto, it ultimately became one of his most frequently performed works and a staple of the clarinet repertoire.\(^{90}\) Copland and Goodman performed the concerto together many times after it was composed, and through this, the concerto became an audience favorite. After Goodman (and McLane), some of the earliest clarinetists to perform the concerto were Gervase de Peyer (who also recorded it), Harold Wright, and Stanley Drucker, all clarinetists in major leading orchestras: the London Symphony, Boston Symphony, and New York Philharmonic respectively. These performances, paired with the recordings that Copland and Goodman produced together, were in Copland’s mind, the reason for the concerto’s success.\(^{91}\) Some clues about how Goodman performed the concerto may be seen in a review written about his 1960 performance at Carnegie Hall with the Orchestra of America, founded and conducted by Richard Korn:

> One could not be sure that Mr. Goodman was altogether happy with Mr. Korn’s tempos. The movement of his leg showed the clarinetist was beating his own. Whatever the explanation, the performance was not a very exhilarating one, though Mr. Goodman did a lot of expert playing that was unfailingly musical in tone.\(^{92}\)

\(^{89}\) Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 425.

\(^{90}\) Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 96.

\(^{91}\) Pollack, 96.

Copland’s Concerto is scored for solo clarinet, string orchestra (violins, violas, cellos and basses), with harp and piano. It was composed in two movements, with a cadenza separating the two. The first movement is simple and lyrical, in a restful ABA form. Copland called this movement a “Pas de deux.” The orchestral accompaniment is a stabilizing element of this movement, both harmonically and rhythmically, as an ostinato, which opens the movement. Played by the harp, celli, and basses, this ostinato continues as a short-long rhythmic figure in ascending tenths (Ex. 2.11). The primary theme, introduced by the clarinet in measure 4, is legato with leaps into the altissimo range, particularly to concert E-flats and E-naturals. The clarinet solo begins as a simple two-note motive, but continues to expand and diversify, a common composition technique of Copland (Ex. 2.11). The violins take over the melody before measure 20, and the clarinet re-enters with a counter-melody in measure 25, which is simply a varied repetition of the primary theme. The range of the clarinet line is lower than the initial theme, employing the mid-range of the instrument, versus the soaring altissimo lines from the opening.

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93 Copland and Perlis, *Copland Since 1943*, 87.
Example 2.11, Aaron Copland, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement I, mm. 1-14; ostinato accompaniment and expansion of two-note motive

The difficulties for the clarinetist lie in the large interval leaps, particularly in places where the dynamic is marked mezzo-piano, for example, just before measure 20. The end result, though challenging for the clarinetist, is worthwhile.
The B section, beginning at measure 51, moves faster ($J=76$) and employs meter changes. This section is scored for clarinet and strings without harp. The tonal center shifts to the key of E-flat and the second use of the *forte* dynamic in the concerto marks the beginning of this second section. The first two notes of the second theme are the same pitches that opened the clarinet solo, an octave higher. The B section begins with an anacrusis one beat before measure 50. (See Ex. 2.12) The first five measures of the B section are transitional, shifting rhythmically from strictly 3/4 time to measures of 3/4, 4/4, and 5/4. Melodic material is shared between the clarinet and orchestra, and the texture is homophonic. While the clarinet introduces the first bit of thematic material in this section, in measure 62 the orchestra, marked pianissimo, is responsible for introducing thematic material that is mimicked in the clarinet solo at measure 66. Because of the louder dynamics in the B section, the large interval leaps become a bit easier for the clarinetist.
Example 2.12, Aaron Copland, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement I, mm. 44-56; structural B section

Throughout the opening of the concerto, there is very little overt jazz influence evident; yet some of the following traits may have been intentional.
attempts at suggesting jazz. With the absence of percussion instruments, the harp provides steady rhythmic pulse from the very beginning. The high tessitura of the clarinet was used frequently in jazz, even in the earliest Dixieland groups, a trend that has continued to present day. Copland was familiar with Goodman’s clarinet-playing ability, particularly in the altissimo range, which was evident in his jazz recordings. For this reason, Copland did not hesitate to exploit the clarinet’s upper range throughout the concerto, and certainly in the lyrical first movement. In the cadenza and second movement that follow, there are more direct references to the jazz influence.

The first and second movements are separated by a carefully notated cadenza, written in the style of an improvised jazz solo. This cadenza serves as a transition between the soaring melodies of the first movement and the exciting, perpetual drive of the second movement. The improvised character comes from the use of repeated syncopated rhythmic accents paired with brilliant passages ascending into the clarinet’s extreme range.

Copland wrote of this passage:

The cadenza is written fairly close to the way I wanted it, but it is free within reason—after all, it and the movement that follows it are in the jazz idiom. It is not ad lib as in cadenzas of many traditional concertos; I always felt there was enough room for interpretation even when everything is written out.  

94 Copland and Perlis, Copland Since 1943, 93.
As Copland stated, there is much room for interpretation in the cadenza and the use of the jazz style varies with each performer of the concerto. For the clarinet, the cadenza begins much like the first movement did, a simple motive comprised of a g-sharp moving down a step to an f-sharp in measure 115 of the concerto, after the orchestra completes a ninth chord. This simple melody expands a bit and gives way to new motives altogether, foreshadowing the second movement. The elements of jazz that can be heard in the cadenza are syncopation, extreme altissimo register, short articulations, the foreshadowing of themes that make up the second movement, and repeated eighth-note rhythm with accents on the fifth and eighth eighth-note of each measure (similar to the fox trot). (See Example 2.13) Copland described this accented eighth-note rhythmic device in his essay, “Jazz Structure and Influence”:

Modern jazz began with the fox trot. For this new dance the four-quarter bass was used as in ragtime but at a considerably slower pace and miraculously improved by accenting the least obvious beats…

Example 2.13, Aaron Copland, Concerto for Clarinet, Cadenza; fox-trot rhythms

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95 Copland, “Jazz Structure and Influence,” 84.
In Goodman’s recording of the concerto, the articulation of these eighth notes is very relaxed and legato throughout; the jazziness of this rhythmic device is made clear by the syncopated accents.

The second movement employs both jazz and neoclassical compositional techniques. Vincent Persichetti pointed out in his article concerning the revisions of the Concerto that the second movement was, “like a newsreel, misplaced with retakes.” Simply stated, this movement is a rondo, with multiple returning themes. The short articulation in the clarinet throughout the movement is matched by pizzicato in the strings. Copland described this movement as “an unconscious fusion of elements obviously related to North and South American popular music: Charleston rhythms, boogie woogie, and Brazilian folk tunes,” explicitly including elements of jazz:

the instrumentation being clarinet with strings, harp and piano, I did not have a large battery of percussion to achieve jazzy effects, so I used slapping basses and whacking harp sounds to stimulate them. The Clarinet Concerto ends with a fairly elaborate coda in C Major that finishes off with a clarinet glissando, or “smear” in jazz lingo.

Copland was successful in creating a symphonic jazz sound in the rhythmic and improvised-sounding lines of the second movement.

The second movement begins at measure 120 and in measure 121, a steady dance-like pulse is established. This feel was appropriate for Goodman and

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97 Copland and Perlis, Copland Since 1943, 93.
his dance-band background, and also gives further support to the use of jazz rhythms in Copland’s music. Beginning one beat before measure 170 and continuing through the downbeat of measure 177, Copland used a hemiola (a shift between duple and triple meter created by replacing two groups of three beats with three groups of two beats), both in the clarinet solo and the orchestra. This meter shift was, among other things, characteristic of jazz, specifically in dance bands of the swing era. The riff-like quality and syncopation in the clarinet solo suggests that Copland intended this to resemble a jazz solo over a string orchestra (Ex. 2.14).

Example 2.14 Aaron Copland, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement II, mm. 169-176; use of hemiola and syncopated, riff-like clarinet solo

The use of pizzicato notes on beats 1 and 3 in the cellos and double basses throughout the second movement is a rhythmic and timbral technique that may be heard in jazz and popular music.

In several instances during the second movement, Copland wrote out swing rhythms in both the orchestra and clarinet solo. First at measure 319 and
again at measure 375, the clarinet melody is in the jazz style, written out as dotted-eighth sixteenth notes. The string accompaniment is on beats 2 and 4.

Example 2.15 Aaron Copland, Concerto for Clarinet, mm. 374-378; clarinet solo swing rhythms

In performance, clarinetists often add swung eighth notes in places where Copland did not indicate in the score. The place in the music most conspicuous for the addition of swung rhythms, is the section at measure 296, marked “With humor, relaxed” (Ex. 2.16). Since the composer did record this piece with Benny Goodman as the clarinetist, the recording should serve as a resource for any interpretation questions. Had it been Copland’s desire to have these eighth notes swung without notating it in the music, Goodman would have swung them in the premiere recording. Furthermore, as we can observe from this example, Copland would have notated it in the score.
Perhaps the confusion arises due to the use of the word “relaxed” in the score. Performers such as Richard Stoltzman assume that relaxed refers to the actual rhythm, and play the eighth notes in a swing fashion.

The concerto ends with a glissando in the clarinet on the downbeat in measure 506. On beat 3 of that measure, the orchestra joins the soloist. The only other instrument with a glissando indicated in the part is the harp. This is not the first time that a clarinet glissando has appeared in a concert work. In 1921, George Gershwin used a lingering glissando in the clarinet solo to begin his composition for piano solo and jazz band, *Rhapsody in Blue*. Gershwin’s brief clarinet solo, used often in orchestral auditions, is one of the most popular solo excerpts among clarinet players. Goodman may be heard performing as the solo
clarinetist for *Rhapsody in Blue* on a recording with Leonard Bernstein, who serves as both the conductor and piano soloist, with the Columbia Jazz Orchestra. That recording was not produced until 1958, ten years after Goodman premiered Copland’s Concerto.

Example 2.17 Aaron Copland, Concerto for Clarinet, Movement II, mm. 504-507, Glissandi in clarinet and harp.

Ironically, with the exception of *Contrasts*, the works Goodman commissioned in his attempts to attain status as a player of legitimate concert music all contained at least some degree of jazz. To this writer, this is due to the overwhelming popularity of both Goodman, historically one of the most famous
jazz musicians, and jazz itself. Imagine the excitement that Milhaud must have felt when Goodman asked for a concerto. Though the trend of jazz in classical music had already passed in France by the time Goodman approached him about a commission, we know that Milhaud was very familiar with both jazz as well as Goodman’s clarinet playing. The concerto that he fashioned for Goodman was truly in homage to Goodman, the “King of Swing.” Similarly, Copland, who knew that Goodman did not want a jazz piece, but a serious solo work, masterfully created his concerto to contain a movement virtually free of any jazz, followed by one that exhibits elements of symphonic jazz at its best. Benny Goodman was the first jazz musician to seek a dual career in both the jazz and classical realms, and he set an example that has been followed by jazz musicians thereafter. Unlike the earliest jazz musicians, most jazz musicians today are at ease in performing legitimate works for their instrument, many of them even hold academic degrees in music. Notable jazz musicians who have also achieved success in classical music are Keith Jarrett, George Shearing, and Wynton Marsalis. Presently, Eddie Daniels is one of the most successful clarinetists to have success in both jazz and classical realms. During the Swing Era, Goodman’s pursuit of legitimacy as a performer of concert music led other clarinetists, namely Artie Shaw and Woody Herman, to do the same.

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Chapter 3: Artie Shaw

Biographical Sketch

Arthur Jacob Arshawsky was born on May 23, 1910, in New York City, almost exactly a year after the birth of Benny Goodman. His parents, both Jewish immigrants, worked as dressmakers and when their shop went bankrupt in 1917, the family moved to New Hartford, Connecticut to continue their dressmaking business. Shaw was alienated by the predominantly Protestant community in New Hartford as a young person and turned to music as his “key to the golden kingdom.”99 His first musical instrument was the ukulele, but he soon discovered the c-melody saxophone and worked at a delicatessen for four dollars a week in order to buy this instrument as a teenager. It is believed that he sought big-band success as “an escape from both of his parents’ Jewish identity and the anti-Semitism of Christian America.”100 Shaw’s eagerness to play African-inspired music was the result of his belief that the African-Americans were the only group of people in the industrial age that still maintained a group of humanity and community.

As an aspiring musician, Shaw became very close to his mother after his father alienated the family when he left and moved to California. After this estrangement, Shaw worked hard to help support his family, all while struggling to learn to play the E-flat alto

100 Ibid.
saxophone. In his early years as a saxophonist, Shaw did not have the opportunity to learn how to read music, which was detrimental in the years that followed. For instance, it kept him from joining Johnny Cavallaro’s Big Band after his first audition. Cavallaro encouraged him to take more lessons and continue to study music. Six months later, after receiving music lessons, he was able to obtain a spot in the group as a saxophonist.\textsuperscript{101}

During his time in Cavallaro’s big band, Shaw learned how to play the clarinet.

Upon leaving Cavallaro’s band, Shaw joined Irving Aaronson’s Commanders, and it was while touring with this group in Chicago that he first heard Benny Goodman play. Shaw was the only clarinetist of the swing era to rival Benny Goodman. He even took on the title, “King of Clarinet,” a challenge to Goodman’s own title, the “King of Swing.”\textsuperscript{102} Though rivals, Shaw and Goodman were each successful in their own right; Goodman for his “hot phrasing, a swing stylist with a concert hall technique,” and Shaw offered a “fluid, less syncopated approach to melody.” Moreover, Shaw’s improvised lines were “varnished with a haughty elegance.”\textsuperscript{103}

During a visit to Chicago, Shaw had his first experience with classical music. He purchased Stravinsky and Debussy albums and about these recordings, he said:

I took them home and began to realize that you can learn music from those guys. I didn’t know who “those guys” were. I didn’t make any distinction between what they did and what I was doing except that it was lots better, more complicated, much more evolved.\textsuperscript{104}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{102} Gioia, The History of Jazz, 48. \\
\textsuperscript{103} Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{104} White, Artie Shaw, 50. 
\end{flushright}
Shaw’s initial exposure to classical music aided his decision to desert jazz and perform only classical music in 1949. This period of his performing career is known as the “Longhair Concerts.” Shaw explained:

In 1947 or thereabouts, I found myself becoming more interested in getting away from the pop music forms and getting off into classical music. I decided that I would give up playing any jazz, any improvised music, for one year, just to see what would happen to my playing, what would happen to the tone production. And the whole sound of my clarinet changed, my entire concept of what clarinet could sound like changed.  

Though Shaw’s break from jazz did not last even an entire year, in 1949 he performed with prominent orchestras and recorded an album of classical music. In January of 1949, *Downbeat Magazine* reported that Shaw would perform a classical concert with the Rochester Civic Orchestra, under the direction of Guy Frasser Harrison, on January 9, in the Eastman Theatre. At this time, he was busy studying classical guitar and clarinet in New York City. It is likely that he was studying with Eric Simon at this time. In February of the same year, Shaw signed a contract with Columbia Records to record an album of classical music. This album, *Modern Music for Clarinet*, came out in March and included works by Francis Poulenc, Maurice Ravel, Morton Gould, Darius Milhaud, Dmitry Kabelevsky, Claude Debussy, and Dmitri Shostakovich. All of these works were recorded with a studio orchestra, with orchestrations by Hershey Kay.

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106 Ibid.
107 Ibid., 203.
As a jazz clarinetist, Artie Shaw was known for both a beautiful tone and for his ability to play “convincingly higher in the clarinet’s range than anyone before him.” Artie Shaw never shared the reputation that Benny Goodman established by performing and recording classical music. He did perform classical works, but less frequently than Goodman. After his break from jazz in 1949, his performance of classical works was very sporadic. By 1954, Shaw left the clarinet and jazz altogether. Shaw returned to the music scene in 1983, not as a clarinetist, but as a big band leader.

The Commission

Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra by Norman Dello Joio

The only substantial work that Shaw commissioned is a concerto in two movements by Norman Dello Joio. In 1949, the year Shaw took a break from jazz, Artie Shaw met Dello Joio after attending a performance of one of his compositions at Carnegie Hall. Directly after the performance, Shaw went backstage to meet the composer and commissioned him on the spot to compose a concerto for him. The resulting commission was the Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra and was premiered by Artie Shaw, on May 22, 1949, in Chautauqua, New York. According to the author of Dello Joio’s biography, this concerto should be considered as notable as Copland’s

Concerto and Stravinsky’s Ebony Concerto. Dello Joio’s work is a notable one, though it is rarely performed. One could speculate that the fate of this work may have been different if Artie Shaw had recorded it.

Dello Joio was born in January 24, 1913, in New York City into a family of organists; and unsurprisingly, he began his musical career as an organist. After the stock market crash of 1929, Dello Joio played piano for various dance bands in New York and Pennsylvania to make extra money. On the subject of his own performance of jazz, Dello Joio said:

I used to listen to Fats Waller on the radio; his piano playing intrigued me. I felt a kinship with him, he too being a church organist. On tour the final jazz band gig I played was with the Yale Band in a Pennsylvania mining district. A belligerent listener insisted on sitting down next to me and kept exclaiming, “Ah, that’s not the way jazz is played”…By the end of that gig, I’d had enough of that life and escaped to upstate New York and worked as a camp baseball coach.

His compositional career began in 1937, and in 1957 he received the Pulitzer Prize for *Meditations for Ecclesiastes* for string orchestra.

Dello Joio, who studied at Julliard, remained firmly rooted in traditional European compositional techniques throughout his career. Instead of moving into the realm of the avant-garde he, “revitalized the older classical forms by incorporating more modern rhythmic combinations, tonal clusters, and harmonic dissonances.” Dello Joio was a

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111 Ibid.  
113 Ibid., 35.
prolific composer of wind band music, which resulted in thirteen works for the medium.114

Like the concert works commissioned by Benny Goodman, there are prominent examples throughout the Concertante that give support to Dello Joio’s knowledge of Artie Shaw’s ability as a clarinetist. Further, there are hints of jazz, indicating that Dello Joio composed this work in homage to Artie Shaw’s jazz musicianship. Not unlike the concertos commissioned for Benny Goodman, this work is tonal and contains prominent neoclassical elements. As a composer who grew up in 1920s America and spent time performing with jazz bands, the influence of jazz was difficult for Dello Joio to escape. Generally speaking, his compositions combine the “dynamic rhythms of jazz dance with music that is melodically based on a liturgical theme.”115 On the Concertante, Dello Joio said the following:

this is one of my earlier works that has satisfied me. It is one of the works that made Hindemith aware of the lyrical quality of my work and he said that “You are a lyricist by nature, don’t do anything to disturb that or try to be consciously modern for its own sake. Just let yourself sing.” This piece does that, and it does it well. I allowed myself to have a long line in terms of a lyric statement whereas before, I tended to chop it off when I felt I was getting too Romantic.116

Dello Joio’s lyricism is exemplified in the flowing melodies written for the clarinet in the outer sections of the first movement and also in the simple, lyrical theme of the second movement. Dello Joio’s compositional style for this concerto was appropriate; Artie

114 Ibid.
115 Bumgardner, Norman Dello Joio, 4.
116 Ibid., 75.
Shaw was known for his lyrical performance, heard in recordings of ballads such as “These Foolish Things,” “Star Dust,” and “A Room With a View.”

The Concertante is scored for solo clarinet, flute and piccolo, oboe and English horn, two horns, two trumpets, two percussionists, and strings; and contains two contrasting movements. In each movement, there are discernible jazz elements. The first movement, “Adagio con molto sentimento” (\( \text{\textit{\textit{\textit{j}}}} = 54 \)), begins slowly, and is in ternary form, with a cadenza just before the return of the primary thematic material. The entire movement, roughly eight minutes long, is based on the melodic and rhythmic development of a simple diatonic theme. The first statement of the theme occurs in the solo clarinet while the orchestra serves as accompaniment (Ex. 3.1). For the clarinetist, this melodic material, free from jazz, is very tuneful and easy to execute because it does not contain difficult articulations and the finger technique is idiomatic. Further, it was written in the instrument’s middle range, keeping intonation manageable for the clarinet player.

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Example 3.1 Norman Dello Joio, Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra, Movement I, mm. 6-27; primary theme played by clarinet

Dello Joio did not choose to use a single key to unify the movement; rather tonal centers concert D and D-flat serve as focal points.

The contrasting inner portion of the movement, “Leggero e soave,” is in 6/8 time, faster, and dance-like. The clarinet line transforms from something simple and legato into a bolder voice that is both rhythmically compelling and syncopated, requiring mastery in both finger dexterity and articulation (Ex. 3.2).
Example 3.2, Norman Dello Joio, Concertante for Clarinet, Movement 1, mm. 40-55; syncopated, articulated sixteenth notes in the clarinet solo

One of the most pronounced jazz elements in this movement occurs in the first movement cadenza, based on the pentatonic scale, a common linear passage from jazz music that was adopted from African American spirituals.

Example 3.3. Norman Dello Joio, Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra, Movement 1, clarinet cadenza, mm. 95-98; use of pentatonic scale

The difficulties in the first movement of the Concertante lie in the articulated passages of the “Leggiero” and the cadenza. The technical demands of finger dexterity and articulation of running sixteenth notes speak to Artie Shaw’s ability as a clarinetist. Amateurs cannot successfully execute these technical elements.

The second movement is a theme and variations, a form commonly used by Dello Joio, illustrated in works such as Meditations for Ecclesiastes (1956) and Fantasies on a
Theme by Haydn (1968) for wind band. Like the first movement, this movement builds on a simple theme. The theme is first presented by the full orchestra, beginning first with the strings, oboe and English horn interrupted by two-measure solos in the clarinet (Ex. 3.3). The tempo of the theme is the same as the first movement (\( \text{\textit{j}=54} \)).

Example 3.4. Norman Dello Joio, Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra, Movement II, mm. 1-9; theme

In the fourth measure of the theme, the clarinet line contains both major and minor thirds above D, an influence drawn from the blues scale (Ex. 3.3)

The variations that follow are all based on the first three notes heard in the orchestra: G, A, and D. Phrases throughout the movement are symmetrical and tuneful. There are a total of five variations, with contrasting tempos and styles. In the lyrical third variation, the use of altered dominant chords on the last two beats of the measure before A and on the fourth beats for the three measures following give this variation a very bluesy sound (Ex. 3.4).
Example 3.5. Norman Dello Joio, Concertante for Clarinet and Orchestra, Movement II, mm. 222-227; altered dominant chords

Artie Shaw performed this concerto with various orchestras, including the Dayton Symphony, the Norfolk Symphony, the National Symphony Orchestra, Tommy Sherman’s “Little Orchestra,” and the Brooklyn Academy Orchestra. In spite of his numerous performances of the work, Artie Shaw never formally recorded Dello Joio’s Concertante. One of his performances, however, is documented on film. The Andante

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118 Simosko, *Artie Shaw*, 118.
movement is featured as part of Artie Shaw: Time is All You’ve Got, a short film made by Dello Joio for a class he was teaching at Sarah Lawrence College.\textsuperscript{119} Shaw recounted his recording and his knowledge of any resulting performances of the piece:

I don’t think anyone else ever did it. The manuscript is in the University of Arizona collection. I do have one recording of it with the Connecticut Symphony when we did it up at Westport or somewhere. But the sound is not good. It was done on acetates.\textsuperscript{120}

The recording that Shaw made of this work was not produced or made available to the public. Clarinetist Robert Alemany recorded the Concertante in his collection American Clarinet: Orchestral Music with the Czech National Symphony Orchestra in 2002. This is the only recording available of this concerto. Dello Joio’s Concertante is a piece of music that is unfortunately underestimated in the clarinet repertoire. It is an accessible work for both clarinetists and orchestras. The tuneful melodies would be well-received by modern concert goers. Dello Joio’s Concertante should be more frequently recorded and made available to listeners of clarinet music.

\textsuperscript{119} Simosko, Artie Shaw, 116.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid., 118.
Chapter 4: Woody Herman

Biographical Sketch

Woodrow Charles Thomas Herman was born on May 16, 1913, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Of Polish and German descent, his father had a love for theatre, played piano, and sang; thus Herman became a musician at a very early age. He danced, sang and played piano, saxophone, and clarinet for a Vaudeville act from the time he was nine years old. As young as he was, he had to obtain a special labor license so not to break child labor laws. In Herman’s autobiography, no mention of any particular clarinet or saxophone teacher is made, only that he did study both instruments, and usually from a jazz musician. He did mention that Sister Fabian Reilly, who taught at his high school, was an angel who supported every musician—even those who played jazz. She was helpful to Herman through his time in school, and offered the following advice, “Just stick to your music, it’s the best thing for you. You’ll learn other things.” Herman grew up in an environment that supported his musicianship.

In the early 1930s, Herman began touring with bandleaders Tom Gerun, Harry Sosnik, and Gus Arnheim. By 1934, he joined Isham Jones’s band as a clarinetist,

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baritone saxophonist, and singer. When this group broke up in 1936, Herman took the leading players to form his own orchestra. This group was initially called the “Band that Plays the Blues,” and was distinguished by its performance of African-American blues. Beginning in 1939, this group performed in New York, Chicago, and Hollywood. By this time, the band was known as Herman’s Herd, later referred to as the First Herd. Due to the war and resulting draft, Herman had to recruit younger musicians, who proved to be more technically advanced than previous band members.\footnote{123} In 1944, Herman’s band was considered “an ambitious, sophisticated organization, with advanced arrangements, distinguished improvisers, a swaggering rhythm section, and ignited by team spirit.”\footnote{124} In the mid-1940s, of new harmonies and colors were introduced into jazz, and Woody Herman’s band was established as one of the “most consistently progressive bands of its era.”\footnote{125} According to Barry Ulanov, the musicians associated with Woody Herman’s Herds in the mid to late 40s produced “an entirely new kind of jazz eloquence and playing decorum was instituted. The Herman musicians were individually impressive; as a band, they were incomparable.”\footnote{126} Historically, Woody Herman is most remembered for his contributions as a big band leader, though he also made contributions to the clarinet repertoire by commissioning two significant works for clarinet and jazz band by two prominent twentieth century composers: Igor Stravinsky and Leonard Bernstein.

\footnote{124} Ibid.  
\footnote{125} Ibid.  
The Commissions

Ebony Concerto by Igor Stravinsky

Igor Stravinsky was always “casting about for fresh models to use as subjects of stylish material.” In Petrushka, Stravinsky incorporated popular song, in Rite of Spring, he used Russian folk song; and in his 1918 compositions, l’Histoire du Soldat and Ragtime for Eleven Instruments, he incorporated elements of ragtime. The instrumentation used in l’Histoire was similar to Dixieland jazz, and the rhythmic elements, particularly in the solo violin, embraced both syncopation and “boogie rhythms.” Stravinsky was among the early composers of art music to come under the influence of jazz, and his initial impressions of this music came from printed piano rag music, rather than live performances. By the time he composed l’Histoire in Switzerland, he was familiar with American jazz, even if only from hearing jazz bands playing in Europe. In an interview with Robert Craft, Stravinsky claimed that the discovery of American jazz was “a very important event” in his life and that the l’Histoire ensemble

resembles the jazz band in that each instrumental category—strings, woodwinds, brass, percussion—is represented by both treble and bass components. The instruments themselves are jazz legitimates, too, except the bassoon, which is my substitution for the saxophone…The percussion part must also be considered as a manifestation of my enthusiasm for jazz.

127 Gendron, Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club, 89.
128 Ibid.
Later that year, he composed *Ragtime* for eleven instruments, and in 1919, *Piano Rag Music*, which exploited the percussive quality of the piano.\(^{131}\) According to André Hoteir, who criticized Milhaud’s claims of jazz authenticity, Stravinsky’s melodies showed “a distinctly more high developed sense of jazz,” and attained “a rhythmic flexibility that makes them resemble the riffs of jazzmen.”\(^{132}\) His compositions created a common ground between jazz and classical music, as he frequently borrowed from elements of ragtime and swing era music. Elements noted in his early jazz-influenced works were metric displacement, ostinato patterns, and added note harmonies.\(^{133}\) His motives to manipulate music that was so progressive and popular were rooted in Neoclassical values, as he used ragtime rhythms to “satirize tonic-dominant clichés” of past European art forms.\(^{134}\) Composed more than twenty years after his early ragtime-influenced pieces, Stravinsky’s *Ebony Concerto* has been considered his most successful attempt at a composition in the jazz style.

In the 1940s, Stravinsky was living in Hollywood and burdened with financial woes, which had an effect on the number of commissions he accepted.\(^{135}\) He was familiar with the recordings of Woody Herman’s band, made available to him by Goldie Goldmark before he began the commission. In an interview with William Clancy, Woody

\(^{131}\) Ibid.
\(^{132}\) Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club*, 90.
\(^{134}\) Gendron, 90.
\(^{135}\) Hallerbach, “The Genesis of Stravinsky’s Ebony Concerto,” 55.
Herman recounted this story regarding the inception of Igor Stravinsky’s *Ebony Concerto*:

the first that I knew about it was when I received a wire from him out of the clear blue sky one day, that said, “I have listened to your orchestra and I wish to write a piece for you as a Christmas gift. It will be delivered on...” And he named a day. When that date arrived, so did the music! Pretty wild! And Stravinsky arrived a day later to rehearse with us.\(^{136}\)

This story is likely a tall tale, in light of Stravinsky’s financial situation. In his autobiography, Herman recounted that Stravinsky’s attorney contacted his attorney, Howard Goldfarb, and said, “Do you realize that Stravinsky can’t afford to live, let alone be giving away music?”\(^{137}\) The result was that Herman arranged to pay Stravinsky approximately $3500 for the *Ebony Concerto*. Perhaps the most definitive answer in regard to payment for this commission comes from a letter written by Stravinsky to Nadia Boulanger in November of 1945:

I am composing a short concerto (with the title *Ebony Concerto*) for the Woody Herman Band (New York), decently paid and published according to our contract by their ASCAP editor. Woody Herman will record the music in February, under my supervision, and it will be done on two sides of one record...It should be completed by the end of December. I am somewhat unnerved by the short time that remains, and by my lack of familiarity with this sort of thing (jazz).\(^{138}\)

Woody Herman’s band successfully performed and recorded this work. The overt success of this work in the jazz idiom is due to the instrumentation; he scored this piece for a jazz


\(^{137}\) Herman, *Woodchoppers Ball*, 65.

band (adding horns) with clarinet solo. In her article discussing Stravinsky’s use of jazz in his compositions, Wilfred Mellers noted:

Woody Herman’s band did not enjoy themselves playing Stravinsky’s concerto, and maybe the composer did not expect them to, for its virtues are not those of jazz. Its virtues are, however, considerable: so it is the greater pity that, its instrumentation being what it is, performances are bound to be infrequent. 139

Mellers referred to the virtues of improvisation and harmony. Even though the musicians in Herman’s band were considered advanced for their time, reading Stravinsky’s music proved difficult. The band began rehearsing the work in early in 1946 and premiered it on March 25, 1946, in Carnegie Hall. Stravinsky attended rehearsals to aid the group’s preparations. 140 Though Herman and the musicians in the band had difficulty with the Ebony Concerto, Stravinsky was supportive and helpful. Regarding his impression of Stravinsky, Herman remembered:

as for the way he worked with me, I can’t say enough about that! He showed me where to breathe, wrote in breath marks and tried to give me confidence in the whole thing. Once he said to me, “You know, the French clarinetists, they get very small sound, but technique, beautiful! The German clarinetists, big sound, not too much technique. But you, you’re different…” 141

The band’s performance of the work, though challenging, ultimately proved that the musicians involved in the commission were capable. Woody Herman’s performance of the clarinet solo is respectable; his tone, technique, and performance of difficult rhythms speak to his ability as a clarinetist.

140 Hollerbach, “The Genesis of Stravinsky’s Ebony Concerto,” 64.
141 Clancy, Woody Herman, 89.
Since its premiere, the *Ebony Concerto* has been performed and recorded by numerous artists. Woody Herman and his orchestra produced the first recording of the work in 1946. Nine years later, Benny Goodman recorded the work with the Columbia Jazz Combo. Sir Simon Rattle and the London Sinfonietta released a recording in 1987 with clarinetist Michael Collins. In 1993, John Bruce Yeh, in collaboration with DePaul University’s Wind and Jazz Ensemble, released an album that included *Ebony Concerto* and also borrowed the title for the album’s cover. In 1995, Pierre Boulez and the Ensemble InterContemporain Orchestra included it on an album of contemporary chamber works with clarinetist Michael Arrignon. In 1998, Michael Tilson Thomas and the New World Symphony released the album *New World Jazz*, which included the *Ebony Concerto* with clarinetist Jerome Simas. In the same year, clarinetist Sabine Meyer recorded the piece with the Bamberger Symphonik Big Band.

The *Ebony Concerto* is a neo-Baroque work in three movements. The concerto is scored for solo clarinet, two alto saxophones (doubling clarinet), two tenor saxophones, baritone saxophone, bass clarinet, one horn, five trumpets, three trombones, piano, harp, guitar, double-bass, tom-tom, cymbals, and drums. Stravinsky composed this work to be the “jazz equivalent of a concerto grosso with a slow, blues movement.”\(^{142}\)

The first movement of the concerto is three and a half minutes long, and is in sonata form. The primary theme is introduced in measures 1-4 by a muted trumpet section. The tonal center is B-flat and the style is very light and staccato (Ex. 4.1).

\(^{142}\) Ibid., 61.
Example 4.1, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement I, mm. 1-4; primary theme played by muted trumpets

Stravinsky’s use of syncopated rhythms, hemiolas, and the muted trumpet reflect his rhythmic and timbral infatuation with jazz. After the first four measures, the saxophone section expands and varies the theme. Beginning at rehearsal 4, and continuing through at rehearsal 8, an ostinato, based on a b-flat minor seventh chord, is played by the harp, double-bass and tom-tom. The harp, not common in jazz groups, highlights the harmony by adding invigorating arpeggiated figures (Ex. 4.2).

Example 4.2, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement I, mm. 18-22; arpeggiated harp figures
Stravinsky created a harsh dissonance by the interjection of E natural tonality in the piano and trumpets beginning just before rehearsal 6 and continuing through rehearsal 8. At rehearsal 9, just prior to the end of the A section, the trombones enter with a line that strongly re-establishes the B-flat tonality.

The clarinet is not introduced until the secondary theme at rehearsal 10. The clarinet is prominent, as it plays two octaves above thematic material in the first trombone. The tonality shifts to E-flat and the melodic line is very legato and lyric, with accompanying rhythmic figures in the trumpets, second and third trombones, and in the rhythm section. Beginning at rehearsal 15 and continuing until the recapitulation, the clarinet line is pronounced, with triplets and syncopated, swing-like eighth note patterns, and there is minimal band accompaniment. Just before the return to the primary theme, there is a short clarinet cadenza (Ex. 4.3). The movement concludes in the key of B-flat.

Example 4.3, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement I, mm. 69-74; clarinet cadenza
The second movement of the work, in true concerto-fashion, is marked Andante (\( \text{\textit{L}=84} \)). It is only two minutes long, and begins with a melodic statement in the low saxophones that serves as principal thematic material throughout the movement. This movement in f minor, is an “African blues,” for which the entire concerto was named. (There is a misconception that the word ebony implies clarinet, it is however an exoticist statement linking ebony to Africa). Rather than always using the altered pitches of a blues scale, Stravinsky created the essence of blues by the use of a monotonous drone, a slow tempo, and a sorrowful mood. At the beginning of the movement, Stravinsky used the low saxophones to melodically suggest this sorrow, the essence of blues (Ex. 4.4).

Example 4.4, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement II, mm. 1-5; saxophone melody

At rehearsal 2, Stravinsky used more conventional methods to suggest the blues: altered pitches, namely A-naturals and A-flats, also played by the low saxophones.
Though the melodic material is simple, this movement gains complexity as it expands. The texture is simple at first, with few instruments playing at a time, with minimal accompaniment in the rhythm section. The solo clarinet is not prominent in this movement. In fact, there is only a span of four beats where the solo clarinet is used without the clarinet section (mm. 11-12). Even in those four bars, it is used only to reinforce a line of sixteenth notes begun by the tenor saxophones. This is the first mezzo forte, the loudest dynamic of the movement yet (Ex. 4.6). Stravinsky’s minimal use of clarinet tells us that he composed this work in homage to the band’s reputation. Rather than composing this work as a clarinet feature, he composed featured each instrument in the band in some capacity.
Example 4.6, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement II, mm. 10-12; second movement clarinet solo

Jazz tone color is employed during the second movement through the use of the harmon mutes in the trumpets and plungers for the trombones. Harmonically, the tritone is used frequently. Additional jazz elements, including the blues scale, swing rhythms, and muted brass instruments, are evident to the listener.

The third movement of the concerto, a theme and variations, is based on a pentatonic theme that is eleven measures long (Ex. 4.7). Introduced first by the bass clarinet and double bass in unison, Stravinsky used D as a tonal center. The tempo marking is moderato (\( \frac{\text{j}=84}{} \)).

Example 4.7, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement III, mm. 1-11; theme
At rehearsal 3, the first variation begins in a new tempo, \( \text{Viva}=132 \). The key shifts to B-flat, and there is an eighth-note ostinato introduced by the clarinets. Melodic material is first in the tenor saxophone line (Ex. 4.8). The theme is in the same key, played in a higher tessitura, and breaks into syncopated rhythms in the third measure.

The ostinato continues, in the solo and second clarinet, and the melodic material is passed between the tenor saxophone, muted trumpet, and horn throughout the variation. Flutter tongued half notes and glissandi are used for effect in the brass.

After an eleven-measure restatement of the original theme, the second variation begins at rehearsal 24. The tempo is marked twice as fast as the first variation, Vivo \( \text{Viva}=132 \). The clarinet is used as a soloist for the first time in the movement, presenting the theme in articulated triplets (Ex. 4.9).
Example 4.9, Igor Stravinsky, *Ebony Concerto*, Movement III, mm. 93-99; solo clarinet variation

At rehearsal 26, the bass clarinet, used more frequently than the soprano clarinet throughout this movement, plays an articulated triplet solo that leads to more variation. Later alto saxophone, baritone saxophone, and the second clarinet highlight melodic material. This movement ends with a coda variation, which is a full band chorale-version of the original theme. The movement ends on a dominant chord.

Unlike the other works we have observed, the *Ebony Concerto* is not a clarinet concerto, rather a concerto grosso that features all of the wind instruments used in big band jazz. This was composed for Woody Herman’s band, not for Woody Herman, the clarinet-playing band leader. The difficulty of this work lies in intricate rhythm, and the successful recording released by Woody Herman’s band testifies to the ability of Herman’s band and also his own clarinet performance. In a conversation between Benny Goodman and Woody Herman, Goodman asked about the Ebony Concerto, “Is it hard?” Herman gave him a copy of the music as proof, and six months later, the two met again.
where Goodman responded, “It is hard!”\textsuperscript{143} Goodman was the second clarinetist to perform and record the piece.

\textit{Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs} by Leonard Bernstein

Around the time of this commission, Leonard Bernstein, like many American composers at the time, was interested in jazz. In the summer of 1955, he conducted the Lewisohn Stadium Orchestra with Louis Armstrong, in a performance of W.C. Handy’s “St. Louis Blues.” Also on that concert, he conducted Dave Brubeck performing Billy Strayhorn’s “Take the A Train” with the orchestra.\textsuperscript{144} Herman never performed this work, but he did have some advice for Bernstein regarding jazz, specifically bebop:

Leonard Bernstein thought he was interested in writing something that had to do with bebop. So I suggested that he listen to certain players like Charlie Parker and Dizzy, and certain people in New York, in the little clubs. He saw a big sign on Broadway, and it said, “Bop City.” So he figured, “Well, they must be playing bebop music there.” He told me this story. He went into the club, and there was Artie Shaw with quite a large orchestra with strings and the whole thing. He described it as “playing some of the more morbid works of some of our contemporary composers,” and that, “Artie was trying to be something that he was not.” So, unfortunately, I don’t think that Leonard ever found out what bebop was all about, because you know, you can’t explain something like that.\textsuperscript{145}

As an improviser, other jazz musicians found Bernstein’s “knowledge of jazz cheerful and enthusiastic, but essentially superficial.”\textsuperscript{146} A student of both Copland and Stravinsky, Bernstein composed works that synthesized elements of jazz and popular

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{143} Hollerbach, “The Genesis of Stravinsky’s Ebony Concerto,” 66.
\bibitem{144} Ibid.
\bibitem{145} Clancy, \textit{Woody Herman}, 133.
\end{thebibliography}
music. His success in this genre is exemplified in the ballet score for *Fancy Free* (1944), *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs* (1949), and in the musicals *On the Town* (1944) and *West Side Story* (1957).\(^{147}\)

Bernstein’s *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs* was originally commissioned by Herman in May of 1949 as an extension of the success of his *Ebony Concerto* collaboration with Stravinsky. Herman offered one thousand dollars for Bernstein to compose a piece for solo clarinet and big band. He wanted a work for the band to perform at their next Carnegie Hall Concert, which was scheduled for November of the same year. Once Bernstein completed this work and sent it to Herman, he never received payment or confirmation of receipt of this work. Historians have speculated as to whether this was due to the break up of the Thundering Herd or lack of funds on Herman’s part.\(^{148}\) The commission lay dormant until 1953. Determined not to waste the music, Bernstein attempted to resurrect the music as a ballet sequence for the musical *Wonderful Town*. The music did not work for the choreography, so it was ultimately cut from the show.\(^{149}\) The premiere of this work, and resulting dedication, was finally performed by Goodman during a telecast of Bernstein’s “What is Jazz” on October 16, 1955. Bernstein and Goodman also recorded the work for Columbia Records with the Columbia Jazz Combo in 1955.

\(^{147}\) Teachout, “Jazz and Classical Music,” 349.
\(^{148}\) Clancy, *Woody Herman*, 152.
Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs is a ten-minute piece, in three continuous movements. Similar to the technique Stravinsky used in the Ebony Concerto, Bernstein borrowed ideas from the Baroque period by composing the first two movements as a prelude and fugue. By contrast, Bernstein’s work is the most overtly jazz-sounding piece of the works previously discussed. The orchestration, different in each movement, only includes clarinet in the final “Riffs” movement. The work, written for the traditional big band, is scored for solo clarinet, two alto saxophones, two tenor saxophones, baritone saxophone, five trumpets, four trombones, piano, two percussion parts with tom-toms, trap-set, xylophone, vibraphone, wood block, two timpani, and double-bass.

The Prelude, subtitled “for the Brass,” is in ABA form, and opens with a five-trumpet fanfare. The A section tempo is marked “fast and exact” (♩=160), which is the tempo marking indicated throughout the entire work. In this section the first and second trumpets are paired against the third, fourth, and fifth trumpets with alternating, rhythmically compelling melodic material. The first four measures feature the first two trumpets, like a fanfare, fortissimo and in common meter (Ex. 4.10). The bass drum plays quarter notes on every beat, reinforcing the pulse. In the fifth measure, the remaining trumpets enter, pianissimo and muted, with a melodic line that shifts meter from measure to measure. This pattern repeats itself, and the entire trumpet section echoes the fanfare just before the B section. The opening of this movement, rather than suggesting jazz, reveals Bernstein’s expertise in mixed meter and effective brass writing.
Example 4.10, Leonard Bernstein, *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs*, Movement I, mm. 1-7; rhythmic trumpet fanfare

The B section is slower, but with a bit more drag. Specifically, Bernstein composed quarter note triplets to create a sense of drag. Beginning at measure 32, the sound immediately shifts to that of a traditional jazz big band, and this lasts until measure 46, where an accelerando and sixteenth notes in the trumpets drive the movement into the return of the A theme. The jazz band sound of the B section is achieved compositionally by a fuller texture, with the addition of the trombone and brassy trills in the trumpet section (Ex. 4.11).
Example 4.11, Leonard Bernstein, *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs*, Movement I, mm.32-35; trumpet trills and trombones with drag rhythms

The second movement, Fugue, is “for the Saxes.” The tempo marking is exactly the same for this movement as the first, and the only indication that the movement begins is the change in instrumentation. This movement is full of syncopated rhythmic structures and polyrhythms. The baritone saxophone replaces the bass drum with accented quarter notes for the first three measures, and in the first ten measures of the movement, the first
fugal subject is passed through each of the members of the saxophone family. The fugue subject is light, rhythmic, and articulated (Ex. 4.12).

Example 4.12, Leonard Bernstein, Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs, Movement II, mm. 82-90; tenor saxophone statement of the fugue subject

At measure 106, a second fugal subject is introduced in the second alto saxophone. By contrast, this subject is marked piano, dolce, and slurred. The baritone saxophone and second tenor have legato upbeats. At measure 120, the first subject returns, becoming prominent until the end of the movement, where the polyphonic texture uses each of the subjects (Ex. 4.13).

Example 4.13, Leonard Bernstein, Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs, Movement II, mm. 148-153; use of both fugal subjects

The final movement of the work, Riffs, “for Everyone,” brings the work to an end with a boisterous jam session including the full ensemble. The riff, one of the
predominant features of swing music, was considered by revivalists of the 1940s as a “fragmentary musical language with creative potential.”\textsuperscript{150} Cooke explained:

on the one hand, the riff, perhaps more than any other musical device, revealed swing to be simplistic, standardized, consumer package…On the other hand, the swing arranger would sometimes use a wide variety of different riffs in one piece to create a complex musical montage, generating an experimental, avant-garde sound, which glaringly excluded such pop requisites as a recurrent and easily recognizable melody.\textsuperscript{151}

Bernstein’s use of riffs in the final movement is a successful display of creating complexity out of something often considered cliché.

The solo clarinet, introduced for the first time in the entire work at measure 159, along with the piano, play the opening riffs together, after an introductory piano ostinato for seven measures. The clarinet line, rich with glissandi and blue notes, is technically demanding. The riffs are based on a sixteenth-note syncopated figure, repeated four times with an extended variation on both the fourth and fifth repetitions. The piano enters with the same material, but an octave higher, in measure 164 (Ex. 4.14). This movement, shifting between measures of 3/8, 3/4, and 4/4, is rhythmically driving and in the same tempo as much of the work (\texttt{\textbf{j}=160}).

\textsuperscript{150} Cooke, “Jazz Among the Classics,” 161.
\textsuperscript{151} Ibid.
Example 4.14, Leonard Bernstein, *Prelude, Fugue and Riffs*, Movement III, mm. 159-167; piano and clarinet riffs

After the riffs are passed between the clarinet, piano, and the vibraphone, Bernstein brings themes back from the previous two movements, some of them in an indisputably jazz fashion. The first fugal subject from the second movement returns in measure 194, with the saxophones, adding clarinet, played simultaneously with
vibraphone riffs (Ex. 4.15). After this theme’s first reappearance in the third movement, it comes back six more times.

Example 4.15, Leonard Bernstein, *Prelude, Fugue, and Riffs*, Movement III, mm. 194-195; saxophones and clarinet fugue statement with vibraphone riffs

At measure 232, Bernstein brings back the overtly jazzy section from the first movement. This time the clarinet solo overpowers the trumpet section. This statement is preceded by the most significant clarinet glissando (in the style of Gershwin) in the movement, aiding in the prominence of the solo line (See Ex. 4.16).
Beginning in measure 248, the dynamic of the entire band is mezzo-piano, and the solo clarinet brings back the opening riffs, followed by a statement of the fugal material. The entrance of the trumpet in measure 273 signals the return of a forte dynamic, which is further increased by the addition of the full band, to fortissimo, at measure 283. This finale, where the riffs are shared by all of the sections in the band, exemplifies the use of repetition to create excitement.

The use of the clarinet in the final movement is representative of clarinet playing in big bands during the swing era. It is always heard, usually in the upper register, always requires rapid finger movement, and always introducing and varying thematic material. For the clarinetist, this music explores techniques and harmonies specific to jazz in a useful way. Since Goodman is the clarinetist who ultimately premiered this work, Herman’s role in commissioning it is a detail often left out. Based on his performance of the Ebony Concerto, Herman and his band could have successfully performed this music; it is unfortunate that the band’s funding fell through, but also fortunate that Bernstein was persistent in having this work performed. Ultimately, both of Herman’s commissions
were successful additions to the clarinet repertoire that have been recorded and performed frequently.
Chapter 5: Conclusions

Clarinetists all over the world have been performing most of the works that were commissioned by Goodman, Shaw, and Herman for the last seventy years. Regularly recorded on LPs and now compact discs, performed in concert halls, and used as tools in educational settings, these pieces of music have proven to be worthwhile additions to the clarinet repertoire. Each of these commissions has unique style elements pertinent to jazz to consider. As a group, these commissions possess unifying traits that bind them together as a group of compositions.

Goodman was an eminently successful commissioner of new works for the clarinet. The scope of his commissions goes far beyond the realm of the compositions discussed in Chapter 2. Goodman was the first and most ambitious of the swing era clarinetists to successfully commission works for the clarinet. He secured composers from diverse backgrounds and nationalities to compose music for him. He performed these pieces and recorded many of them, with the exception of the concerto by Darius Milhaud. Of the works discussed that Goodman commissioned, Milhaud's concerto is the only one that has not survived as an often-performed piece in the clarinet repertoire. On the other hand, it is a very difficult work, and may serve as an important piece for clarinet students.
Shaw’s commission has not received adequate attention. Perhaps the reason that Norman Dello Joio’s Concertante never received its due acclaim is because it was not recorded in the years just after its premiere. Shaw did not record the work himself, it was left unexposed for a long time. Interestingly, the only work that Goodman did not premiere or record was Milhaud’s, and it shares a similar lack of reputation. There is currently only one recording available of Dello Joio’s composition. This is unfortunate, because the Concertante provides the clarinet repertoire with a concerto that combines both lyrical and technical elements, and serves the repertoire as a successful concert work fused with jazz elements.

Herman’s commissions have been successfully performed and recorded, mostly by clarinetists with jazz ensembles, giving a testament to his success as a clarinetist and big band leader. As concert works, these pieces often provide prominent wind ensembles with jazz-sounding music that does not require any knowledge of improvisation. The lack of improvisation, a key element of jazz, is a salient trait shared among all of the works discussed. Herman’s commissions provide the traditional jazz band with concert works. Though Herman never performed Bernstein’s commission, we can assume that the commission is the result of his personal reputation as a clarinetist as well as the reputation of the musicians that played in his band.

Through these chapters, we have observed details about each of the prominent swing era clarinetists, their commissions, and the composers who accepted the commissions. Through the examination of these works, the use of jazz elements by
representative composers of art music in works composed during the 1940s has been brought to light. In his commission, Bartók used quotations from jazz harmony in a concert chamber work, while Milhaud combined elements of syncopated rhythms, improvisation, ragtime, and harmony in his. Copland’s approach was even more direct; he included a cadenza that is considered a written-out jazz clarinet solo, employed swing rhythms, dance and syncopated rhythms, and used the glissando, in both the clarinet and orchestra. Dello Joio’s concerto, while lyrical and polite, fuses jazz by borrowing from its harmonies. Stravinsky’s *Ebony Concerto*, whose most obvious jazz element lies in instrumentation, is an example of Neoclassicism: it combines formal elements of the Baroque concerto grosso with the swing era jazz band. Similarly, Bernstein’s work, the most overtly jazzy piece discussed, also contains Baroque formal elements in its opening prelude and fugue.

By means of repeated performances and recordings, these works have contributed to the clarinet repertoire in a significant way. For the classically trained clarinetist, playing music in the jazz style may be difficult. As a clarinetist who is not trained in jazz, rather an enthusiast, I began this project to expand my knowledge of the repertoire of twentieth century clarinet works influenced by jazz, free of improvisation. These works allow clarinetists who are trained in the traditional European techniques, fluent in the use of clarinet in works by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and thankful for the contributions of Johannes Brahms, to expand their techniques on the instrument. Jazz, with its own traditions, techniques, and characteristics remains music from which composers have
continued to seek influence. These works for clarinet require an understanding and knowledge of jazz interpretation; they provide a challenge to performers and should not be underestimated.
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