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By

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Abstract

Clarinetist, composer, and conductor Jörg Widmann (b. 1973) is a world-class musician who is equally at home as a performer and composer. Recognized as a clarinet virtuoso, Widmann frequently performs as a solo recitalist, orchestral soloist, and as a chamber musician performing his own compositions as well as significant works from the standard repertoire. In his chamber music collaborations, he may be found performing his own compositions which mirror the instrumentation of monumental classical-romantic works. In addition to being an extraordinary clarinetist, Widmann is in high demand as a composer. His compositions have been commissioned, programmed, and recorded by renowned orchestras, soloists, and chamber ensembles around the world. Although many of his compositions feature the clarinet, his total compositional output is remarkable in size and scope. His diverse compositions include works for unaccompanied instruments (piano, violin, clarinet, and horn); chamber groups (for two to eight players, including voice); concertos (for flute, clarinet, oboe, piano, violin, cello, and trumpet); symphonic works; and operas.

Widmann maintains a distinct compositional voice, utilizing all manner of extremes through dynamics, instrumental colors, tempo, and playing techniques. Full of contrasts, Widmann’s works feature conventional pitches and frequent extended techniques and non-pitched sounds. His use of extended techniques and non-pitched
sounds are not used for minimal effect but rather to clearly express his musical vision.

His works for clarinet exhibit his creative and enticing use of non-pitched sounds and extended techniques. One of his earliest composed works, the *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo* (1993) is an exciting, virtuosic work which is enjoyed by performers and audiences alike through frequent performances worldwide.

Widmann’s dual talents as clarinetist and composer make him historically significant as a musician who is equally renowned in both spheres. Widmann can be compared to renowned virtuoso clarinetist-composers of the past including Franz Tausch (1762-1817), Ernesto Cavallini (1807-1874), Paul Jeanjean (1874-1928), and Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960), among others. As virtuosi players, the compositional output of these legendary clarinetist-composers was mainly limited to solo clarinet works. Widmann’s distinction as a virtuoso clarinetist and composer of such wide diversity makes him stand out as a compelling artist of his time.

Throughout the course of this document, Widmann’s compositional voice and performance style will be discussed to aid performers who approach his works for clarinet, specifically the aforementioned *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo*. A survey of repertoire in the unaccompanied clarinet genre clearly places the *Fantasie* in a significant position of importance and relevance. A comprehensive guide to extended contemporary techniques on the clarinet is included to prepare the performer for Widmann’s use of these sounds and effects. The *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo* is thoroughly examined in the form of a performance guide for clarinetists approaching the work.
Dedication

To my family for their continued support and love.
Acknowledgments

Thank you to the members of my doctoral committee, Dr. Arved Ashby, Professor Katherine Borst Jones, and Dr. Russel C. Mikkelson for their support throughout my studies at OSU. I am so appreciative of my teacher and advisor, Dr. Caroline Hartig who has been so influential in my life during these past five years at Ohio State. She has helped me to grow as a performer, pedagogue, and person in ways that I never could have anticipated.

Thank you to my former teachers who helped me to grow in innumerable ways: Dr. Leigh Wakefield, Dr. Scott A. Jones, and my mother who was my first clarinet teacher.

Lastly, thank you to my family for their encouragement and support throughout my studies. I could not have completed this without them. My father has been my biggest fan since day one. Most of all, thank you to my fiancé Emily for her boundless love, support, and patience. I seem to find a way to bring up my doctoral research every time we talk, and she still loves me despite that.
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Chapter 1. Introduction

Jörg Widmann (b. 1973) is a world-renowned clarinetist, composer, and conductor. Recognized as a clarinet virtuoso, Widmann frequently performs as a solo recitalist, orchestral soloist, and as a chamber musician performing his own compositions as well as significant works from the standard repertoire. His compositions are regularly programmed and recorded by acclaimed orchestras, chamber ensembles, and soloists. Widmann’s diverse compositional output includes works for solo instruments, chamber ensembles, concertos, symphonic works, and operas. His compositions for clarinet have grown in popularity and are frequently performed worldwide, particularly one of his earliest works, Fantasie for Clarinet Solo (1993). Widmann is a prolific composer, as evidenced by commissions from and performances by leading foundations, orchestras, and performers including Carnegie Hall, the Berlin Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, pianists András Schiff and Mitsuko Uchida, and many others.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to investigate the musical output of Jörg Widmann in order to arrive at an assessment of his compositional style and to identify his uncommon distinction as a musician equally recognized as a professional clarinetist,
composer, and conductor. An assessment of his compositional practices with a specific focus on his works for clarinet will be undertaken to reveal his compositional style and to raise awareness of his output. Furthermore, a survey of the unaccompanied clarinet literature and a guide to contemporary techniques will provide context for his _Fantasie for Clarinet Solo_, which will be thoroughly explored through a performance guide to better equip performers wishing to study this exciting new work. Little has been written about his clarinet compositions generally and about his works for unaccompanied clarinet specifically. This document aims to fill this gap in the research.

In chapter two, Jörg Widmann will be examined as both a composer and performer. His solo, orchestral, and chamber compositions will be surveyed to arrive at an initial assessment of trends in his compositional style and general compositional techniques. Chapter three contains a survey of his solo and chamber works which prominently feature the clarinet in order to determine the characteristics of his writing for the clarinet. Chapter four contains an overview of repertoire in the unaccompanied clarinet genre in order to place the _Fantasie_ in a significant position of importance and relevance. Chapter five contains a guide to the contemporary extended techniques of the clarinet which will prepare the performer for Widmann’s use of these sounds and effects. Additionally, this guide will combine the technical, pedagogical, and notational discussions of the indexed resources in Appendix B into a single volume. Lastly, chapter six includes a complete exploration of Widmann’s _Fantasie_ through the form of a performance guide which will facilitate the study of this work.
**Literature Review**

As Widmann’s status as a composer has grown, research into his compositions has increased. Significant research into Widmann’s compositional output has been completed by Siglind Bruhn\(^1\), whose 2013 book is an assessment of his works on the occasion of his fortieth birthday. An illuminating interview with Widmann which explores his development as a clarinetist and composer as well as his methods and philosophies of composition was published in 2005 by Markus Fein.\(^2\) In addition to these significant investigations of Widmann’s compositions, several articles have been written which address a single piece or aspect of his compositional output. Amidst these resources; however, little has been written about his clarinet compositions generally and about his works for unaccompanied clarinet specifically.

A survey of the current unaccompanied clarinet repertoire will be undertaken to place Widmann’s *Fantasie* into context within that genre. Comprehensive catalogs of unaccompanied clarinet repertoire have been published, but none that include works after 1990. James E. Gillespie’s 1976 book, *Solos for Unaccompanied Clarinet: An Annotated Bibliography of Published Works* is the first attempt to catalog the growing body of repertoire.\(^3\) David H. Odom’s 2005 D.M.A dissertation continues Gillespie’s catalog by

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adding works between 1978 and 1982. Phillip Rehfeldt’s *New Directions for Clarinet* contains lists of repertoire including unaccompanied works written up to 1990. It is unclear, however, how comprehensive this list is. Several articles have been published which are concerned with a single piece or the works of a single composer. An example of the latter is a 2013 article by Amanda R. Morrison which discusses the unaccompanied clarinet music of Eric Mandat, a well-known composer for the instrument.

Much has been written about extended contemporary techniques on the clarinet. Appendix B contains a comprehensive list of resources for the study of extended techniques. *New Directions for Clarinet* by Phillip Rehfeldt contains a complete list of techniques, though his discussion of each is rather narrow. Two books which examine extended techniques on the bass clarinet have been published by Henri Bok and Harry Sparnaay. These books are invaluable for those learning contemporary techniques on the bass clarinet and can be useful on the soprano clarinet as well. Many other articles which focus on one technique or a subset of techniques are available. A 1988 article by Michele Gingras describes several contemporary techniques and offers pedagogical discussion

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7 Rehfeldt, *New Directions*.
appropriate for students and teachers alike.\textsuperscript{10} Nicholas J. Valenziano published a two-part article in 1977 which outlines new trends in contemporary notation for extended techniques.\textsuperscript{11} Also published in 1977, F. Gerrard Errante’s three-part article presents an early discussion of contemporary techniques.\textsuperscript{12} Clarinetist Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr published an article in 1980 which collates information from several sources on multiphonics.\textsuperscript{13} The present exploration of extended contemporary techniques on the clarinet aims to combine the technical, pedagogical, and notational discussions of the aforementioned resources into a single volume. The present research will include descriptions of each technique, variations in production, use in the repertoire, as well as pedagogical discussion for those learning and teaching these techniques.

\textit{System for Labeling Pitches}

In the course of this document, pitches will be labeled based on the Acoustical Society of America standard of Scientific Pitch Notation. Each pitch will have a letter designation, sharp or flat if necessary, and a number indicating its register. References to

pitches labeled in this manner will refer to the written pitch, not the sounding pitch. (See Figure 1 for a comprehensive labeling system).

Figure 1. System for Labeling Pitches

The names of the clarinet registers will be referenced throughout this document. Those registers are the Chalumeau (E₃ – B♭₄), Clarion (B₄ – C₆), and Altissimo (C#₆ and above).
Chapter 2: Jörg Widmann as Performer and Composer

Biographical Sketch

Jörg Widmann was born in Munich on June 19, 1973. He was exposed to music at an early age by his parents, who were not professional musicians. In an interview with Asher Ian Armstrong, Widmann shares that his “parents were not musicians but were really interested in music. They had a ‘hobby-string quartet’ at home – so that is what my sister (who was a violinist) and I had as our first impressions. My parents took us to concerts and to the opera; it was kind of our childhood.”14 This early introduction to classical music inspired Widmann and his younger sister Carolin, a world-renowned violinist and pedagogue in her own right. Widmann began clarinet lessons at the age of seven and quickly became interested in composition. When asked how he began composing, Widmann explains:

Everything in my musical thinking started with the clarinet. Started with playing the clarinet. I started at the age of 7 and when I was practicing quite early, I was improvising when I was practicing, just making up some melodies. I was always furious with myself the next day because I could not remember exactly what I played before. I remembered that there was this nice part and wanted to play it again. So, there was a very natural need to find a way of notating it. So that was the reason why I really wanted to learn how to compose.15

This desire to record his clarinet improvisations led Widmann to begin studying composition at the age of eleven with Kay Westermann in Munich.

Widmann received his formal music education at the Munich Hochschule für Musik, where he studied clarinet with Gerd Starke. He went on to study clarinet with Charles Neidich at the Juilliard School of Music in 1994. Widmann continued his study of composition from 1994 to 1996 with Wilfried Hiller and Hans Werner Henze and from 1997 to 1999 with Heiner Goebbels and Wolfgang Rihm. In 2001, Widmann was appointed Professor of Clarinet at the Fribourg Hochschule für Musik. Eight years later, in 2009, he was additionally appointed professor of Composition at the same institution. Currently, Widmann serves as Professor of Composition at the Barenboim-Said Academy in Berlin.

Increasingly, Widmann is more active as a conductor in addition to his commitments as performer and composer. He has a close relationship with the Irish Chamber Orchestra, where he was appointed principal conductor in 2017. As a conductor of the Irish Chamber Orchestra, Widmann regularly conducts his own works along with standard orchestral repertoire. With that ensemble he has recorded two compact discs on the Orfeo Label which blend his own works with the symphonies of Felix Mendelssohn.¹⁶

**Widmann as a Clarinetist**

As a clarinetist, Widmann is known as a dynamic performer of the standard classical-romantic repertoire and as a champion of new music. He regularly performs a

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¹⁶ See Appendix A. Discography of Compositions by Jörg Widmann.
wide variety of repertoire including works for unaccompanied clarinet, concertos with orchestra, and chamber works. Widmann has collaborated in chamber music with many world-renowned musicians including violinist Christian Tetzlaff, pianists András Schiff and Mitsuko Uchida, the Goldmund and Hagen string quartets, oboist and pianist Heinz Holliger, and many more.

Widmann has performed as concerto soloist on his own compositions as well as standards of the repertoire and contemporary works. Among the orchestras he has performed with are the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, Orchestra National de France, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, National Symphony Orchestra (Washington), Orchestre symphonique de Montréal, Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, and the Orchestre de Paris. In addition to performing his own clarinet concertos *Elegie* (2006) and *Echo-Fragmente* (2006), Widmann regularly performs the concerti of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Carl Maria von Weber. The recipient of several dedications by contemporary composers, Widmann gave the premières of Wolfgang Rihm’s *Music for Clarinet and Orchestra* (1999), Aribert Reimann’s *Cantus* (2006), Heinz Holliger’s *Rechant* (2009), Peter Ruzicka’s *Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo* (2012), and Mark Andre’s *über* for clarinet, orchestra, and live electronics (2015).

In both his discography and live performances, Widmann regularly places his own compositions alongside monumental works of the standard repertoire. By doing so, Widmann draws a connection between his compositions and the works of renowned composers of the past which inspire him. For example, in the 2017-18 season, Widmann
has performed his new Clarinet Quintet with the Hagen String Quartet. Their performances of this new work regularly pair it with the Quintet in A Major for Clarinet and Strings, K. 581 of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. As a performer, Widmann is equally at home playing the works of Mozart, Schumann, Mendelssohn, and others as he is performing his own contemporary pieces. In addition to recording many of his own works, Widmann has recorded pieces from the classical-romantic repertoire including Fantasiestücke by Robert Schumann, the Clarinet Quintets of Mozart and Weber, the Octet of Franz Schubert, and Quatuor pour la fin du temps by Olivier Messiaen. Refer to Appendix A for Widmann’s complete discography.

**Widmann as a Composer**

Widmann has a diverse compositional output, including works for unaccompanied instruments (piano, violin, clarinet, and horn); chamber groups (for two to eight players, including voice); concertos (for flute, clarinet, oboe, piano, violin, cello, and trumpet); symphonic works; and operas.

Widmann has been commissioned by preeminent soloists and ensembles from around the world. Recent examples include his Sonatina facile (2016) for Piano, commissioned jointly by Elbphilharmonie Concert Hall (Hamburg, Germany), Carnegie Hall, and Pianist Mitsuko Uchida; his 2014 piano concerto Trauermarsch, jointly commissioned by the Berlin Philharmonic, Toronto Symphony, and San Francisco Symphony for Pianist Yefim Bronfman; and his 2014 orchestral work Babylon-Suite, which was jointly commissioned by the Grafenegg Festival, Deutsches Symphonie-
Orchester Berlin, and the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra. One of Widmann’s most recent works was jointly commissioned by the Gewandhausorchester of Leipzig and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. *Partita: Fünf Reminiszenzen für großes Orchester* (Five Reminiscences for Orchestra) was premiered by the Gewandhausorchester on March 8, 2018, conducted by Andris Nelso. The Boston Philharmonic under the direction of Andris Nelso gave the American debut on April 3rd in Boston Symphony Hall and in Carnegie Hall on April 13th, 2018. Widmann’s works have been premiered by outstanding soloists and ensembles including the Orchestre de Paris, the Berlin Philharmonic, Pianist András Schiff, the Cleveland Orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, Oboist Heinz Holliger, the Bamberg Symphony Orchestra, Violinist Christian Tetzlaff, and the Munich Philharmonic, among many others.

Widmann maintains a distinct compositional voice, utilizing all manner of extremes through dynamics, instrumental colors, tempo, tonality, and playing techniques. His works frequently blend the lines of tonality through the use of both traditional harmony and microtonality. Full of contrasts, Widmann writes both conventional sounds and frequent non-traditional extended techniques. As a virtuosic clarinetist, it is expected that he writes extended techniques that are both possible and appropriate for the clarinet. It comes as a surprise, however, that he is also able to use extended techniques befitting instruments that he does not himself play. Dominik Wollenweber, English hornist of the Berlin Philharmonic, interviewed Widmann and commented on the idiomatic nature of his extended techniques for all instruments of the orchestra. Widmann responded, saying,
I think one can write complex things, rhythmically, in terms of technique, but they should be in the spirit of the instrument, not contrary to it… It is very important that it stems from the spirit of the instrument and that it is not just used as an effect.\textsuperscript{17}

Widmann’s use of extended techniques, idiomatic for performers, is also accessible for listeners. His use of non-traditional sounds has a logical quality and grows from a desire to express his ideas more effectively.

In addition to writing idiomatic extended techniques, Widmann also carefully utilizes the tone color of each instrument. In the same interview, Wollenweber asked Widmann why he did not use the English Horn more extensively in his 2014 piano concerto \textit{Trauermarsch}. Widmann responded that the two exposed English Horn passages “are the very essence of the English Horn. I cannot write like this for any other instrument. I promise that when you sit there, you’ll hear a certain color. When it is heard for the first time at this point… the world changes, at least within this piece, and it can only be the English horn.”\textsuperscript{18} This interview presents Widmann as a composer concerned with instrumental color and appropriate technique. While his music does incorporate non-traditional sounds and effects, he does not compose new music for the sake of being avant-garde. Rather, Widmann composes music with ideas, emotions, and sensations using his singular compositional voice that implements instrumental colors and contemporary effects to heighten the musical drama.


\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
Widmann views the claim of the impossible as a good starting point for a composition.\textsuperscript{19} He appreciates the energy of this barrier and hopes it comes across to the listener, creating a sense of overwhelmed and disarmed wonder at hearing and seeing a virtuoso. This sense of exaggerated virtuosity can be heard in several of his compositions including his \textit{Fantasie} for Clarinet Solo (1993), \textit{Etudes} for Violin Solo (six total composed between 1995-2010), and the Trumpet Concerto \textit{ad absurdum} (2002). Widmann identifies the Belgian violin virtuoso Eugène Ysaÿe and Hungarian composer, conductor, and virtuoso pianist Franz Liszt as great innovators, having crossed the border of what was thought impossible.\textsuperscript{20}

With each piece, Widmann sets out to do something new and different. He shared with Markus Fein that he has a need to keep moving forward, to start anew and try things in a different way.\textsuperscript{21} As a composer known for his direct references to composers and works of the past, this statement may initially seem incongruous. There seems to be a dichotomy between referencing works from the past and composing new works. His works which connect to composers or compositions of the past do not simply rehash old material, however. Rather, Widmann uses these references as a launching point for his own compositional process. Whether setting his compositions with a similar instrumentation, imitating other composers’ techniques and compositional voices, or directly quoting musical material, Widmann’s compositions serve as contemporary reflections on the reference material. By setting his own compositions alongside the

\textsuperscript{19} Fein, 39.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., 47.
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid., 65.
historical works which he references, Widmann encourages an informed, contemporary interpretation which then elevates both pieces. While many of his works are composed independently, Widmann’s oeuvre also contains sets of works which seek to answer a similar question. These include his five string quartets, six etudes for violin solo, light study cycle (*Lichtstudie I-VI*), and orchestral works exploring instrumental singing (*Lied, Chor*, and *Messe*). While these series of works each set out to answer similar questions and fulfil similar goals, each piece does so in a new way.

**Compositional Process**

Widmann’s compositional process changes from piece to piece but generally follows a similar progression. He frequently begins with a long period of non-writing that he refers to as his incubation phase. During this phase, Widmann composes many experimental sketches which are unrestricted and exploratory. Some of these sketches will be used in the project at hand while others will be used at a later time or not at all. When composing these musical sketches, Widmann often conceives of a certain instrumental color or timbre which he then notates. His conception of sounds or techniques occurs with the physical gesture in mind. He senses and feels the physicality of what he wants but, at times, struggles to put that into notation. Following this crucial incubation phase, which centers around experimentation and contemplation, the actual composing can occur very quickly. Widmann asks questions of the sketches and uses the

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22 Fein., 62.
23 Ibid., 64.
24 Ibid., 36.
answers to lead him through the actual writing of the piece. Following the rapid compositional phase, Widmann’s works go through many stages of editing and reformatting. Composing is generally a very independent activity for Widmann and he shares his unfinished compositions with few people, the exceptions being Aribert Reimann and Wolfgang Rihm.

In an interview with Markus Fein, Jörg Widmann discussed his first orchestral work and how it shaped his compositional process. In this first orchestral piece, Carillon, which has since been retracted, Widmann likened himself to a painter with a large and overused color palette. At that point he thought maximum expression was achieved through orchestral mass. Through the failure of this first work, Widmann changed his philosophy on expression to the opposite: achieving the greatest possible intensity with minimal effort. Widmann attempts to fool the listener through perceptual extremes by making something large within a reduced form or instrumentation and making something small from a large form or instrumentation.

Form and Instrumentation in Widmann’s Instrumental Works

Widmann’s compositional output includes works for solo instruments and chamber ensembles of varying sizes all the way to full orchestral works and operas which include voices and theatrical settings. Many of his works draw inspiration from an

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25 Ibid., 63.
26 Ibid., 30.
27 Fein, 23.
28 Ibid., 51.
influential composer and standard work of the past. In his chamber output, nearly every composition has such an association including his Oktett for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, String Quartet and Double Bass (2004) which was inspired by the Octet in F major, D. 803 (1824) of Franz Schubert. Similarly, Widmann’s Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet in A, Horn, Bassoon, and Piano (2006) which was inspired by the Quintet in Eb major, K.452 (1784) of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Widmann’s orchestral works also draw connections to earlier compositions and composers including his Lied for Orchestra (2003) which drew inspiration from the lieder of Franz Schubert and Armonica (2006) which is scored for orchestra and glass harmonica, an instrument which is infrequently used today, but one that Mozart favored and wrote for later in his life. Within his compositional output are works of varying sizes and the goals he pursues in each instrumental genre (orchestral, chamber, and solo concerto) are quite different.

In his orchestral writing Widmann explores traditional forms and composes in a singing manner.29 Three of Widmann’s orchestral works draw explicit inspiration from vocal mediums including: Lied for Orchestra (2003, rev. 2009), Chor for Orchestra (2004), and Messe für großes Orchester (2005). In Lied, Widmann chose the lieder of Franz Schubert as a reference point. In this work, Widmann composes individual solo lines for the instruments of the orchestra with a vocal quality akin to Schubert’s lieder. In Chor, the concept of instrumental singing was expanded from the single voice writing of Lied to a more choral style. In this work, Widmann conceives of the orchestra as a unified choir, using a unison as a point of departure. Finally, in Messe, Widmann sets the

29 Fein, 91.
traditional form of a mass for an orchestra without vocalists. *Messe* blends the individual and choral styles of the previous two works on instrumental singing. Within his manuscript, Widmann sets the text of the mass over the instrumental parts to clearly identify the vocal quality of the composed music.

Widmann takes multiple approaches when composing in the genre of the solo concerto. One approach is exemplified by his trumpet concerto *ad absurdum* (2002) in which Widmann explores the polarity of the soloist versus the orchestra.\(^{30}\) The Oxford English dictionary defines absurdity as “The quality or state of being ridiculous or wildly unreasonable.”\(^{31}\) As this title may suggest, *ad absurdum* begins where most concertos end: at a rapid tempo and place of wild virtuosity. Throughout the piece, Widmann pits the orchestra and soloist against one another. They continually push each other to faster tempi and heightened levels of virtuosity which leads to an inevitable breaking point.

Widmann’s other approach to writing in the solo concerto genre can be seen in his two clarinet concertos, *Elegie* (2006) and *Echo-Fragmente* (2006), as well as in his first Violin Concerto (2007). In these works, Widmann moves away from the virtuosic extremes of the concerto and instead explores nuances of sound, timbre, and texture. The solo voice in these works is set above the orchestra, but also weaves in and out of the orchestral texture. In this style of concerted composition, Widmann treats the two voices as equals in fulfilling the musical vision of the piece.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., 91.

In his chamber works, Widmann explores subtle nuances and attempts to create the greatest possible contrasts.\textsuperscript{32} His chamber works tend to be the most adventurous in terms of playing techniques, form, and tonality. Widmann views chamber music as a laboratory where he can experiment and try something new.\textsuperscript{33} In his \textit{Nachtstück} for clarinet, cello, and piano (1998), Widmann attempts to achieve the greatest possible nuance of a single tone.\textsuperscript{34} To accomplish this, Widmann composes segments of tone-color melodies which resemble the technique of \textit{Klangfarbenmelodie} coined by Arnold Schoenberg in 1911. Using this technique, Schoenberg incorporated tone color as an element of composition along with pitch, rhythm, and harmony.\textsuperscript{35} In \textit{Nachtstück}, Widmann transforms a single pitch with instrumental tone color by transferring it between the voices of the trio. He then expands this idea by adding variations in timbre, dynamics, and playing techniques to create a greater range of colors. Near the beginning of the work, a C\# is passed between the clarinet and the cello with the cellist instructed to play the pitch normally, using a harmonic, and using different bow strokes including col legno.

Solo clarinet pieces such as \textit{Fünf Bruchstücke} (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano (1997) and \textit{Drei Schattentänze} (Three Shadow Dances) for Clarinet Solo (2013) contain an increased use of extended techniques and non-pitched effects on the clarinet.

\textsuperscript{32} Fein, 93.
\textsuperscript{33} Ibid., 94.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 93.
This increased usage reflects Widmann’s intimate understanding of the tonal and expressive capabilities of his own instrument. His chamber works also feature increased use of extended techniques and effects for other instruments. In his Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet in A, Horn, Bassoon, and Piano (2006), the instruments must perform air effects, key clicks, multiphonics, tone color trills, and special articulations such as a “Schmatzgeräusch” (smacking sound) and a slap. Over time, Widmann’s compositional language has come to incorporate more frequent non-pitched effects, particularly key clicks and air effects in wind instruments.

In addition to his relationship to composers and compositions of the past, comparisons can be made between Widmann’s compositional style and that of other contemporary composers including Alban Berg, Matthias Pintscher, and Helmut Lachenmann. Widmann’s music shares an emotional and romantic quality which is also present in the music of Alban Berg (1885-1935). While Berg’s music is constructed using serial techniques and a contemporary vocabulary, it also contains at its core an expressive romanticism. Some critics describe this romanticism as “backward-looking” to the late romantics such as Mahler. Like Berg, Widmann’s music is intensely expressive and backward-looking despite being constructed using a contemporary organization and vocabulary. In respect to vocabulary, Widmann goes far beyond Berg given his

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incorporation of non-pitched sounds and extended techniques. Berg did not go so far as to incorporate these contemporary elements.

Widmann’s music also shares similarities to his German contemporary Matthias Pintscher (b. 1971). The two composers’ careers show parallels as both studied for a time with Hans Werner Henze and both served as Daniel R. Lewis Young Composer Fellows with the Cleveland Orchestra. Similarities between their compositional styles may also be seen. Pintscher’s music frequently features spares textures that allow for the exploitation of instrumental color and nuanced gestures (as in his 2014 work composed for the Cleveland Orchestra, *idyl*). Additionally, Pintscher’s compositional vocabulary contains occasional use of non-pitched sounds and extended techniques as in *Sonic Eclipse* for solo horn, trumpet, and ensemble (2009-10). Pintscher’s careful use of instrumental color and nuanced gestures combined with a compositional vocabulary which features conventional playing with non-pitched sounds and extended techniques can also be seen throughout Widmann’s output.

Some similarities may also be drawn between the compositional vocabularies of Widmann and German composer Helmut Lachenmann (b. 1935). Beginning in the 1960s, Lachenmann began to expand his vocabulary into what he later termed *musique concrete instrumentale*. In this new period of composition, Lachenmann came to incorporate “the mechanical and physical conditions of instrumental and vocal sound production into his compositions.”

As a result, his works after this point are composed almost exclusively

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using non-pitched sounds and extended techniques, as in *Mouvements (-vor der Erstarrung)* for chamber ensemble (1982–4). While Widmann employs some of the same sounds and techniques as Lachenmann, their use is not nearly as extensive nor all-encompassing.

**Duality of Performer and Composer**

Widmann’s prolific compositional output and active performance schedule make him an uncommon modern musician. There are few examples of modern clarinetists striving in both areas of musicianship: composition and performance. Widmann’s dual success as clarinetist and composer alike place him in the company of renowned clarinet pedagogues, performers, and composers throughout history including Franz Tausch (1762-1917), Ernesto Cavallini (1807-1874), Paul Jeanjean (1874-1928), and Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960). As virtuosi players, the compositional output of these legendary clarinetist-composers was mainly limited to works for solo clarinet. Widmann’s distinction as a virtuoso clarinetist and composer of such wide diversity makes him stand out as a compelling artist of his time. It is hard to predict which contemporary works will stand the test of time as did the works of the aforementioned clarinetist-composers. Widmann’s compositions enjoy repeat performances today and are fit to enter the standard repertoire for future generations of performers.

state.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000015776.
Jörg Widmann’s compositional output contains many pieces which feature the clarinet. These include works for unaccompanied solo clarinet, clarinet with piano, chamber compositions with three to eight players, and chamber works featuring voice. His chamber compositions vary in their instrumentation, with many mirroring the instrumentation of standard chamber works from the past. Examples from Widmann’s output include, but are not limited to: *Nachstück* for Clarinet in A, Cello, and Piano which shares the instrumentation of trios by Johannes Brahms (Clarinet Trio, Op.114) and Ludwig van Beethoven (Trio in B-flat major, Op.11); *Tränen der Musen* for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano which mirrors the instrumentation of Béla Bartók’s *Contrasts* (Sz.111); and *Es war einmal… Fünf Stücke im Märchenton* which mirrors the instrumentation of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart’s *Keggelstadt* Trio (Trio in E-flat major, K.498) and Robert Schumann’s *Märchenerzählungen*, Op. 132. Nearly every piece in Widmann’s catalog of chamber works has an association with an earlier composer and composition. Widmann uses these associations as a point of departure in his compositional process. He intentionally makes these connections and regularly sets his own compositions alongside the standard works of the past both in live performance and on commercial recordings.

Widmann’s compositional voice, which is characterized by the combination of conventional playing with extended techniques and non-pitched sounds, is evident from
his earliest works. His use of non-pitched material includes air effects on wind instruments, harmonics and unconventional bowings on string instruments, and percussive effects on the piano. At times, Widmann uses these elements to symbolize different characters or places as in the third movement, “Die Eishöhle” [The Ice Cave], of his trio for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano, *Es war einmal*…. In this movement, special effects are used to transport the listener and create the sounds of an ice cave. In other works, Widmann incorporates extended techniques and non-pitched sounds into traditional forms, as in *Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons (Sphinx’s Sayings and Riddle Canons)* for Soprano, Clarinet, and Piano. In this work, Widmann presents a series of canons, each of which uses certain extended techniques and non-pitched sounds as musical elements within the canon.

His writing for the clarinet has developed along with his further exploration and improvisation on his own instrument. Over time, his clarinet writing has gradually come to incorporate more special effects including flutter tongue, underblown and overblown multiphonics, fingered multiphonics, quarter and microtones, air effects, and percussive effects including key clicks. His compositions for solo clarinet effectively display this tonal development as each work uses progressively more of these special effects and increased microtonality. Certain gestures are frequently used, such as rapid passages performed with a pianissimo tone but fortissimo key noise and a microtonal figure which begins on open G₄ and rapidly descends without the use of the left thumb. While Widmann’s writing for the clarinet has gradually developed to incorporate more of these non-traditional elements, two seemingly contrasting aspects of his compositional style
have remained constant: virtuosity through extremes in range, dynamics, tempi, and style; and an expressive vocal quality in his writing for the clarinet.

The following survey of Widmann’s solo and chamber works for the clarinet features a diverse selection of pieces which display his admiration for composers of the past, expanding compositional vocabulary, and careful use of instrumental color and timbre. Available recordings are indicated for each piece including the many recordings made by the composer himself. These recordings are an invaluable resource when approaching Widmann’s works. Although he includes ample instructions within his scores, some of the techniques and sounds are more easily understood aurally. The works in the following survey are arranged chronologically within their respective subheading.

*Unaccompanied Works and Solo Clarinet with Piano*

*Fantasie for Clarinet Solo (1993)*

The *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo* was composed in 1993 and is one of Widmann’s earliest compositions. Written when he was just twenty years old, the *Fantasie* is filled with virtuoso flourishes and youthful exuberance. Even at this young age, Widman’s compositional voice is apparent. He combines conventional playing with extended techniques, and non-pitched sounds, though not nearly to the same extent as his later works. This piece is discussed in thorough detail in Chapter 6.
*Fünf Bruchstücke (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano (1997)*

*Fünf Bruchstücke* (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano was composed in 1997 and received its premiere on April 10, 1997 with the composer on clarinet and Moritz Eggert, piano. This work contains five short movements:

I. Äußerst langsam (Extremely Slow)
II. Presto possible (As Fast as Possible)
III. Sehr langsam, frei (Very slow, free)
IV. Energiegeladen, sehr schnell (With energy, very fast)
V. $\text{♩}= 40$

*Fünf Bruchstücke* combines extended techniques and non-pitched sounds for both the clarinet and the piano. This work contains more extended techniques and non-pitched sounds than the *Fantasie* (1993), but not nearly as many as Widmann’s latest work for solo clarinet, *Drei Schattentänze* (2013). Like the *Fantasie*, this work is composed in a virtuosic fashion with each movement exploring different contemporary techniques.

In the first movement, “Äußerst langsam,” the clarinetist performs only three pitches: chalumeau E₃, G₄, and clarion Ab₅. Widmann writes extreme dynamics on the opening E₃ including crescendos and decrescendos between sffz, p, mf, ppp, ff, pp, f, ppp (quasi niente), and fffppp all within the first measure. The opening E₃ is further embellished using a quarter tone which is achieved by depressing a thumb key on the German Oehler system clarinet but is only possible through embouchure manipulation on the Boehm system. In the second movement, “Presto Possible,” Widmann alternates between conventional playing and microtonal lines performed without use of the left-hand thumb. The pianist is instructed to place jewel cd cases on indicated strings to create a buzz along with the pitch of the given key. Widmann notates key clicks in the clarinet.
part by using a second “key noise” staff in the beginning of the movement. Half way through the movement, Widmann writes repetitive articulations on G\textsubscript{4} with the instruction for the clarinetist to randomly overblow harmonics. In the third movement, “Sehr langsam, frei,” Widmann notates long silences and soft dynamics throughout. The pianist is called to perform an “Aeolian harp effect” in which the notated keys are silently depressed before the pianist softly strums the strings in the piano body. The pianist must also perform a “distant rumble” by depressing the pedal and drumming the fingertips on the lower strings of the piano.

The fourth movement, “Energiegeladen, sehr schnell,” is angular and characterized by a rapid tempo, frequent time signature changes, large registral leaps, and rhythmic intensity. A syncopated rhythmic motive serves as an important structural element in this piece. Surrounding the statements of this motive is wild music which includes dissonant tonalities and frequent extended techniques including glissandi, flutter tongue, and color trills. Beginning in measure thirty-five, Widmann uses notation for indistinct pitches performed on the clarinet with the instruction “wild glissando, screams, figurations.” The music becomes increasingly wild and aggressive into page thirteen where the pianist performs fortissimo hits on the extreme ranges of the keyboard while the clarinet improvises “wild figurations” according to graphical notation. The final movement, “♩ = 40,” bears no descriptive title besides the tempo marking. This movement is a kind of night music, a true contrast from the wild and unbridled quality of the fourth movement. The solo clarinet part contains the piano score as well, attesting to the close relationship of the two voices in this movement. The slow and contemplative
opening leads to a “senza misura” section in measure ten during which the pianist is instructed to noisily scratch along a designated piano string before performing a rapid glissando to the lowest string of the piano. The clarinetist responds to this sound with a fortissimo and “dirty” multiphonic in measure eleven which leads into a microtonal trill on E₄. The movement closes with “dark air-noise” through the clarinet while the pianist holds the depressed pedal of the piano.

Widmann’s *Fünf Bruchstücke* (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano shows his imagination and experimentation with the clarinet. The expansion in his tonal language during the four years separating this work from the *Fantasie* can be seen in his increased writing of extended techniques and non-pitched sounds for clarinet and piano alike. This expanded tonal language continues into his other clarinet works, particularly in his 2013 unaccompanied piece *Drei Schattentänze* (Three Shadow Dances). *Fünf Bruchstücke* is available on three commercial recordings: two by Widmann with Heinz Holliger, Piano, and Silke Avenhaus, piano, and one by Lajos Rozmán, clarinet, with Martin Tchiba, piano.

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Drei Schattentänze (Three Shadow Dances) (2013)

Drei Schattentänze (Three Shadow Dances) was composed in 2013 based on a commission from the Beijing International Music Competition and the Ernst von Siemens Musikstiftung. This three-movement work contains many extended techniques, microtones, and non-pitched sounds. Widmann explains his intention in the preface to the work:

My primary objective in these Drei Schattentänze [Three Shadow Dances] is to view the clarinet from a completely different perspective than is customary and thereby encourage young clarinetists to develop an enthusiastic and playful approach to microtones, multiphonics, key click sounds, shadowy notes and other exciting new playing techniques.  

The piece contains an extensive preface with descriptions of the notation and effects called for within the three movements. As with Widmann’s other works for solo clarinet, the multiphonic and microtonal fingerings fit the German Oehler system clarinet and must be adapted to fit the French Boehm system.

The first movement, “Echo-Tanz,” (Echo dance) contains frequent use of microtones, undertones, glissandi, air sounds, and slap tongue, as well as quiet whisper-tones and echo notes. The near constant use of extended techniques in this work makes it difficult for those performers who are not already familiar with contemporary techniques. Refer to Chapter 5 for descriptions of the contemporary clarinet techniques and for suggestions on how to begin learning them. “Echo-Tanz” has a jazzy groove that Widmann notates through changing time signatures, specific articulation markings, and

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41 Jörg Widmann, Foreword to Drei Schattentänze (Mainz, Germany: Schott Musik International, 2013).
expressive instructions calling for vibrato and other artistic effects. Widmann composes manipulations of the harmonic series by calling for underblowing of pitches from the fifth and third partial in order to produce notes with an altered timbre in the fundamental chalumeau register. He also composes “screaming multiphonics” in measure eighty-two in which fingerings from the low chalumeau register are overblown to produce simultaneous pitches from both the first and third partials.

The vast majority of the second movement, “(Under) Water Dance,” explores the softest dynamics possible on the clarinet. The majority of the movement falls within piano (p) and pianississississimo (ppppp). In the first section of the movement marked “molto rubato,” Widmann notates a tone color trill performed with the right index finger on the right-hand trill keys. A graphical notation indicates the relative speed of the trill as the line progresses. Combined with the extreme soft dynamics, this technique produces an eerie effect. Through the use of timbre trills, underblown notes from the fifth and third partial, and rapid technical figures within a soft dynamic, Widmann represents the sights and sounds of being underwater. The listener can imagine the undulating effect of light refracting through water and the muffled quality of sound traveling within it. This movement contains many expressive descriptors including “ephemeral, shadowy,” “bubbling,” “hesitantly, shadowy,” “lurking,” “threateningly,” and “urgently.” The coda of the movement contains rapid scalar patterns performed “as fast as possible,” always with a “whispering tone.” Each scalar pattern begins on chalumeau E₃ and extends progressively higher, ending on a final altissimo Ab₆ marked “quasi niente.”
The final movement, “Danse africaine,” is composed using key clicks, air effects, and very soft playing. To make the key clicks clearly audible, Widmann instructs the performer to play seated so the instrument can be held in the knees and to slightly amplify using a microphone. Following an introduction of percussive key clicks, the clarinetist performs a recurring rhythmic motive in a normal manner of playing using “pianissimo slaps.” Widmann varies this motive by setting it in both normal pianissimo slaps and pitched key-clicks throughout the movement. In measure ninety-four, Widmann writes a multiphonic similar to those from the first movement, this time with the instruction “screaming jungle multiphonic, quasi elephant call.” In the coda, marked “Più mosso subito,” Widmann notates approximate pitches using only stems without note heads. The movement closes with three extraordinary effects: a “quasi elephant trumpeting sound” produced by sucking air into the clarinet, a “primeval scream” performed with the voice, and “elephant call” multiphonics produced by overblowing the chalumeau E₃ to produce higher partial notes through embouchure manipulation.

_Drei Schattentänze_ contains many more extended techniques and non-pitched sounds than Widmann’s other works. It reflects his experimentation with his own instrument which led to the development of an extended tonal language. The prevalence of extended techniques makes this an exceptionally challenging work, particularly for

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42 Widmann, _Drei Schattentänze_, 10.
those unfamiliar with these effects and sounds. The piece has been recorded by Widmann on the Orfeo label.\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{Concertos for Clarinet and Orchestra}

\textit{Elegie for Clarinet and Orchestra (2006)}

Jörg Widmann’s first concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra, \textit{Elegie}, was composed in 2006 on commission from the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra (NDR Sinfonieorchester). Widmann premiered the work as soloist with the NDR in the Laeiszhalle in Hamburg on June 11, 2006. In addition to the typical string orchestra, Widmann calls for two flutes (second doubling piccolo), two bassoons (second doubling contrabassoon), two horns, one percussionist, harp, celeste, and accordion. The addition of the accordion is particularly interesting as Widmann uses its unique color as a critical element throughout the composition.

\textit{Elegie} is a concerto in a different style than Widmann’s earlier trumpet concerto, \textit{ad absurdum (2002)}. In \textit{ad absurdum}, Widmann explores the medium of the concerto by setting the soloist against the orchestra. \textit{Ad absurdum} begins at a breakneck pace as the soloist and orchestra battle for dominance and only becomes progressively faster and more virtuosic throughout. Whereas \textit{ad absurdum} explores soloistic virtuosity and the conflict between the soloist and accompaniment, \textit{Elegie} is a work concerned with color, timbre, texture, and collaboration between soloist and accompaniment.

Throughout *Elegie*, Widmann divides the strings into multiple parts. In the opening of the piece, for example, the first and second violins, violas, and cellos are divided into a solo string quartet part and a section part, with the celli further divided into three separate voices. String divisi is used throughout the work with varying numbers of voices. Widmann achieves an intimate texture at the beginning of *Elegie* by starting with the solo clarinet holding a long G5 marked piano. The solo string quartet responds with a chorale-like theme. In the opening five measures, Widmann uses the timbre difference between the solo string quartet and full string section by alternating between the two. When the full string section performs, however, the dynamic is softer, marked *ppp* (Echo!), whereas the quartet is marked louder, reaching *poco f* at the end of measure three.

Widmann alters the texture in measure eleven by writing solo triplet lines for violin and cello. The pitches of these solo lines are sustained by the rest of the string section. This sustain in the divisi strings (marked *ppp sempre*) creates soft, towering chords over which the clarinet performs a rhythmic and microtonally-inflected line. The towering effect of these chords is created by dividing the strings into seven violin parts and two viola parts. Along with the celli and basses, this divisi spans six octaves from the low D1 of the string bass to the high Db7 of the first violin. When the flutes, bassoons, and horns enter in measure twenty-two, they are also divided. The arrival at measure twenty-nine, “Ruhig,” brings a new, stark texture in which the clarinet soloist performs in dialog with the orchestra. The carpet of sound beneath the clarinet in the first section of
the concerto is gone, replaced with only brief rhythmic interjections by the strings, accordion, harp, and celeste.

Widmann layers the voices of the orchestra over one another using a canon beginning in measure seventy-nine, “In ruhigem Fluss” (quiet flow). There, the quarter note line in the divisi winds is set in a canon separated by two beats. Widmann uses the canon in the string voices beginning in measure ninety-eight. There, the upper strings perform a rapidly descending chromatic line set three beats apart. The rhythmic motion of the string line slows as the line descends and note durations become progressively longer.

As the divisi strings enter with the chromatic canon figure, their sounds combine into a sound mass. The string rhythm continues to slow until they hold and diminuendo to nothing in measure 105. There, Widmann creates a new texture as the clarinet soloist performs a series of soft underblown multiphonics above a “misterioso” line in the divisi celli and basses.

After over seventeen minutes of music, Widmann concludes the concerto with a series of underblown multiphonics performed by the clarinet beginning in measure 284. The string quartet plays a series of chords in response to the multiphonics of the clarinet. Initially, these chords are dissonant as are the multiphonics until the final set in measure 292. There, the clarinet performs a multiphonic which produces a perfect fifth: E and B. The strings respond by performing an E major chord using harmonics. This chord is then struck by the celeste, harp, accordion, and glockenspiel in the following bar. After a long, microtonal, and densely chromatic work, this major chord comes as a complete surprise and sounds almost like a foreign entity.
Jörg Widmann’s first concerto for clarinet and orchestra, *Elegie*, is one long chromatic and microtonal movement. *Elegie* presents a different vision of virtuosity than does Widmann’s earlier concertos for other instruments. The extensive use of microtones, intensely quiet playing, rapid technical passages, and extremes of range and dynamic are all virtuosic aspects contained within the *Elegie*. What separates this work from Widmann’s other concerti, however, is how the soloist and orchestra interact. The close connection between the two marks a change from his prior works. *Elegie* is available on a commercial recording made with Jörg Widmann, clarinet, and the German Radio Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Christoph Poppen.44

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**Echo-Fragmente for Clarinet and Orchestra Groups (2006)**

*Echo-Fragmente* for Clarinet and Orchestra groups was composed by Jörg Widmann in 2006 for a commission by the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra (SWR). This work requires two orchestras to perform: a modern orchestra tuned to $A = 443$ Hz and a baroque orchestra tuned to $A = 430$ Hz. In the modern orchestra, Widmann composes for six first violins, five second violins, four violas, three cellos, and two basses along with four clarinets in A (the third clarinet doubles bass clarinet and the fourth doubles contrabass clarinet), an accordion, harp, celeste, and one percussionist. The baroque orchestra includes parts for the same number of string instruments along with four natural horns, a baroque oboe (doubling a recorder tuned to ca. 415 Hz), and a

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guitar (doubling a bandurria and a banjo, the latter tuned to C, Eb, B, and B lowered by one quarter tone). Widmann premiered his concerto in Freiburg, Germany on June 25, 2006 with the Stuttgart Radio Symphony Orchestra and Freiburg Baroque Orchestra conducted by Sylvain Cambreling.

_Echo-Fragmente_ was premiered only two weeks after Widmann’s first concerto for clarinet and orchestra, _Elegie_. While _Echo-Fragmente_ is separate in its use of two orchestras, it is also similar as it contains borrowed elements from the first concerto. _Echo-fragmente_ is composed using the same microtonal and chromatic language as his first concerto. Additionally, some passages seem to be copied verbatim as in measure eighty where the upper strings perform the same descending canon figure into a sound mass that diminuendos to nothing. The ensuing section, beginning in measure eighty-seven is also taken from _Elegie_. There, the clarinet performs multiphonics over a duet between the celli and basses.

There is an abundance of new material, however, including the addition of a cadenza beginning in measure 187. This cadenza contains rapid scalar figures with microtones dotted throughout, all of which are performed within _ppp_. The difference between the two tuning systems is evident throughout the work but comes to the forefront beginning in measure 254. There, the first violin soloist of the baroque orchestra begins a sixteenth note line which is joined in polyphony by the first violin soloist of the modern orchestra in measure 259. Widmann is careful to not include any unisons between the two voices. A “senza misura” section beginning in measure 287 is reminiscent of a parallel passage in the first concerto. There, the strings of the baroque orchestra perform soft
chords beneath arpeggiations played by the guitar. The baroque oboe and the clarinet soloist join this texture with a duet in measure 289 in which the clarinet echoes the statements of the oboe while adding microtonal inflections. Measure 303, “Calmo,” is the subdued final section of the concerto. The string sections of each orchestra alternate, performing soft chords which gradually become softer until Widmann instructs the performers to bow on the bridge to produce a non-pitched white-noise sound. The clarinet soloist and the clarinets from the modern orchestra perform a similar sounding technique by blowing air through the instrument in measures 326-327. *Echo-fragmente* ends in a similar manner as *Elegie*, with soft multiphonics in the clarinet leading to a *pp* chord played by the strings of both orchestras. The final sounds of the work are the string sections playing on the bridge to produce a non-pitched white-noise sound.

Jörg Widmann’s second concerto for Clarinet and Orchestra Groups, *Echo-fragmente*, was premiered only two weeks after his first concerto. Due to the close timeframe, the two works share a similar form, affect, and passagework. *Echo-fragmente* stands apart because it calls for two orchestras to perform: one modern and one baroque, the latter of which is tuned to A = 430. Unfortunately, no commercial recording has been made of this work.

**Chamber Works**

*Tränen der Musen (Tears of the Muses) for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano (1993, rev. 1996)*

*Tränen der Musen* (Tears of the Muses) for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano was composed in 1993 when Widmann was only twenty years old. This work was written in
the same year as his Fantasie for Clarinet Solo and 180 Beats Per Minute for string sextet. In the preface to the work, Widmann reflects on a statement that he discovered while working on this piece: “inter armis musae silent.” He writes, “Is it really true that the muses should remain silent when weapons speak? Perhaps it is possible to translate this silence into sounds?”\textsuperscript{45} Tränen der Musen is based on three pitches which are separated by a descending minor second and a falling minor third.

In an interview with Markus Fein, Widmann identifies two works from the standard chamber repertoire which inspired his Tränen der Musen: Béla Bartók’s Contrasts (1938) and the sixth movement, “Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes” of Olivier Messiaen’s Quatuor pour la fin du temps (1941).\textsuperscript{46} Widmann chose to set his piece using the same instrumentation as the Bartok Contrasts: Clarinet, Violin, and Piano. Tränen der Musen is an attempt to find a place between the worlds of Bartok’s Contrasts and Messiaen’s Quatuor pour la fin du temps.\textsuperscript{47}

The piece begins with an unmeasured clarinet solo marked “very free, lamenting, espressivo.” The placement of the descending half step followed by a descending minor third creates the sense of lament in the line. Throughout Tränen der Musen, Widmann writes the minor third interval enharmonically as an augmented second. When the violinist joins the clarinet, the music continues on without bar lines (the entrance of the violin is labeled measure two). Representative of Widmann’s earlier compositional style,

\textsuperscript{46} Fein, 17; my translation.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., 17.
this piece contains only minor uses of extended techniques and microtonality. In the clarinet part, Widmann only notates vibrato (which may be more effectively performed as a color trill) and infrequent use of flutter tongue, glissandi, and non-pitched air sounds. The violinist must also perform glissandi and has a single quarter-tone statement in measure 106.

Following the unmeasured duet between the clarinet and violin, the piano enters in measure seven with a statement of the three pitches. In the ensuing bar, the slow and soft chords of the piano, which accompany the violinist’s high expressive melody is reminiscent of the fifth movement, “Lounge à l’éternité de Jésus,” of Messiaen’s Quatuor. A clear nod to Messiaen’s Quatuor begins in measure forty-seven where the three voices of the trio perform a staccato triplet line in unison. This is a reference to the sixth movement, “Danse de la fureur, pour les sept trompettes,” of Messiaen’s Quatuor, which contains only one musical line performed entirely in unison. The reference is clear as the trio continues to play in unison until measure fifty-nine and then again periodically through measure eighty.

Following a grand pause in measure thirty-four, the music shifts to a new character. A new theme is first presented in the right hand of piano and later by the violin along with a lilting accompaniment figure which evokes a folk-song-like character. Here the listener may hear an allusion to Bartók’s Contrasts which was based on Hungarian and Romanian dance melodies. The sixteenth note triplet figure in both clarinet and violin heard first in measures forty and forty-one has an eastern-European tinge about it. Widmann goes on to alternate between the Bartók-like folk melody and the Messiaen-like
unison triplet line until measure eighty-three. Beginning in measure eighty-four, the soft
chords of the piano return as the clarinet and violin play a unison lyrical line above. From
there, the music slowly winds down until the final two bars in which the trio performs a
descending quarter note line in octaves with the violinist playing high harmonics, the
clarinetist supporting low in the range, and the pianist plucking the strings of the piano.

Widmann’s Tränen der Musen (Tears of the Muses) for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano is an early work from his oeuvre which draws inspiration and direct compositional elements from Messiaen and Bartók. No commercial recording has been made at this time, though a recording from a live performance is available on the website of violinist Peter Sheppard Skaerved. The live recording is from February 1, 2001 with Jörg Widmann, Clarinet and Aaron Shorr, Piano.48

*Nachtstück (Night Piece) for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano (1998)*

*Nachtstück* (Night Piece) for Clarinet in A, Cello, and Piano was composed in 1998 and revised in 2008. The first performance of this piece came on April 17, 1998 in Dresden at the Albrechtsberg Palace with Jörg Widmann, clarinet; Jan Vogler, cello; and Silke Avenhaus, piano.

*Nachtstück* is a stark contrast to Widmann’s earlier trio for clarinet, *Tränen der Musen* for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano. In *Tränen der Musen*, Widmann established a clear framework for the piece by developing a clear form and thematic material based on

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three pitches. In contrast, *Nachstück* presents an entirely different compositional process based on an indistinct form and the transformation of pitches using instrumental timbre. Within this work, Widmann attempts to achieve the greatest possible nuance of a single tone. He achieves this goal throughout by crafting tone-color melodies which transfer single pitches between instruments in interesting ways. An example of this occurs in measure twenty-five where a C# is first played by the clarinet before it is passed to the cello (performing a harmonic) in measure twenty-seven. The two voices overlap with the cello instructed to “enter imperceptibly.” Having transformed the C# by means of timbre exchange from clarinet to the cello harmonic, Widmann then alters it further by adding vibrato in the cello which the clarinet then imitates in measure thirty-three. A final transformation of the C# occurs in measure thirty-five where the cello has the instruction “col legno saltando,” meaning the cellist must use the wood of the bow (col legno) and bounce it with repeated rebounds before sustaining (saltando).

The title *Nachstück* is presented in a more literal fashion beginning in measure fifty-five where the piano performs a repeated Gb3 with the instruction “12 strokes of midnight.” The composition is filled with non-traditional sounds performed by all members of the trio. These non-traditional sounds can conjure for the listener the eerie sense one feels late at night in an empty house or alone outdoors.

The più mosso of measure seventy-eight brings about a return of the opening four measures of the piece, this time in quarter-note triplets in the piano. This repetitive, descending line begins as a single voice but gradually becomes more complex through

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49 Fein, 93.
the addition of harmonization and polyrhythm. Widmann provides the instruction “quasi ‘musical box.’” The repeated music box builds in intensity and complexity to measure eighty-six after which it begins to lose steam. As the line gradually loses its harmonization and polyrhythm, it passes to the clarinet and cello as in the opening of the work. The piano suddenly interrupts with a rapidly ascending fff subito line at the end of measure ninety-nine. This sudden interruption leads into an uncertain silence and a concluding ppp, senza diminuendo chord that, rather than sustain to silence, has a definite end with a clear release of the piano sustain pedal.

Widmann’s Nachstück (Night Piece) for Clarinet in A, Cello, and Piano was composed only five years after his earlier trio for clarinet (Tränen der Musen for Clarinet, Violin, and Piano), yet it presents an entirely different approach to form and thematic development. Nachstück contains no hummable melodies, but instead aims to present the images and sounds of the night through the use of extended techniques, non-pitched sounds, and the transformation of single pitches and motives. A commercial recording is available through the Berlin Classics label with Jörg Widmann, clarinet; Jan Vogler, cello; and Ewa Kupiec, piano.⁵⁰ That album presents Widmann’s work alongside the trios for clarinet and piano of Johannes Brahms (in A minor, Op. 114) and Ludwig van Beethoven (No. 4 in B flat major "Gassenhauer", Op. 11).

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Widmann’s *Fieberphantasie* (Fever Fantasy) for Piano, String Quartet, and Clarinet (doubling bass clarinet) was commissioned by the Bayerischen Akademie der Schönen Künste. It received its premiere on November 27, 1999 with Muriel Cantoreggi and Rüdiger Lotter, violins; Hariolf Schlichtig, viola; Christoph Richter, cello; Jörg Widmann, clarinet; and Silke Avenhaus, piano.

In the preface to this work, Widmann writes that he “always felt that Robert Schumann’s music resembled the contours of a fever curve: nervous, unsteady, and feverish, with an endless multitude of smaller and larger wave peaks and troughs within the progression of the curve.”\(^{51}\) He continues that his aim in writing this work was to consider the phenomenon of fever curve contours. In the course of doing so, the pitches C, F, E, and D# kept entering into the composition. Only later in the process did Widmann realize that this sequence of pitches also begins Schumann’s Violin Sonata No.1, Op. 105. “It was only at this point that it became clear to me that my composition was on course of magnetic attraction towards this moment in Schumann’s music.”\(^{52}\)

Throughout the composition Widmann uses these four pitches (C, F, E, and D#) in ways that are likely unrecognizable to the listener. The first clear setting of the pitches from Schumann’s sonata comes in measure forty-three in which the viola has C, F, E with the instruction “à la Schumann.” Following an introduction performed by the string

\(^{51}\) Jörg Widmann, Foreword to *Fieberphantasie* (Mainz, Germany: Schott Musik International, 1999).

\(^{52}\) Ibid.
quartet, the piano first joins in measure fifty-eight performing on the strings inside the body of the instrument. Eventually the pianist moves back to the keyboard and begins a virtuosic flurry of notes with the instruction: “‘manic’ accents on each note.” The bass clarinet joins in the middle of the ensuing “senza misura” section which starts at measure 156. In measure 174, the clarinet performs a line with tone color trills created using the right trill keys. Widmann uses this same effect in other compositions featuring the clarinet, most prominently in the second movement of his Drei Schattentänze for solo clarinet (2013). Widmann also calls for the clarinetist to perform a multiphonic by overblowing the chalumeau E₃ to produce both the fundamental E as well as higher partial notes. As with the tone color trills, this overblown multiphonic effect is also called for in Widmann’s other works featuring the clarinet.

Finally, in measure 306, Widmann sets a direct quote of the opening four pitches from Schumann’s violin sonata with a rolling accompaniment in the piano. Surprisingly, he elects to set the motive in octaves between the clarinet and piano right hand rather than the violin for which it was originally written. The movement continues on at a feverish pace until the opening scalar figure returns, this time in the piano, beginning in measure 327. The rising col legno line in the cello, also a reference to the beginning of the work, brings the piece to an abrupt end.

Widmann’s Fieberphantasie (Fever Fantasy) for Piano, String Quartet, and Clarinet (doubling bass clarinet) is inspired by the music of Robert Schumann and utilizes the first four pitches (C, F, E, D#) of his Violin Sonata No. 1, Op. 105. These pitches pervade the composition, at times in direct quotations that are audible to the
listener, but mainly in creative ways that go aurally unnoticed. Widmann’s writing for the clarinet in this work from 1999 includes some of the same effects used in his *Fünf Bruchstücke* (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano from 1997. Widmann goes on to expand on these techniques in his later works, particularly in the *Drei Schattentänze* (Three Shadow Dances) for Clarinet Solo (2013).

*Oktett for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, String Quartet and Double Bass (2004)*

Widmann composed his *Octet* for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, String Quartet and Double Bass in 2004. The work was commissioned as part of the chamber music festival "Spannungen: Musik im Kraftwerk Heimbach" and received its premiere at that festival on June 4, 2004. At the premiere, Widmann performed the clarinet part along with Stefan Schweigert, bassoon; Sibylle Mahni Haas, horn; Florian Donderer and Antje Weithaas, violin; Tatjana Masurenko, viola; Claudio Bohórquez, cello; and Yasunori Kawahara, bass. Widmann used the Octet in F major, D. 803 (1824) of Franz Schubert as his central reference when composing his own *Octet*. In addition to using the same instrumentation, Widmann attempted to imitate the Schubertian tone and the emotional character of Schubert’s work.53 The piece contains five movements:

I. Intrada  
II. Menuetto  
III. Lied ohne Worte (Song without words)  
IV. Intermezzo  
V Finale.

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53 Fein, 95.
The first movement “Intrada” begins with a slow chordal statement in rhythmic unison. The movement does not contain a recurring theme besides the periodic return of this chordal statement. Filled with dense polyphony, the tempo of the movement slowly accelerates through a series of metric modulations. The movement ends without the resolution of a series of chords with extreme dynamics in the last three bars, marked poco \( sfz \) to \( p \) subito, \( fff \) subito, and \( pp \) subito.

The second movement, “Menuetto,” begins with a bright horn hunting theme before descending into what Widmann describes as a bitter evil middle section.\(^{54}\) The bitter evil middle section comes unexpectedly in measure thirty-two when the clarinet, horn, bassoon, cello, and bass perform glissandi up to the downbeat of measure thirty-three and down again to land \( sffz \) in measure thirty-four amongst seemingly random pizzicato performed by the strings. The pizzicato of the strings continues until slurred statements by the winds gradually return the music back to the bright theme. The theme returns only briefly as the rhythmic motion slows and the movement ends unexpectedly as all instruments diminuendo until only the clarinet is left holding. The “Menuetto” second movement was inspired by the fourth movement, “alla danza tedesca,” from Ludwig van Beethoven’s String Quartet No. 13 in B\(\text{b} \) major Op. 130.\(^{55}\) Widmann’s exploration of a hunting theme can also be seen in his third string quartet, *Jagdquartett* (2003). These two works question the purpose of a hunting movement and take an almost sarcastic tone.

\(^{54}\) Fein, 96.
\(^{55}\) Ibid., 96.
Widmann describes the third movement “Lied ohne Worte” (song without words) as an intense movement of inescapable sadness. This movement contains more frequent uses of microtones and features thinner textures. Much of the movement contains a single line that is passed from voice to voice with a unison overlap to accomplish the timbre exchange. Brief moments of consonant harmony are made all the more satisfying by their fleetingness as they transiently emerge from the stark textures, extreme dynamics and ranges, and microtonal inflected lines.

The brief fourth movement, “Intermezzo,” begins with a long timeless measure in which the string bass performs alone with the instruction “Move the bow vertically along the bridge, with highest pressure, so as to attain an uncontrolled yowling glissando sound.” This unconventional beginning leads into a raucous movement filled with polyrhythms, pizzicato, and rapid virtuosic lines that leads attacca into the final movement. “Finale” begins with a quotation of the opening chordal statement from the first movement. This statement is the only connection to the opening movement, however, as the music heads in a different direction. This final movement contains dense textures and continued use of extended techniques, non-pitched sounds, and microtones, which Widmann describes as dark night sounds.

Widmann’s Octet for clarinet, bassoon, horn, string quartet, and double bass is an intriguing companion to the Octet in F major, D. 803 of Franz Schubert. The work is

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56 Ibid., 96.
58 Fein, 96.
available on two commercial recordings. The first is a recording released in 2010 by Collegium Novum Zürich which sets Widmann’s *Octet* alongside two of his other works: *Freie Stücke* (Free Pieces) and *Abgesänge auf eine tote Linde* for soprano, violin, clarinet & piano.\(^{59}\) A live album was also released in 2010 with the composer himself performing both his own *Octet* along the Schubert Octet in F Major, D 803.\(^{60}\)

**Quintett for Oboe, Clarinet in A, Horn, Bassoon, and Piano (2006)**

In 2006, Jörg Widmann was awarded the Claudio Abbado Composition Prize by the Karajan Academy of the Berlin Philharmonic. Widmann was the inaugural recipient of this prize, which is awarded on an occasional basis. As part of the award, the composer is commissioned to write a work for both the instrumentation and artistic skills of the students at the academy. The students at the Karajan Academy are highly talented young musicians who receive instruction from members of the Berlin Philharmonic. Widmann composed his *Quintet* for Oboe, Clarinet in A, Horn, Bassoon, and Piano for this commission and rehearsed the work with the students of the Karajan Academy for the premiere performance on November 10, 2006.

Widmann used the Quintet in Eb major, K. 452 for Oboe, Clarinet, Horn, Bassoon, and Piano by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart as inspiration when composing this work. While Widmann used the same instrumentation as Mozart, his *Quintet* is composed

in eighteen short miniatures, many of which last less than one minute. Most of the movements are performed attacca, the exceptions being after movements three, five, seven, ten, and fourteen in which a fermata on the final bar line instructs the performers to hold between three and six seconds. Each miniature has a characteristic title which describes the movement either formally or musically:

1. Eingang (Entry)
2. Verwunschener Garten (Enchanted Garden)
3. Kontrapunktische Studie 1 (Contrapuntal Study 1)
4. Falsche Fährte (Wrong Track)
5. Choral 1 (Chorale 1)
6. Akkord-Etüde mit Cantus firmus (Chord Study)
7. Coda (mit Dies irae-Sequenz) (Coda with Dies Irae Sequence)
8. (Verworfener) Fluchtgedanke (Discarded Flight Plan)
9. Kontrapunktische Studie 2 (Contrapuntal Study 2)
10. Triller-Etüde (Trill Study)
11. Im Kreis (In a Circle)
12. Kontrapunktische Studie 3 (Contrapuntal Study 3)
13. Verlorener Walzer (Lost Waltz)
14. Choral 2 (Chorale 2)
15. Mit Humor (With Humor)
16. Leidchen (Little Song)
17. Verwunschener Garten (Enchanted Garden)
18. Flugtraum (Flight Dream)\(^{61}\)

Widmann composed his \textit{Quintet} using his singular compositional voice, which is characterized by a blend of ‘normal’ playing techniques with extended contemporary techniques, non-pitched sounds, and effects. Originally composed for students, Widmann provides a key to the new notational symbols used throughout the work. Some of the notation indicates a particular sound such as air effects made by breathing both in and out through the instrument, symbols to indicate multiphonics, and tone color trills produced.

\(^{61}\) Translated movement titles adapted from: Bruhn, \textit{The Music of Jörg Widmann}, 136.
with an indicated key. Other symbols indicate a sound quality such as a “Schmatzgeräusch” (smacking sound) and notation to perform a slap sound. In addition to the general symbols, Widmann provides specific guides for the oboe and horn players.

Jörg Widmann’s Quintet for Oboe, Clarinet in A, Horn, Bassoon, and Piano pays homage to Mozart using Widmann’s compositional voice featuring conventional playing techniques as well as extended techniques and non-pitched sounds. Although the Quintet was composed for the students of the Karajan Academy of the Berlin Philharmonic, it is not a watered-down version of Widmann’s work. Rather, the piece is filled with Widmann’s penchant for complex rhythms, polyrhythms, and extremes of range, dynamics, and expression. A recording of the Quintet is not currently available.

*Es war einmal... Five Fairytales for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano (2015)*

*Es war einmal... Fünf Stücke im Märchenton* (Once Upon a Time... Five Pieces in Fairy-Tale Style) is a five-movement work written in 2015 for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano. It was commissioned by the Tonhalle Zurich, Wigmore Hall, BOZAR Music, and the Louvre and received its premiere on October 25th, 2015 in Zurich with the composer playing clarinet; Tabea Zimmermann, viola; and Denes Varjon, piano. The piece shares the same instrumentation and subject matter as *Märchenerzählungen* (Fairy Tales) by Robert Schumann. Inspired by the work of Schumann, which Widmann sees as “a disjointed, complex contemporary work – despite the innocence and naivety of its initial appearance,” he composes his own work not “to be a mere sentimental, nostalgic flight
into the distant past, but as a naive and fantastical alternative concept to our genuine world with all its upheavals.”  

The piece is written in five movements:

I. Es war einmal… (Once upon a time)  
II. Fata Morgana  
III. Die Eishöhle (The Ice Cave)  
IV. Von Mädch en und Prinzen (On Maids and Princes)  
V. Und wenn sie nicht gestorben sind (And they all lived happily ever after…)

The first movement, “Es war einmal…” contains a recurring harmonious and waltz-like theme that, after each statement, dissolves into discord created with thick rhythmic interplay, non-pitched sounds and air effects, timbre trills, and microtonal dissonances. The return of the waltz-like theme throughout the movement suggests the innocence and optimism of fairy tales despite the dark themes and hostile antagonists surrounding. Many fairy tales contain these veiled dark themes such as the story of Hansel and Gretel in which the protagonists outwit a dark witch who captures and attempts to eat them. Widmann’s music attempts to capture both sides of fairy-tales: childlike innocence and darkness or evil.

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, Fata Morgana is Italian for Morgan le Fay (Morgan the Fairy) who, according to legend, was a sorceress and the sister of King Arthur. In addition to other fabled powers, Morgana was said to have the ability to change shape and to create complex mirages over water. Today, the term fata morgana can be used generally to describe a mirage. The second movement of

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62 Jörg Widmann, Foreword to *Es war einmal*… (Mainz, Germany: Schott Musik International, 2015).
Widmann’s *Es war einmal*... depicts this mythical sorceress and her mysterious nature and abilities. The piece begins with “senza misura” solos performed by each instrument (Viola, Clarinet, then Piano) with a brief unison rhythmic motive separating each solo. Widmann instructs the soloists to perform slowly and freely, with molto rubato, and with a “non-European” sound. The solos of the viola and clarinet are dotted with microtones and, in the case of the clarinet, numbers above the notes to indicate suggested fingerings which produce given microtones and timbres. The third and final “senza misura” solo performed by the piano ends as the clarinet and viola enter in measure fourteen with soft glissandos that slowly rise in pitch over the course of several measures. The passing of three solos by the members of the trio suggests they mystical ability of Morgan le Fay to change form. In the “appassionato, con brio” section that follows, beginning in measure twenty-five, flourishes in the viola and clarinet give way to a flowing and sentimental theme which is heard only briefly. A short silence and a brief microtonal statement leads to the end of the movement which is an extension of the unison rhythmic motive first heard at the start.

*Die Eishöhle* (The Ice Cave) is composed using non-traditional sounds and techniques which evoke the sense of being inside a frigid cave. The movement begins with a loud depression of the piano sustain pedal, which remains depressed throughout the movement. Widmann writes specific instructions for all players on how to produce the sounds he intends. The clarinetist is required to create percussive sounds on the strings of the piano, crescendo from nothing while playing into the piano body, and create air effects through the clarinet. The violist has instructions to perform on specific parts of
the string and body of his or her instrument and to sing while playing. The pianist has the most instructions of all as the performer must create percussive sounds on the keyboard as well as within the body of the piano. Widmann instructs the pianist not to release the sustain pedal until the sound has completely faded away from the performing space.

The fourth movement, “Von Mädchen und Prinzen” (On Maids and Princes), begins with the instructions “Suchend, spielerisch neckish” (Searching, playfully teasing). This playful and teasing quality is initially heard between the viola and clarinet which perform two or three note statements that chase and imitate one another. Widmann extends the imitation to include extended techniques between the instruments as in measures fourteen and sixteen in which the violist imitates the sound of air through the clarinet. Similar to the first movement, the music in this fourth movement evokes a series of characters as it quickly drifts at various points between a flowing romantic line, dark rhythmic polyphony, wild virtuosity, playful imitation, humorous interchanges, and moments of intimacy and innocence. The movement ends with the penultimate note of the flowing romantic line left unresolved with the instruction to begin the fifth movement before the sound has completely faded.

In the opening of the final movement, Widmann writes the text “Und wenn sie nicht gestorben sind” (And they all lived happily ever after…) in the score over the first statement of each instrument. He includes the instruction “Sehr langsam, verhalten, traumverloren” (very slow, muted, dreamily). Widmann creates a timeless and dream-like quality in the introduction to this movement using three techniques: rhythmically by composing polyrhythm between the three voices, tonally by composing harmonics for the
viola and microtones for the clarinet, and expressively by instructing the performers to play “molto rubato, quasi improvvisando.” Following a dark air effect produced through the clarinet in measures fourteen and fifteen, the viola and piano perform a slow, romantic, and nostalgic theme that permeates the rest of the movement. Widmann interjects chromaticism and dark lines amidst the statements of this theme, ultimately ending the movement in an uncertain manner. The work ends at the height of the final phrase, which slowly climbs into the upper range of each instrument as if suggesting a question mark. Perhaps the story does not end so happily after all?

Widmann’s *Es war einmal... Fünf Stücke im Märchenton* for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano is an intriguing and intimate work in which Widmann employs timbral effects, extended techniques, and microtonal inflections to represent several characters, themes, and images. This work was inspired by and pays homage to *Märchenerzählungen* (Fairy Tales) by Robert Schumann which has the same instrumentation and subject matter. Widmann recorded and released an album containing his own *Es war einmal...* alongside the fairy-tale inspired works of Schumann: *Marchenzählungen*, Op. 132; *Fantasiestücke* (Fantasy Pieces), Op. 73 for Clarinet and Piano; and *Märchenbilder* (Fairy-Tale Pictures), Op. 113 for Viola and Piano.64

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64 Tabea Zimmerman, Jörg Widmann, and Dénes Várjon. *Es war einmal... Once upon a time...*, Recorded December 2015 at Konzertsall der Siemensvilla Berlin, Mirios Classics, MYR020, 2017, compact disc.
Clarinet Quintet for Clarinet, 2 Violin, Viola, and Cello (2017)

One of Widmann’s newest compositions, the Clarinet Quintet was commissioned in part by the Centro Nacional de Difusión Musical Madrid, Muziekgebouw Amsterdam, Strijjikkwartet Biennale Amsterdam, Lugano Musica, Carnegie Hall New York, Cité de la Musique Paris, Mozartwoche Salzburg, Philharmonie Essen, Wigmore Hall, and the Fondation Hoffmann. This single-movement work was premiered in Madrid at the Auditorio Nacional de Música, Sala de Cámara on April 24, 2017 with Jörg Widmann, clarinet, and the Hagen String Quartet. Widmann and the Hagen Quartet have been performing this piece throughout the 2017-2018 season with performances in Paris, Switzerland, Amsterdam, Essen, London, and Salzburg. Widmann and the Hagen Quartet will give the United States premiere of this work on March 22, 2019 in Carnegie Hall. At this time, a score and recording of this new work are not yet available.

Chamber Works with Voice

Sieben Abgesänge auf eine tote Linde (Seven Swan Songs for a Dead Linden Tree) on poems by Diana Kempff for Soprano, Clarinet, Violin, and Piano (1997)

Widmann composed Sieben Abgesänge auf eine tote Linde (Seven Swan Songs for a Dead Linden Tree) for Soprano, Clarinet, Violin, and Piano after being approached by conductor Christoph Poppen. Widmann provides an extensive forward to the score which details this touching commission:

It was in 1996 that Christoph Poppen, at that time conductor of the Munich Chamber Orchestra, told me about a curious concert he had experienced in Münsing (Ammerland). One of the most violent thunderstorms ever experienced in the region raged visibly and audibly for all participants during one of his
orchestral concerts in the local church. During this storm, lightning struck a
notable landmark in Münsing: an ancient lime tree which was several hundred
years old.
The poet and writer Diana Kempff, a local resident, was in the audience at this
concert and was so devastated by the demise of the lime tree that she subsequently
recorded her impressions in a series of poems.\textsuperscript{65}

Christoph Poppen approached Widmann about composing a piece using Kempff’s poems
to be performed one year later at the church in Münsing as a commemoration of the tree.
Widmann worked closely with Kempff, who gave the composer permission to use
segments and fragments of her poems within his composition. Widmann vividly
describes the poetry of Kempff in the foreword to this work:

Her lyrical poetry is the expression of a manifested, severely tortured soul and
frequently appears to us to be bizarre and fantastical. A fragile tenderness is
relentlessly confronted by an almost brutal abrasiveness. Schubert’s “Fremd bin
ich eingezogen” [“As a stranger I arrived”] is an appropriate phrase for Dianne
Kempff and is expressed in her verses in an affinity with all things that are
strange.\textsuperscript{66}

Widmann’s musical setting attempts to accompany this propensity for the bizarre,
fantastical, and strange which is present in Kempff’s writing.

The first movement uses the text “Trostlos wie Schweigen, die Zeit zerklirrt”
(Bleakly like silence time clatters into nothingness).\textsuperscript{67} Widmann creates a bleak sense
through a sparse texture featuring short pianissimo tone clusters which span over six
octaves in the piano, a pianissimo A\textsubscript{5} harmonic in the violin, and air effects through the
clarinet. The second movement sets the text:

\textsuperscript{65} Jörg Widmann, Foreword to Sieben Abgesänge auf eine tote Linde (Mainz, Germany:
Schott Musik International, 2015)
\textsuperscript{66} Widmann, Foreword to Sieben Abgesänge auf eine toten linde.
\textsuperscript{67} Translations of Kempff’s poetry is adapted from: Bruhn, The Music of Jörg Widmann,
115.
In this movement, Widmann utilizes text painting in measure seven by setting “mein Schöner” (my beautiful one) in a large expressive leap to a sustained A5. The word “Licht” (Light) in measure twelve is also approached by a leap in the soprano, but it is the high harmonic of the violin that highlights this word, suggesting a bright light. The text “Regenbote, mein Schöner” is repeated twice in the movement. The way Widmann changes the music surrounding each setting could suggest an initial happiness at the arrival of rain that changes to concern as the rain brings with it destructive wind and lightning.

The third song has the subtitle “Tanz der toten Seelen” (“Dance of the Dead Souls”). Widmann composed this movement in the style of a Zwiefacher, a popular Bavarian dance which alternates between 2/4 and 3/4 time. Widmann follows the structure of the dance but creates deliberate missteps by inserting measures of uneven, compound time (3/8 and 5/8). This deliberate misstep combined with his use of chromaticism gives the dance a macabre feeling. The music matches the title of the movement and the text of the poem, which is concerned with “vertriebene Seelen” (displaced souls) which “wandern und wandern” (wander and wander). The fourth song

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is a breathless flight from beginning to end. The text concerns the cleanup of the dead linden tree, an act which is not graceful or romanticized. The action of digging up and chopping the tree is reflected in the music which is busy and fast.

The text of the fifth song comes from the perspective of the linden tree. The tree tells of its death, including mention of the “wütendes Gewölk” (furious cloud) and the “Licht das mich zerbricht” (light that breaks me). This song, the moment of death for the tree, is not dark and furious, however. Instead, Widmann deliberately sets the text in the simple style of a mournful folk song. The vocal line is relatively simple, containing mainly intervals of seconds and thirds. The clarinet, violin, and piano serve an accompanying role until the last four measures in which the soprano ends. There, the violinist performs a folk-song-like melody using harmonics while the piano repeats an open fifth D-A and the clarinet plays a chromatic line with large leaps.

The sixth song is the antithesis to the fifth. Where the fifth had a gentle, folk-song quality, the sixth presents a gradual build in dynamics, pitch, and intensity. The song is divided into two halves. In the first half, the soprano performs the text using a “quasi Sprechgesang” or style of vocalization between speech and song. Widmann does not notate pitches for the soprano and instead uses graphical notation to indicate a general rise and fall of each statement. At first, the vocal statements are separated by falling glissandos performed on the strings of the piano. The violin then joins in measure seven and begins its own rising and falling glissandi which follow the overall crescendo of the song. The soprano finishes in measure eleven and, from there, the second half of the work is performed entirely by the instruments. The violin and clarinet perform ever higher and
louder unison pitches while the piano rhythm becomes more complex and dense. The song ends with wild improvisation by the clarinet and violin, which perform high, random screams above rapid clusters in the piano.

The seventh and final song begins in a tonally ambiguous manner with an A₄ performed in the piano and violin together. The pianist repeats this A through the entire work and gradually adds pitches. By the sixth bar, it seems the repeated A is the fundamental of an extended chord as the piano performs both the major and minor third (C and C#) along with the ninth (Bb) and the eleventh (D). This chord continues throughout the entire song, though Widmann varies it by adding triplets in both hands of the piano beginning in measure fourteen. The form and shape of the movement takes on a bell curve in which the beginning and end are tonally ambiguous with isolated pitches, and the middle contains full eleventh chords occurring every three beats. The dynamic plan of the movement follows this bell curve as well, with the loudest point being a mf in the middle of the work. The seventh song ends with a long-held E harmonic in the violin, the same pitch that is sustained through and ends the first song.

*Sieben Abgesänge auf eine tote Linde* by Jörg Widmann is a fascinating work composed for Soprano, Clarinet, Violin, and Piano. Widmann effectively sets the text of poet Diana Kempff to memorialize the death of an ancient linden tree. The set of songs has been recorded by Collegium Novum with soprano Olga Pasichnyk.⁶⁹

Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons (Sphynx’s Sayings and Riddle Canons) 
for Soprano, Clarinet, and Piano (2005)

Jörg Widmann composed his Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons in 2005 to fulfill a commission by the Badenweiler Music Festival. The work was premiered at the festival that year on March 10, 2005 with Jörg Widmann, clarinet; Claron McFadden, soprano; and Jean-Efflam Bavouzet, piano. In his preface to the work, Widmann writes about how his compositional style has come to incorporate more non-pitched sounds and air-effects. He attempts to use these effects, “not just as a mere tonal phenomena but to combine these techniques with strict forms.”\[^{70}\] In Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons, Widmann sets a “particularly playful handling of sonority”\[^{71}\] in a strict canon form. The soprano has no text and instead sings various phonetic gestures. Widmann attempts to blend the humming of the singer with the soft playing of the clarinet to create one sonority. He writes that “this tonal approach is the only, yet, to me, essential point of reference to the central original work for this instrumentation: Franz Schubert’s Hirt auf dem Felsen (Shepherd on the Rock).”\[^{72}\] While no direct relationship to Schubert’s Lied is presented in this work, Widmann was clearly aware of and inspired by this monument of the repertoire.

Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons is composed in five movements with descriptively titled canons associated with each:

I. Sphinxenspruch [Sphinx Saying I] 
   “Klopfkanon” I (Holz) [“Knocking Canon” I (Wood)]

\[^{70}\] Jörg Widmann, Foreword to Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons (Mainz, Germany: Schott Musik International, 2015).
\[^{71}\] Ibid., 4.
\[^{72}\] Ibid., 4.
II. Sphinxenspruch [Sphinx Saying II]
   “Luft-Kanon” [“Breath Canon”]

III. Sphinxenspruch [Sphinx Saying III]
   “Rätsel-Kanon” [“Mysterious Canon”]

IV. Sphinxenspruch [Sphinx Saying IV]
   “Klopf-Kanon” II (Metall) [“Knocking Canon” 2 (Metal)]
   “Zirkel-Kanon” (Canon perpetuus) [“Circular Canon” (canon perpetuus)]
   “Pfeif-Kanon” [“Whistling Canon”]

V. Sphinxenspruch [Sphinx Saying V]

Widmann’s legend preceding the work defines the non-traditional notation used throughout. Exclusive to this work as compared with his other compositions for clarinet is a clef consisting of two vertical bars which indicate relative pitches. Also exclusive to this work is notation consisting of a square above a note head with a number inside. This notation calls for a theatrical element in which the performers are instructed to hold up their hands showing the given number with their fingers. This technique is first used in the final measures of “Knocking Canon” I (Wood) and again more extensively in the “Circular Canon” (canon perpetuus) movement.

Throughout the piece, the pianist performs many effects within the body of the instrument. In “Knocking Canon” I (Wood), the pianist drums on the closed lid of the piano. In the “Breath Canon,” the pianist joins the soprano in singing poco f’breath sounds with indicated syllables. The piano lid begins down in “Sphinx Saying III” until the pianist is instructed to slam it up in measure forty-eight. In “Sphinx Saying IV,” the pianist must pluck and strum designated strings inside the piano body. In “Knocking Canon 2” (Metal), the pianist, clarinetist, and soprano all are instructed to strike various positions inside the body of the piano. Finally, Widmann periodically instructs the pianist to silently depress certain notes or chords on the keyboard which, through sympathetic
vibrations, then provide sustain for corresponding pitches performed by the clarinetist or soprano.

Widmann’s writing for the clarinet shows similarities to other works of this time. The clarinetist performs a series of air effects, microtones, flutter tongue, and multiphonics. This piece contains some of his earliest uses of percussive sounds produced inside the body of the piano. Widmann continues to use these techniques in his later works including in his 2015 trio for clarinet, viola, and piano, Es war einmal….

Jörg Widmann’s Sphinxensprüche und Rätselkanons for Soprano, Clarinet, and Piano is an interesting set of movements which combine contemporary techniques with strict forms and theatrical elements. This work is not yet available on a commercial recording.

Summary

This collection of works from Jörg Widmann’s output of solo and chamber compositions prominently involving the clarinet contain some of his most adventurous and intriguing compositions. These compositions show the development of his compositional voice over time. An aspect of his compositional style that has remained relatively consistent over time is his frequent reference to composers of the past including Franz Schubert, Robert Schumann, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Olivier Messiaen, and Béla Bartók. References to these earlier composers may be as straightforward as adopting the same instrumentation or as involved as emulating the compositional voice and style of a given composer.
This collection of works also displays Widmann’s gradual assimilation of non-pitched sounds and extended techniques into his compositional vocabulary. Widmann’s application of these techniques is not simply limited to the clarinet, but rather to all instruments including piano and voice. Within his rich vocabulary of sounds and techniques, Widmann shows a particular penchant for microtonal inflection as well as air and percussive effects.

Lastly, these works display Widmann’s tendency for extremes in texture, dynamic, tempo, and playing techniques. Widmann’s use of extremes is another aspect of his compositional style which has remained consistent from his earliest compositions. His solo and chamber compositions frequently contain sparse textures which allow for nuanced gestures. Additionally, his careful implementation of instrumental tone color, which includes segments of pure tone-color melody, can be seen throughout the aforementioned works.
Chapter 4. Unaccompanied Solo Clarinet Literature

Woodwind instruments enjoy a vast repertory of unaccompanied solo pieces extending from the baroque era to the present day. During the baroque period, which includes the years between 1600 and 1750\textsuperscript{73}, an interest in unaccompanied solo sonatas and partitas led to compositions for many solo instruments including the violin, cello, and flute, among others. Of the woodwinds, flutists have the largest significant body of unaccompanied solo repertoire from the baroque era including two particularly important works, the *Partita in A minor*, BWV 1013 (1722-3) by Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) and the *12 Fantasias*, TWV 40: 2-13 (1733) by Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767), among many others. Interest in the genre of unaccompanied solo sonatas and partitas waned in the classical period, however. For this reason, the clarinet, which largely gained prominence in the classical period, does not have an early body of unaccompanied repertoire as does the flute.

Interest in composing for unaccompanied solo clarinet was greatest in the twentieth century, with few compositions coming before this period. The earliest work for unaccompanied solo clarinet may be the *Trois caprices pour la clarinette seule*, composed in 1810 by Anton Stadler (1753-1812).\textsuperscript{74} Stadler also composed a set of ten

\textsuperscript{73} Grove Music Online, s.v. “Baroque,” accessed February 26, 2018.
variations for clarinet solo. Following these early entries into the unaccompanied clarinet repertoire, no works are known until Gaetano Donizetti (1791-1848) composed his Studio Primo in 1821. Unfortunately, other unaccompanied works by Donizetti for the clarinet have since been lost. The Donizetti Studio Primo is a delightful work which predates the Italian clarinet etude collections by Ernesto Cavallini (1807-1874) and Gaetano Labanchi (1829-1908). The unaccompanied solo clarinet repertoire of the nineteenth-century is characterized by collections of solo etudes composed for pedagogical purposes. Though these may be performed publicly, the first unaccompanied work explicitly intended for the concert stage came in 1919 with Igor Stravinsky’s (1882-1971) Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo. This piece quickly became a standard in the unaccompanied solo clarinet literature and now serves as a benchmark for composers and performers interested in the medium. Stravinsky dedicated the Three Pieces to Werner Reinhardt, a patron and amateur clarinetist, as a thank you for graciously financing the first performance of L’Histoire d’un Soldat (1918). The Three Pieces may be considered a catalyst for the unaccompanied solo medium as interest in composing and performing such works grew exponentially throughout the twentieth century.

Early works following Stravinsky’s Three Pieces include the Sonate für Klarinette solo, Op. 110 (1925) by Sigfried Karg-Elert, Fantasy for B-flat Clarinet, Op. 87 (1930) by Malcolm Arnold, and Sonata for Clarinet Solo (1933) by John Cage.

75 Ibid., 56.
77 Ibid., 66.
Hundreds of compositions for unaccompanied solo clarinet have since been composed. Beginning in the 1960s, composers including John Eaton (*Concert Music for Solo Clarinet*, 1961), William O. Smith (*Variants*, 1963), and Bruno Bartolozzi (*Collage*, 1968) began to experiment with contemporary techniques and non-traditional sounds in the unaccompanied medium. A history and description of non-traditional sounds and extended techniques on the clarinet can be found in Chapter 5. Many pieces composed after this point began to incorporate these avant-garde techniques and sounds.

Today, clarinetists have a large variety of pieces available for unaccompanied solo clarinet. Due to the fact that the vast majority of this music comes from the twentieth century, much of the repertoire is written in a virtuosic fashion and utilizes contemporary techniques. In his 2005 D.M.A. dissertation, David H. Odom created a representative list of significant repertoire for unaccompanied solo clarinet composed between 1978 and 1982. He rated the performance difficulty of the compositions that he surveyed and discovered a majority were considered difficult or very difficult. He also found that many, though not all, of the pieces surveyed incorporated extended techniques. He went on to surmise that pieces containing extended techniques tend to fall into the more difficult performance categories. While Odom’s research only considers an arrow period of time, from 1978 and 1982, the pieces written since 1982 largely follow this trend.

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79 Ibid., 93.
80 Ibid., 95-97.
anything, the unaccompanied solo repertoire is lacking in effective pieces of an easy to moderate difficulty.

Several clarinetist-composers have written for the unaccompanied solo clarinet, including but not limited to: Ronald Caravan (b. 1946), Béla Kovács (b. 1937), Meyer Kupferman (1926-2003), Eric Mandat (b. 1957), Donald Martino (1931-2005), William O. Smith (b. 1926), and Jörg Widmann (b. 1973). These composers are fortunate in that they intimately know the instrument for which they are writing. As a result, their works are some of the most-played of the unaccompanied repertoire.

The repertoire of the unaccompanied solo clarinet also includes several works by Pulitzer prize winning composers. These Pulitzer prize winning composers include Leslie Bassett (1923-2016), William Bolcom (b. 1938), Elliot Carter (1908-2012), Karel Husa (1921-2016), Donald Martino (1931-2005), George Perle (1915-2009), and Shulamit Ran (b. 1949). Clarinetists are lucky to have a growing body of repertoire for this medium composed by such renowned composers.

*Survey of Unaccompanied Solo Repertoire*

A thorough catalog of the repertoire for the unaccompanied solo clarinet is outside the scope of this document, but a survey of significant repertoire is warranted. Significance is based primarily on the author’s opinion but is also based on performance frequency and historical significance (such as the first use of a certain technique).

Following the early compositions by Anton Stadler, Gaetano Donizetti, and Igor Stravinsky which were already discussed, Heinrich Sutermeister (1910-1995) composed
his *Capriccio* in 1946 for the International Music Competition in Geneva, Switzerland. Donald Martino’s (1931-2005) *A Set for Clarinet* of 1954 is an important work as it pushed the boundaries of clarinet technique. Martino wrote rapid articulations and three octave leaps inspired by Italian clarinet etudes including those composed by Gaetano Labanchi. Willson Osborne (1906-1979) composed his lyrical *Rhapsody* in 1954 for both bassoon and clarinet. A British composer of Indian origin, John Mayer (1930-2004) was known for joining Indian instruments and techniques into classical forms. His 1958 *Raga Music* presents nine short movements in this style. John Eaton’s (1935-2015) *Concert Music for Solo Clarinet* of 1961 is notable as one of the first works to incorporate extended techniques including flutter tonguing, multiphonics, and quarter tones. This work was followed soon after by *Variants for Solo Clarinet* (1963) by clarinetist-composer William O. Smith (b. 1926). *Variants* presents six short movements which make use of many extended techniques which are explained in the preface to the piece. *Domaines* by Pierre Boulez (1925-2016) was originally composed in 1968 for unaccompanied clarinet and was later revised for clarinet accompanied by twenty-one instruments arranged into six groups. This work is considered by some to be one of the most significant unaccompanied clarinet works composed in the second half of the twentieth century.

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81 Gillespie, 67.
The *Concerto per Clarinetto Solo* (1969) by Valentino Bucchi (1916-1976) is a virtuosic work written in four movements performed without pause. It uses timbre trills and a chorale of multiphonics with fingerings suggested by legendary Italian clarinetist and teacher Ciro Scarponi. Louis Cahuzac’s (1880-1960) *Arlequin* of 1972 draws its inspiration from the Harlequin figure of the traditional form of Italian improvised comedy known as commedia dell’arte. Edison Denisov (1929-1966) composed his *Sonata for Clarinet in B-flat Solo* in 1971. The first movement is dense and intensely expressive utilizing quarter tones and flutter tongue while the second movement is fast and rhythmic with large registral leaps and a repeated Bb ostinato. The 1974 *Parable XIII*, Op. 126 of Vincent Persichetti (1915-1987) is one of twenty-five parables he composed for varying instrumentation between 1965 and 1986.\(^\text{85}\) Janos Komives (1932-2005) composed *Flammes, Five Etudes for Clarinet* in 1975. This piece contains a set of five virtuosic movements, each of which explores contrasting moods. *Harlekin* (1975) by Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007) is noteworthy for its use of theatrical elements. Stockhausen provides specific instructions for the performer to dance in a rhythmic fashion during the performance of this work. Pulitzer prize winning composer Leslie Bassett (1923-2016) wrote his *Soliloquies* in 1976. This four-movement work is considered one of the finest works for clarinet from the twentieth century.\(^\text{86}\) Also a Pulitzer prize winning composer, Shulamit Ran (b. 1949) composed *For an Actor – Monologue for Clarinet* in 1978 for clarinetist Laura Flax and the Da Capo Chamber Players.

Italian composer Franco Donatoni (1927-2000) composed *Clair* in 1980 for Italian clarinetist Ciro Scarponi. This is a dazzlingly virtuosic work set in two movements. Luciano Berio (1925-2003) composed two works for unaccompanied clarinet. The first is *Sequenza IXa* (1980), a demanding work which utilizes many extended techniques. This work is one piece in a long line of Sequenzas composed for solo instruments which began with the flute *Sequenza* of 1958. The second work by Berio is *Lied* of 1983 which, contrary to the virtuosity of the Sequenza, explores a more cantabile style. In 1981, Joan Tower (b. 1938) composed *Wings* for clarinetist Laura Flax. The piece portrays the characteristic flight of various birds and is inspired by the way Flax performed Olivier Messiaen’s *Quatuor Pour la Fin du Temps* with the Da Capo Chamber Players. French composer Ida Gotkovsky (b. 1933) composed her three movement *Solo Clarinet Sonata* in 1984. The work was commissioned by the International Clarinet Society and premiered by Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr at the 1986 conference at the University of Washington.\(^87\) Virtuoso clarinetist-composer Meyer Kupferman (1926-2003) has composed several pieces for clarinet solo, most notably the jazz-inspired *Moonflowers, Baby!* (1986). Krzysztof Penderecki (b. 1933) composed his *Prelude* for solo clarinet in 1987. The *Prelude* begins and ends with a low G\(_3\), building to a loud altissimo glissando in the middle.

Elliott Carter (1908-2012) wrote *Gra* in 1993. *Gra*, Polish for ‘play’, was composed for Witold Lutoslawski to commemorate his eightieth birthday. Hungarian

clarinetist-composer Béla Kovács (b. 1937) has written many works for the clarinet including his *Hommages* (1994). This set of nine etudes are frequently performed individually and pay homage to famous composers: J.S. Bach, Paganini, Weber, Debussy, De Falla, Strauss, Bartók, Kodaly & Khachaturian. American composer Libby Larsen (b. 1950) wrote the four-movement *Dancing Solo* in 1994 for clarinetist Caroline Hartig. Kalmen Opperman (1919-2010) was a renowned clarinetist and pedagogue. His legacy lives on today through his numerous published studies and etudes for the clarinet. He composed *Un Seul* in 1998 for his student Richard Stoltzman. Clarinetist-composer Eric Mandat (b. 1957) has written many pieces for clarinet which incorporate non-traditional sounds and techniques. Representative works include *Etude for Barney* (1990), *Folk Songs* (1986), and *The Jungle* (1989). *D(i)agon(als)* for solo clarinet was composed in 2005 by Augusta Read Thomas and is dedicated to Russell Dagon. The piece is composed in an improvisatory style and is made up of five phrases which each end in a fermata. William Bolcom (b. 1938) composed *Chalumeau* in 2005 for clarinetist Caroline Hartig who gave its premiere at the 2005 conference of the International Clarinet Association in Tokyo, Japan. This work makes use of several extended techniques including glissandi, portamenti, flutter tonguing, timbral trills, and multiphonics. James Niblock (b. 1917) composed *Soaring* for Solo Clarinet in 2006. This work contrasts long lyrical lines with brilliant passagework to suggest a bird in flight. *Three Studies for Solo Clarinet* was composed in 2008 by Karel Husa (1921-2016). This piece was written for the 60th Prague Spring International Music Competition and is dedicated to Jiří Hlaváč on the occasion of his 60th birthday.
While many more pieces are available in the medium of unaccompanied clarinet solo, the compositions listed above represent a sample of what could be considered the most significant and standard works. There are many pieces of the standard unaccompanied repertory that are written in a virtuosic fashion. Pieces such Hommages by Béla Kovács, Rhapsody by Willson Osborne, Un Seul by Kalmen Opperman, and Soaring by James Niblock would be appropriate for young players first preparing an unaccompanied piece.

*Challenges of Performing and Composing Unaccompanied Solo Clarinet Works*

The unaccompanied solo clarinet genre is a uniquely difficult medium for the performer and composer alike. In some respects, the difficulties faced by both performer and composer are one and the same. The soloist in an unaccompanied solo work must do more than simply play a single line of music. Without the support of an accompanying pianist or ensemble, the soloist must present every aspect of the music including melody, harmony, pulse, color, and pacing. For this reason, the soloist must perform in a more convincing manner than when performing accompanied repertoire. Due to the unique challenges of this genre, unaccompanied solo works are indispensable for performers.

The challenges associated with the genre of solo unaccompanied music stems from the limitations of a single monophonic voice. From the composer’s perspective, the limitation of a single monophonic instrument complicates how concepts like harmony and color can be implemented. Without multiple voices, a composer cannot create vertical harmonies or exploit contrasting tone colors. These facets of music must be
implemented in a different manner. Some composers choose to forgo traditional harmonic motion in unaccompanied solo writing, as John Anderson identifies in his 1974 D.M.A. dissertation. Anderson discusses the use of rhythm as an integral element for establishing a cadential feeling in atonal and unaccompanied works.\textsuperscript{88} Composers, lacking clear harmonic motion, can instead create rhythmic drive to a caesura to signal the end of a phrase. Anderson identifies the third movement of Stravinsky’s \textit{Three Pieces} as an example of this rhythmic cadence. Clarinetist-composer Jörg Widmann uses rhythm in a different manner by creating a sense of vertical harmony through rapidly performed notes.\textsuperscript{89} In the “Schnell, brillant” section of his \textit{Fantasie}, Widmann theorizes that, if performed fast enough, the notes group themselves in such a way as to create the perception of vertical harmony. This concept, as it relates to performing the \textit{Fantasie} is discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

Beginning in the 1960s, some composers contended with the challenge of harmony in an unaccompanied solo work by employing multiphonics. Multiphonics are produced on the clarinet either by manipulating fundamental fingerings or by humming a pitch while playing a ‘normal’ note. Although multiple pitches are produced through these techniques, the notes which are produced can vary in dynamic, tone quality, and pitch such that harmonic information is not always clearly conveyed. Thus, the multiphonic is not analogous to a pure harmony as can be produced on other instruments.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[89] Fein, 21.
\end{footnotes}
Composers may also imply multiple voices within a single line of music. This technique can be seen as early as the baroque in which composers wrote consecutive pitches in different registers. When performed as two separate lines, the performer can create the perception of a duo. Many examples exist, but Georg Philipp Telemann utilizes this frequently in his *12 Fantasias for Transverse Flute without Bass*. In Figure 2, the eighth notes of measures thirteen and seventeen, which are separated by large leaps, outline two lines in contrasting motion. In this sense, the flute soloist can perform both a melody and a bass line through careful emphasis. Composers also accomplish this in a more explicit manner by using contrasting stem directions or multiple systems to indicate the implied duo voices. Composer Peter Maxwell Davies accomplishes this in a more explicit manner in *The Seven Brightnesses*. As seen in Figure 3, Davies uses two systems (performed by one player) in the second movement “Adagio,” and contrasting stem direction in the third movement, “adagio espressivo.”

Figure 2. Telemann *Fantasia* no. 1 in A Major, mm. 13-18
Figure 3. Davies *The Seven Brightnesses*, page 2.
Maintaining interest throughout an unaccompanied work is one of the largest challenges for the performer and composer. The soloist must exaggerate the extremes of dynamic, tempo, and color to engage the listener. More than in any other genre of performance, the unaccompanied solo requires the performer to explore the nuance of every phrase. The soloist bears all responsibility for bringing the music to life. Composers may overcome this challenge by writing in a virtuosic fashion with rapid tempi and extremes of dynamic and range. The pure spectacle of virtuosic performance can help, but ultimately the intricacies of the music including sensitivity to dynamics, expression, style, and character is most important in maintaining the interest of the listener.

Stamina and composure are also challenges for the performer of an unaccompanied solo work. Without an accompaniment, the soloist must plan breaths carefully and sustain his or her energy and concentration in order to maintain stamina throughout the piece. Planning locations to both inhale and exhale can help the player to feel more relaxed and fresh. From the perspective of composure, it is more difficult for a player to confidently stand on the concert stage alone then with an accompanist or ensemble. Players can consider this during their preparation in order to strengthen themselves mentally for standing alone on the stage. The demands of performing an unaccompanied solo piece are both mental and physical. Overcoming these challenges promotes increased confidence and better prepares a player to more clearly express his or her artistic vision in all genres of performance.
From the composer’s perspective, those who are in close contact with a performer are better equipped to compose an effective piece for unaccompanied solo. A symbiotic relationship between composer and performer can help a piece to become more compelling since the player has more intimate experience with the expressive and technical capabilities of the instrument. Collaboration in this way can lead to a fuller exploitation of an instrument’s potential. Due to the importance of this symbiotic relationship, composers who are also performers are at a great advantage as they understand the limitations and possibilities of the instrument for which they are writing.

Widmann’s abilities as a clarinetist aided him in composing his *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo*, which is one of his earliest works. The standout success of the *Fantasie*, as evidenced by frequent performances by Widmann as well as performers worldwide, speaks to Widmann’s mettle as a composer. At only twenty years old, Widmann was able to overcome the aforementioned challenges of composing for the unaccompanied solo genre.
Chapter 5. Approaching Extended Techniques on the Clarinet

Extended contemporary techniques have become standard in the clarinet repertoire of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. They are frequently called for in the solo clarinet literature and are gaining use in contemporary chamber and large ensemble works. For the modern clarinetist, a study of contemporary techniques is indispensable for two reasons. First, a clarinetist must be prepared when a composition calls for any number of techniques such as multiphonics, slap tongue, or any other effect. Due to the growing number of compositions in the standard repertoire that employ extended techniques, it is imperative that modern players be prepared to execute them. More importantly, however, the study of contemporary techniques can improve more ‘standard’ classical playing by enhancing concepts of embouchure, air, technical facility, voicing, and overall flexibility. With ever increasing technical and stylistic demands placed on modern clarinetists, the study of contemporary techniques is essential.

In the following discussion, all extended techniques will be examined in detail including their history, examples in the repertoire, methods on how to learn them, and resources for further study. Extended techniques are meant to enhance and extend one’s playing, not to make up for deficiencies. While techniques such as circular breathing and double tonguing are useful in certain passages, they should not be used to compensate for poor breathing or inefficient articulation. Players must take care not to sacrifice the
fundamentals of good tone, rhythm, air support, and relaxation in learning and implementing extended techniques. Most importantly, there are many methods for performing each technique. Each player must be patient and willing to experiment to arrive at his or her own individual method for producing these techniques.

Learning pieces that employ extended techniques can be a slow and arduous process. Players approaching quarter tones, microtones, and multiphonics for the first time must learn new fingerings. Like when first learning a new instrument, it takes slow practice and time to become well-versed with this new fingering system. Additionally, works employing these techniques often use unfamiliar notation and symbols, which have not yet become standardized. With practice and patience, these fingerings and notation will become second nature. One should endeavor to embrace the challenge of learning these new sounds and techniques.

For an extensive description of all extended techniques, players may reference *New Directions for Clarinet*, 2nd edition by Phillip Rehfeldt.\(^{90}\) This compendium has become known as the guide to contemporary techniques and includes many examples. The DMA Dissertation by Ronald Caravan, *Extensions of Technique for Clarinet and Saxophone*, is also a thorough reference for all extended techniques, particularly so for multiple sonorities and quarter tones.\(^{91}\) For extensive discussion on extended techniques for the Bass Clarinet, reference Harry Sparnaay’s *The Bass Clarinet: A Personal*

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\(^{90}\) Rehfeldt, *New Directions for Clarinet*.

\(^{91}\) Ronald L. Caravan, “Extensions of Technique for Clarinet and Saxophone” (DMA diss., Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 1974).
History\textsuperscript{92} and Henri Bok’s New Techniques for the Bass Clarinet.\textsuperscript{93} These resources include rich descriptions of each technique with personal recollections, examples from the repertoire, and discussion of notation. Caravan’s Preliminary Exercises & Etudes in Contemporary Techniques for Clarinet\textsuperscript{94} and Polychromatic Diversions for Clarinet\textsuperscript{95} are also valuable resources for approaching multiple sonorities and quartertones. Supplementary articles and books which discuss specific techniques are listed in Appendix B.

Notation of extended techniques has not become standardized. In his Music Notation in the Twentieth Century: A Practical Guidebook\textsuperscript{96}, Kurt Stone provides the performer and composer lengthy discussion and examples of common notational practices for all extended techniques. Nicholas J. Valenziano also discusses contemporary notational practices in his two-part article “Contemporary Notational Symbols and Performance Techniques for the Clarinet.”\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{92} Sparnaay, The Bass Clarinet: A Personal History.
\textsuperscript{93} Bok, New Techniques for the Bass Clarinet.
\textsuperscript{96} Kurt Stone, Music Notation in the Twentieth Century: A Practical Guidebook (New York: W. W. Norton, 1980).
Harmonic Series

Before exploring the extended contemporary techniques of the clarinet, a concise discussion of the harmonic series is required. Many of the contemporary techniques on the clarinet are produced through manipulation of the harmonic series. A fundamental understanding of the harmonic series will help clarinetists to improve their intonation, flexibility, and technique.

The harmonic series describes a collection of frequencies which combine to form a given sound. The Harvard Dictionary of Music defines the harmonic series as:

A series of frequencies, all of which are integral multiples of a single frequency termed the fundamental. The fundamental and its harmonics are numbered in order, the fundamental being the first harmonic and having the frequency 1f, the second harmonic having the frequency 2f, the third harmonic 3f, and so forth. Harmonics above the fundamental are sometimes termed overtones, the second harmonic being the first overtone, etc.98

Although perceived as a single pitch, every sound is comprised of many frequencies which are multiplications of the fundamental frequency. A sound gains its discernable pitch from the fundamental harmonic while the relative strength of the higher harmonics (also called partials) influences its timbre. In theory, the harmonic series is boundless, though the partials become closer together as they ascend. Figure 4 depicts the first ten partials in the harmonic series of C.

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Every wind instrument, whether it is from the woodwind or brass families, has a set of fundamental fingerings or positions which produce the first partial of a given harmonic series. This set of fundamental fingerings serves as the basis for producing all pitches on the instrument. Higher pitches are attained using a fundamental fingering combined with the manipulation of several elements including the embouchure, air, shape of the oral cavity, and venting of certain keys.

Unlike the other wind instruments, the clarinet is different in that its reed causes it to function as a closed-end tube, effectively only allowing it access to the odd numbered partials. This means that, when depressed, the register key causes the clarinet to overblow the fundamental by the interval of a twelfth to the third partial. Other instruments which access both odd and even partials overblow the fundamental by an octave, to the second partial. As a result, the harmonic series of a note on the clarinet looks very different than other wind instruments (see Figure 5).
The pitches indicated in Figure 4 and Figure 5 are the theoretical pitches of the harmonic series. When performed on the clarinet, the intonation of these pitches will not be exact, and some will vary drastically. Clarinetists may create a personal harmonic series based on their personal way of playing and their own setup. By creating a personal harmonic series in this way, players will have a greater understanding of where third and fifth partial fingerings come from and the multiple possibilities to produce a single pitch. In doing so, a player may better determine the most effective fingerings for the extreme altissimo, which is often called for in contemporary works.

Knowledge of the harmonic series and experience manipulating its partials is essential when learning extended techniques on the clarinet. Using Figure 5 as an example, it can be seen that G₅, E₆, and A₆ are all higher partials of the fundamental note C₄. Clarinetists will recognize that the corresponding fingerings for these third, fifth, and seventh partial notes are related to the fingering for C₄. For example, beginning with the fingering for C₄, the register key must be depressed to play G₅. From there, the left hand first finger must be removed and the right hand Eb key added to play E₆. It is also possible, however, to sound these third, fifth, and seventh partial pitches without altering the fundamental fingering. Through manipulations of the tongue position, oral cavity
shape (referred to as voicing), and placement of the lower lip, clarinetists can perform higher partials without depressing the register key or changing any other fingers.

Begin practicing the partials by ensuring the appropriate amount of mouthpiece is taken into the mouth. The lower lip should fall at or slightly below the fulcrum of the mouthpiece, the point at which the reed and mouthpiece separate. An embouchure which is too tight or too loose will have difficulty accessing notes in the higher partials. Do not use the tongue to articulate at first when practicing the partials of the clarinet. Instead, begin each note with fast air, like saying “Heee.” Clarinetist Michele Gingras writes that the throat cavity must become smaller to access each subsequent partial. Additionally, players will find that each partial is located at a different place on the reed. It is important to remember that all of the partials exist within a single point at the fulcrum of the mouthpiece. This fulcrum is at the point where the reed and the facing of the mouthpiece separate. The location of the first five partials within the reed are indicated in Figure 6. Despite the appearance in the figure, the space between each partial is minimal; all partials exist within a single dot at the fulcrum of the mouthpiece.

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When practicing these partials, clarinetists will find that the third partial is the
most difficult to reach. If unsuccessful, try venting the register key for a moment. Release
it quickly but sustain the third partial pitch for as long as possible. Take a quick breath
and try to reattack the third partial with fast air. With practice, players will be able to
reliably perform each partial. The harmonic series of lower pitches in the fundamental
register are progressively more difficult to access. Begin practicing the partials with a
fingering higher in the chalumeau range such as G₄ or C₄.

Reliable reproduction of these higher partials will aid the study of the following
contemporary techniques. Players can begin the study of contemporary techniques before
mastering the partials, however, as they both share a reciprocal relationship. Success with one technique or concept can directly lead to success in another.

Catalog of Contemporary Effects

Air across upper joint

This effect can be compared to the sound and technique of a shakuhachi flute. The shakuhachi flute is a traditional Japanese instrument played by holding it at a “downward angle of about 45°. The lower edge of the upper end rests in the hollow of the chin below the lip. Through a narrow embouchure, a sharp stream of air is directed at the blowing-edge.” Similarly, this effect is produced on the clarinet by blowing across the bore of the upper joint (without the barrel). This effect produces a flute-like whistling tone. The pitch can be changed by adding and removing fingerings.

The embouchure used in this technique resembles the flute embouchure, although it feels quite different. With the bell of the clarinet resting in the lap, tilt the head down and place the lower lip slightly inside the bore of the upper joint. Direct the air at the far edge of the bore. This effect can be quite difficult to produce, but experimentation with the angle, air speed, and placement will produce the effect. Additionally, a whistle tone similar to the extended technique on the flute can be produced. Whistle tones are produced using a slower airstream and sound like a very high and soft whistle.

This difficult technique is useful for focusing and relaxing the embouchure. Additionally, practice of this technique may increase the precision of the embouchure. More than a pedagogical tool, this intriguing effect is called for in the fourth movement of *Folk Songs* for B-flat Clarinet (1986) by Eric Mandat.

**Circular Breathing**

Circular breathing is a useful tool for extending phrases in both standard classical works as well as in contemporary pieces. Similar to the operation of a bag pipe, the circular breath involves operating the cheeks of the mouth as an inflatable air sac. Air is stored in the cheeks and then pushed through the instrument using the muscles of the face. This technique is easier for instruments with smaller, more resistant openings such as the oboe or bassoon, but is possible on all members of the clarinet family. The circular breath can be divided into five stages:

1. Blow air normally through the instrument
2. While blowing air, inflate the cheeks
3. Transition from blowing air normally to pushing the air from the cheeks into the instrument using the facial muscles
4. While pushing air from the cheeks inhale through the nose
5. Transition back from pushing air from the cheeks to blowing air normally

These five stages are performed quite rapidly, but it is useful to practice each step separately at first. The greatest challenge of the circular breath is in sustaining the sound during the transition from normal blowing to pressing with the cheeks (stages three and
The goal is to have no change in timbre or dynamic during any stage of the circular breath. The technique is easiest and most effective in the clarinet’s lower register, particularly during technical passages or trills, as they can obscure any timbral change. Circular breathing during articulation is incredibly difficult, but not impossible.

When first learning the technique, the player should practice away from his or her instrument. A straw may be used in the following practice method, but it is not essential. Practicing without any external item or aid is just as effective at first. Some of the stages may come quickly and naturally while others will take time to grasp. Each player will learn at a different rate: patience is key.

First, players must practice stage two: blowing air and inflating the cheeks. While blowing air, simply allow the cheeks to inflate and deflate. Blow air continuously at this point and do not attempt to expel air using the muscles of the face. Next, practice the transition between blowing air and pushing it out with the cheeks without attempting the breath through the nose (stage 3). Blow air normally, allow the cheeks to inflate, stop blowing air, and begin expelling air from the cheeks using the facial muscles. Pause at first between each step, but with each attempt, try to eliminate any pauses between these steps, achieving a consistent airstream. Once this stage is comfortable, the player can add the transition back to blowing normally. Only when these steps can be accomplished should the player add the breath through the nose (stage four). Practice all steps together, all the while attempting to blow a consistent airstream across all stages.

Once the player feels comfortable completing these steps without an instrument, the entire process can be practiced with a glass of water and a straw. Although not
essential, practicing with a glass of water and a straw is an effective intermediary step
before transitioning to the instrument. The same procedure described above should be
followed while blowing through the straw into the water. The objective is to keep
consistent bubbles in the water throughout the entire process.

When first attempting the technique on the clarinet, practice each step
independently as previously discussed. The transition to the clarinet will feel dissimilar as
it has different backpressure and resistance. At first, practice the circular breath in the
lower register while playing a trill. With practice, the player can maintain consistent
intonation, timbre, and volume during the circular breath. To test for proficiency, the
player can attempt to exhale during the circular breath. True proficiency is achieved when
both inhalation and exhalation can be accomplished.

This is an advanced technique that necessitates a good concept of embouchure.
Although it is an effective tool for certain passages, it should not be used in place of a
good breath and proper support. It requires flexibility, relaxation, and an embouchure that
is not too tight. The circular breath is easiest to execute in the chalumeau register of the
clarinet and becomes increasingly difficult higher in the range.

**Flutter Tongue**

The flutter tongue is one of the most common effects asked of all wind
instruments. Early examples of the flutter tongue include variation two of Richard
Strauss’ tone poem *Don Quixote* (1892) and in act two scene eleven: “L'arrivée de Casse-
Noisette et Claire” of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky’s ballet *The Nutcracker* (1892). In the
Tchaikovsky, the flutes carry the instruction “Frullato”, the Italian term for flutter tongue. Many examples of flutter tonguing exist in music of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. It is commonly called for in Orchestral and Wind Band literature as well as in solo repertoire.

In notation the flutter tongue may be indicated with abbreviations of the German Flatterzunge, “Flz”, the Italian Frullato, “Flt”, or the English flutter tongue, “f.t.” or “f.l.” It may also be indicated using a three-line tremolo mark on the stem of a note.

The flutter tongue is a very flexible technique with a high degree of individual variation based on the structure of a player’s mouth and tongue. Players should experiment to discover the method that works best for them. Typically, the flutter tongue is produced by rolling the tongue at the top of the mouth like pronouncing “d-r-r-r-r” or “p-r-r-r-r” or like rolling the R in the Italian and Spanish languages. While blowing fast air, bring the tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth behind the teeth. A fast air stream causes the tongue to rapidly oscillate when the tip of the tongue is placed against the roof of the mouth. The tongue does not make contact with the reed during this technique, but it remains quite close. It is important to note that this is not an active motion of the tongue. Rather, the speed of the airstream causes the tongue to rebound off of the roof of the mouth. Some clarinetists are unable to produce this effect due to the structure of their tongue and oral cavity. The effect can be approximated by “growling” in the throat, what Rehfeldt describes as a pronunciation of “g-r-r-r.”

101 Rehfeldt, New Directions for Clarinet, 64.
the flutter tongue is easiest to perform at a loud dynamic. It becomes increasingly
difficult at soft dynamics due to the high velocity of air required to activate the tongue.

The flutter tongue is generally an approachable technique for most players. Due to
the high individual variation in this technique, however, some may find it difficult. The
flutter tongue is an essential extended technique due to its frequent use in orchestral,
wind band, and solo compositions.

**Glissando and Portamento**

Differentiating between the glissando and portamento is important as the two
terms are often confused. A glissando is a rapid, diatonic movement – like running the
finger up and down the keys of a keyboard. On the other hand, a portamento is a
continuous sound – like moving up and down the fingerboard of a stringed instrument or
the sliding of a trombone. The piano and harp are only capable of producing a glissando
whereas stringed instruments, trombones, clarinet, and timpani are all able to produce a
portamento.102 Most composers who call for portamentos use the term glissando. Because
these terms are used interchangeably, players may generally perform the sliding
portamento when the composer asks for a glissando.

The portamento effect can only be produced in the upper register of the clarinet.
This is why the opening solo in George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* begins with a
glissando (rapid diatonic finger motion) before transitioning to a portamento in the

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102 *Grove Music* Online, s.v. “Glissando,” by David D. Boyden and Robin Stowell,
state.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/11282.
clarion register. Phillip Rehfeldt describes producing the portamento “by adjusting lip pressure, as well as the shape of the oral cavity, in such a way as to produce a pitch somewhat below the normal pitch.”103 The motion is then guided by the fingers in scale-wise fashion before arriving at the final pitch. Clarinetists need to be careful, however, to only use minimal embouchure motion for this effect; the larger factor at play is the shape of the tongue and oral cavity.

To properly execute a portamento, players must have a firm concept of embouchure and tongue position/voicing. Before approaching the portamento, begin by experimenting with pitch bending through adjustments of the tongue and oral cavity. The easiest place to begin practicing pitch bending is on clarion C6. Keeping the embouchure stable, lower the tongue from an “ee” shape to “ah” or “oh.” Attempt to bend down by specific intervals beginning with the half step. Expand the interval incrementally to a whole-step, minor third, etc. On this high C6, a pitch bend of up to a fourth is possible. Once comfortable with pitch bending on the high C6, start on B5 one half-step lower. Bend the pitch down, slowly slide the left-hand pointer off the tone hole, and raise the tongue back to the “ee” shape. With practice, this method can produce a smooth portamento. Once the half-step motion from B5 to C6 is comfortable, begin incrementally expanding the interval.

At first, gliding the fingers off the tone holes will help to control the effect. Ultimately, however, the portamento can be accomplished with only minimal gliding motion from the fingers. Similar to the flutter-tongue, the glissando and portamento are

103 Rehfeldt, New Directions for Clarinet, 57-8.
frequently called for in wind band, orchestra, and solo repertoire. This effect can help developing players to increase awareness of their tongues, further clarifying tongue position and voicing.

**Quarter Tones and Microtones**

A quarter-tone is an interval one-half the size of the semitone. Quarter-tones are derived by dividing the octave into twenty-four equal segments rather than the western-classical tradition of twelve. Quarter-tones were discussed in ancient Greek music theory but saw sparse usage in western classical music until interest grew in the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries. A microtone is defined as any difference in pitch smaller than a semitone, thus serving as an umbrella term under which quarter-tones fit. There is some inconsistency across writers and theorists, however, as some “restrict the term to quantities of less than half a semitone; others extend it to refer to all music with intervals markedly different from the (logarithmic) 12th part of the octave and its multiples.”

Like multiphonics, quarter tones and microtones are produced by manipulating standard fingerings on the clarinet. Individual variation between players and instruments is common, so experimentation is required to determine effective fingerings for each player. Variation between the members of the clarinet family is must also be considered. Fingerings may differ between Bb and A Clarinet as well as between the other members

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of the clarinet family. On the bass clarinet in particular, variations in key work between manufacturers requires players to alter fingerings as needed. Many sources are available with quarter and microtonal fingerings. These will be listed below in the resources for further study.

The notation of quarter tones and microtones is not standardized across the repertoire. Works which employ quarter and microtones typically contain a legend defining the notation that is used. For discussion on notational practices, one may refer to Kurt Stone’s *Music Notation in the Twentieth Century.*

Approaching quarter tones for the first time can be daunting for players as they must learn an entirely new set of fingerings. While some composers indicate fingerings in the music, others merely provide the notation, leaving the performer to determine a fingering. Before attempting a piece that contains quarter or micro tones, players may reference Ronald L. Caravan’s *Preliminary Exercises and Etudes in Contemporary Techniques for Clarinet* and *Polychromatic Diversions.* These two resources provide fingerings and graded etudes that can help to familiarize players with this new vocabulary. After studying quarter-tone fingerings prepared by other clarinetists, players may choose to create their own fingerings.

**Multiple Articulation**

Multiple articulation is a common and standard technique used by flutists and brass players. Though less commonly used on reed instruments, multiple articulation can
be a useful tool for clarinetists in works of the standard repertoire as well as in contemporary music. Multiple articulation is possible on all members of the clarinet family. Players should first strive for a fast, relaxed single tongue before attempting to double or triple tongue. Double tonguing involves alternating between a tongue and a throat articulation. Triple tonguing adds an additional tongued articulation after the throat articulation.

Various syllables can be used for double tonguing including “da-ga” and “ta-ka.” Variations of these with different vowels such as “tee-kee,” “too-koo,” and “teh-keh” can also be used. The “ga” or “ka” syllable created with the back of the tongue and throat needs to be gentle and slight in order to not interrupt the airstream. Players can begin practicing this technique in the lower register of the clarinet. Strive for an even and equal multiple articulation. As with single articulation, strong and consistent air support is a pre-requisite to proper multiple articulation. Players can practice two ways: by starting with the single articulation (“da” or “ta”) and by starting with the throat syllable (“ga” or “ka”). Practice by starting with both stages to help to even the multiple articulation.

Before attempting multiple articulation, a facile single tongue must be developed. The study of multiple articulation may also help the player to develop facility in the single articulation, however. While multiple articulation is a useful technique, it should not compensate for a slow and relaxed single tongue.
Multiple Sonorities

There are two categories of multiple sonorities on the clarinet: those that are produced through manipulation of fundamental fingerings (fingered multiphonics) and those produced by singing or humming while playing. These two methods will be discussed separately.

Fingered multiphonics are produced by manipulating fundamental fingerings to access higher partials in the overtone series. This effect is not exactly like playing chords on a keyboard instrument because the resultant pitches vary in intensity, intonation, and timbre. Phillip Rehfeldt describes the clarinet multiphonic as a “complex sonority” rather than as a harmonic structure. Many factors influence the pitches of a multiphonic including reed strength, mouthpiece facing, air speed, and lip/jaw placement. The number of multiphonic fingering combinations is enormous as the addition or subtraction of fingers (and half holes), adjustment in tongue and throat position (voicing), and placement of the lower lip on the reed can all affect the resultant pitches.

Multiphonic possibilities on woodwind instruments grew in popularity during the mid-twentieth century. Works composed for flutist Severino Gazzelloni, including Sequenza (1958) by Luciano Berio and Proporzioni (1958) by Franco Evangelisti are the earliest examples of multiple sonorities called for on a woodwind instrument. 

Experimentation with multiple sonorities on the clarinet began soon after, leading to

109 Rehfeldt, New Directions for Clarinet, 43.

The earliest published resource discussing multiple sonorities on woodwind instruments was Bruno Bartolozzi’s *New Sounds for Woodwind* (1967), translated by Reginald Smith Brindle. Soon after the publication of Bartolozzi’s instructional book, many other doctoral dissertations and articles were written through the 1970s detailing multiphonic possibilities on the clarinet. As evidenced by the abundance of articles written about clarinet multiphonics, interest in this new technique was great in the 1970s. Since then, interest has waned somewhat, though multiphonics can be found in many works for clarinet, particularly in the unaccompanied solo repertoire.

The process for sounding multiphonics follows the same principals of sounding any other note on the clarinet. Every note has an ideal lip pressure and voicing that becomes habitual over time. The same is true for multiphonics, although they are more temperamental when first learned. Unlike conventional fingerings, some multiphonic fingerings only speak at a certain dynamic level. Again, variation between players and instruments must be considered.

Compositions which call for multiphonics frequently contain a fingering provided by the composer. For lists of multiphonic fingerings, performers can reference Rehfeldt’s *New Directions for Clarinet*, which provides an extensive list of multiphonic fingerings.
for soprano, sopranino, and bass clarinets. He goes on to note that multiphonic trills and tremolos are possible by combining fingerings or by experimenting with tone hole venting.

In addition to fingered multiphonics, multiple sonorities can be achieved by playing conventionally while humming or singing. When first attempting this technique, practice unison pitches with the instrument and voice. With practice, the player will become accustomed to the unusual feeling of singing and blowing air at the same time. Next, improvise some simple exercises such as playing scales while humming a pedal. When comfortable singing the pedal, swap the voices by playing the pedal and singing the scale. Elsa Ludewig-Verdehr provides several effective preliminary exercises in “A Practical Approach to New and Avant-garde Clarinet Music and Techniques.”

Additionally, Ronald L. Caravan’s *Five Duets for One Clarinetist* is a simple set of pieces to help the performer with this technique. Lastly, Frank Joseph Dolak’s doctoral dissertation “Augmenting Clarinet Technique: A Selective, Sequential Approach Through Prerequisite Studies and Contemporary Etudes” provides instructions as well as pedagogical etudes to help develop this technique.

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111 Rehfeldt, *New Directions for Clarinet*, 48-54.
Fingered multiphonics are easier to produce when the player has a looser, more flexible embouchure. Clarinetist Eric Mandat refers to this as “defocusing.” Mandat contends that the study of multiple sonorities on the clarinet can aid the player in developing a more flexible embouchure, with the end goal of expanding timbral flexibility for a “liquid tone.” Due to the flexible nature of multiphonics, the player must experiment with air speed, dynamic, lip pressure and placement to produce different pitches. This experimentation allows the player to further develop the ability to make minute adjustments in embouchure, air, and voicing to improve both contemporary and conventional performance.

**Percussive Effects and Non-Pitched Sounds**

The category of percussive effects and non-pitched sounds incorporates a wide variety of techniques discovered by performers and composers. This category includes noises produced from the instrument mechanism (key clicks, key slaps, hand pops, and tapping the body of the instrument) and air sounds through the instrument without producing a tone.

Key clicks and slaps may be simple percussive effects or soft pitches achieved by popping the fingers in a particular fingering. Clicks and slaps may be performed with or without air through the instrument. Air sounds can be achieved either by sucking air through the mouthpiece or by blowing air with a loose embouchure so as not to produce a

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116 Ibid., 27.
clarinet tone. While blowing air through the instrument, various fingerings can be added to produce faint pitches. Composers who call for various percussive effects or other non-pitched sounds will generally include a key or other instruction on how to produce the effect.

**Slap Tongue**

The slap tongue produces either a pitched or non-pitched pop similar to the sound of a pizzicato on string instruments. This technique can be produced on all single reed instruments and is particularly effective on the bass clarinet. The slap tongue is a completely different motion of the tongue from normal articulation. In this technique, the reed is pulled away from the mouthpiece before it is released to literally slap against the facing of the mouthpiece. Combined with a puff of air, the slap tongue can produce a pitch along with the thud of the reed hitting the facing. It is particularly effective in the lower register of the soprano and bass clarinets where its sound is more pronounced, like the pizzicato of a string bass. The effect is typically notated using an X for a note-head.

This advanced technique is produced by placing the tongue against the reed to create a seal between the tongue and reed. Maintaining contact with the reed, create a divot in the middle of the tongue to create a vacuum between the tongue and reed. The suction produced by this vacuum enables the player to pull the tongue away, pulling the reed away from the facing and releasing it back into the mouthpiece. It is generally easier to produce on the bass clarinet since its reed is larger and easier to grab with the tongue. Begin by practicing in front of a mirror using the reed alone. Placing the reed further
back to the middle of the tongue, attempt to create the divot and suction between the tongue and reed. When this concept is understood, the reed and mouthpiece can be combined. Practice first without adding the puff of air, verifying the technique by listening for a small click as the reed hits the facing. Once this click can be consistently produced, attempt to add a puff of air to produce a discernable pitch. Anchor tonguing can help to learn this effect due to the large amount of reed that must be placed on the tongue. This technique is best practiced for only a few minutes at a time as many repeated attempts can bruise the tongue. Additionally, begin practicing with either an old or rejected reed as the tip of the reed is easily destroyed. A synthetic reed may stand up better to repeated practice of the slap tongue.

Timbral Adjustments

Players are already accustomed to music carrying instructions for timbral adjustments. Composers use markings such as “dolce” or “con forza”, for example, conjure a particular timbre. In contemporary music, however, composers extend the notation by calling for small adjustments in the sound including tone color alterations, vibrato, and subtones.

Tone color may be altered through tone color trills where the change in fingering produces a negligible fluctuation in pitch but a noticeable fluctuation in tone quality. Examples include trilling in the altissimo by alternating the right hand Eb key. The same pitch is produced with only minimal fluctuation of intonation. Composers may also indicate fingerings to influence tone color on repeated pitches.
Vibrato may also be indicated by contemporary composers. While traditionally not used on the clarinet, vibrato can be produced by the jaw, diaphragm, or with the key work of the clarinet (the latter is a similar effect as a tone color trill). Composers may also notate the intensity and depth of the vibrato.

Subtones may also be referred to as an echo tone or sotto voce. A subtone calls for the performer to play as softly as possible while still maintaining tone and pitch.
Chapter 6. Performance Guide to Fantasie for Clarinet Solo

Before approaching any clarinet works by Jörg Widmann, the performer must be aware of several important factors. First, as in all of Widmann’s works, accidentals only apply to the note they directly precede. Performers using a Boehm system clarinet have the added challenge of translating his directions from the German Oehler system on which Widmann plays. In the following performer’s guide to his *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo*, suggested fingerings and techniques on the Boehm system will be discussed as they arise in the piece. Finally, the extended techniques called for in this work are best initially practiced away from the piece. For more information on how to approach and practice extended techniques, refer to Chapter 5.

The *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo*, written in 1993 and revised in 2011, is the first of Jörg Widmann’s works for unaccompanied clarinet. This is one of his earliest compositions, preceded only by his 1990 (revised in 1993), String Quartet from the Opera “Absences.” The *Fantasie* is one of Widmann’s most frequently performed works, both by himself as well as by clarinetists around the world. This exciting and virtuosic work is full of extremes in dynamic, tempo, and character. These extremes make the *Fantasie* an attractive piece for audiences and performers alike, earning it a place in the standard repertory of unaccompanied works for clarinet.
Refer to Appendix A for a list of reference recordings. At the time of writing, three professional recordings have been made of the Fantasie, by Bettina Aust, Eduard Brunner, and Stefan Neubauer. Additionally, two videos of the composer himself performing the Fantasie are available on YouTube. Listening to these recordings, particularly to the videos of Widmann’s performances, gives insight into the intention of the composer.

In an interview with Markus Fein, Widmann shared that the Fantasie is in principal a written-out improvisation.\footnote{Fein, 21.} Widmann goes on to share that he was inspired by Igor Stravinsky’s Three Pieces for Clarinet Solo (1919) and Pierre Boulez’s Dialogue de l’ombre double (1985) for clarinet and tape. The qualities of impulsivity, virtuosity, and extremes inherent in Boulez’s works for the clarinet can also be heard in Widmann’s writing. When writing the Fantasie, Widmann had an image of the Harlequin figure from the traditional form of Italian improvised comedy known as commedia dell’arte.\footnote{Ibid., 19.} At that time, he was not aware of the unaccompanied clarinet work Harlekin (1975) by Karlheinz Stockhausen. Louis Cahuzac also composed his unaccompanied clarinet work Arlequin (1972) to evoke the harlequin figure. Widmann identifies the opening multiphonic of the Fantasie as being a parody of new music since many new works of that time begin in a similar manner.\footnote{Ibid., 19.} His immediate departure from the multiphonic sonority back into tonality underlies this parody.
Widmann set out to write the *Fantasie* to answer a question: how can harmony be presented in an unaccompanied work for a monophonic instrument? When discussing the work with Markus Fein, Widmann identifies harmony as the central theme of the *Fantasie*. Widmann answered this question in two ways. First, although intended as a parody of new music, the opening multiphonic is by nature a response to this question. The multiphonic is not a pure chord as such, but still provides harmonic information that pervades the entire composition. In its first statement, the *Fantasie* presents an answer to the question with a harmonic entity. Secondly, Widmann explored vertical harmony using a rapid tempo in the “Schnell, brillant” section beginning on page four. There, he posited that notes performed at a rapid pace could group themselves together to form the perception of vertical harmony. If played fast enough, Widmann contends that these notes form a kind of sound pillar which contains harmonic information. He later found that a similar technique was used by legendary jazz saxophonist John Coltrane. In the 1950s, Coltrane expanded his technique into what critic Ira Gitler described as “sheets of sound.” In this technique, Coltrane would perform rapid arpeggios and scale sequences to create a sense of harmony in an otherwise horizontal improvisation.

Performers beginning work on the Fantasie for Clarinet Solo need to be aware of several important factors. First, Widmann omits bar lines throughout the fantasy save for two exceptions. Dotted bar lines are used both in the “quasi Ländler” and “alpine”

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120 Fein, 21.
121 Ibid., 21.
sections as well as surrounding the phrase marked “exaggeratedly jazzy” on page seven. Despite the omission of bar lines, the Fantasie is anything but arrhythmic. Instead, Widmann carefully notates note lengths and utilizes specific beaming to imply rhythmic groupings. The performer is left to determine these groupings as he or she sees fit. Although the majority of the Fantasie can be felt in common time, the quickly articulated sections of pages four to six and eight are written in an implied mixed-meter.

Widmann carefully notates silence throughout the Fantasie. He employs three different notations for silence: a breath mark, breath mark with a fermata, and temporally notated rests. The performer should clearly distinguish between these markings to perform the silence as notated. With an abundance of short phrases in the first page and in similar passages throughout the work, these distinct notations for silence can help the performer determine which phrases should be grouped together or separated. Lastly, the Fantasie is erratic in nature. Widmann frequently interjects contrasting characters into the middle of a phrase or section. In his performance note, Widmann indicates, “The changes of characters, especially between short phrases, shall be profiled in a very abrupt and strict manner during the whole piece.”

123 To achieve this abrupt character shift, performers should emphasize the extremes of dynamic, tempo, and articulation, particularly on interjected characters.

123 Jörg Widmann, Fantasie for Clarinet Solo (Mainz, Germany: Schott, 2005).
First Section – Free, rhapsodically

The first section of the Fantasie contains a series of short motives separated by breath marks or breath marks with a fermata. Widmann’s use of dynamics and silence gives this section a hesitant quality. Each small motive begins at a soft dynamic and quickly grows to a loud outburst before immediately subsiding. It is as if each statement ends with a question mark, leaving the listener unsure of what is to come. Widmann references these short motives later in the Fantasie, often as fragments with small alterations in dynamics, articulation, or rhythm. The first two systems of the piece explore and expand on the pitches of the multiphonic. In particular, Widmann reiterates the whole-step interval Eb to F several times. Given the hesitant, question-like quality of the music in this first section, emphasizing the repeated Eb to F interval can help the listener connect these seemingly disparate phrases. The performer can accentuate this interval by placing a tenuto on the Eb each time it re-occurs.

The opening multiphonic of the Fantasie returns several times throughout the piece at different dynamic levels. The fingering provided by Widmann works well at all dynamic levels on the Boehm system. Adding the right-hand pinky Eb key can help the multiphonic to speak easier (See Figure 7).
When shifting to the “ordinary” F4, Widmann instructs the performer to “take over fingering of the multiphonic.”¹²⁴ Rather than shifting abruptly, the “ordinary” F4 should emerge from the multiphonic sonority by slowly depressing the left thumb as the multiphonic fingering is released. Widmann indicates that the altissimo F trill should be a “synonym” trill¹²⁵ rather than a traditional half or whole step trill. Here, the performer can use the right-hand pinky finger to trill the Eb key or experiment with trilling the other right-hand pinky keys for different colors (In Figure 8, the trill keys are indicated in grey and fingering 1 is the first-choice recommendation.).

¹²⁴ Widmann, Fantasie, 1.
¹²⁵ Phillip Rehfeldt, New Directions for Clarinet, revised ed. (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2003): 55-56. Phillip Rehfeldt refers to this effect as a key vibrato or color trill. The term color trill will be used in this document.
The color trill indicated on the second system F₅ can be performed in the same manner as the altissimo F₆, with the right-hand pinky key trilling the Eb key. The glissandos indicated between the altissimo F₆, E₆, D₆, and Eb₆ should follow the graphical notation Widmann provides. Thus, the performer should slightly dip beneath the following pitch and rise up to the next. Refer to “Glissando and Portamento” in Chapter 5 for more information about how to perform these glissandi. The expanding intervals in the fourth system, culminating with a three-octave leap from chalumeau B₃ to altissimo Bb₆, is reminiscent of Donald Martino’s Set for Clarinet. In the first movement of Martino’s Set, the performer must execute several three-octave leaps from the chalumeau to altissimo on Bb and B-natural. Widmann writes in a similar manner, yet also drastically changes the dynamic from a sforzando on the chalumeau B₃ to subito piano on the altissimo Bb₆. To avoid the need for drastically changing the embouchure, the performer must find an altissimo Bb₆ fingering that is both stable and slightly sharp. This prevents the need for unnecessary contortions in the embouchure on the altissimo Bb₆,
which can be flat when approached by a leap of this magnitude. The fingering indicated in Figure 9 is effective and stable in this instance.

Figure 9. Altissimo Bb\textsubscript{6} fingering [Page 1, System 4]

The following section, marked “Tempo, grazioso, simple, quasi Ländler” presents a totally new character. According to the Grove Dictionary of Music, a Ländler is a traditional folkdance in 3/4 time. It was most popular in 18th century Austria, Germany, and Switzerland, though it still exists today in that region. In classical music, composers of every period, including Haydn, Mozart, Bruckner, Mahler, Berg, Weber, and Brahms all wrote ländler-like movements.\footnote{Grove Music Online, s.v. “Ländler,” accessed January 18, 2018, https://doi.org.proxy.lib.ohio-state.edu/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.article.15945.} In his \textit{Fantasie}, Widmann’s use of the term ländler along with the included dotted bar lines clearly indicates that the music should feel like a dance in 3/4 time. Additionally, he provides crescendos and decrescendos around the “downbeat” to further emphasize the dance-like quality. The ländler section contains
several interruptions, beginning with the forte sixteenth notes marked “frightened” in the fifth system, the opening multiphonic returning in the sixth system, the opening arpeggio and color trill in the seventh, and a final sixteenth note fortissimo interjection at the bottom of the first page (See Figure 10, interjections indicated in brackets). Each of these interjections should starkly contrast the ländler music, which then promptly returns unfazed.

Figure 10. Fantasie Page 3, “Tempo, grazioso”

At the top of the second page, Widmann quotes portions of the opening material with important changes. Here, the rising pianissimo arpeggio moves ahead without
fermatas. Widmann adds an accent to the Eb₅ to again emphasize the Eb to F whole step. The A₅ to Ab₅ interval that follows is an unexpected alteration from the beginning. This half-step serves as a bridge to the following sextuplet passage, a direct quotation from the third system of the opening. Again, Widmann alters the end of this quote by descending from chalumeau F₃ to E₃, setting up the following “misterioso” section.

Figure 11. *Fantasie* Page 4, System 1-2

The “misterioso” at the top of the second page brings with it an effect Widmann frequently calls for on the clarinet. Here, the player is instructed to play with “very low clarinet sound, but fortissimo key noise.” The listener should clearly hear both the notated pitches along with the rhythmic click of the keys. The use of key-click sounds only appears in this one section of the *Fantasie*, but is used more extensively in his later works.

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works, including *Three Shadow Dances* for solo clarinet. Using strong air support, the performer should play as quietly as possible, linking the fermata pitches with rapid chromatic scales. This passage should slowly accelerando with the first two fermatas being the longest, and each subsequent fermata gradually decreasing in length. The final chromatic motion from E₃ to G₅ should be the fastest yet, with no fermata on the clarion G₅.

Widmann returns to the opening arpeggio and altissimo F₆ color trill in the fourth system. The subsequent arpeggios beginning on G₃ and A₃ should build both in volume and intensity. Although breath marks are indicated between each, the space between the arpeggios should be small. The performer should create one phrase arch, intensifying the musical line from the “becoming progressively faster” in the third system all the way through the whole step altissimo G₆ to A₆ in the fifth system.

**Second section – Schnell, brilliant** (See Figures 12 and 13)

The sixteenth note arpeggio in the fifth system of the fourth page launches the music into a frenzied section with fast articulation and large register leaps. The descending sixteenth notes into “Schnell, brilliant” can gradually accelerando into the fast tempo. Group the first four notes together and rapidly accelerando beginning on the A₃ through the remaining five chromatic pitches. The five-note chromatic should crescendo and slam into the following bar before suddenly dropping in dynamic. As Widmann indicates, the player must leave room in the tempo such that when this section returns on page 8, it can be even faster and more frenzied. As with the first two pages of the piece,
the dynamic and articulation markings must be closely followed. Highlighting the accents and tenutos helps the music to groove while the extreme dynamics makes this section particularly exciting.

Beginning with this fast section, the lack of bar lines introduces complex rhythmic challenges. Widmann beams the eighth and sixteenth notes in such a way that eighth-note groupings of two and three are implied. Whereas the first two pages of the piece can be felt in common time, here Widmann implies compound time. See Figure 12 and Figure 13 for recommendations on where to insert eighth-note groupings of two and three. Vertical lines indicate groupings of two whereas triangles indicate groupings of three.

Figure 12. *Fantasie* Page 4, “Schnell, brillant”
Figure 13. Fantasie Page 5, “Schnell, brillant”
Breaths must be carefully planned this section. The first opportunity for a breath comes in the eighth rest of the sixth system on page four. The dynamic change on the following beat can be emphasized by inserting a decrescendo on the last four eighth notes preceding the breath. The following eighth and two sixteenths can then crescendo down to the chalumeau E₃ to announce the change of dynamic and intensify the passage. The next opportunity for a breath comes between the two beats of eighth note triplets on the final system the fourth page. Similar to the first breath, adding a decrescendo preceding the breath and a crescendo following it is effective. Two other possible breaths are after the accented tenuto chalumeau F₃ four beats from the end of page four and after the accented chalumeau E₃ at the top of page five. These breaths are also indicated with a “V” in Figure 12 and Figure 13 above. From there on out, breaths can be taken on rests and where indicated by Widmann.

The beats preceding the flutter-tongue in both the first and second ending (page five, system three) should crescendo to the loudest dynamic of the entire section. The music intensifies and loudens to this point before it suddenly stops. The performer should suspend the energy and tension of the final beats through the silence before landing on the flutter tongue. Regarding the first and second ending, Widmann indicates that it is “ad libitum,” or as desired. Regardless of whether the first or second ending is taken, the flutter tongue should be rapid and intense and should continue through the swiftly descending chromatic. This effect is shocking and unexpected.

Following the flutter tongue, the music of the previous section continues with added glissandi in the fourth system of page five. In the case of these glissandi, the
performer can articulate the first A₅ and slur through the following A₅ and Ab₆ with a downward scooping glissando between each pitch. Again, the music comes to a screeching halt at the end of the fourth system. As with the flutter tongue in the previous system, Widmann again uses a straight line in system five of page five to indicate that the player should perform a rapid ascending chromatic over nearly three octaves. The three repetitions of the descending sextuplet that follows should gradually become slower, softer and more dolce; a true contrast from the preceding lines.

After a long silence, the music begins to wind up again on the sixth system of the fifth page. Widmann instructs the performer to “tornare al tempo,” (return to tempo). Observing the graphical notation, there should be a scoop glissando between each pitch along with an accelerando and crescendo. The vibrato on the altissimo F#₆ can be accomplished by using adjustments of air or jaw pressure (the latter of which is called lip vibrato).¹²⁸ At this point, the music has a ridiculous and absurd quality much like the harlequin character of the commedia dell’arte. This comes to a head in the final system of the fifth page where the music drives up to three altissimo Ab₆ pitches. Due to the extreme range of these pitches, rather than articulating each Ab₆, the performer can slur across, using scoop glissandi in-between. Just as quickly as the moment comes, the music quickly loses momentum and deteriorates to silence at the end of page five.

With the listener left unaware of what could come next, the music again roars back in the first system of page six as if the deterioration to silence had never occurred. As with the previous section, the challenge of implied compound meter presents itself.

¹²⁸ Rehfeldt, *New Directions for the Clarinet*, 62.
Refer to Figure 14 for suggested groupings. Finding places to breathe is also a challenge in this section. Potential spots include at the end of the first system on page six, after the piano E₃ in the third system directly preceding the subito fortissimo, and after the altissimo Eb₆ three beats later. After this point, the performer should be able to take breaths during rests and where indicated by Widmann.

Figure 14. Fantasie Page 6, “langsam ins Tempo”
At the end of the fifth system on page six, beginning with the forte C₆, Widmann notates pitch bends¹²⁹, also called falls, after each pitch. This should be done primarily with alterations of tongue position and oral cavity, though some loosening of the embouchure can help. See “Glissando and Portamento” in Chapter 5 for a more in-depth description.

Third Section – Presto possible (See Figure 15)

The section titled “Presto possible subito” on system six of page six should be the fastest, wildest part of the piece. The performer can experiment with double tonguing on the articulated sixteenth notes throughout this section. Using a double articulation enables the performer to vastly increase the speed, giving the music a frenetic quality. Unlike the previous “Schnell, brilliant,” this section can be felt entirely in common time.

“Presto possible subito” can be divided into three subsections: (1) presto possible in the sixth system through the breath mark in the eighth system, (2) the following mezzo-piano A#₃ through “exaggeratedly jazzy” at the top of page 7, (3) and the return of “presto possible” through the multiphonic in the second system of page seven. Each of these subsections builds to a fortissimo at the end, like waves crashing onto a beach.

In the eighth system of page six, the glissando from Db to G is made easier by using an overblown B fingering (See Figure 16).

¹²⁹ Rehfeldt, *New Directions for the Clarinet*, 59.
Figure 15. Fantasie Page 6-7, "Presto possible"
Due to the large leap preceding the altissimo B♭₆ to C₇ two beats later, selected fingerings should tend slightly sharp. As discussed earlier, choosing a slightly sharp fingering prevents the need for unnecessary adjustments in the embouchure when leaping multiple octaves into the altissimo, which can be flat when approached by a leap of this magnitude. See Figure 17 for recommended fingering options for the altissimo B♭₆ to C₇.

The breath mark following the altissimo C should be observed, allowing for a brief silence before continuing. The clarion A♯₅ in the final system of page six can be played using an alternate fingering (see Figure 18).

At the bottom of page six, Widmann instructs the performer to glissando from the upper chalumeau F♯₄ to the clarion A♯₅. To accomplish this, perform a rapid chromatic without glissando from F♯₄ to B₄, at which point the glissando becomes possible from C₅ to A♯₅ (See Figure 19 for illustration).
Figure 17. Altissimo B♭6 to C7 [Page 6, System 8]

Figure 18. Clarion B♭5 alternate fingering [Page 6, System 9]

Figure 19. F#4 to A#5 glissando [Page 6, System 9]
This glissando slides into the subsequent measure, marked “suddenly much slower, exaggeratedly ‘jazzy’. ” This interruption measure should starkly contrast the sixteenth notes that precede and follow. As with the interruptions discussed in the preceding sections, the following bar should immediately change character as if nothing had changed. Widmann instructs the performer to accelerate even more at the top of page seven. In his own performances of the piece, Widmann truly pushes himself to the limit of his articulation. The “presto possible” continues to build with accelerando and crescendo into a sudden silence in the second system of page seven.

Fourth section – Tempo come prima, ma poco più mosso (See Figure 20)

The return of the opening multiphonic in system two of page seven launches the recapitulation of the opening material. Here, Widmann has inverted the order, instead beginning with the alpine ländler. Note that there is no break indicated between the multiphonic in system two of page seven and the fermata Gb5 that follows. These two gestures should be performed without space between. The alpine dance is a direct quote from the first page until the unexpected multiphonic in the fourth system. Here, Widmann alters the opening motive by adding a trill to the multiphonic. See Figure 21 for an effective trill fingering on the Boehm system (the trill key is indicated in grey.)

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130 Widmann, Fantasie, 7.
Figure 20. Fantasie Page 7, "Tempo come prima, ma poco più mosso"

*(accel.)*

*Multiophonic come prima*

---

*Tempo come prima, ma poco più mosso*

Alpenländisch, tänzerisch

with an Alpine feel, like a dance

---

*viel flüchtiger als beim ersten Auftreten*

*much more fugitive than in the first appearance*

---

*staccatiss. presto possibile*

---

*rit. molto*

---

*) quasi Synonymtriller nach unten mit Zeigefinger rechts / quasi synonym trill downwards with right index finger

**) aber wie zu Anfang F-Griff von Multiophonic übernehmen / but take over the fingering of the multiophonic as at the beginning

****) Gabel-F + innere der 2 oberen Klappen (linker kleiner Finger) / fork F + the inner of the 2 higher keys (left hand little finger)

***** sehr perkussiv, quasi pianissimo-slaps / very percussionlike, quasi pianissimo slaps
The material that follows beginning in the fourth system of the seventh page is a near direct quote from the first page save for several important alterations. These small additions further intensify the line by adding new colors to the familiar material. Overall, the dynamic level of this section has been lowered from the original. The sixteenth note gesture in the fifth system of page seven moves into a F₅ quarter tone rather than the color trill of the first page. The fingering provided by Widmann does not work on the Boehm system clarinet. Refer to Figure 22 for a recommended fingering.
The quarter tone F\textsubscript{5} also carries the instruction “doloroso” (sad, sorrowful) along with a hairpin crescendo-decrescendo al niente. In the following gesture, Widmann includes the instruction “glissando much hastier than before.”\textsuperscript{131} The performer should also differentiate the sixteenth note triplet at the end of system five, which, in the first page, was written as an eighth note triplet. In the sixth system chalumeau E, Widmann includes three hairpin crescendo-decrescendo gestures marked “molto.” Each hairpin should intensify, leading to a large crescendo through the sixteenth note arpeggio and glissando from E\textsubscript{6} to G\textsubscript{6}. The final system of the seventh page carries the instruction, “much more fugitive than in the first appearance.” The performer can perform this passage in a more angular manner to bring out this character change. Finally, the repeatedly articulated G that closes the section is extended, with the instruction to shift to “very percussion like, quasi pianissimo slaps”\textsuperscript{132} in the last three beats. In his own performances of the Fantasie, Widmann does shift to a soft slap tongue here.

The final page of the Fantasie is a return of the “Fast, brilliant” section from page four. As discussed earlier, this section should be even faster than on page four. Widmann includes a note at the bottom of the page that this section should “generally intensify and crescendo up to the penultimate line.”\textsuperscript{133} As with the original material from page four, the implied compound meter is problematic. See Figure 23 for suggested eighth-note groupings.

\textsuperscript{131} Widmann, Fantasie, 7.
\textsuperscript{132} Ibid., 7.
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid., 8.
Figure 23. *Fantasie* Page 8, "Schnell, brillant (noch schneller und drängender als zuvor)"
Again, the performer should attend to the small changes from the original “Schnell, brillant” section of page four. Widmann pushes the performer by lowering the overall dynamic. In the second system of page 8, for instance, the sixteenth note gesture builds to fortissimo before a subito piano on the following beat. This dynamic plan is changed from the parallel passage on page four where the music only builds to forte before a subito mezzo-piano. Other alterations include the omission of a breath mark between the two beats of triplets in the second system of page eight and a downward glissando fall after the G#₅ of system five.

The glissando on the first beat of system eight, page eight is similar to the gesture at the end of page six. Here, Widmann writes a glissando beginning on F#₄, but extends its reach to altissimo E₆. As with the gesture from page six, the player should perform a diatonic glissando to clarion B₄ and portamento the rest. Crossing from the clarion to the altissimo register during a portamento can be challenging. To make a smooth connection between C₆ and C#₆, use a brief half-hole with the pointer finger of the left hand. Press with the first finger onto the bottom half of the tone hole for only an instant before lifting off. Refer to Chapter 5 for more information about how to perform this extended technique.

Unlike the first time this material was heard, the glissandi in system eight of page eight do not start at a slow tempo and accelerando. Instead, they remain at the fast tempo from before and moltissimo ritardando and decrescendo following the vibrato F#₆. The unexpected dynamic and tempo change sets up the final multiphonic of the Fantasie, this time marked forte. Widmann concludes the Fantasie by quoting the alpine theme, this
time with the instruction to perform it in a “grotesque, comical” manner. The final
gesture from chalumeau A₃ to clarion B♭₅ should be performed as a rapid chromatic and
should not be played as a portamento. Decrescendo as much as possible to the B♭₅,
leaving it with an upward inflection as if it has a question mark. This sets up the grace
note gesture, letting it sound decisively final. Considering all of the unexpected twists
and turns of this piece, the final gesture should be played in such a way that it clearly
signals the end of the piece for the audience.

Widmann’s Fantasie for Clarinet Solo is an exciting recent addition to the
unaccompanied solo clarinet repertoire. This piece is frequently performed in recitals by
Widmann and by clarinetists around the world. It is currently available on three
commercial recordings by Bettina Aust¹³⁵, Eduard Brunner¹³⁶, and Stefan Neubauer¹³⁷ as
well as in two YouTube videos performed by Widmann.¹³⁸

¹³⁴ Widmann, Fantasie, 8.
¹³⁵ Bettina Aust and Robert Aust, Bettina Aust - Deutscher Musikwettbewerb,
Preisträgerin 2015, Clarinet, Recorded at Ehemalige Sendestelle des Deutschlandradios,
October 16–19, 2015, GENUIN classics, GEN 16432, 2016, compact disc.
¹³⁶ Eduard Brunner, Music for Solo Clarinet, Recorded in Studio 2, Bayerischer
¹³⁷ Stefan Neubauer, Solitary Changes, Recorded between 2002-2013, Orlando Records,
or 0006, 2013.
¹³⁸ “JÖRG WIDMANN PLAYS ‘FANTASIE’” YouTube video, 6:53, from a
performance at the Hiller Festival in Munich on April 11, 2011, posted by
“Jörg Widmann - Fantasie für Klarinette solo” YouTube video, 6:47, from a performance
at the Hochschule für Musik Karlsruher, posted by “Hochschule für Musik Karlsruhe,”
October 27, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kD1vG0Ck0k.
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Chapter 7. Conclusion

Clarinetist, composer, and conductor Jörg Widmann has gained prominence in all aspects of modern musicianship. As a clarinetist, he is a renowned performer of contemporary works as well as the standard classical-romantic clarinet repertoire. As a composer, he has been commissioned and recorded by leading orchestras, chamber ensembles, and soloists in preeminent concert halls globally. As a conductor, Widmann has a strong relationship with the Irish Chamber Orchestra where he has led two commercial recordings and produces innovative concert programs featuring his own works as well as works from the standard orchestral canon. Widmann’s equal renown in all three categories of musicianship is rare for a contemporary musician. This prominence as a modern-day clarinetist-composer places him in the company of legendary virtuosos including Franz Tausch (1762-1917), Ernesto Cavallini (1807-1874), Paul Jeanjean (1874-1928), and Louis Cahuzac (1880-1960).

The purpose of the research was to investigate the musical output of Jörg Widmann in order to arrive at an assessment of his compositional style and to identify his uncommon distinction as a musician equally recognized as a professional clarinetist, composer, and conductor. Specific focus was placed on his solo and chamber works which feature the clarinet in order to reveal his compositional style. Finally, a survey of the unaccompanied clarinet literature and a guide to contemporary clarinet techniques
provided context for his *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo*, which was then explored through a performance guide. This document aimed to fill the gap in research on the clarinet compositions of Jörg Widmann generally and about his works for unaccompanied clarinet specifically.

Chapter two examined Jörg Widmann’s career to this point, identifying him as both a composer and performer of renown. His general compositional techniques and trends were assessed to identify overall characteristics of his solo, chamber, and orchestral output. Chapter three examined his works featuring the clarinet in solo and chamber settings in order to more specifically identify his compositional style for that instrument. In chapter four, an overview of the unaccompanied clarinet repertoire and discussion of the special challenges of composing and performing works in the unaccompanied medium placed Widmann’s *Fantasie for Clarinet Solo* in a position of historical significance. The guide to contemporary extended clarinet techniques of chapter five provides clarinetists with thorough descriptions of the particular sounds and techniques that have become standard in contemporary music and are featured in Widmann’s *Fantasie*. Lastly, chapter six provides clarinetists with a thorough guide for the study and performance of Widmann’s *Fantasie*.

The present research identifies Widmann as a prolific contemporary composer who carefully considers instrumental color, nuance, tonality, and extremes using his singular compositional voice which features conventional playing, extended performance techniques, and non-pitched sounds. His use of contemporary techniques and non-pitched sounds are not simply used as a minimal effect, but rather to clearly express his artistic
vision. Widmann’s compositions frequently draw inspiration from prominent works in the chamber and orchestral repertoire. Within his chamber compositions featuring the clarinet, many share the instrumentation of and draw connections to standard works from the repertoire.

Widmann’s solo and chamber works are some of his most adventurous in terms of playing techniques, tonality, and form. His solo clarinet works are well regarded, particularly his Fantasie for Clarinet Solo (1993). The Fantasie is frequently performed by clarinetists worldwide and has been recorded by multiple clarinetists including Bettina Aust, Eduard Brunner, and Stefan Neubauer. Widmann’s use of contemporary techniques in his clarinet writing comes from his own experimentation on the clarinet. Widmann’s more recent works for solo clarinet contain increased use of these techniques as in Drei Schattentänze (Three Shadow Dances) (2013), which is filled with non-traditional performance techniques and microtonality. His works are frequently performed today and are primed to enter the standard repertoire for future generations of performers.

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141 Stefan Neubauer, Solitary Changes, Recorded between 2002- 2013, Orlando Records, or 0006, 2013.
Suggestions for Further Research

Further research into the methods and techniques involved in Widmann’s compositions is warranted, particularly into his clarinet works. As a clarinetist himself, Widmann has an intimate understanding of the instrument which enables him to compose in a more idiomatic nature. Even his contemporary techniques are carefully researched and planned in order to naturally fit both the instrument and the music. Further research into his solo and chamber compositions which feature the clarinet are warranted in order to expose these works to a larger audience.

Current research into unaccompanied solo repertoire for the clarinet only extends to 1990. No published catalog of works composed after this point has been completed. This is a gap in the literature that should be filled in order to expand knowledge of compositions for unaccompanied clarinet and to increase diversity of programming.

Effective resources are readily available which explore the extended techniques of the clarinet. Recent research into the techniques possible on the bass clarinet led by Henri Bok and Harry Sparnaay are particularly exciting. While some pedagogical materials are available for the learning and teaching of these techniques, a more comprehensive method could aid clarinetists approaching contemporary techniques for the first time. Resources which provide a logical method and exercises for the development of these techniques would prove beneficial additions to the current literature.
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Appendix A. Discography of Compositions by Jörg Widmann

The following entries are listed in chronological order:


Arlecchino Rabbioso for self-playing Fairground Organ (1997)


Dunkle Saiten for Cello, Orchestra and Two Women’s Voices (1999-2000)


Nachtstück, for clarinet, cello & piano


Fünf Bruchstücke for Clarinet and Piano
Étude III for Violin Solo
Freie Stücke for Orchestra
Fieberphantasie for Piano, String Quartet und Clarinet (doubling Bass Clarinet)


Lied for Orchestra

...umdustert... for chamber ensemble


*Zweites Labyrinth* [Second Labyrinth] for Orchestra Groups


String Quartet No. 1
String Quartet No. 2 (Choral Quartet)
String Quartet No. 3 (Jagdquartett [Hunting Quartet])
String Quartet No. 4
String Quartet No. 5 (Versuch über die Fuge [Essay on the Fugue])


*Armonica* for Orchestra


*Etude V* for Violin Solo Hommage a Niccolo Paganini


*Freie Stücke* for Ensemble

*Sieben Abgesänge auf eine tote Linde* (Seven Swan Songs for a Dead Linden Tree) for Soprano, Clarinet, Violin, and Piano

*Oktett* for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, String Quartet and Double Bass


*Fünf Bruchstücke* (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano

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_Toccata* for Piano

_Fleurs du Mal* Piano Sonata after Baudelaire


_Oktett* for Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, String Quartet and Double Bass


_Fantasie* for Clarinet Solo


_Messe* for large orchestra

_Fünf Bruchstücke* (Five Fragments) for Clarinet and Piano

_Elegie* for Clarinet and Orchestra


11 Duos for Violin and Cello, Book 2 From: _24 Duos for Violin and Cello_


_Fantasie* for Clarinet Solo


_Jagdquartett* [Hunting Quartet], Third String Quartet


_Fleurs du Mal* Piano Sonata after Baudelaire

_Fragment in C* for Piano

_Toccata* for Piano
Lichstudie III for Piano
Elf Humoresken for Piano


Violin Concerto
Antiphon for Orchestral Groups
Insel der Sirenen for Violin Solo and 19 Strings


Liebeslied for Eight Instruments (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Violin, Viola, Cello, Piano, Percussion)


Antiphon for Orchestral Groups
Armonica for Orchestra
Souvenir bavarois for Orchestra


Idyll und Abgrund (Idyll and Abyss) Six Schubert Reminiscences for Piano


Passacaglia for Violin, Cello, and Piano


Etudes I, II, III for Violin Solo

*Con brio* Concert Overture for Orchestra


String Quartet No. 1
String Quartet No. 2 (Choral Quartet)
String Quartet No. 3 (*Jagdquartett* [Hunting Quartet])
String Quartet No. 4
String Quartet No. 5 (*Versüch über die Fuge* [Essay on the Fugue])
String Quartet on the opera “Absenses”
180 beats per minute for String Sextet


*Drei Schattentänze* for clarinet solo


*Fantasie* for Clarinet Solo


*Elf Humoresken* (Eleven Humoreques) for Piano
*Zirkustänze* (Circus Dances) Suite for Piano


*Ad absurdum* Concerto for Trumpet in Bb and Orchestra

*Etude* III for Violin Solo


*Es War Einmal...* (Once Upon a Time…) five Pieces in Fairy-Tale Style for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano


Air for Horn Solo


*Versuch über die Fuge* version for Soprano, Oboe, and Chamber Orchestra

By Jörg Widmann

“Andante” from the Clarinet Sonata in E-flat major, transcribed for Clarinet, String Orchestra, Harp, and Celesta

By Felix Mendelssohn, Transcribed by Jörg Widmann


Air for Horn Solo


Concerto for Viola and Orchestra

Selections from Duos für Violine und Violoncello, arr. for Violin and Viola

*Jagdquartett* [Hunting Quartet], Third String Quartet
Appendix B. Resources for the Study of Extended Techniques

Beneath each resource is a list of techniques which are discussed within.


Bok, Henri. *New Techniques for the Bass Clarinet.* N.p.: Shoepair Music Productions, 2011. (Flutter Tonguing, Glissando and Portamento, Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Articulation, Multiple Sonorities, Percussive Effects and Non-Pitched Sounds, Slap Tongue, Timbral Adjustments)

Caravan, Ronald L. “Extensions of Technique for Clarinet and Saxophone” DMA diss., Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 1974. (Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Sonorities)

Caravan, Ronald L. *Five Duets for One Clarinetist.* Verona, NJ: Seesaw Music, 1976. (Multiple Sonorities)

Caravan, Ronald L. *Preliminary Exercises & Etudes in Contemporary Techniques for Clarinet.* Oswego, NY: Ethos Publications, 1979. (Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Sonorities)

(Glissando and Portamento, Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Sonorities, Timbral Adjustments)


(Circular Breathing)

(Multiple Articulation)

(Multiple Sonorities)

(Multiple Sonorities)

(Slap Tongue)

(Multiple Sonorities)

(Flutter Tonguing, Glissando and Portamento, Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Articulation, Multiple Sonorities, Percussive Effects and Non-Pitched Sounds, Slap Tongue, Timbral Adjustments)

(Multiple Sonorities)

(Multiple Sonorities)

(Flutter Tonguing, Glissando and Portamento, Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Articulation, Multiple Sonorities, Percussive Effects and Non-Pitched Sounds, Slap Tongue, Timbral Adjustments)
(Flutter Tonguing, Glissando and Portamento, Quarter Tones and Microtones, Multiple Sonorities, Percussive Effects and Non-Pitched Sounds, Timbral Adjustments)

(Glissando and Portamento)

(Air across the upper joint, Multiple Sonorities, Percussive Effects and Non-Pitched Sounds, Timbral Adjustments)