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A Contextual Analysis of Solo Bass Clarinet Music by Irish Composers

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A Contextual Analysis of Solo Bass Clarinet Music by Irish Composers

**Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Master of Music degree**

**Dublin Institute of Technology
Conservatory of Music and Drama**

Supervisor: Dr Paul McNulty

September 2017

Marcella Barz

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of

Master's Degree (MMus)

is entirely my own work and has not been submitted for assessment for any academic purpose other than in partial fulfilment for that stated above.

Signed:

Marcella Barry (Candidate)

Date:

20 September 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	viii
ABSTRACT	ix
INTRODUCTION	x

CHAPTER ONE: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE BASS CLARINET 1

1.1 An Introduction to the Bass Clarinet	1
1.2 A Brief Overview of the Structural Design of the Bass Clarinet	1
1.2.1 Early Bass Clarinet Designs	2
1.2.2 Modern Bass Clarinets	5
1.3 Solo Bass Clarinet Performances and Performers (1794–1955)	5
1.4 Influential Bass Clarinet Soloists (From 1955)	9
1.4.1 Josef Horák	10
1.4.2 Harry Sparnaay	12
1.4.3 Henri Bok	14
1.4.4 Eric Dolphy	15
1.5 Conclusion	16

CHAPTER TWO: STYLISTIC INFLUENCES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SOLO BASS

CLARINET MUSIC 17

2.1 Introduction	17
2.1.1 Aleatoric Music	18
2.1.2 Minimalism	22
2.1.3 Electronic Music	25
2.1.4 Jazz Music	29
2.2 Extended Techniques	30
2.2.1 Slap Tonguing	31
2.2.2 Flutter Tonguing	32
2.2.3 Multiphonic Techniques	33

2.2.4 Colour Fingerings, Quarter Tones, and Timbral Trills	35
2.2.5 Glissandi and Vibrato	36
2.2.6 Breath Sounds and Key Slaps	37
2.3 Conclusion	38
CHAPTER THREE: THE EMERGENCE OF SOLO BASS CLARINET SPECIALIZATION IN IRELAND	39
3.1 The Bass Clarinet in Irish Chamber Music	39
3.2 Concorde, Harry Sparnaay, and Paul Roe	41
3.2.1 Paul Roe and Contemporary Music: New Directions	41
3.2.2 Harry Sparnaay in Ireland	43
3.2.3 Paul Roe and Concorde	44
3.3 Conclusion	45
CHAPTER FOUR: SOLO BASS CLARINET MUSIC IN IRELAND	46
4.1 Overview of Irish Solo Bass Clarinet Music	46
4.2 Paul Roe's Approach to Contemporary Music	47
4.2.1 Collaboration	47
4.2.2 Stylistic Approach	48
4.3 A Cross-survey of Works with Musically Explorative Elements	49
4.3.1 <i>O Breath</i>	50
4.3.2 <i>Continuum</i>	52
4.3.3 <i>Monster</i>	53
4.3.4 <i>Composure</i>	57
4.3.5 <i>Periastron</i>	60
4.4 Detailed Analyses	62
4.4.1 <i>Rattle</i>	62
4.4.2 <i>Stung</i>	68
4.5 Conclusion	75
CONCLUSION	77

BIBLIOGRAPHY	79
Books	79
Dissertations	79
Journal Articles	80
Musical Scores	81
Online Articles	82
Newspaper Articles	82
Recordings	82
Websites	82
 APPENDICES	 84
Appendix A: Email Interview with Paul Roe, 2 January 2017	85
Appendix B: Interview with Paul Roe, 3 August 2017	90
Appendix C: Email Interview with Paul Roe, 23 August 2017	109
Appendix D: Email Interview with Frank Lyons, 28 August 2017	112
Appendix E: List of Solo Bass Clarinet Compositions by Irish Composers	113

LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

CHAPTER TWO

Example 2.1: Feldman, <i>Projection 1</i>	20
Example 2.2: Cardew, <i>Treatise</i> , page 66	21
Example 2.3: Brun, <i>Perpetual Flowing</i>	21
Example 2.4: Logothetis, <i>Fusion</i>	22
Example 2.5: Young, <i>Death Chant</i>	24
Example 2.6: Glass, <i>1+1</i>	24
Example 2.7: Siegel, <i>Jackdaw</i> , 28–49	25
Example 2.8: Bruynèl, <i>Intra</i> , 1'15"–1'45"	28
Example 2.9: Grainger, <i>In Dahomey</i> , 16–17	29
Example 2.10: Hobbs, <i>Why Not?</i> , page 1, line 1	30
Example 2.11: Hobbs, <i>Why Not?</i> , page 3, lines 3–4	30
Example 2.12: Lange, <i>Press Release</i> , 16–22	32
Example 2.13: Raxach, <i>Chimaera</i> , 8'15"	34
Example 2.14: Melläs, <i>Riflessioni</i> , 55–60	35
Example 2.15: Yun, <i>Monolog</i>	36
Example 2.16: Kucera, <i>Duodramma</i>	36
Example 2.17: Kagel, <i>Schattenklänge</i>	37

CHAPTER FOUR

Example 4.1: Holohan, <i>O Breath</i>	51
Example 4.2: Holohan, <i>O Breath</i> , inscription at the bottom of the score	51
Example 4.3: Holohan, <i>O Breath</i> , multiphonics, page 2	52
Example 4.4: Canning, <i>Continuum</i> , 5'24"	53
Example 4.5: Bennett, <i>Monster</i> , 4'30"	54
Example 4.6: Bennett, <i>Monster</i> , 2'45"	55
Example 4.7: Bennett, <i>Monster</i> , 8'00"	56
Example 4.8: Bremner, <i>Composure</i>	59
Example 4.9: Mulvey, <i>Periastron</i> , 0'21"	60

Example 4.10: Mulvey, <i>Periastron</i> , 2'03"	61
Example 4.11: Mulvey, <i>Periastron</i> , 2'54"	61
Example 4.12: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 1–2	63
Example 4.13: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 5–6	64
Example 4.14: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 15–16	64
Example 4.15: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 21–22	65
Example 4.16: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 48–49	65
Example 4.17: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 50–54	66
Example 4.18: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 68–71	67
Example 4.19: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 111–113	68
Example 4.20: Feery, <i>Rattle</i> , 131–135	68
Example 4.21: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , Coda, line 3	70
Example 4.22: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , line 1	71
Example 4.23: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , Introduction, line 6–7	72
Example 4.24: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , Section II	72
Example 4.25: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , Section V	73
Example 4.26: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , 'A' Section, line 3–4	74
Example 4.27: Lyons, <i>Stung</i> , 'D' Section, line 4–5	75

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

Figure 1.1: <i>Glicibarifono</i>	4
Figure 1.2: The First World Bass Clarinet Convention Flyer	15

CHAPTER TWO

Figure 2.1: Electronic Set-up for <i>Intra</i> , Ton Bruynèl	27
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ABSTRACT

The investigation of the emergence of solo bass clarinet music in Ireland evolved out of my experience learning Irish contemporary bass clarinet music with Dr Paul Roe. The intention was to discover why there had not been any solo bass clarinet music in Ireland prior to 2000, as well as to determine which events influenced the creation of the repertoire.

Data from interviews was vital to understanding how the bass clarinet repertoire in Ireland has steadily grown since 2000 and a search through *The Irish Times* archives provided information about bass clarinet activity in Ireland. A list of solo bass clarinet repertoire by Irish composers was compiled using the Contemporary Music Centre's online database, composers' websites, and Roe's personal collection of music. It was revealed that a significant amount of compositions were written for or premiered by Roe. Events in his career affected his interest in bass clarinet specialization, including his involvement with Concorde and collaborations with Harry Sparnaay. The importance of combining solo and chamber music performance is mirrored in the careers of Josef Horák, Sparnaay, and Henri Bok.

Five pieces were chosen from the repertoire to demonstrate the diversity and explorative nature of many compositions by Irish composers. These pieces are *Continuum* by Rob Canning, *O Breath* by Michael Holohan, *Monster* by Ed Bennett, *Composure* by David Bremner, and *Periastron* by Gráinne Mulvey. Two more pieces, *Rattle* by Amanda Feery and *Stung* by Frank Lyons, were examined in detail. All of the compositions were analysed from a performer's perspective. Composers were influenced by Roe's open-minded and creative approach to bass clarinet performance, and the repertoire reflects this.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this dissertation is to trace solo bass clarinet performance from the very first performers to its current state in Ireland. The premise is to provide information on the genesis of solo bass clarinet music in Ireland as well as to analyse solo bass clarinet music by Irish composers.

Chapter One seeks to provide a historical overview of the design of the bass clarinet, its performers and music.

Chapter Two presents a sketch of twentieth century music that shaped the overall solo bass clarinet repertoire, with examples of bass clarinet music from this time period. The end of the chapter offers information on a variety of techniques and effects that exist in the bass clarinet repertoire. All of this provides context for the Irish bass clarinet repertoire. Even though the first solo bass clarinet music written by Irish composers did not appear until 2000, the repertoire is just as advanced and diverse as music written in other countries where solo bass clarinet music has been thriving for much longer.

Chapter Three uncovers information about contemporary musical life in Ireland and how the Irish bass clarinet repertoire was created. As the majority of solo bass clarinet music was written for and premiered by Dr Paul Roe, I have decided to focus on the emergence of works written particularly for him; however, Sarah Watts and Deirdre O'Leary are two bass clarinetists who have also premiered several solo works by Irish composers. A full list of repertoire with details on premiere performers can be found in Appendix E.

Chapter Four contains five short and two detailed analyses of solo bass clarinet works from the perspective of a performer. Amanda Feery's *Rattle* (2010) and Frank Lyons's *Stung* (2010) are two works that I studied with Dr Paul Roe, which has allowed me to have deeper insight into the process in which these pieces were

created. These two pieces are of excellent quality and my hope is that the analysis of these pieces will make dissemination easier for others in the future.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE BASS CLARINET

1.1 An Introduction to the Bass Clarinet

The bass clarinet of the twenty-first century is a versatile instrument with an extensive range and many possibilities. Over the course of its history, it underwent many structural developments in the hands of various instrument makers. Inventors inspired musicians with their designs, and those musicians—and sometimes the inventors themselves—inspired composers to write for the instrument. The inventors of primitive bass clarinet designs dealt with tuning issues, key mechanism difficulties, and problems arising from the large size of the instrument. Eventually the bass clarinet's structural design was improved so that performers began to specialize in the instrument and started to seek out composers to write solo bass clarinet music. The pioneering efforts of these musicians built a unique and non-standard repertoire for bass clarinetists today. This chapter seeks to provide context for solo bass clarinet performance in Ireland by outlining major events in the history of bass clarinet design, composition, and performance.

1.2 A Brief Overview of the Structural Design of the Bass Clarinet

The invention of the bass clarinet is speculated to be circa 1730–1750. The structural design of the bass clarinet has already been discussed in detail by many authors including Albert Rice (2009), John Henry van der Meer (1987), David Lewis Kalina (1972), and Charles Albert Roeckle (1966); therefore, this chapter will only contain a brief overview, focusing on instruments connected with solo performances.

Bass clarinets are similar to soprano clarinets in that they have a cylindrical bore, which gives the instrument the ability to overblow a twelfth; however, bass clarinets are pitched an octave lower than soprano clarinets. Early attempts to build bass clarinets resulted in a variety of different shapes, with varying numbers of keys and key mechanisms.

1.2.1 Early Bass Clarinet Designs

The earliest extant bass clarinet designs were limited by poor intonation and range.¹ The earliest surviving bass clarinet was constructed circa 1750 and only has three keys. Harry Sparnaay writes about the experience of being able to hold this instrument and comments that it is not clear how the instrument would have been played.² This suggests that in addition to intonation problems and a limited range, early bass clarinets were awkward to handle. These issues would have detracted musicians from taking up the instrument. Other early extant examples indicate that a variety of designs were present in the eighteenth century. Designs were, at this point, purely experimental and it is not known who played these instruments.

Late in the eighteenth century, a more sophisticated bass clarinet was invented by Heinrich Grenser (1764–1813) of Dresden in 1793. This instrument was performed in the earliest documented recital featuring the bass clarinet (see section 1.3).³ Grenser's bass clarinet represents a shift from experimental designs to those that were capable of being used in performance. From this point onwards, designs were increasingly sophisticated.

¹ Rice, Albert R.: *From the Clarinet d'Amour to the Contra Bass* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 249.

² Sparnaay, Harry: *The Bass Clarinet: A personal story* (Barcelona: Periferia, 2010), 31–32.

³ Rice, Albert R.: 'The Earliest Bass Clarinet Music (1794) and the Bass Clarinets by Heinrich and August Grenser', *The Clarinet*, 38/3 (2011), 54–57.

Johann Heinrich Gottlieb Streitwolf (1779–1837) of Göttingen designed bass clarinets dating from 1828.⁴ Rice notes that ‘in comparison with previous bass clarinets, Streitwolf’s instruments are of the highest quality, carefully designed and expertly constructed’.⁵ Eight of Streitwolf’s bass clarinets have survived, suggesting that it was used more often than previous bass clarinet designs. These extant bass clarinets have seventeen to nineteen keys—quite a contrast from the earliest three-keyed bass clarinet—and were declared by Streitwolf to be ‘pure in intonation on all occasions’ and excelling ‘as both a bass and a solo instrument’.⁶ Unprecedented until this point, Streitwolf even published a five-page manual for playing his bass clarinets, including a fingering chart for his instruments.⁷

Catterino Catterini (fl. 1833–1853) was a musician and inventor from Monselice, near Padua. He is known for his invention of a bass clarinet called the *glicibarifono* (see Figure 2.1).⁸ Catterini played the *glicibarifono* in the premiere of Giacomo Meyerbeer’s opera, *Emma di Antiochia* (1834), the first piece of bass clarinet music that still exists today.⁹

⁴ Roeckle, Charles Albert: ‘The Bass Clarinet: An Historical Overview’ (MMus, The University of Texas, 1966), 82.

⁵ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 271.

⁶ Kalina, David Lewis: ‘The Structural Development of the Bass Clarinet’ (Ed.D., Columbia University, 1972), 100, cited in Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 268–69.

⁷ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 272–273.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 275–277.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 342.



Figure 2.1: *Glicibarifono* by Paolo Maino, Musée des instruments de musique, Brussels.¹⁰

Antoine Joseph (Adolphe) Sax (1814–1894) was an important figure in developing the bass clarinet design. Sax's Belgian patent for a twenty-one keyed bass clarinet was approved on 1 July 1838. His early bass clarinets were made in Brussels before he moved to Paris to try and sell his instruments there.¹¹ Unfortunately, Sax met some resistance in Paris when he tried to promote his instruments there in the 1840s. Despite this, several composers such as Meyerbeer, Berlioz, and Rossini were impressed with the improved design of his bass clarinet; all three of these composers composed orchestral parts for the bass clarinet.¹² Sax's improvements to the bass clarinet included the correct placement of tone holes, an enlarged bore, and a better designed register key that improved high notes.¹³

¹⁰ Della Seta, Fabrizio: 'From the Glicibarifono to the Bass Clarinet: A Chapter in the History of Orchestration in Italy', *The Opera Orchestra in the 18th and 19th Century Europe*, ed. Niels M Jensen and Franco Piperno (Berlin: Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2008), 336.

¹¹ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 291–293.

¹² Hoeprich, Eric: *The Clarinet*, (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 266.

¹³ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 304; Hoeprich, 265.

1.2.2 Modern Bass Clarinets

Although many instrument makers made bass clarinets in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, only a few main companies have successfully specialized in making professional bass clarinets into the twenty-first century. Professional bass clarinetists today usually play either a Selmer or a Buffet-Crampon bass clarinet with a range to a low C (concert B \flat), although Yamaha and F. Arthur Uebel also manufacture professional bass clarinet models. The Boehm key system is used predominately around the world; however, the Oehler system is still used in Germany.

The newest addition to the modern bass clarinet design is the Sensor Augmented Bass Clarinet Research (SABRe) technology. Any acoustic bass clarinet can be equipped with SABRe sensors that connect wirelessly to a computer using Bluetooth technology. Matthias Mueller is one of the project coordinators and is the main bass clarinetist associated with the research. The first prototype was created in 2011, with two more prototypes following in 2013 and 2014. At the time this thesis is being written, research into further developing SABRe technology continues, including extending the product for use with all types of clarinets and saxophones. Research is being undertaken at the Institute of Computer Music and Sound Technology of the Zurich University of the Arts with financial support from the Swiss National Science Foundation.¹⁴

1.3 Solo Bass Clarinet Performances and Performers (1794–1955)

The history of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument is not extensive; however, there is evidence of bass clarinet performances between 1794 and 1955, mostly by established clarinetists who doubled on clarinet-family instruments or by the inventors themselves.

¹⁴ <http://matthias-mueller.ch/instrument-sensor-augmented-bass-clarinet-sabre/>; <https://www.sabre-mt.com/>.

The earliest documented recital featuring the bass clarinet soloistically took place in Sweden in 1794. Johann Ignaz Stranensky, a clarinettist in Stockholm's court theatre orchestra, performed three bass clarinet works on 16 February 1794. Of these, *Romance with a Rondo a la Polonaise for Clarinette Fagotte* and *Quintet with two flutes, two horns, and Clarinette-Fagotte* were possibly written by Stranensky. The third work was an arrangement for two horns and Clarinette Fagotte from André Grétry's opera *Zemire et Azor* (1772). None of these works have been located.¹⁵

There are accounts of bass clarinet performers without any detailed information about the music they performed or how it sounded. Ahl (the younger), a member of the Mannheim orchestra, is mentioned in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1815 as the 'darling of the public' who plays clarinet and bass clarinet.¹⁶ There are no records of any of his bass clarinet performances. In 1832, clarinet virtuoso and composer Isaac Dacosta performed a recital in Paris that included at least one bass clarinet performance. The repertoire performed was not documented and it is not known if Dacosta only performed on bass clarinet or also included performances on clarinet.¹⁷

A more detailed report is given on Wilhelm Deichert who performed two bass clarinet pieces on 14 January 1830 in Kassel. Deichert played *Adagio mit Variationen*, as well as the duet *Volkslied für Bass- und Contrabass-Klarinette* with contra-bass clarinettist J. C. Bänder.¹⁸ Both compositions have yet to be located.

There are several reports of the inventor Catterini (see Section 1.2.1) performing on his instrument in Italy in the 1830s and 1840s. He performed an unspecified concerto on

¹⁵ Rice, 'The Earliest Bass Clarinet Music', 54–55.

¹⁶ *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung*, Volume 17 (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1815), 331, translated in Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 340.

¹⁷ Aber, 'A History', 75–76.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 72.

the *glicibarifono* on 6 April 1835,¹⁹ and a set of *Variazioni obbligate al glicibarifono* at a benefit concert on 15 June 1835. Catterini may have performed again on his instrument at a gala concert at the Teatro Ducale de Parma in 1837, although no details are disclosed.²⁰ At a concert on 12 February 1838, Catterini performed *Variazioni con l'Eco* on themes by Bellini and an Aria from Donizetti's opera *Anna Bolena* (1830), both solos for the *glicibarifono*.²¹ The last mention of Catterini performing is at the Teatro Nuovo in Trieste on 18 May 1847.²²

The Englishman Thomas Lindsay Willman mostly performed as a soloist on clarinet and occasionally the basset-horn; however, there is also a record of Willman performing on the bass clarinet. He performed Sigismund von Neukomm's 'Make haste, O God' with contralto Mrs Alfred Shaw and a string orchestra on 6 April 1836 in London.²³ This work is still in existence today, unlike the preceding examples of bass clarinet works.

Berlioz showed his support of Adolphe Sax's instruments by re-writing *Chant sacré* for six of Sax's instruments (including clarinet and bass clarinet) and orchestral accompaniment. The piece was performed in February 1844 and the bass clarinet part was played by Edouard Duprez, who played the instrument in the Paris Opera Orchestra from 1839 to 1855.²⁴

Possibly the earliest chamber music performance featuring the bass clarinet in Ireland was given by John Henry Maycock in Dublin in 1849. Maycock performed an arrangement from Meyerbeer's *Les Huguenots* (1836) with an oboist and an ophicleide

¹⁹ Della Seta, 338.

²⁰ Ibid., 336.

²¹ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 345.

²² Della Seta, 336.

²³ Weston Pamela: *Clarinet Virtuosi of the Past* (Kent: Novello & Co. Ltd., 1971), 109; Hoeprich, 272.

²⁴ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 355.

player.²⁵ In an interview in *The Musical Herald*, Maycock recounts how he came to play the bass clarinet:

I was walking on the boulevards in Paris. I met [Michael William] Balfe, and he embraced me in his warm manner. He was writing *The Daughter of St. Mark* at the time [1844]. He said 'If you will get a bass clarinet I will write a solo for you.' I went to Sax, the maker in Paris. He was a great broad-chested man, and played the instrument in a way that impressed me. I thought I should play like that at once. I bought the instrument. A friend said, 'You will never be able to play that big instrument; it will kill you in almost no time. I will take you to someone who has made an instrument that you will be able to manage nicely.' [...] I received the other instrument [not Sax's], and managed to play fairly well on it by the time when Balfe ought to have been ready for me.²⁶

Maycock goes on to recount the story of receiving the solo for *The Daughter of St. Mark* on the day of the premiere performance. He did not play it in the first performance, much to Balfe's dismay, because the part was difficult. A quarrel ensued and Maycock was told to stay up all night to learn the part for the next performance or Balfe's opera would be ruined. Maycock also describes the solo part and his new bass clarinet:

It was certainly a difficult solo; it occurred in solo form in the overture, and also introduced a tenor air in the opera. The instrument was a new invention. The compass extended from F in [altissimo] to double Bb below the staff, and I have played four octaves. [...] I introduced this instrument in England fifty years ago, and I do not think it had been used here before.²⁷

Maycock must not have been aware of Willman's performance in England in 1836, or George F. Wood, an instrument maker who designed a bass clarinet in London around 1833.²⁸

The sparsity of known solo bass clarinet performances continues with Henri Wuille's performance on the instrument at a recital in London in 1852. Wuille performed works

²⁵ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 352.

²⁶ 'Mr. J. H. Maycock', *The Musical Herald*, (London: J. Curwen & Sons, 1 Dec 1900).

²⁷ Ibid..

²⁸ Rice, *From the Clarinet*, 274.

on saxophone, clarinet, and bass clarinet. 'The Last Farewell', composed by Frank Mori, was for voice and bass clarinet obbligato, but the work no longer exists.²⁹

A. Pierre St. Marie was a bass clarinetist in Paris at the end of the nineteenth century who published the first educational method for the bass clarinet, entitled *Méthode pour la Clarinette-basse, à l'Usage des Artistes Clarinettistes, avec l'indication des doigtés pratiqués* (1898). He must have been an active performer because a few pieces were written for him and published by Evette et Schaeffer from 1897 to 1902.³⁰

Often cited as one of the greatest early works written for the bass clarinet, Othmar Schoeck's Bass Clarinet Sonata, Op. 41 (1928), was dedicated to Werner Reinhart, a Swiss musician and musical philanthropist who played many different clarinets including the bass clarinet and basset horn. It should be noted though, that Werner Reinhart did not premiere the bass clarinet sonata himself; the sonata was premiered by Wilhelm Arnold on 22 April 1928.³¹

1.4 Influential Bass Clarinet Soloists (From 1955)

It was not until the mid-twentieth century that the bass clarinet became a specialist instrument. Between Josef Horák, Harry Sparnaay, and Henri Bok, over one thousand works have been written for bass clarinet specialists! This is a huge achievement, and one that was attained within a short time period. Additionally, many other bass clarinetists all over the world have commissioned compositions or have written for the instrument themselves.

²⁹ Aber, 'A History', 83–84.

³⁰ Aber, Thomas: 'The First Published Method for the Bass Clarinet – A. P. Sainte-Marie's *Méthode pour la Clarinette-basse*...of 1898 – and a Brief Survey of Subsequent Didactic Works for the Bass Clarinet', *The Clarinet*, 42/3 (2015), 76.

³¹ Weston, Pamela: 'Werner Reinhart: Philanthropist Extraordinaire', *The Clarinet*, 28/3 (2001), 64.

1.4.1 Josef Horák

The Czech bass clarinetist, Josef Horák (1931–2005), is credited for giving the first recital entirely featuring the bass clarinet as a solo instrument. The events leading up to Horák's first recital were adventitious. He had been playing clarinet in the Brno Radio Symphony Orchestra since 1951, but in early 1955, the bass clarinetist in the orchestra was not well enough to take part in a recording so he became the replacement. Horák wrote that he 'immediately fell in love with the bass clarinet' and that he 'regretted that this beautiful instrument was used to such a limited extent'. He sensed that the instrument had great potential by way of 'extensive and variable ranges of expression'.³²

Shortly after taking up the bass clarinet, Horák performed a bass clarinet recital on March 24 1955, joined by the pianist, P. Kosatko. The only two compositions on the programme originally written for bass clarinet included Schoeck's Bass Clarinet Sonata, Op. 21 and *Sketches* by the Czech composer Josef Mašta. The rest of the programme featured transcriptions for the bass clarinet.³³ After this recital, Horák dedicated the rest of his life to building repertoire for the bass clarinet as a solo instrument. Over five hundred works were written for Horák.³⁴

Chamber music played an important role in Horák's development as a bass clarinet performer. He frequently performed Leos Janáček's *Mládí* (1924) with the Moravian Wind Quintet and they even performed it at Darmstadt in 1960.³⁵ Attending Darmstadt greatly influenced Horák and afterwards he created a contemporary music ensemble,

³² Horák, Joseph: 'The Course of the Bass Clarinet to a Solo Instrument and the Problems Connected With It', *The Clarinet*, 4/2 (1977), 25.

³³ Simmons, Melissa Sunshine: 'The Bass Clarinet Recital: The impact of Josef Horák on recital repertoire for bass clarinet and piano and a list of original works for that instrumentation' (DMus, Northwestern University, 2009), 2–3.

³⁴ Rehfeldt, Phillip: *New Directions for Clarinet*, 2nd edn. (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, 1994), 158.

³⁵ Simmons, 4.

Musica Nova Brno, consisting of flute, bass clarinet, piano or harpsichord, and percussion. Horák wrote that

the time spent in this ensemble was particularly important for the development of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument. In confrontation with the other instruments, I have experimented with the possibilities and shades in technique and expression. At that time many composers of varied trends were writing for us, and the bass clarinet, already in the first phase of its solo career, was allotted [sic] major tasks.³⁶

Together with Emma Kovárnová, Horák formed the bass clarinet and piano chamber music duo 'Due Boemi di Praga' in 1963. This became a long-lasting collaboration between the two musicians, resulting in many performances and recordings. Václav Kučera's *Invariant* (1969) for bass clarinet, piano and stereo tape recorder was recorded by Due Boemi di Praga in 1973,³⁷ and to my knowledge, this is the earliest soloistic piece written for bass clarinet and electronics.

Composers wrote challenging music for Horák that pushed him to find solutions and extend his abilities as a bass clarinetist. For instance, he notes how 'composers ... employed leaps and bounds over the whole range of register as if it were a normal clarinet'.³⁸ This inspired him to find ways of smoothing out registral changes. In another (more humorous) situation, a young Czech composer asked for a low B, which is a semi-tone lower than the bottom note of the bass clarinet. At first, Horák told the composer that it was beyond the possible range of the instrument, but then he 'remembered bassoonists who, in the operetta *Polenblut* [Oskar Nedbal, 1913], stuck rolled up scores into their instruments to get lower notes'. Using this technique, Horák was even able to get a low A in a different piece.³⁹ Kovárnová noted that 'experienced musicians did not seem to show any confidence in the potential of the instrument, but

³⁶ Horák, 27.

³⁷ Simmons, 44.

³⁸ Horák, 25.

³⁹ Ibid., 27.

young composers were impressed by the new color in the music spectrum and used it in their compositional experiments'.⁴⁰

Horák wanted to ensure that the next generation of bass clarinetists would further his work as a soloist. He taught bass clarinet at the Prague Conservatory for several years starting in 1974 and he gave masterclasses and workshops all over Europe, as well as in the United States of America and in Cuba.⁴¹ He presented lectures and a recital at the International Clarinet Association conference in Denver, Colorado in 1976, and returned to perform at the 1982 and 1984 conferences.⁴² Marvin Livingood reported on the 1976 conference and wrote that 'Horak exhibited a range of 4 ½ octaves and a variety of sounds from pure clarinet tones to growly and shrieking noises, all on a tremendous dynamic range'. His recital featured Czech composers prominently and Frescobaldi's *Canzoni per Basso Solo*.⁴³ These events would have been influential for anyone who attended as his bass clarinet playing was unprecedented at the time. Horák's efforts to gain acceptance for the bass clarinet as a solo instrument were joined by Harry Sparnaay in the 1970s.

1.4.2 Harry Sparnaay

In his early years, the Dutch musician Harry Sparnaay (b. 1944) played the accordion, but it was the tenor saxophone that motivated him to pursue music. He was influenced early on by saxophone players such as John Coltrane, Stan Getz, and Eric Dolphy. He auditioned at the Amsterdam Conservatoire on tenor saxophone, but was only accepted by Ru Otto under the condition that he study clarinet. After trying a bass clarinet in one of his lessons, Sparnaay decided that it was the instrument he really

⁴⁰ Kovárnová, Emma: 'Josef Horák – Pioneer of the Bass Clarinet', *The Clarinet*, 41/4 (2014), 44.

⁴¹ Rehfeldt, 158.

⁴² Weston, Pamela: *Clarinet Virtuosi of Today* (Hertfordshire: Egon Publishers, 1989), 135.

⁴³ Livingood, Marvin D.: 'International Clarinet Clinic, 1976', *The Clarinet*, 4/1 (1976): 30.

wanted to play. This was shortly before graduating from the Conservatoire and he became committed to the bass clarinet from this moment on.⁴⁴

When Sparnaay was listening to the radio in 1968 he heard a piece for bass clarinet and piano that caught his attention. It was a work composed by Anestis Logothetis (1921–1994) and played by Josef Horák. This recording inspired him to obtain the music, which ended up being a graphic score. This was Sparnaay's introduction to a new kind of notation and later on Logothetis composed more bass clarinet music, this time for Sparnaay.⁴⁵

In 1972, he won The Gaudeamus Competition as solo bass clarinetist. Three months later, Luciano Berio wrote *Chemins Ilc* for bass clarinet and orchestra.⁴⁶ Sparnaay premiered the work with the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra and since then, over six hundred and fifty works have been written for Sparnaay.

His influence extends beyond compositions. As an educator, Sparnaay was the Professor of Bass Clarinet and Contemporary Music at the Conservatory of Amsterdam where he taught students from all over the world. He was also Professor of Bass Clarinet at the Catalonia College of Music from 2005 to 2010.⁴⁷ Many of his students are now prominent bass clarinetists all over the world.

Chamber music also formed an integral part of Sparnaay's musical life and many of his travels were with these ensembles. Fusion Moderne was a duo consisting of bass clarinet and piano, played by Polo de Haas. Fusion Moderne played together until 2006.⁴⁸ Starting in the 1980s, Sparnaay was also a member of Het Trio, along with

⁴⁴ Sparnaay, 13–18.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 50–51.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 17–18.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 248–249.

⁴⁸ Sparnaay, Harry: 'Fusion Moderne', accessed August 20 2017, http://www.harrysparnaay.info/fusion_engels.htm.

flautist Harrie Starreveld and pianist René Eckhardt. Harpsichordist Annelie de Man and Sparnaay formed the duo Double Action in 1989 and he created Duo Levent with his wife Silvia Castillo in 1997. He also played in the Asko/Schönberg Ensemble.⁴⁹ Playing in all of these ensembles complemented his work as a solo bass clarinetist by introducing the instrument to extended audiences, as well as by providing additional opportunities for travel, networking, recording, and performing on the instrument.

Sparnaay spent a large portion of his career travelling to other countries to share his music and work with other musicians. As a soloist and also with Duo Levent and Double Action, he made several trips to Ireland from 1995 to 2008 which will be discussed further in Chapter Three.

1.4.3 Henri Bok

Inspired by Eric Dolphy, Henri Bok (b. 1950) is another Dutchman who dedicated his life to specializing in the bass clarinet. In his book, Bok notes that hundreds of compositions have been written for and dedicated to him and that he has recorded over 20 CDs.⁵⁰ Henri Bok is best known for his specialization in chamber music performance. He has been a part of many duos including Duo Contemporain, Bass Instincts, Duo Novair, Duo HeRo, Duo Clarones, and Duo Hevans. He was the Professor of Bass Clarinet at the Rotterdam Conservatory for many years and educated a new generation of bass clarinetists.

In 2005, Bok organized The First World Bass Clarinet Convention in Rotterdam. The convention took place from 21 to 23 October and was to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the first ever bass clarinet recital that was performed by Horák (see Fig. 1.2). The convention featured bass clarinetists from every continent and comprised of

⁴⁹ Sparnaay, 21–29.

⁵⁰ Bok, Henri: *New Techniques for the Bass Clarinet*, special edition (Rotterdam: Self-published, 1989/2005), 76.

masterclasses, recitals, lectures, competitions, and concerts. The main performers featured were Horák, Bok, and Sparnaay. This was a huge achievement for the bass clarinet community as it celebrated the bass clarinet as an instrument in its own right, instead of merely being a lower clarinet.

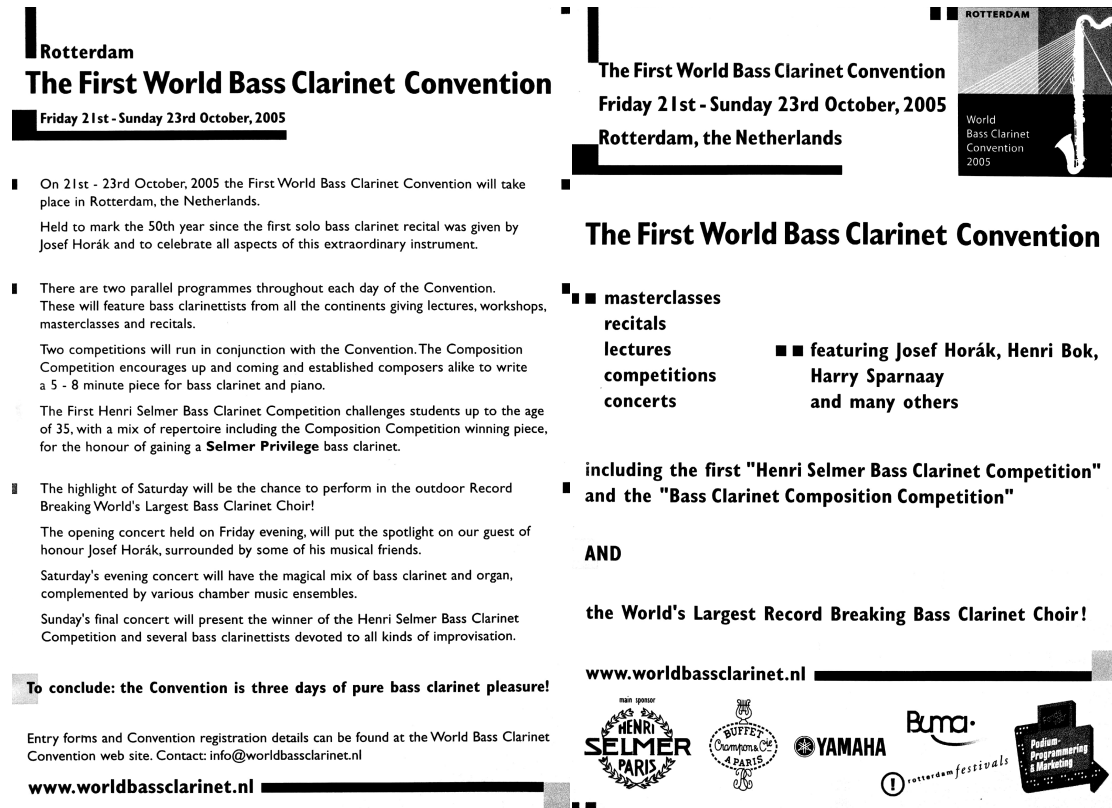


Figure 1.2: Front and back of a flyer for The First World Bass Clarinet Convention, courtesy of Dr Paul Roe.

1.4.4 Eric Dolphy

Although Horák, Sparnaay, and Bok were important figures in the classical music world, the American jazz musician Eric Dolphy (1928–1964) was—and continues to be—one of the most influential bass clarinetists of all time. Dolphy was a multi-instrumentalist, performing on bass clarinet, flute, and alto saxophone. In particular, his solo bass clarinet improvisations on Billie Holiday's *God Bless the Child* have been inspirational enough to create transcriptions that are frequently performed today.

1.5 Conclusion

It took many years for the bass clarinet to gain enough momentum to become a solo instrument due to issues with the design and a lack of interest from composers and performers. As the structure of the bass clarinet became more sophisticated, it slowly gained the interest of a handful of clarinettists and composers. Eventually, musicians such as Horák and Sparnaay fell in love with the instrument and dedicated a large portion of their lives to developing the solo repertoire. The twentieth century saw unprecedented interest in the bass clarinet and the resulting music for the instrument is diverse, experimental, and worthy of further examination.

CHAPTER TWO

STYLISTIC INFLUENCES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF SOLO BASS CLARINET MUSIC

2.1 Introduction

The bass clarinet repertoire that exists today is considerably varied and little of it can be considered standard or traditional. Influences stem from various different twentieth-century styles wherein composers have tested the limits of range, the possibilities of timbre, and the technical facility of the instrument. Since 1955, music for the bass clarinet has been influenced by many twentieth-century styles including aleatoric music, minimalism, electronic music, and jazz music, to highlight only a few.

The first half of this chapter sets out to provide context for the bass clarinet repertoire in Ireland by describing each of the styles listed above, and by showing examples of bass clarinet compositions from the twentieth century that are influenced by these styles. The musical excerpts chosen are only a selection of the hundreds of works written for the bass clarinet.

The second half of the chapter presents an assortment of techniques that are possible on the bass clarinet and how composers have incorporated them into their works. Compositions for the bass clarinet often require various extended techniques and special effects, a range spanning four or more octaves, and electronic set-ups. The focus of this section is only on effects relating to the music that will be discussed in further chapters, not on every bass clarinet technique possible.

2.1.1 Aleatoric Music

The word *aleatory* describes music ‘involving elements of random choice (sometimes using statistical or computer techniques) during their composition, production, or performance’.¹ Aleatoric music developed in the second half of the twentieth century as a sub-genre of experimentalism and encompassed ideas such as elements of chance, open form composition, indeterminate notation, improvisatory elements, and graphic notation.

Henry Cowell (1897–1965) was one of the first composers to explore the compositional techniques that led to aleatoric music. He coined the term ‘elastic’ to refer to the rearrangement of his compositions, in length or in order. *Mosaic Quartet* for strings contained pre-determined notation that could be re-ordered by the performers.² He sought to give the performer more freedom without being ‘so freely improvised as to be vague and purposeless, wandering formlessly’.³ This sentiment was well expressed by Cowell in a letter to Percy Grainger in 1937:

Lately it would seem that modern music has gone in the direction of more and more exact writing down of notated details, making the performer more than ever a reproducer of each minute factor as directed by the composer. I seem to react strongly against this, and wish to compose works so flexible [sic] in form that a fine performer can legitimately contract or expand the form. [...] The advantage is in not freezing the work into a set figure, and in giving the performer as creative a job as the originator (both are composers).⁴

John Cage (1912–1992) developed his own aleatoric methods which resulted in chance music. Cage employed chance procedures during the compositional process of *Music of Changes* (1951). He created charts containing musical ideas and then tossed coins to

¹ Oxford Dictionary of English, ‘Aleatory’ (Oxford University Press, 2013).

² Griffiths, Paul: *Modern Music: A Concise History* (Malta: World of Art, 1978/1994), 107.

³ Cowell, Henry: ‘Relating Music and Concert Dance’, *Dance Observer*, 4/1 (1937), 7–8, cited in Miller, Leta E.: ‘Henry Cowell and John Cage: Intersections and Influences, 1933–1941’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 59/1 (2006), 64.

⁴ Cowell, Henry: ‘Letter to Grainger’, 3 December 1937, (NYPL Cowell Collection, box 97), cited in Miller, 64–65.

determine which ideas would be included in the composition. This was his attempt to liberate himself from 'individual taste and memory (psychology) and also of the literature and "traditions" of the art'.⁵

Some composers left elements of chance to the performers instead of using it as a compositional device. Open form compositions leave the order of musical events or sections to be decided by the performer, like Cowell's *Mosaic Quartet*. John P. Welsh notes that these can also be called mobiles. They are defined as compositions where 'the composer typically notates musical elements or events which are assembled, ordered, and combined by the players or conductors during the performance'.⁶ Composers can create flexible or controlled open form compositions.

The third movement of Pierre Boulez's Third Piano Sonata (1956–57) is a nineteen-page open form movement entitled 'Constellation-miroir'. The performer's choice (the chance element) is limited to deciding on the order of segments within each of the movement's sections and there are not very many options.⁷ Earle Brown (1926–2002) created several open form. *Twentyfive Pages* (1953) is a twenty-five-page score wherein Brown has instructed the performer that the pages 'may be played in any sequence', 'be performed either side up', and 'events within each 2 line system may be read as either treble or bass clef'.⁸ Similarly, Karlheinz Stockhausen's *Piano Piece XI* has nineteen sections that the performer can play in any order.

Morton Feldman (1926–1987) is credited for having produced the first score using a graph with symbols as notation instead of traditional musical notation. *Projection 1* for

⁵ Auner, Joseph: *Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries* (New York and London: W.W. Norton & Co., 2013), 203.

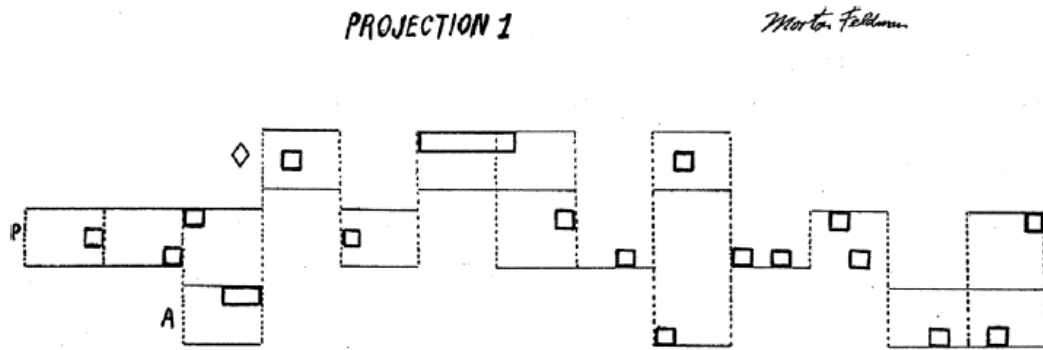
⁶ Welsh, John P.: 'Open Form and Earle Brown's Modules I and II (1967)', *Perspectives of New Music*, 32/1 (1994), 256.

⁷ Trenkamp, Anne: 'The Concept of 'Alea' in Boulez's 'Constellation-Miroir'', *Music & Letters*, 57/1 (1976), 5–7 and 9–10.

⁸ Lesser, David: 'Score, Identity and Experience in Earle Brown's Twentyfive Pages', *Contemporary Music Review*, 26/3–4 (2007), 478.

solo cello (1950) allows the performer to choose pitches within a defined range based on smaller boxes drawn and placed in relation to larger boxes (see Ex. 2.1). Although the pitches may have been indeterminate, Feldman indicates which notes should be bowed or plucked, and when harmonics should be played. Another indeterminate element within the piece is the spatial placement of rhythms.⁹

Example 2.1: Feldman, *Projection 1* (1950).¹⁰



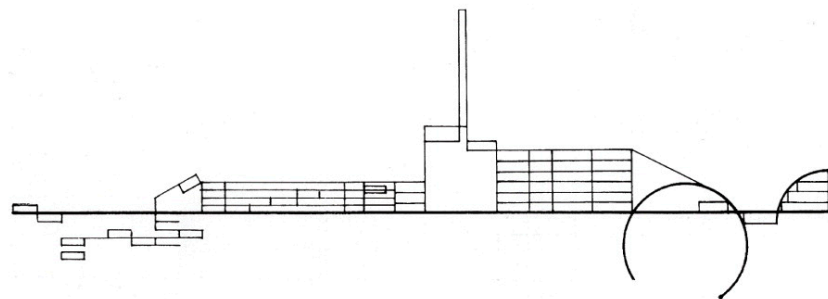
In contrast, Cornelius Cardew's *Treatise* (1960–1963), explored notation where the symbols did not represent any pre-conceived ideas; the 193-page graphic score was published without instructions. This allowed performers to create their own musical language based on what they saw in the graphic score.¹¹

⁹ Johnson, Steven: 'Feldman, Morton', *Grove Music Online* (Oxford University Press), accessed 11 June 2017.

¹⁰ Boutwell, Brett: 'Morton Feldman's Graphic Notation: Projections and Trajectories', *Journal of the Society of American Music*, 6/4 (2012), 460.

¹¹ Anderson, Virginia: '“Well, it's a Vertebrate . . .”: Performer Choice in Cardew's *Treatise*', *Journal of Musicological Research*, 25 (2006), 291-292.

Example 2.2: Cardew, *Treatise*, page 66.¹²



Several graphic scores have been created for bass clarinetists. Due Boemi di Praga (see Section 1.4.1) performed a few of these works including Richard Brun's *Perpetual Flowing* (see Ex. 2.3), Anestis Logothetis's *Desmotropie II*, and Rudolf Ružička's *Contaminationi*.¹³ After learning one of Logothetis's graphic scores (see Section 1.4.2), Sparnaay later corresponded with the composer and several works were written for him, including another graphic score entitled *Fusion* (see Ex. 2.4).¹⁴

Example 2.3: Brun, *Perpetual Flowing*.¹⁵



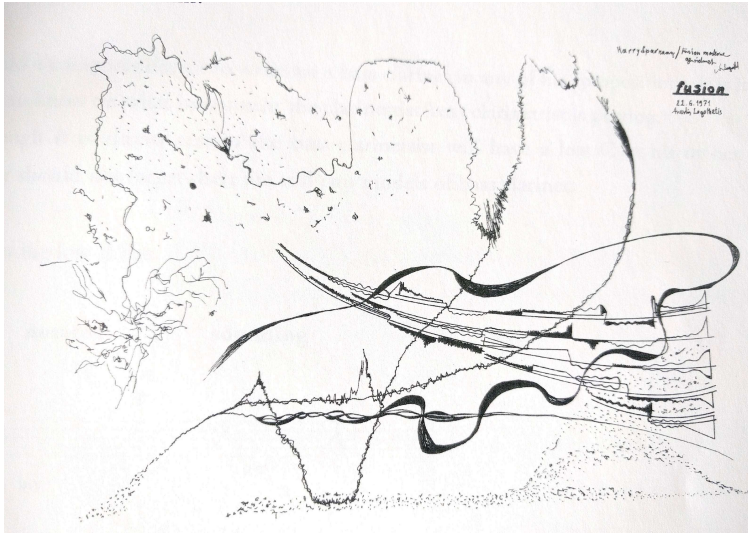
¹² Cardew, Cornelius: *Treatise*, (Peters Edition, edition no. EP7560), cited in Anderson, 307.

¹³ Simmons, 30-31.

¹⁴ Sparnaay, 50-51.

¹⁵ Simmons, 30.

Example 2.4: Logothesis, *Fusion*.¹⁶



These works challenge performers to approach practice and performance in new ways by identifying with the music on a more personal level and finding solutions to the undefined aspects of each composition.

2.1.2 Minimalism

The term *minimalism* originated from the visual arts and eventually became applied to an array of musical compositions and composers starting in the 1960s. Michael Nyman explained that minimalism was perhaps the inevitable response to indeterminate music, where composers decided ‘to reduce their focus of attention to singularity’ rather than multiplicity. Nyman describes the most common features of minimalist music as having a minimum of musical materials (mainly tonal) that were selected extremely carefully and put through procedures that are highly repetitive and disciplined.¹⁷

¹⁶ Sparnaay, 51.

¹⁷ Nyman, Michael: *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* (Edinburgh; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 139.

Minimalism renewed visions of tonality and rhythm, focusing on steady pulses and musical processes. These processes were often highlighted by repetitive ideas that changed very slowly over a long period of time. One of the most prominent minimalists, Steve Reich, wrote that ‘a musical process should happen extremely gradually ... so slowly that listening to it resembles watching the minute hand on a watch – you can perceive it moving after you stay with it a little while’.¹⁸ Aside from Reich, other composers associated with minimalism include La Monte Young, Philip Glass, and Terry Riley.

Young (b.1935) is often cited as one of the forerunners of minimalism. In many cases, his compositions are comprised of sustained long notes, lasting for extended periods of time.¹⁹ For example, the composition *For Brass* (1957) is entirely made up of long drones and the only changes that occur within the piece are when another long tone is added or withdrawn.²⁰

In *Death Chant* (1961), written for a child’s funeral, Young utilized a compositional technique coined *additive processes*. *Death Chant* begins with a simple two-note motive and with each repetition, a new note is added at the end of the motive (see Ex. 2.5).²¹ Philip Glass’s *1+1* (1968) is derived from two rhythmic ideas that can be combined using the additive process technique (see Ex. 2.6). Repetition, sequences, and permutations all play major roles in Glass’ compositions.

¹⁸ Schwarz, K. Robert: *Minimalists* (London; New York: Phaidon Press, 2008), 11.

¹⁹ Nyman, 140.

²⁰ Ibid., 141.



²¹ Obendorf, Hartmut: *Minimalism: Designing Simplicity* (Hamburg: Springer, 2009), 45.

Example 2.5: Young, Death Chant.²²




Example 2.6: Glass, 1+1.²³


The following two rhythmic units are the building blocks of 1+1:


a.)  and b.) 

1+1 is realized by combining the above two units in continuous, regular arithmetic progressions.

Examples of some simple combinations are:

1.)  etc.

2.)  etc.

 etc.

Terry Riley's *In C* (1964) was influential for reintroducing tonality to the twentieth century classical mainstream. The score is comprised of fifty-three cells and can be performed by any number of musicians with any kind of instrument. All performers initially start with the same cell, but are free to enter at different times. Each performer will repeat whichever cell they are on until they decide to move on to the next cell. A steady pulse, created by two Cs in the high register of a keyboard instrument, is maintained throughout the entire work.²⁴

²² Obendorf, 45.

²³ Nyman, 148.

²⁴ Schwarz, 44-45.

Wayne Siegel's *Jackdaw* (1995 rev. 2000) for bass clarinet and electronics is influenced by minimalist ideas. When performed well, the audience is mesmerized by the constant pulse and the seamless interaction between the bass clarinet part and the electronics. The musical material is repetitive within each section, yet constantly evolving. An example of an additive process (like Young's *Death Chant*) can be seen at bar 28 (see Ex. 2.7). A one-note motive is repeated several times before it begins to evolve; with each repetition, more notes are added to the motive.

Example 2.7: Siegel, *Jackdaw*, 28–49.²⁵

♩ = 144

28
Bass Clarinet

34
B. Cl.

40
B. Cl.

46
B. Cl.

mf

2.2.3 Electronic Music

The creation and development of electronic music greatly affected music in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Not only were new electronic instruments like the theremin and the electric guitar created, new recording technologies became

²⁵ Siegel, Wayne: *Jackdaw* (Online Sheet Music: Wayne Siegel, 1995 rev. 2000), 2.

available (such as the magnetic tape recorder), providing composers with new mediums for compositional experiments. New technology enabled composers to work with a new palette of sounds. Recorded sounds could now be manipulated in ways that were not previously possible and a new range of electronically created sounds became possible.

Early electronic music in Europe is often divided into two strands: *musique concrète* in France and *elektronische musik* in Germany. The pioneers of *musique concrète*, Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry, constructed music ‘using sound recording tools, natural sounds, electronic signals, and instrumental sounds’.²⁶ Generally speaking, *musique concrète* refers to recorded sounds that are then manipulated. An example of *musique concrète* is Schaeffer’s *étude aux chemins de fer* (1948) which was composed from recorded train sounds; audible train sounds include train whistles, the train leaving the station, wheels on the tracks, and steam-like sounds.

Elektronische musik was first developed by Herbert Eimert in Cologne. In contrast to Schaeffer’s efforts in Paris, activity in Cologne revolved around electronically created sounds. A demonstration of electronic music was presented at Darmstadt in the summer of 1952. *Musica su due dimensioni* (Music in Two Dimensions) was a collaboration between Dr Werner Meyer-Eppler and the Italian composer Bruno Maderna. The composition was for flute, cymbals, and tape, and a flautist performed along with the electronic music for the presentation.²⁷ The interaction between acoustic instruments and recorded electronic music is still frequently explored.

Stockhausen composed an electronic composition, *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1955–1956), that drew on techniques developed at both the French and German electronic music studios. His attempts to compose with both acoustic and electronic elements, without

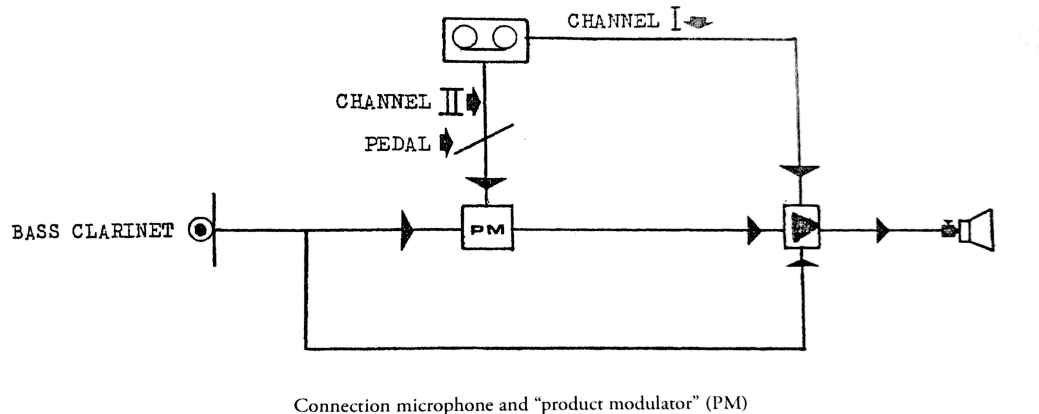
²⁶ Holmes, Thom: *Electronic and Experimental Music: Technology, Music, and Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 49.

²⁷ Auner, 61 and 63.

emphasizing one more than the other, set a new level of sophistication for electronic compositions.²⁸

Harry Sparnaay's first opportunity to combine bass clarinet with electronics came in 1971. Ton Bruynèl, the first Dutch composer to set up his own electronic studio, wrote *Intra* (1971 rev. 1989) for bass clarinet, soundtracks (tape), and ring modulator.²⁹ In the words of Bruynèl, '*Intra* is a journey through the tube of a bass clarinet, travelling through holes and around keys'.³⁰ The set-up for *Intra* is an example of what was required to play with electronics in the 1970s (see Fig. 2.1).³¹ The modulator provides the performer with the means to manipulate the timbre of the bass clarinet, and as a result, *Intra* contains elements of live electronic performance.

Figure 3.1: Electronic set-up for *Intra*, Ton Bruynèl.³²



²⁸ Holmes, 73–74.

²⁹ A digital version for bass clarinet and laptop was created by bass clarinetist Marij van Gorkom and Jessica Aslan. This information was posted on Gorkom's blog: <http://sonicspaces.tumblr.com/post/16170125756/intra>.

³⁰ Information taken from the composer's website: <http://www.tonbruynel.nl/notes/intra.htm>. More of the composer's information is on the demo of the score found on Donemus's website: <https://webshop.donemus.nl/action/front/sheetmusic/1747>.

³¹ Sparnaay, 107.

³² Ibid..

In the performance notes, Bruynèl writes that the ‘way of playing [*Intra*] is free; [the] repetition of tones within the indicated time[s] are permitted’.³³ Most of the piece is very drone-like, with long low tones emanating from both the soundtrack and the bass clarinet parts (see Example 2.8). Sporadic bursts of energy from the bass clarinet pierce through the electronic parts in upwards sweeping motions. Towards the end of the composition, the bass clarinet multiphonics blend effectively with the soundtracks to create an ethereal effect.

Example 2.8: Bruynèl, *Intra*, 1’15–1’45.³⁴

Many other compositions combining bass clarinet and electronics emerged before the turn of the century. For example, Rolf Gelhaar’s *Polymorph* (1977) was created for bass clarinet and tape delay, requiring two tape recorders.³⁵ Today, performers can perform fixed electronic pieces with only their smartphone and a set of speakers. The combination of bass clarinet and electronics did not subside with the end of the twentieth century; an increasing number of compositions for bass clarinet, electronics, and other forms of media continue to be composed all over the world.

³³ Bruynèl, Ton: *Intra*, Sample Pages, (Amsterdam: Donemus, 1971 rev. 1989), accessed 10 September 2017, <https://webshop.donemus.nl/action/front/sheetmusic/1747>, 4.

³⁴ Bruynèl, 5. From top to bottom, the score shows timing, notes on the tape part, bass clarinet notation, and control signals.

³⁵ Sparnaay, 108.

2.2.4 Jazz Music

With the development of recording technologies, many twentieth century composers grew up listening to recordings of jazz music. Composers drew inspiration from the rhythms, harmonies, forms, and instrumentation of jazz music to bring fresh sources of inspiration and colour to their compositions.

Inspired by ragtime, composers began to use syncopation in their compositions. For example, Percy Grainger made extensive use of the cakewalk rhythm in his piano piece, *In Dahomey* (1903–9). In Example 2.9, Grainger has composed the cakewalk figure into the right hand of the piano part, repeating it every two beats.

Example 2.9: Grainger, *In Dahomey*, 16–17.³⁶



Darius Milhaud's *La création du monde* (1923) was influenced by the rhythmic syncopations of jazz music and by the blues scale; Milhaud used 'blue' notes such as minor thirds, augmented fourths, and minor sevenths to evoke jazz sounds.³⁷

Christopher Hobbs composed a solo bass clarinet piece for Ian Mitchell entitled *Why Not?* (1994). The marking 'with a swing' at the beginning of the piece clearly indicates

³⁶ Grainger, Percy Aldridge: *In Dahomey* ("Cakewalk Smasher"), (New York: C.F. Peters, 1987).

³⁷ Miller, R. Ward: 'Defining Jazz Elements In Darius Milhaud's *La Création du Monde*', *Journal of Band Research*, 50/1 (2014), 7–8.

that *Why Not?* is meant to be played with jazz inflections (see Ex. 2.10). Hobbs has not used barlines or time signatures, leaving phrasing to the performer's intuition.

Example 2.10: Hobbs, *Why Not?*, page 1, line 1.



Syncopations are a prominent feature in this piece, as well as the juxtaposition of implied simple and compound times (see Ex. 2.11).

Example 2.11: Hobbs, *Why Not?*, page 3, lines 3–4.



2.2 Extended Techniques

Composers in the twentieth century began employing extended techniques to create new sounds and effects in their compositions. For example, Cowell felt that old instruments were not capable of new tone colours; therefore, his solution was to explore the inside of the piano, treating it like a new instrument which he called the 'stringpiano'.³⁸ Some of Cowell's compositions such as *The Aeolian Harp* (1924), *The*

³⁸ Cizmic, Maria: 'Embodied Experimentalism and Henry Cowell's *The Banshee*', *American Music*, 28/4 (2010), 438.

Banshee (1925), and *Sinister Resonance* (1930) make use of the piano in non-traditional ways.

Several expressive sounds can be made on the bass clarinet. Many of these effects are considered to be extended techniques because they extend the sonorities of the instrument beyond what it was designed for; however, many extended techniques are now considered standard for bass clarinetists since it can be difficult to find repertoire without at least one of these techniques.

2.2.1 Slap Tonguing

Slap tonguing is an extended technique used by reed players that is characterized by a percussive popping sound. To execute this technique, the performer pulls the reed back with their tongue and creates a vacuum seal between the tongue and the reed; when the performer quickly pulls their tongue back and releases the reed, it snaps back and creates the distinctive popping sound. A variety of slap tongue sounds can be made from delicate to aggressive depending on several factors including how strong the seal is, if the performer blows air into the instrument while the reed is snapping back, and the quantity of air the performer uses.

Slap tonguing is particularly effective when employed in the low register of the bass clarinet. It can be used rhythmically to create a bass line or a second voice, or it can be used as a special percussive effect. David Lang's *Press Release*, recorded by Evan Ziporyn, is a great example of a rhythmic slap tonguing effect (see Ex. 2.12).

Example 2.12: Lang, *Press Release*, 16–22.³⁹



Although slap tonguing is not indicated in the score, Ziporyn used slap tonguing for the lower melodic line in his recording of *Press Release*.⁴⁰ Since the composition was written for Ziporyn, it seems likely that Lang approved or possibly even suggested slap tonguing. Lang's request in the score for a 'gritty and hard' bass line is achieved well with slap tonguing. As a result, other performers who have posted videos of themselves performing Lang's work have also used slap tonguing.⁴¹ Slap tonguing really helps drive the funk bass line and without this, the contrast between the upper and lower lines is not as strong; however, some performers may choose not to slap tongue as it can become tiring after an extended period of time. *Press Release* can be convincingly performed without slap tonguing; the American bass clarinetist Michael Lowenstern, well known for his educational videos on YouTube, posted a video of himself performing *Press Release* without the use of slap tonguing.⁴²

2.2.2 Flutter Tonguing

Flutter tonguing is a common extended technique used by wind players. This technique creates a texture in the airstream that can evoke different effects. For example,

³⁹ Lang, David: *Press Release*, Sample Score (New York: G. Schirmer, 1991), accessed 7 September 2017, http://digital.schirmer.com/chamber/tri/sample/samples/l/press_release_basscl_30051.pdf.

⁴⁰ Ziporyn, Evan: 'David Lang: press release', accessed September 7 2017, <https://evanziporyn.bandcamp.com/track/david-lang-press-release>, from Lang, David: 'Press Release', *This is Not a Clarinet*, Evan Ziporyn, bass clarinet, Cantaloupe Music CA21002.

⁴¹ Liang, Jack: 'David Lang, Press Release' (May 20 2015), accessed September 7 2017, <https://youtu.be/v7DEMwgUyuw>.

⁴² Lowenstern, Michael [Earspasm Music]: 'Press Release by David Lang. How do you practice a piece like this?!' (October 4 2016), accessed September 7 2017, <https://youtu.be/486NaFl1tF4>.

Richard Strauss depicts the bleating of sheep in *Don Quixote* by asking for flutter tonguing in the brass, clarinet, and bass clarinet parts.⁴³ Flutter tonguing was also used in jazz music in the twentieth century.

2.2.3 Multiphonic Techniques

Multiphonics are colourful sounds produced by typically monophonic instruments. Sarah Watts has researched and written extensively about bass clarinet multiphonics, classifying them into two categories. Her definition is as follows:

Type One multiphonics are based on standard low note fingerings and are produced by a player manipulating the embouchure in such a way that the frequencies of the harmonic series increase in audibility producing a strong set of multiple sounds. Type Two multiphonics are created by the player using special fingerings that are not the standard fingerings used when producing a single tone.⁴⁴

Type One multiphonics typically produce more complex sounds, whereas Type Two multiphonics can produce an array of different sounds, from clear to indistinct sounding multiphonics.

Eric Dolphy used multiphonics in his jazz bass clarinet music leading up to the 1970s. Shortly thereafter, multiphonics in contemporary solo bass clarinet music emerged in the music that was written for Harry Sparnaay. Josef Horák also performed works with multiphonics in the 1970s, Sofia Gubaidulina's *Dots, Lines, and Zigzags* (1976) being one example.⁴⁵

Composers generally notate multiphonics in one of two ways. The first method is to write multiphonics rigidly, with particular fingerings and pitches marked in the score.

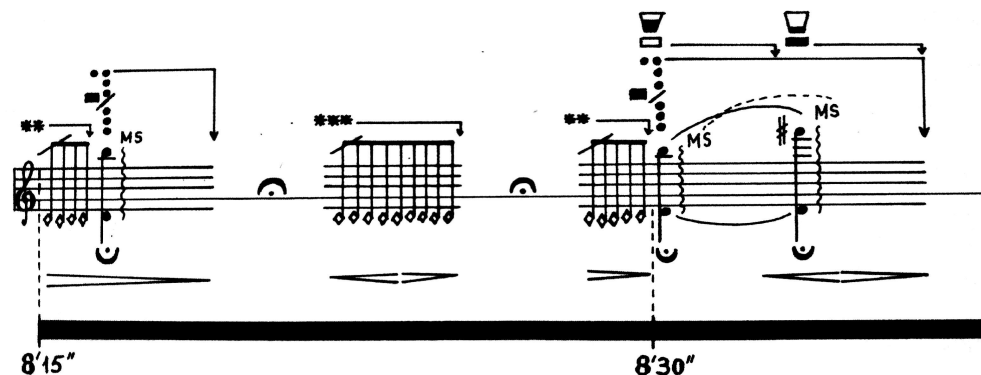
⁴³ Strauss, Richard: *Don Quixote* (Munich: Jos. Aibl Verlag, 1898), accessed 6 June 2017, International Music Score Library Project, [http://imslp.org/wiki/Don_Quixote,_Op.35_\(Strauss,_Richard\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Don_Quixote,_Op.35_(Strauss,_Richard)). The flutter tonguing takes place in Variation Two.

⁴⁴ Watts, Sarah: *Spectral Immersion* (Ruisbroek-Puurs: Metropolis Music Publishers, 2015), 1.

⁴⁵ Simmons, 26–27.

An example of specific pitches written into the score with their accompanying fingerings can be seen in Enrique Raxach's *Chimaera*, for bass clarinet and magnetic tape, written for Harry Sparnaay in 1974 (see Ex. 2.13). The fingerings are indicated above the staff.

Example 2.13: Raxach, *Chimaera*, 8'15".⁴⁶



The second method of writing multiphonics is to give some freedom to the performer with general guidelines on how the multiphonics should be played, such as giving a description of their sound quality or pitch range. An example of this can be found in the 1987 edition of Arne Melläs's *Riflessioni* for bass clarinet or clarinet and tape. In the score, Melläs makes a distinction between four kinds of multiphonics by using graphic notation and a legend (see Ex. 2.14). His multiphonics are broken into complex/shrill sounds, less complex/shrill sounds, complex/mild sounds, and less complex/mild sounds. Multiphonics have been notated in many other different ways depending on what the composer is trying to accomplish, but Melläs's version of notation gives the performer the freedom to find multiphonics that will work for them and their instrument.

⁴⁶ Watts, 8.

Example 2.14: Melläs, *Riflessioni*, 55–60.⁴⁷

*) 4 different types of multiphonic sounds:

complex; hard, shrill	less complex (two notes); hard, shrill	complex, soft	less complex (two notes), soft
Complex/shrill	less complex/shrill	complex/mild	less complex/mild

Multiphonic glissandi are extended techniques derived from Type One multiphonics where the performer slides through different harmonics in a glissando-like motion while keeping the fundamental note underneath. This technique can be performed in a controlled manner or it can be wild and unpredictable, and sound like an elephant call.

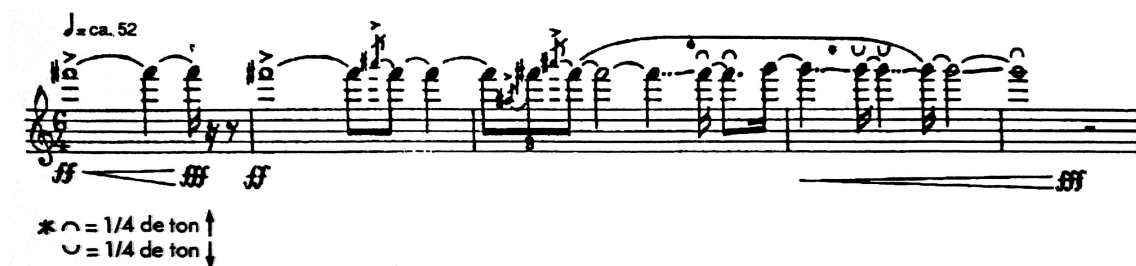
2.2.4 Colour Fingerings, Quarter Tones, and Timbral Trills

Many Western classical composers were interested in micro-tones in the twentieth century. Although the bass clarinet was not designed for micro-tonal pieces or scales, fingerings can be manipulated and changed on the bass clarinet to create quarter-tones. An example of quarter tones can be found in Isang Yun's *Monolog* for bass clarinet solo, written for Harry Sparnaay (see Ex. 2.15).⁴⁸ Composers sometimes ask for colour fingerings instead of quarter tones, indicating that they are more interested in a colour effect than a precisely tuned note. Timbral trills are trills between two notes that are generally a quarter tone or less apart in tuning. These effects add subtle colour changes to the music, as opposed to many other effects which are much more noticeable such as slap tonguing or flutter tonguing.

⁴⁷ Sparnaay, 137.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 125.

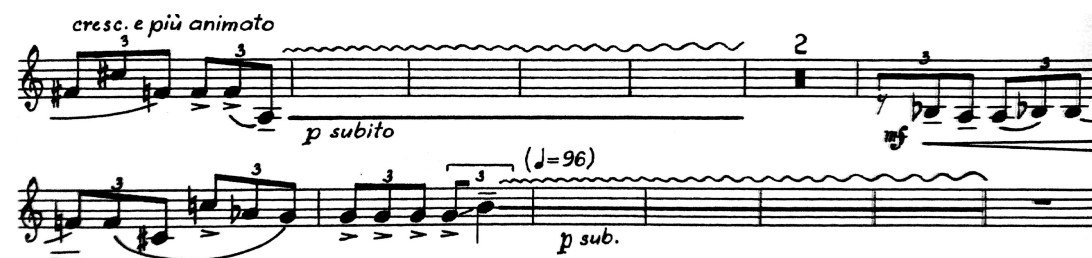
Example 2.15: Yun, *Monolog*.



2.2.5 Glissandi and Vibrato

Glissandi and vibrato were used extensively by clarinetists who played in jazz genres. Vibrato can be created by manipulating either the jaw or air stream and can be subtle or exaggerated. When clarinetists use vibrato in classical music, it is usually frowned upon, but it is not the same for bass clarinetists. This may be because the bass clarinet repertoire is mostly contemporary and performance traditions have not yet become fixed. Contemporary composers will either use a symbol to show that they want vibrato (see Ex. 2.16) or they may just write in 'with vibrato'.

Example 2.16: Kucera, *Duodramma*.⁴⁹



While certain extended techniques are more effective on the bass clarinet than the soprano clarinet (slap tonguing, for example) there are other techniques that work better on the soprano clarinet. One of these techniques is the glissando. Soprano

⁴⁹ Sparnaay, 91.

clarinets have open tone holes where fingers can slowly slide over the holes to cover them, helping to create the glissando effect. The bass clarinet is not as capable of such effects because the keys do not have holes in them; if they did, the musician's fingers would not be able to cover the size of the holes! Still, composers often write glissandi into bass clarinet works. The glissando effect can be done well in the high register of the bass clarinet, and it can be faked in the lower registers.

2.2.6 Breath Sounds and Key Slaps

Composers have become interested in extended techniques where the performer does not blow into the instrument normally. Performers can blow air through the bass clarinet without vibrating the reed, resulting in a wind sound. The pitch of the air sounds can be slightly altered by changing fingerings while blowing into the instrument.

Pitched key sounds emerge when vigorously pressing down the appropriate keys on the bass clarinet. Not all pitches can be sounded with key slaps since some notes require the keys to be opened, not closed. This effect can also be combined with breath sounds. An example of this is in Mauricio Kagel's *Schattenklänge* (1995) for bass clarinet and tape (see Ex. 2.17).

Example 2.17: Kagel, *Schattenklänge*.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Sparnaay, 106.

2.3 Conclusion

Having examined select musical styles and special effects present in the twentieth century bass clarinet repertoire, it is clear that the instrument is well suited for composers wishing to explore and experiment with sound. The emergence of bass clarinet specialization in Ireland has opened up a new area in Irish composition. The next chapter will consider the factors that motivated the creation of solo bass clarinet music in Ireland.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EMERGENCE OF SOLO BASS CLARINET SPECIALIZATION IN IRELAND

3.1 The Bass Clarinet in Irish Chamber Music

Leading up to the twenty-first century, the main source of bass clarinet music in Ireland was either through large ensembles such as orchestras and wind bands, or through chamber music. The bass clarinet is more likely to be heard in a chamber ensemble than in a large ensemble, such as the orchestra; therefore, it is reasonable to examine bass clarinet chamber music in order to reveal the extent of bass clarinet activity in Ireland before composers started to write solo compositions for the instrument.

In the 1970s, two Irish composers wrote chamber music pieces that included the bass clarinet.¹ A.J. Potter's *Arklow Quartet* (1976–77) was scored as both a brass and reed quartet.² Gerard Victory's *Adest Hora* (1977) – a quintet scored for clarinet doubling bass clarinet, percussion, violin, cello and piano – was premiered in 1978 at Trinity College Dublin by a group from London. Gerald Barry's chamber work '_____' (1979) has two clarinet parts that double with bass clarinet, but the bass clarinet parts treat the instrument like a low clarinet.

There appears to have been some interest in composing for the bass clarinet in the 1980s. James Wilson, Piers Hellawell, and Frank Corcoran wrote duos for the bass clarinet and another instrument. Curiously, these three works were all written in 1983.

¹ Jane O'Leary's *Quartet* (1968) is the earliest chamber music piece with a bass clarinet part, but it was written before she moved to Ireland and was premiered in the USA. Although listed on CMC's website, Barry Guy's *Bitz* (1979) was premiered in London by the Capricorn Ensemble and was composed before Guy moved to Ireland.

² Since the performers were from the Arklow Silver Band, a brass band, it is likely that the quartet was performed first as a brass quartet and later as a reed quartet.

Wilson's *Two by Four by Two* for bass clarinet doubling tenor saxophone, and vibraphone doubling marimba was not premiered until 1996, and Corcoran's *Lines and Configurations* was premiered in Germany, the Irish premiere having taken place in Dublin in 1995. Even though Hellawell's *Dance Paragraphs* for clarinet doubling bass clarinet and piano was premiered in 1984, this took place in London. Barry's chamber music sextet *Bob* (1989) was commissioned by London New Music and subsequently premiered in London. Wilson, Gerard Victory, and John Buckley wrote larger chamber ensemble works with bass clarinet parts. Only Wilson's *Nighttown* (1982) is known to have been premiered in Ireland; it was first performed by the Dublin Sinfonia at the National Concert Hall in Dublin in 1983.

Although there were bass clarinet parts in chamber music compositions in the 1970s and 80s, performances of these works were scarcely heard in Ireland. There are several explanations as to why many works with bass clarinet parts were either premiered outside of Ireland or were not premiered in Ireland until years after the composition had been written. Some Irish composers may not have been living in Ireland during this time period. For example, Corcoran's *Lines and Configurations* was premiered in Germany while he was living there. In other situations, the composer may have known a bass clarinetist outside of Ireland. For instance, the English bass clarinetist Richard Hosford commissioned Hellawell to write *Dance Paragraphs*; therefore, it makes sense that Hosford would have premiered the piece in England. A third reason could have been the lack of a bass clarinet specialist in Ireland.

This brings us to the 1990s when Paul Roe began to play regularly with the contemporary music group Concorde, and increasingly on the bass clarinet. It was at this point that he came to realize, by researching local archives,³ that 'there [was] very little music that [was] written by Irish composers for the bass clarinet'.⁴ Roe's interest

³ Roe, Paul: 'A Phenomenology of Collaboration in Contemporary Composition and Performance' (PhD, The University of York, 2007), 59.

⁴ Interview with Paul Roe, 3 August 2017, Appendix B: 89.

in developing the bass clarinet repertoire was further stimulated by his involvement with Concorde. Roe commented on the change within Concorde:

First of all, when I was with Concorde I was primarily an ensemble player who did some solo pieces, but [...] as time has gone along I've done more and more solo stuff within Concorde. So most concerts we do in Concorde I would have some solo pieces or a piece for solo bass clarinet, solo clarinet, or duos... Actually, I think that was also because most of the stuff we did was for the full ensemble, five instruments, sometimes six. Then over the years we began to play in different spaces, we did more duos, more trios, more solos, and of course all of that inspired me to get more repertoire.⁵

Roe's interest in building the solo repertoire became the turning point in the role of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument in Ireland.

3.2 Concorde, Harry Sparnaay, and Paul Roe

The complete lack of solo bass clarinet music in Ireland in the twentieth century was soon followed by a change in direction in the twenty-first century. The absence of a bass clarinet specialist in Ireland would hardly have encouraged composers to write for the instrument alone. There were a few key developments in the years leading up to 2000 (when the first solo bass clarinet works were written by Irish composers) that provide insight into how the bass clarinet repertoire in Ireland emerged. The following section explores these headways, including Roe's shift from playing full time in the National Symphony Orchestra (NSO) to specializing in contemporary music and the interconnections between Roe, Sparnaay, and Concorde.

3.2.1 Paul Roe and Contemporary Music: New Directions

Roe was playing clarinet in the NSO when, around 1988, the conductor and clarinetist Alan Hacker came to Ireland to guest conduct a Mozart Opera. While Hacker was in Ireland, Roe decided to take some clarinet lessons with him as he felt that he 'wanted

⁵ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 92.

to learn more' and that he didn't 'have enough learning or education as a clarinettist'. During these lessons, Roe had been playing *A Set for Clarinet* by Donald Martino, and Hacker 'opened up a whole new world to [Roe] about contemporary music'. Shortly after this exchange, Roe began playing with the contemporary music ensemble Concorde and in Roe's own words, 'that really started a life, a career long fascination and interest in contemporary and new music'.⁶

Jane O'Leary established Concorde in 1976 for the purpose of performing new compositions.⁷ Paul Roe began performing with Concorde around 1990 while he was also the Associate Principal Clarinet of the NSO. For Roe, playing with Concorde and the NSO represented two entirely different areas of music performance. In an interview with his former student, Pablo Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, he commented that playing in the orchestra

is really like being in the midst of a machine, very well oiled ... but at the same time, you realise that your part is very specific to the working of that machine, but if you're interested in exploring other possibilities, your thinking is to a greater or lesser extent inhibited because your skill is based on the ability to deliver very effectively music that's chosen for you to play it and prescribed for how you play it by a conductor.⁸

Playing in Concorde gave Roe more opportunities as a soloist and as a chamber musician. He felt a connection to contemporary music and it gave him the opportunity to 'define [himself] as an artist musician'.⁹

From 1999 to 2000, Roe took a year off from playing with the NSO in order to complete a Master's degree. This break expanded his 'view of possibility, as a musician, as an educator, [and] as an artist'.¹⁰ During this year, Roe performed the first two Irish solo

⁶ Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, Pablo: 'Jane O'Leary and Her Approach to Contemporary Music for Clarinet and Bass Clarinet' (MMus, Dublin Institute of Technology, 2016), 83–84.

⁷ Ibid., 62.

⁸ Ibid., 82.

⁹ Ibid., 85.

¹⁰ Ibid., 82.

bass clarinet works at the Containers Exhibition which took place from 18 to 30 July 2000 (discussed further in Sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2). The two pieces were Rob Canning's *Continuum* (2000) for amplified bass clarinet with digital delay and tape, and Michael Holohan's *O Breath* (the second part of *The Lads*, 2000) for bass clarinet solo. It was during this summer that he remembers feeling 'a gradual accumulating sense of dread' about returning to play in the NSO. It was a difficult decision based on many factors, but ultimately Roe decided to quit the orchestra to focus on 'developing as a musician, as an artist [and] as an educator'.¹¹

3.2.2 Harry Sparnaay in Ireland

Another important occasion was when Harry Sparnaay travelled to Belfast in 1995 to perform and give a workshop at the Sonorities Festival of 20th Century Composers. On 2 May 1995, he gave a concert featuring seven different works for bass clarinet, and the next day, 3 May, he gave an important workshop for composers and bass clarinetists.¹² Sparnaay's performance and workshop in Belfast was only the beginning of his travels to Ireland. For the next thirteen years, Sparnaay would be making trips to Ireland as a soloist, with two of his chamber music duos (Duo Levent and Double Action), and to perform with ensembles such as Concorde and Crash Ensemble.

Sparnaay's visits to Ireland were substantial. In an interview with Roe, I asked him what effect he thought Concorde had had on the bass clarinet repertoire. He replied that the connection between Concorde and the bass clarinet 'begins to a certain extent with Harry Sparnaay.' Sparnaay's collaborations with Concorde left a permanent impact on all of the members of the ensemble. Roe particularly got on with Sparnaay because they 'shared a lot of the same humour [...] and the same passion and desire for new music'.¹³ In a different interview, Roe remarked that Sparnaay's biggest influence on

¹¹ Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, 81–83.

¹² 'April 29 - May 5', *The Irish Times*, (Dublin: The Irish Times Ltd., 29 April 1995).

¹³ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 92.

him was discovering how important ‘personality, [...] character, and individuality’ are in music, rather than purely being influenced by Sparnaay’s style of playing the bass clarinet.¹⁴ Jane O’Leary reflected on the numerous ways Sparnaay influenced Concorde:

We learned how to stand up and play from Harry, and in those days nobody did, of course nowadays everybody does. It made a huge difference, I mean it just connects with the audience so much better ... I guess Harry introduced us to a lot of repertoire, he would come and he would play pieces that were important to him. They [Harry Sparnaay and Paul Roe] did quite a lot of duos together with these collaborative concerts. He really taught us everything we know about the bass clarinet, I have to say, both for Paul and for all of us, not only the wind players. He opened it up and made us braver and more sensitive to certain things that you need to listen for in an ensemble. He is such a strong player that when you’re playing with him, he would clearly lead the ensemble and that was important to understand that you can have somebody within the group who is actually leading it.¹⁵

Sparnaay also brought a lot of international bass clarinet repertoire to Ireland and demonstrated during several different performances how colourful and versatile the bass clarinet can be. Many of his performances around Ireland were reviewed in *The Irish Times* and not one of them was unfavourable. Early reviews dazzled at Sparnaay’s shocking virtuosity on the bass clarinet; however, this soon became unsurprising, and in December 2002, reviewer Michael Dervan remarked that Sparnaay’s performance displayed ‘predictable flashes of genius’.¹⁶

3.2.3 Paul Roe and Concorde

For Roe, a side benefit of playing in Concorde was the chance to discover which composers he’d like to work with and have write a piece for bass clarinet. In the early 2000s, Roe commissioned five composers, with financial support from the Arts Council, to write solo works for the bass clarinet as part of his PhD research on the process of

¹⁴ Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, 90.

¹⁵ Ibid., 69.

¹⁶ Dervan, Michael: ‘Enjoying the Northern Highlights’, *The Irish Times*, (Dublin: The Irish Times Ltd., 10 December 2002).

collaboration between composers and performers.¹⁷ Four of the five works emerged and were premiered in 2005: *Monster* by Ed Bennett, *It's the Hole that Kills You Not the Bullet* by Stephen Gardner, *Music for Bass Clarinet* by Ronan Guilfoyle, and *a piacere* by Jane O'Leary. O'Leary, Gardner and Bennett were three musicians that Roe had worked with in Concorde before undertaking his PhD project. This was a huge step for the bass clarinet repertoire in Ireland. Roe commented that

you can imagine five new pieces that were commissioned and paid for in the space of a couple of years really was a big chunk. And that spawned a whole lot of other pieces and other interest around the bass clarinet and bass clarinet solo works.¹⁸

3.3 Conclusion

By examining twentieth century bass clarinet chamber music in Ireland, it was revealed that Concorde, Harry Sparnaay, and Paul Roe were major influences in the emergence of solo bass clarinet repertoire in Ireland. Since 2000, the repertoire has continued to expand and diversify, creating a distinctive space in Irish music for the bass clarinet.

¹⁷ Roe, 59.

¹⁸ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 92.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOLO BASS CLARINET MUSIC IN IRELAND

4.1. Overview of Irish Solo Bass Clarinet Music

A surprising number of established Irish composers have written at least one solo bass clarinet work. After searching through the Contemporary Music Centre's (CMC) database, the personal collection of bass clarinetist Paul Roe, and composers' websites, I discovered that there are currently forty-two compositions by thirty-eight Irish composers for unaccompanied bass clarinet, or solo bass clarinet and electronics.¹ A full list of solo works can be found in Appendix E. Additionally, there are sixteen pieces for solo bass clarinet and piano, and thirty-one duos for bass clarinet and another instrument. There are many more pieces featuring the bass clarinet soloistically within chamber ensembles such as trios, quartets, and larger ensembles. In this chapter, I will be focusing only on unaccompanied bass clarinet music, and music for bass clarinet and live or fixed electronics.

One of the themes that stood out during my research was that solo bass clarinet music is often explorative in quality, providing the performer with opportunities to make a personal connection with the piece. Within the Irish bass clarinet repertoire, musical characteristics that encourage experimentation include non-standard notation, extended techniques or other special effects, indeterminate notation, improvisational sections, the lack of time signatures or barlines, and graphic notation. The amount of repertoire written for or premiered by Paul Roe that included these elements is quite large. As a result, the focus of this chapter will be to examine music that was written for or premiered by Roe.

¹ This count was done in early 2017 and there may be more compositions that have not made their way into CMC's database yet.

4.2. Paul Roe's Approach to Contemporary Music

A lot of music written for the solo bass clarinet by Irish composers incorporates elements that permit the performer to explore a variety of different sounds and encourage the performer to approach their instrument in new ways. Realizing this, I decided to investigate the connection between Roe and the Irish composers who have written solo works for the bass clarinet.

4.2.1. Collaboration

Both Roe and composers interested in writing for the bass clarinet have initiated the creation of new works; however, the repertoire has been shaped in part by composers with whom Roe has actively sought out for collaboration. When commissioning music, Roe is interested in working with composers who have 'a sharpness of mind', are curious, and interested in collaboration.² With experience, he learned that it was much more enjoyable to work with composers 'who were much more open to it [the music] being something that was up for discussion' than those who were 'very directive, and a little bit resistive'.³

Another factor that could have affected the output of repertoire is that Roe often has composers record him playing around on the bass clarinet. The idea is to give them a palette of sounds that Roe can make on the bass clarinet or sounds that he enjoys making. This allows the composer to have something specific to Roe's style to work with in addition to any reference material they may use to compose for the instrument. He did admit that this could lead to 'some really interesting conversations trying to recreate what had been played spontaneously in the moment'.⁴

² Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 100.

³ Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, 90.

⁴ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 105.

4.2.2. Stylistic Approach

The explorative nature of many of the compositions written for Roe runs parallel to his approach to performing contemporary music. To Roe, the solo bass clarinet repertoire in Ireland artistically reflects both his and the composers' 'colour, imagination, gesture, dynamism, energy, [and] intensity'.⁵ Roe's attitude towards contemporary music is flexible and open-minded. As a bass clarinetist (and clarinetist), he wields a diverse set of skills capable of overcoming the kinds of challenges that often materialize in contemporary music such as unfamiliar or vague notation and virtuosic technical challenges. As a contemporary music performer, Roe has never been afraid of experimenting and trying new things. As he said himself:

I've never been one of these musicians, 'Oh I can't do that!' [...] I've never been too afraid to try all sorts of crazy things on the instrument including water in the bell of my bass clarinet [...] and all this sort of thing.⁶

Roe emphasized the creative approach he believes is necessary to learning contemporary music:

With contemporary learning like M [*Monster*] and P [*Periastron*]- the sonic range is amplified to such an extent we need to move away from being instrumentalists and become more sound artists. The focus opens up on a Macro level to encompass a vast world of sound possibilities not accessible on the plane of simply being a clarinetist. Of course there are technical challenges to overcome but much of the learning is about carving and sculpting a sound world that is only possible with constant experimentation. With more traditional repertoire the parameters of the sound world are strongly established however with contemporary music as a performer our role is to create new sound worlds.⁷

Composers writing for Roe would be primarily influenced by his personal and musical qualities. In an e-mail interview, he described some of these qualities:

⁵ E-mail Interview with Paul Roe, 23 August 2017, Appendix C: 110.

⁶ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 98.

⁷ E-mail Interview with Paul Roe, 2 January 2017, Appendix A: 85.

let me consider some qualities of mine [that] would have influenced composers. I am curious, philosophical, interested in exploration, non judgemental (try to be), fun. I am easy to work with-have a genuine interest in people and creativity and somewhat self-effacing. As a player, which for me is of secondary importance the qualities are musical imagination, flexibility, wide sound palette, technically supple, dynamically varied, intellectual engaged, emotionally connected and somatically embody the work.⁸

Many composers have highlighted the importance of knowing the musician(s) they are writing for. If they know the tendencies of the performer and how they sound, then they can write with the knowledge that the performer will be open to and capable of performing their ideas. The way the composer ‘hears’ the musician can influence the composer’s stylistic decisions. For example, Jane O’Leary, who has worked with Roe in Concorde for many years and written several pieces for him, spoke about composing for Concorde, saying ‘I hear him [Roe] playing in his particular style and I think that in itself encourages me to be brave and a little more exploratory than I would normally be’. O’Leary described his style of playing as ‘very open, very exploring, pushing the edge, always searching for something new and enjoying the challenge’.⁹ Similarly, when Ed Bennett was working on *Monster* with Roe, he explained to Roe how he had been affected by his style:

I can make certain assumptions about what you’re going to do with this music and the sound you produce, whereas if I write for some great professional players who make a lovely sound but who don’t put any of their own input into it I’d be worried because I would think, oh they can only play what’s on the page.¹⁰

4.3. A Cross-survey of Works with Musically Explorative Elements

As a result of Roe’s open-minded attitude, works written for him tend to be stylistically varied. In this section, a range of solo bass clarinet works by Irish composers have been selected to demonstrate the compositional elements that encourage performers to

⁸ E-mail Interview with Roe, Appendix C: 110.

⁹ Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, 66–68.

¹⁰ Roe, 156.

explore different approaches to performance, as well as to attest to how diverse the repertoire is.

4.3.1. *O Breath*

The Lads (2000) by Michael Holohan was commissioned for the Containers Exhibition at The Galway Arts Festival in 2000. The Containers Exhibition featured twenty-five artists who designed an object based on the word 'container'.¹¹ Jane O'Leary was one of the five composers who was paired with a designer and she recalled that the aim was to 'respond to the idea of containers' and to 'respond to the work which the artists were making'.¹² *The Lads* contains two pieces: one for solo clarinet and one for solo bass clarinet; *Chatterbox* is for clarinet and *O Breath* is for bass clarinet.

O Breath is a tribute to the fifty-eight Chinese refugees who lost their lives to asphyxiation in a shipping container that was discovered in Dover, England in June 2000.¹³ The original performance of *O Breath* at the Containers Exhibition was accompanied by instructions that Roe had to execute while performing. Roe described the choreography as 'really quite challenging' since at one point in *Chatterbox* he had to put one arm through one hole in the box and his other arm through another hole in the box and play the clarinet in the middle.¹⁴

Roe explained that *O Breath* 'represents that breath, the lack of breath'.¹⁵ It is important for the performer to consider different modes of communicating this

¹¹ Galway Arts Festival Programme 2000, accessed 27 August 2017, https://issuu.com/galwayartsfestival/docs/galway_arts_festival_2000_programme.

¹² Manjón-Cabezas Guzmán, 71.

¹³ '58 Dead in Port Lorry', *BBC News Online*, (19 June 2000), accessed 27 August 2017, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/796791.stm>.

¹⁴ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 95.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

subject. Breathing is represented in a literal sense where the bass clarinetist breathes through the instrument (see Ex. 4.1).

Example 4.1: Holohan, *O Breath*.¹⁶

Handwritten musical notation for Example 4.1. The staff is in bass clef. The first measure has a note with a dynamic marking 'F'. The second measure has a note with a dynamic marking 'F'. The third measure has a note with a dynamic marking 'sf'. The fourth measure has a note with a dynamic marking 'F'. Above the staff, the word 'BREATH' is written. Below the staff, there are three asterisks with instructions: '* BLOW THROUGH CLAR. VENTS OPEN', '* BLOW THROUGH CLAR. VENTS CLOSED', and '* HIGHER BREATH PITCH'.

In the second final bar of the piece, the performer is instructed to play notes in a 'breathy' way (see Ex. 4.2). *O Breath* ends on an ethereal multiphonic at the dynamic of pianissimo. Such a soft and delicate multiphonic seems analogous to the word *requiescat*.

Example 4.2: Holohan, *O Breath*, inscription at bottom of score indicating his tribute to the victims (*Requiescat* meaning 'rest in peace' in Latin).

Handwritten musical notation for Example 4.2. The staff is in bass clef. The first measure has a note with a dynamic marking 'p'. The second measure has a note with a dynamic marking 'pp'. Above the staff, the word 'BREATHY' is written. Below the staff, there is a handwritten inscription: 'Michael Holohan © 2000 "For those at DOVER Requiescat" O BREATH 3.'

¹⁶ Holohan, Michael: *The Lads* (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2000).

In the middle section, there is a multiphonic section that contributes to the melancholic nature of the work. In Roe's recording of *O Breath*, available at the Contemporary Music Centre, the multiphonics sound almost like someone crying softly. Multiphonics can sometimes sound grating and harsh, but the ones Roe chose are more delicate. Multiphonics are the most challenging aspect of *O Breath* since there are so many of them and they require different fingerings than regular notes (see Ex. 4.3). Although there are suggested fingerings in the score, performers might need to come up with their own if these do not work on their particular instrument.

Example 4.3: Holohan, *O Breath*.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a piece titled "O BREATH". It consists of two staves of music. The notation is complex, featuring notes with multiple dots and stems, which are characteristic of multiphonic notation. Above the notes, there are markings such as "8v" and "8". The score is written in a style that suggests it is a working draft or a personal score. Below the staves, the title "O BREATH" is written in quotes, and the number "2" is at the bottom right. The overall appearance is that of a handwritten manuscript.

4.3.2. *Continuum*

Continuum, composed in 2000, was cutting edge at the time, combining technology with an acoustic instrument. Back when *Continuum* was written, Roe remembers that Canning was 'doing a lot of exploration with technology and different approaches to composing'. As Roe reflected on *Continuum*, he recalled the need for a 'particular delay machine'—not just any delay machine—which meant that it was unfortunately difficult to perform this piece often.¹⁷ The performance requires a tape delay machine with a

¹⁷ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 94.

delay of 6500 milliseconds as well as two microphones: one hooked up to the delay machine and another hooked up to the reverb unit.¹⁸ The digital delay gives the impression of a second bass clarinetist playing along with the performer.

Continuum is not a virtuosic work. It has a meditative quality to it, elicited by sounds emanating from the tape part such as Tibetan prayer bowls being bowed or struck, and a limited range. The tempo is very slow (crotchet equals forty-five) and every phrase ends with a long note, usually coloured by vibrato or a trill. There are a few multiphonic sections interspersed throughout the piece with suggested fingerings (see Ex. 4.4). The chosen multiphonics blend well with the sounds in the tape part.

Example 4.4: Canning, *Continuum*, 5'24".¹⁹

4.3.3. *Monster*

Composed by Ed Bennett in 2005, *Monster* for bass clarinet and fixed electronics was part of Roe's PhD research on the collaborative process between performers and composers (see Section 3.2.3).

¹⁸ Canning, Rob: *Continuum* (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2000), performance notes.

¹⁹ Ibid., 2.

While *Continuum* is relaxed and contemplative, *Monster* is extraverted and dynamic. One of the challenges of *Monster* is to keep a high level of energy throughout the entire piece. A challenging section to do this is mid-way through the piece when there is less pitch material (see Ex. 4.5). Experimenting with different intensities of flutter tonguing and vibrato can help the performer find a variety of textures to use during performance.

Example 4.5: Bennett, *Monster*, 4'30".

The image displays three systems of handwritten musical notation for a piece by Bennett. Each system consists of two staves: a top staff for B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet) and a bottom staff for Elec. (Electric guitar). The notation is highly experimental and indeterminate, featuring various markings and textures.

- System 1 (4'30" to 4'40"):** The B. Cl. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It includes markings for 'ftr.' (flutter tonguing) and 'f' (forte). The Elec. staff shows dense, scribbled textures. A time signature of 4/4 is indicated at the end.
- System 2 (4'45" to 4'50"):** The B. Cl. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It includes a marking for 'Cresc.' (Crescendo). The Elec. staff shows dense, scribbled textures. A time signature of 4/4 is indicated at the end.
- System 3 (4'55" to 5'00"):** The B. Cl. staff has a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It includes a marking for 'EXAGG. VIB.' (Exaggerated Vibrato). The Elec. staff shows dense, scribbled textures. A time signature of 4/4 is indicated at the end.

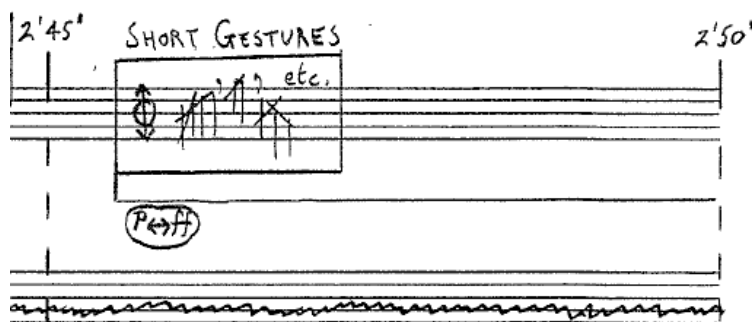
Working with Roe on *Monster* gave Bennett a chance to devise 'flexible ways of scoring that left room for plenty of experimentation on the part of the performer' and that there is 'no composerly expectation of a reading that is overly faithful to the text'.²⁰ *Monster* incorporates various levels of indeterminate notation that allow the performer to make a lot of creative decisions. Roe wrote that

²⁰ Roe, 174.

in performance 'Monster' has a spontaneous quality, reflective of the improvisatory compositional process. I have performed this piece many times and each performance has a freshness or flexibility not often found in prescriptive notation.²¹

Cells with motivic ideas can be found throughout the piece. Some of them show pitches, while others only demonstrate a shape of a gesture (see Ex. 4.6). Listening to the tape part in these sections and reacting to the electronic sounds is key to exploring different ways to approaching the indeterminate notation.

Example 1.6: Bennett, *Monster*, 2'45".



There is also an extended section that is improvisatory on the second last page of the score that is about a minute in length (see Ex. 4.7). Despite the fact the it says in the score 'make a fast continuous rhythmic texture using these notes', it is best to not take this too literally. Since this section lasts for a whole minute, only playing these notes would get quite boring. It is much more interesting and monster-like to use the entire range of the bass clarinet than sticking to a compass of five notes. For most performers, this is likely to be the most challenging part of the piece. Roe found that for him:

²¹ Roe, 182.

The difficulty is not so much in the improvisation but in the intensity required to bring it off. There needs to be a feeling of things coming apart at the seams. On a physical/somatic level this takes a lot of energy and willingness to go beyond stability. The requirement is to be really unhinged and unstable-the visual is highly relevant and important and cannot be simulated. You really have to 'lose the plot' on the inside much like an actor playing a role of a character having a mental breakdown.²²

Example 4.7: Bennett, *Monster*, 8'00".

Handwritten musical score for Example 4.7: Bennett, *Monster*, 8'00". The score consists of two systems, each with a Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.) staff and an Electronic (Elec.) staff. The first system is marked with a time signature of 8'05" and a dynamic of *f*. The B. Cl. staff contains a series of notes, with a handwritten instruction above: "MAKE A FAST CONTINUOUS RHYTHMIC TEXTURE USING THESE NOTES. BREAK ONLY TO PLAY OTHER NOTES AS THEY APPEAR." The Elec. staff shows a dense, chaotic waveform. The second system is marked with a time signature of 8'15" and a dynamic of *f*. The B. Cl. staff contains a series of notes, with a handwritten instruction above: "BACKWARDS SOUNDS ENTER". The Elec. staff shows a dense, chaotic waveform. The score ends at 8'20".

If performers do not have much experience with improvisation, it is useful to set a stopwatch for one minute and play up and down the range of the bass clarinet, without letting the mind get too involved. If the performer spends too much time thinking about what notes are going to come next, it will be too late. The notes need to flow continuously without having a sense of being prepared, otherwise the monster will not be very convincing! The energy and character of this section are much more important than getting the notes 'right'.

²² E-mail Interview with Roe, Appendix A: 86–87.

4.3.4. *Composure*

Composure (2009) is a graphic score for bass clarinet that is the result of a collaboration between the composer David Bremner and Paul Roe. It was commissioned by Roe with funds provided by the Arts Council. The indeterminate results of many extended techniques were the motivations for working with a graphic score, rather than traditional notation. Graphic notation would not suit every performer, but Roe had experience working with graphic scores and as indicated previously in Section 4.2.2, he is open to different compositional ideas and not afraid to experiment. Speaking about his collaboration with Bremner, Roe explained that

we knew that this was a medium by which we could work collaboratively. He [Bremner] was very interested in the idea of collaborative working and exploring what happens when we change the context, we tear away the traditional way of notating music.²³

The premise of the piece ‘revolves around the idea of contained energy; “keeping one’s composure” implying the maintenance of a shaky cool, and its future breakdown under pressure’. *Composure* is not pitch based, but is rather an exploration of timbre; ‘the main motif is that of the note which breaks up into pieces’. This information is a useful starting point towards investigating the graphic notation since ‘the score is totally open to interpretation’.²⁴ This is rather explicit permission for the performer of this work to bring their own creativity and intuition to the piece, rather than following someone else’s interpretation.

While performing *Composure*, Roe adopted more than one approach to the graphic notation. He acknowledged this by describing both a programmatic and non-programmatic course of action:

²³ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 106.

²⁴ Bremner, David: *Composure*, (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2009), programme notes.

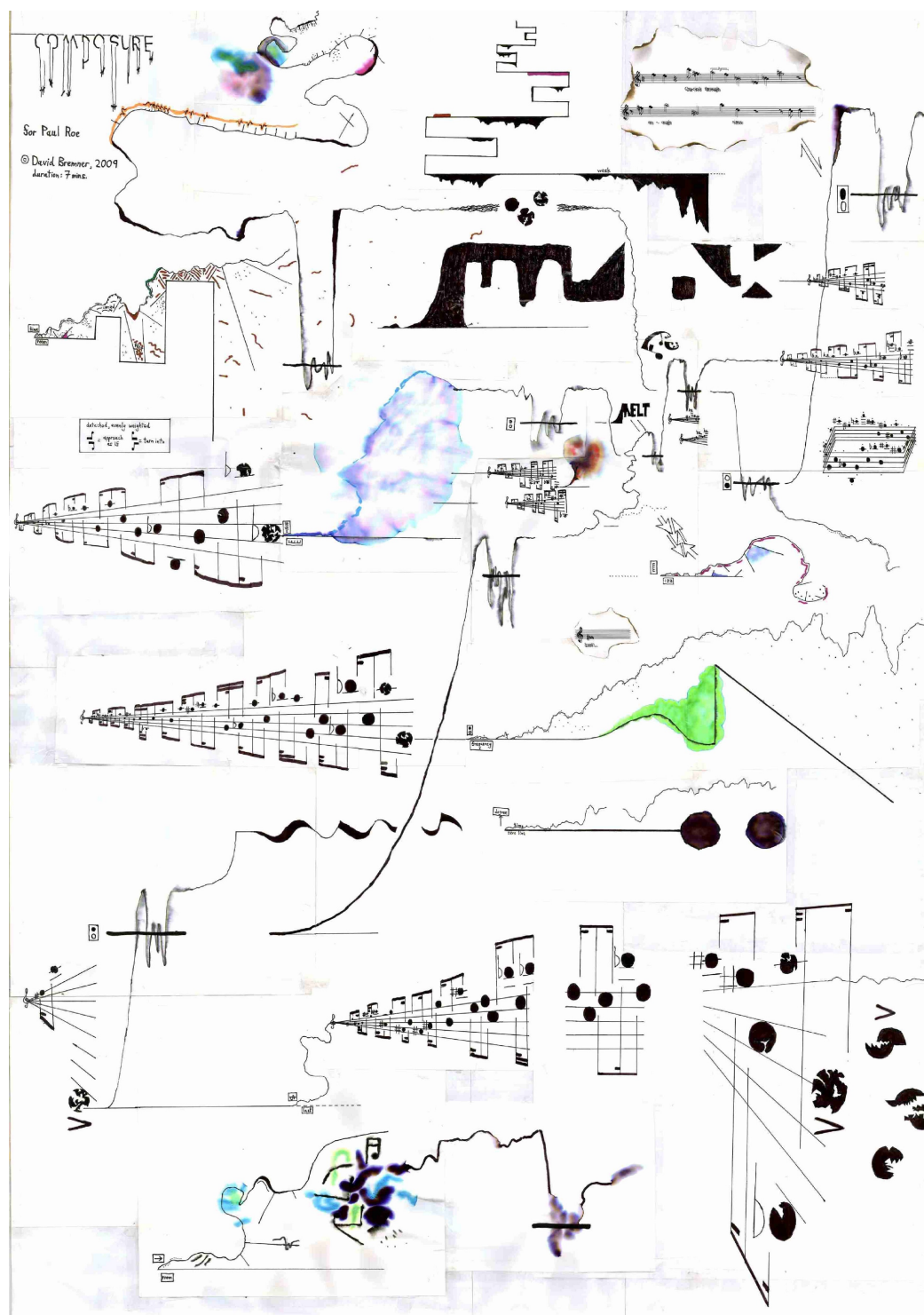
Some of that piece, I did attempt to do what I thought the actual images represented in terms of high-low, thick-thin, loud-soft, these sort of things. But then also I used it as a stimulus, to just respond to it in a non-literal fashion. In the one hand, you could say, I could have adopted a programmatic approach to it. Yeah, we've ascending lines so I should go up there and then in another way I approach it in a non-programmatic, a non-linear way, and in an abstract way which was just to respond to it emotionally, viscerally, and not too intellectually. For me, I didn't find it too difficult, I enjoyed doing that.²⁵

Interestingly, he had little to say at all about finding the piece challenging, except for the fact that the score was not easy to carry around. The score is A0 sized and when Roe performs this piece he performs with his back to the audience so that the audience can look at the score. He commented that 'the success of that piece [...] is how it looks and how people engage with how it looks', and that 'people love looking at it and hearing it unfolding'.²⁶

²⁵ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 107.

²⁶ Ibid..

Example 4.8: Bremner, *Composure*.²⁷



²⁷ Bremner, David: *Composure*, Sample Pages, (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2009), accessed 27 August 2017, <https://www.cmc.ie/music/composure>.

4.3.5. *Periastron*

Periastron was composed by Gráinne Mulvey in 2009 and is for bass clarinet and fixed electronics. The word ‘periastron’ originates from the Greek words ‘star’ and ‘around’. Periastron is the place where an orbiting body is closest to its star. Mulvey’s composition is multi-dimensional. Not only does the electronic part have an otherworldly feel to it, the bass clarinet part adds further depth with circular and non-linear motives (see Ex. 4.9).

Example 4.9: Mulvey, *Periastron*, 0’21”.²⁸

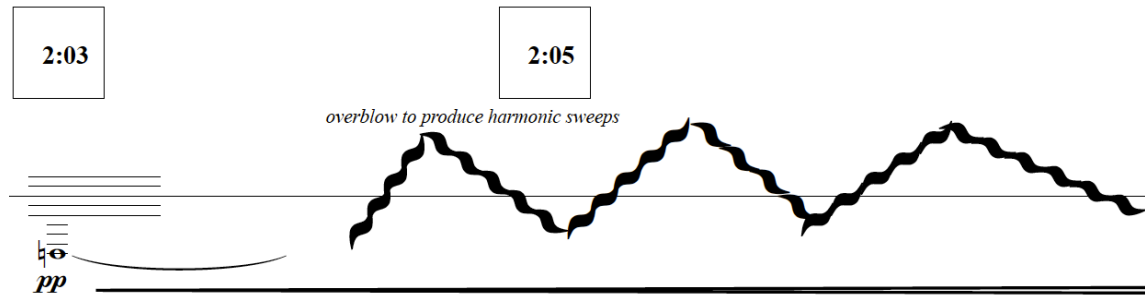
0:21

The musical notation is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It features a series of notes, primarily eighth and sixteenth notes, with some accidentals (sharps and flats). A large, curved slur spans the entire length of the notation. Below the staff, there are three dynamic markings: *p* (piano) at the beginning, *f* (forte) in the middle, and *p* (piano) at the end. To the right of the staff, the text 'repeat pattern' is written above a horizontal line that extends to the right.

Periastron takes advantage of the wide range of colourful sounds that can be made on the bass clarinet. Mulvey incorporates celestial-sounding multiphonics into the outer-space theme of the work, as well as multiphonic glissandi (see Ex. 4. 10) and more percussive effects such as slap tonguing.

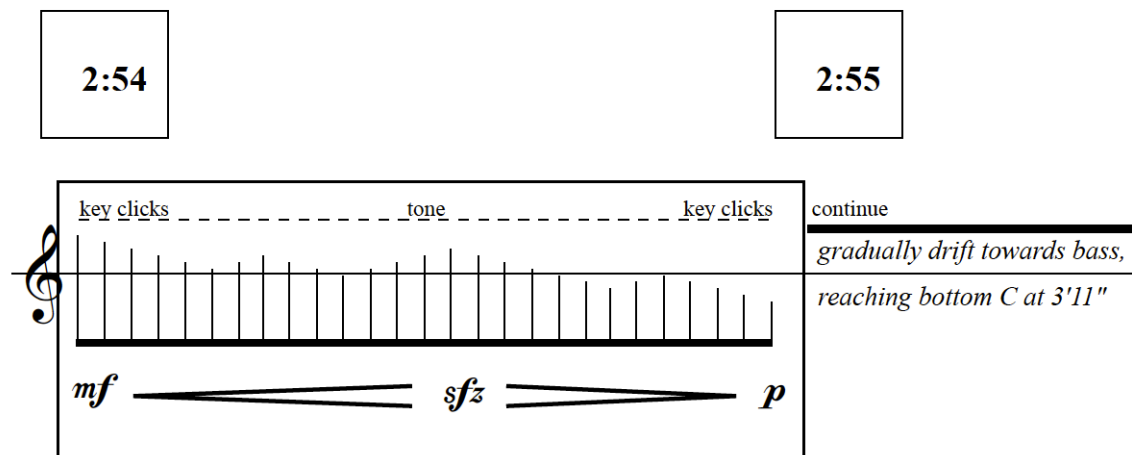
²⁸ Mulvey, Gráinne: *Periastron* (Dublin: Contemporary Music Centre Ireland, 2010).

Example 4.10: Mulvey, *Periastron*, 2'03".



The abstract nature of the score encourages the performer to be imaginative and to explore a range of different sounds that can add to the orbital movement of the work. Performers working on this piece may find it useful to spend a lot of time listening to the soundtrack and imagining how the bass clarinet sounds could blend or interact with the electronics. There are a lot of ambiguous elements in this composition and it takes a lot of careful consideration in order to make it work (for example, see Ex. 4.11).

Example 4.11: Mulvey, *Periastron*, 2'54".



4.4. Detailed Analyses

As there are many Irish bass clarinet pieces, I will only analyse two works in detail: *Rattle* (2010) by Amanda Feery and *Stung* (2010) by Frank Lyons. I have chosen these pieces for analysis for several reasons. Musically, they are contrasting; *Rattle* is for bass clarinet alone and *Stung* includes interactions with electronics. They both allow an explorative approach to performance and are rewarding to learn due to several challenging sections. Furthermore, the performance of these compositions is engaging for the performer and the audience. More pragmatically, I chose to analyse these two pieces because I have worked on them with Roe and have performed both of them, including a performance of *Stung* with the composer; therefore, I have a deeper understanding of the kind of performance issues that surface during the learning process and how they might be explored.

4.4.1. *Rattle*

Composed in 2010, *Rattle* is a recollection of Amanda Feery's clarinet lessons, when her lessons focused on removing any perceived flaws from her sound and technique. As she explains in her performance notes, this included 'work on intonation, scales, melodious studies, and removing erroneous breaks and squeaks'.²⁹ According to Roe, the title *Rattle* refers to 'a kind of a cough that [...] her granny had. [...] That was called a rattle in the chest, [...] a chesty cough, a rattle, or a wheeze'.³⁰

The first part of the composition is linear and emphasizes rhythmic motives that vary constantly. At the beginning, these rhythmic motives are pitch-less, the sounds imitating 'the idea of [a] snare drum'.³¹ The directions in the score indicate that they should be tongued, 'but without producing the pitch' (see Ex. 4.12). The performer's

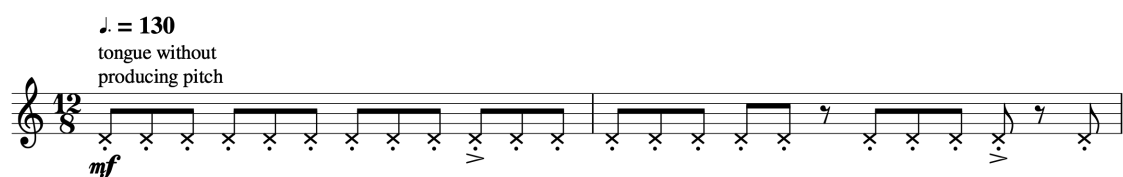
²⁹ Feery, Amanda: *Quinquennial* (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2015), performance notes.

³⁰ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 102.

³¹ Ibid., 100.

challenge in this passage is to come up with a way to create a pitch-less sound that is present enough to be heard by the audience. Simply tonguing, as suggested by the composer, will not present a loud enough sound; therefore, the performer must experiment with different ways to produce an appropriate sound. For example, instead of tonguing normally, the performer may choose to emulate ‘ch’ or ‘tch’ sounds and cover less of the mouthpiece with their embouchure.

Ex. 4.12: Feery, *Rattle*, 1–2.³²



It is important, though, that the performer chooses the most practical solution for switching between pitch-less sounds and regular accented notes as these begin to appear more and more frequently from bar 5 (see Ex. 4.13). The performer may discover that some of the strongest pitch-less sounds require a very different embouchure from that of normal playing, which may not be possible at the quick tempo. The metronome marking for *Rattle* is dotted crotchet equals 130.³³ This quick tempo gives the impression of a train going so fast that it might run off the tracks, something that will captivate both the performer and audience’s attention. The intensity is further heightened by unpredictable accents that are constantly shifting to different parts of the beat.

³² Feery, Amanda: *Quinquennial* (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2015), performance notes.

³³ This is much scaled back from the original version where the metronome marking was dotted crotchet equals 170.

Ex. 4.13: Feery, *Rattle*, 5–6.



The pitch-less sounds are eventually overrun by repetitive rhythmic figures on a pitched D (see Ex. 4.14).³⁴

Ex. 4.14: Feery, *Rattle*, 15–16.



The next challenge is the unpredictable addition of B-flats and D-flats in the upper register (see Ex. 4.15). Switching between lower and upper registers on the bass clarinet can be difficult because higher notes can take longer to speak; the unrelenting tempo does not give the performer any extra time to let the higher notes speak slowly. This section can be approached by slowing down the tempo and lengthening the upper notes. By working on this section slowly, the performer can develop a kinaesthetic awareness of the embouchure changes necessary to execute these large jumps in register. The performer may also find it helpful to employ an alternative fingering for the upper D \sharp , such as overblowing a lower F \sharp .

³⁴ All notes in this section will be referred to in the key of B \flat as the score is transposed. (In reality, a pitched D is a concert C).

Ex. 4.15: Feery, *Rattle*, 21–22.



As the piece progresses, higher notes are added with more and more frequency before culminating on repeated high D's (see example 4.16). The directions 'screech' and 'exaggerate' in bar 48 provide insight that the piece has been building up to this point, with emphasis to 'really drag out these notes'. The difficulty here is to actually make the high D's screechy, as they are stable notes. The performer can try different fingerings, but none of them result in a screechy quality. Another option would be to play the D an octave above or to come up with a fake D fingering.

Ex. 4.16: Feery, *Rattle*, 48–49.



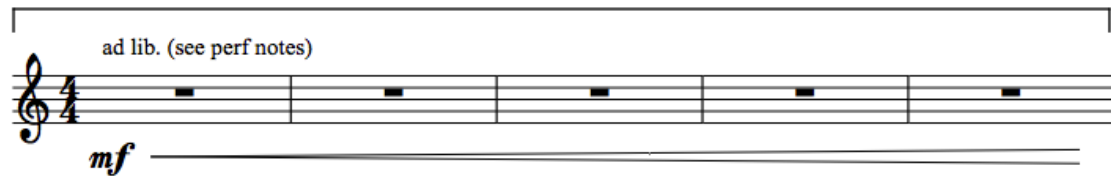
Up until this quasi-climatic point, the unpredictable accents and rests provide the performer with a mental challenge to remain focused. If the performer loses focus during the first forty-seven bars, the driving pulse could easily be lost.

Starting in bar 50 is a five-bar segment that is at the liberty of the performer (see Ex. 4.17). This brief section is for the performer to improvise based on Feery's directions in the performance notes to 'play with quick ascending-descending passages, building up to a vocal, screaming quality' like the 'climax of a sax solo'.³⁵ She does not give any

³⁵ Feery, performance notes.

indication that she has a particular saxophone player in mind. This improvised section at bar 50 and a similar three-bar segment at bar 91 are invitations for the performer to leave a more personal mark on the composition and can be approached in more than one way.

Ex. 4.17: Feery, *Rattle*, 50–54.



Roe's approach to the improvised section was to contextualise it within the entire composition. He emphasized the importance of it being 'reflective of the energy that has come out of the rest of the performance' and to fit it 'into that energy space'. While practising, Roe improvised and then wrote out the framework because it 'linked better to what was coming before'. He wanted to ensure that it stayed within the context of the rest of the piece during performance.³⁶

My approach to this section was to listen to jazz saxophone players and try to imitate the most climatic parts of their improvisations. Similar to Roe, I came up with a framework that I could use in performance and then memorized it instead of writing it out. I also attempted to link the start of the improvisation to the bars before and after. These are only two approaches and there are many other ways one could choose to go about the improvisation.

The middle section of the piece contains multiphonics and short rhythmic interjections that do not resemble any of the opening material (see Ex. 4.18). In the score, Feery refers to two different kinds of multiphonics: multiphonic one (noise) and multiphonic

³⁶ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 103.

Ex. 4.18: Feery, *Rattle*, 68–71.

68 Multiphonic 1 - Noise

Musical notation for measures 68-72. Measure 68: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat (B-flat), dynamic *mf*. The note is a half note B-flat. Measure 69: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat (B-flat), dynamic *mf*. The note is a half note B-flat. Measure 70: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat (B-flat), dynamic *mf*. The note is a half note B-flat. Measure 71: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat (B-flat), dynamic *mf*. The note is a half note B-flat. Measure 72: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature, key signature of one flat (B-flat), dynamic *mf*. The note is a half note B-flat.

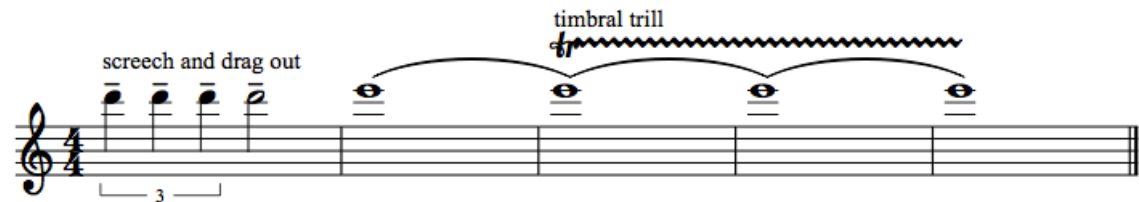
³⁷ Feery, performance notes.

Ex. 4.19: Feery, *Rattle*, 111–113.



This continues to develop linearly until bar 129 with the return of screechy high D's, much like bars 48 and 49. *Rattle* ends on a high E timbral trill (see Ex. 4.20), the highest note of the piece, only used previously in bar 105.

Ex. 4.20: Feery, *Rattle*, 131–135.



4.4.2. *Stung*

Paul Roe commissioned Frank Lyons to compose for the bass clarinet, and in 2010, Lyons completed *Stung* for bass clarinet and live electronics. The live electronics can be controlled by the bass clarinetist or by another person and 'may be used in a freely improvised way'.³⁸ The bass clarinet sounds are processed electronically by Ableton Live Patch. The title *Stung* refers to Lyons's reaction from listening to Michael Brecker's saxophone solo on the track 'Tumbleweed'.³⁹

Stung is the result of a collaboration between Roe and Lyons. When Roe performed *Stung*, Lyons improvised the electronic part using Ableton Live. Roe explained the genesis of the piece:

³⁸ Lyons, Frank: *Stung* (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2010), performance notes.

³⁹ E-mail Interview with Lyons, August 28 2017, Appendix D: 111.

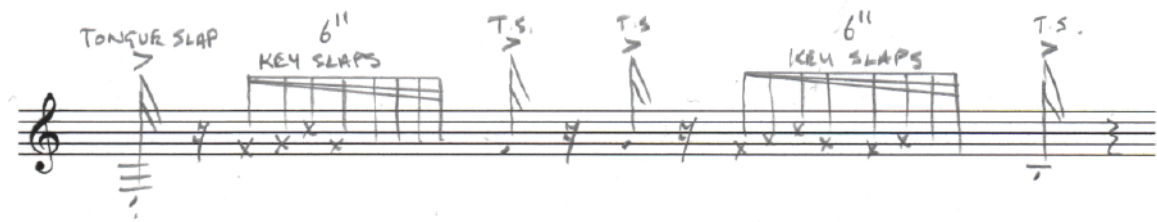
we've spoken a long time about working together, doing some pieces, and eventually Frank came up with this piece. We'd had many conversations over the years about how composition and performance were really closely related and that when composer and performer work closely together it works really, really well. And he himself is a performer, a guitarist, and he played in all sorts of bands. He has a strong feeling of what it's like to be a performer and has a great interest in jazz, [...] in John Coltrane, Pat Metheny, all these jazz musicians. So all of that goes into the mix with this piece. *Stung* is definitely influenced by Coltrane, [...] jazz, [...] technology, [...] [and] improvisational styles. Frank knew I was interested in improvising and [...] creative music making. And he knew that we would get along well, which is what you want when you're working with people.⁴⁰

The bass clarinet part contains an introduction, six numbered sections (I-VI), five lettered sections (A-E), and a coda. The performer must always start with the Introduction and end with the Coda. The performer can choose to follow the Introduction with any of the numbered sections and then alternate between lettered and numbered sections until they have all been performed once. This flexible layout allows the performer to either leave the order of sections to chance during performance, or decide through experimentation how best to order them in rehearsal.

Stung's score does not include barlines or time signatures. The time element of *Stung* is almost entirely controlled by the performer and even if the performer chooses to have someone else operate the live electronics, the technician reacts to the performer's sounds. While performing pieces like *Monster* and *Periastron* the electronics provide a stimulus to the performer, but the opposite takes place in *Stung*. Although the performer is not locked into a time signature, Lyons has chosen to write how long certain elements such as rests, trills, and other effects should last. For instance, Lyons has designated key slaps to take place for six seconds (see Ex. 4.21).

⁴⁰ Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 104.

Example 4.21: Lyons, *Stung*, Coda, line 3.⁴¹



Stung's bass clarinet part is improvisatory in style. Each section has a different character and incorporates different extended techniques and special effects. When different effects like slap tonguing and flutter tonguing are processed in Ableton Live, some very interesting sounds ensue. The performer should explore the possibilities of each special effect and extended technique, and carefully consider how each version might be affected by the electronic processing.

The Introduction is an appropriate name for the first section of the piece because it introduces many of the extended techniques and special effects that will be used in the numbered and lettered sections. It contains two contrasting styles. The first half is characterized by a jagged rhythmic figure and a 'Balkan trill' (see Ex. 4.22). A Balkan trill can be produced by trilling and applying a wide vibrato at the same time. Roe first heard this term when he was studying klezmer clarinet with David Krakauer in New York and the term was then picked up by Lyons.⁴² The lack of barlines encourages the performer to feel the pulse in different meters, and the rests at the ends of phrases allow for the electronics to sound and fade before the next phrase begins.

⁴¹ Lyons, Frank: *Stung* (Dublin, Contemporary Music Centre Ireland: 2010).

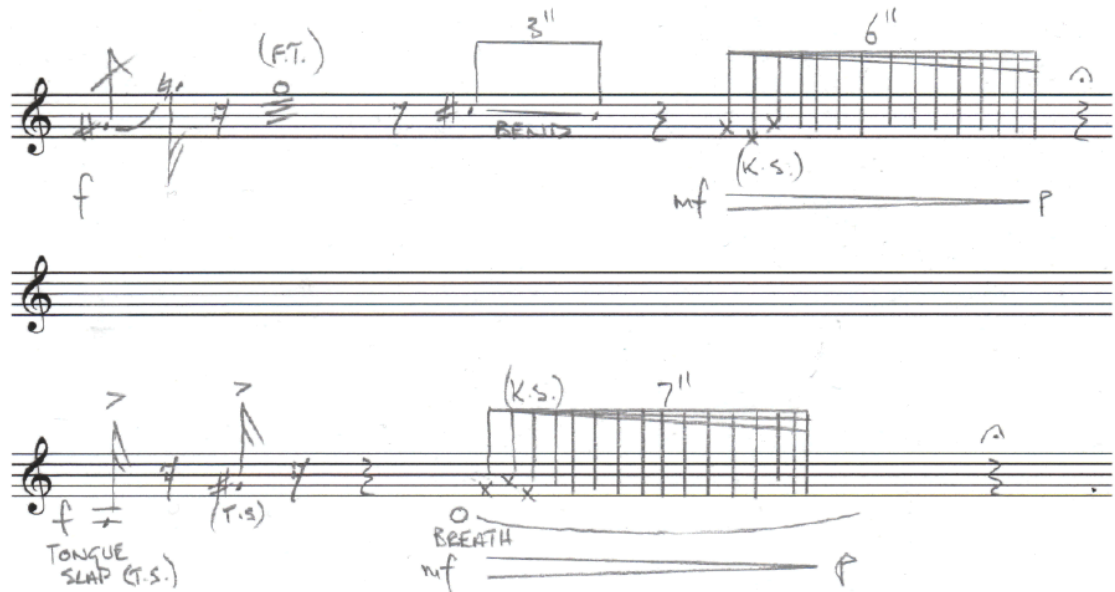
⁴² Interview with Roe, Appendix B: 104–105.

Example 4.22: Lyons, *Stung*, Introduction, line 1.



The second half of the introduction employs flutter tonguing, glissandi (bends), key slaps, and slap tonguing (see Ex. 4.23). The key slaps should begin slow and then accelerate as the dynamic diminishes. If a performer is worried about damaging their instrument with key slaps, they may want to find another method of making a similar sound. To get a good glissando over the break, the upper side keys can be used. The challenge in this section is to transition from one special effect to another in a convincing manner. Lyons does not specify what kind of a slap tongue should be used so the performer can decide whether a more percussive or resonant slap tongue would be most effective when processed electronically. In Example 4.23, there are also key slaps with the added breath.

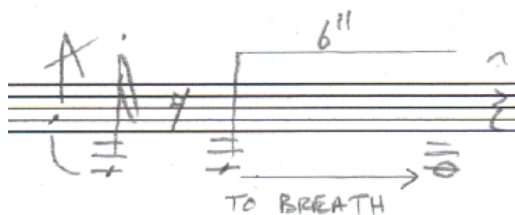
Example 4.23: Lyons, *Stung*, Introduction, line 6–7.



The numbered segments are all extremely short, most of them lasting one or two lines. Many of them contain elements that can be found in other areas of the piece.

Section I is short and dynamic; it integrates slap tonguing into two chromatic sextuplet gestures and then ends on a regular trill that begins with a slap tongue. The second numbered segment is also quite short, but less energetic. It includes grace note figures that resemble those found in the Introduction and long notes that subside into breath sounds (see Ex. 4.24).

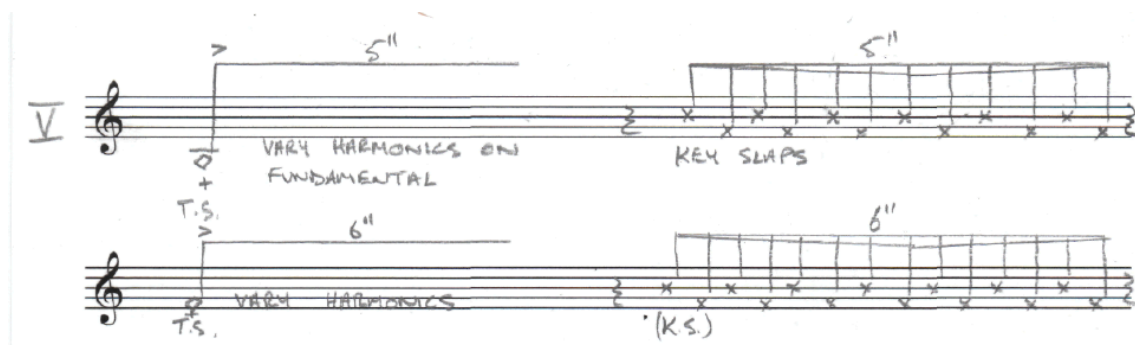
Example 4.24: Lyons, *Stung*, Section II.



Section III is built on three notes: D, B \flat , and F \sharp . These notes are used in an arpeggiated fashion, alternating with tremolos. The tremolos are similar to those that characterize section 'A'. Wailing bends take up the entire fourth numbered segment. These wailing bends and the Balkan trills are both clear examples of how Roe's style of playing bass clarinet has influenced the composition. These gestures have connections to klezmer music, something that he has studied in detail.

Section V contains multiphonics and key slaps (see Ex. 4.25). The harmonics can be varied over the fundamental in either a fluid or jagged manner. The key slaps are comparable to the ones found in the Introduction and vary in speed.

Example 4.25: Lyons, *Stung*, Section V.



The sixth numbered segment is comprised of bends (glissandi), and a long note dissolving into breath, similar to the one in Section IV. The bends are not easy to accomplish on the bass clarinet, but by manipulating the embouchure at the same time as slowly moving from one note to the next, a quasi-glissando can be achieved.

The 'A' Section is distinguishable by its fast pace and the interpolation of tremolos. It is technically challenging to play because the tremolos are not easy to execute and the streams of notes are not intuitive (see Ex. 4.26). The notes are unpredictable and it takes time for them to feel natural under the fingers.

Example 4.26: Lyons, *Stung*, 'A' Section, line 3–4.



The streams of notes are also a feature of Section 'B', but instead of tremolos, there are slap-tongued notes. Each line begins with a passage of notes and ends with a slap-tongued note. With each progressive line, there are less notes at the beginning and added slap-tongued notes at the end. For example, the first phrase begins with a series of eleven notes followed by one slap-tongue and the last phrase only has five notes at the beginning, but the slap-tongued notes have grown to seven.

Section 'C' is quite different from all of the other sections. It has a jazz ballad feel to it, which is likely influenced by Michael Brecker (as he was the inspiration behind *Stung*).⁴³ It exploits the low register of the bass clarinet with smooth, slow figures and without any special effects or extended techniques. Despite the lack of barlines, a steady pulse is essential to maintaining a ballad-like quality.

Section 'D' is characterized by flutter-tonguing, successions of notes, and repetitive-note gestures. The flutter-tongued notes are connected from one to the next by bends. This combination of two different effects is creative and creates a really interesting texture. The repetitive-note gestures begin fast and slow down over a period of five seconds.

⁴³ Email interview with Lyons, Appendix D: 111.

Example 4.27: Lyons, *Stung*, 'D' Section, line 4–5.



Section 'E' is another fast-paced episode. The rhythms are chopped up by frequent and unpredictably placed rests and the frantic pace culminates in a Balkan trill in two different places. Both the choppy rhythms and the Balkan trills allude to the Introduction. The Coda incorporates a mixture of thematic material that has already been expressed in several different sections. There is a return of the grace note gestures, bends, slap tonguing, key slaps, breath notes, flutter tonguing and the Balkan trill.

Stung has a spontaneous quality that is reflective of an improvisatory style, constantly switching between different motives and special effects. The bass clarinetist may feel that there is a lack of continuity when practising alone, but once the electronics are added the empty spaces are filled.

4.5. Conclusion

Stung and *Rattle* are excellent compositions to learn and perform because they are engaging. The pitch-less snare drum sounds and multiphonics in *Rattle* require the performer to explore different approaches to creating sounds on the bass clarinet. Similar to the improvised sections in *Rattle*, *Stung* encourages the performer to engage in the creative process by considering how the order of sections should unfold. The

plethora of extended techniques in *Stung* distinguish each section from one another, but they also unify the composition as a whole because most effects can be found in more than one section. The added interaction with electronics influences the performer to consider how each extended technique and special effect will be affected by electronic manipulation. Both compositions reflect the diversity of the Irish solo bass clarinet repertoire and encourage solo bass clarinetists to be creative and experimental.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation traced the emergence of solo bass clarinet repertoire by surveying early performers and specialists, musical styles of the twentieth century, and the compositions influenced by those styles. The background of bass clarinet specialization in Ireland was then discussed. The compositions highlighted in this dissertation represent a distinctive area in Irish composition. Stylistically, they welcome diversity, experimentation, and collaboration. Each piece embodies a different energy state that the performer must communicate. *Monster* is a high-energy composition with jarring moods, while *Continuum* is meditative. *Composure* bridges the gap between the two, teetering between feelings of being in control and losing it. *Rattle* and *O Breath* convey uncomfortable states (coughing and suffocating), and *Periastron* is a mixed-energy interaction of non-linear sounds. *Stung* mixes acoustic and electronic sounds in a reactive way that is not predictable and changes with each performance. All of these works encourage the performer to connect with the composers' intentions in the score, and then, using the bass clarinet as a tool, communicate these with the audience.

Each composer has approached the instrument in a different way, from integrating its acoustic sounds with electronics to exploring the range of its sonic possibilities through different extended techniques. This is only the beginning of the development of solo bass clarinet music in Ireland; as long as there is a bass clarinet specialist like Roe in the country, more works will continue to be written. Without him, the repertoire would be limited in size and in diversity. He has embraced experimental musical ideas and encouraged composers to write them. Roe's willingness to try new things (such as different kinds of notation) and actively seek out new collaborations, continues to propel the repertoire forward. This emergence of solo repertoire is vital for the acceptance and recognition of the bass clarinet in its own right, rather than simply being a low-sounding extension of the soprano clarinet.

This study of solo bass clarinet repertoire has demonstrated that chamber music plays an integral part in the development of solo works. Bass clarinet specialists Horák, Sparnaay, Bok, and Roe have all benefited from playing the instrument in small chamber ensembles. Future research could examine bass clarinet chamber music in Ireland which could lead to further insights about the instrument's role in Irish music. Other potential research areas include studying the role of other solo wind instruments in Irish contemporary music such as the soprano saxophone or the alto flute, or examining the development of solo bass clarinet music in other countries.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Email Interview with Paul Roe, 2 January 2017

Marcella Barz: How did your approach to learning *Monster* and *Periastron* differ/not differ from learning traditional repertoire such as Brahms or Mozart (disregarding the fact that you would most likely be learning Brahms or Mozart on clarinet rather than bass clarinet)?

Paul Roe: The process of learning both M and P was/is entirely different to learning more traditional repertoire. This relates directly to the end I have in mind when playing music from different eras or indeed different idioms such as Klezmer. With more traditional repertoire I have a strong sense of the historical context of works that have been performed over many years-in some cases such as Mozart 250+ years. With this there is a concern with the broader elements of this context. For example repertoire from the classical era is concerned with symmetry and balance, phrase & line, unity and cohesion. In romanticism there is an overt expressivity. My practice reflects these contextual elements with a focus on embodying these principles; in the case of classical works this would include finessing melodic lines, establishing clear foreground and background material through some structural analysis and establishing a performative narrative primarily of simplicity and transparency. In romantic music the move towards self-expression requires a more rigorous characterisation that represents a broader world view. There is a clear visceral immediacy that places the performer in a more overtly animative role. I find this requires establishing a knowing that seems somehow more energetically fluid and responsive. With other music forms such as Klezmer, again it is about emotional and somatic pitching-finding the internal mobility/movement to direct externally. This is inner work based on emerging awareness.

With contemporary learning like *M* and *P*-the sonic range is amplified to such an extent we need to move away from being instrumentalists and become more sound artists. The focus opens up on a Macro level to encompass a vast world of sound possibilities not accessible on the plane of simply being a clarinettist. Of course there are technical challenges to overcome but much of the learning is about carving and sculpting a sound world that is only possible with constant experimentation. With more traditional repertoire the parameters of the sound world are strongly established however with contemporary music as a performer our role is to create new sound worlds.

MB: How did your approach to learning *Monster* and *Periastron* differ/not differ from learning *Jackdaw*?

PR: *Jackdaw* as a piece is like being in a straight jacket-a fun jacket but there is little room for weft and weave.

Both *Monster* and *P[eriastron]* have some linear ambiguity and allow for a swaying of the musical narrative. There is an improvisatory feeling to both pieces whereas *Jackdaw* is pretty locked in. Every performance of *M* and *P* is quite different-there is room to expand or contract, to shout or wimper, to flail, to float, to grimace, to incite... all can be revealed. In *Jackdaw* the recipe works nicely as is and we get a nice result each time-as long as we've spent our practice time well. With *M* & *P* the concern is not with a nice result-its about engagement.

MB: Because *Monster* and *Periastron* were written for you, do you feel that that affected the way you learnt the pieces?

PR: Very much so. I know both of these composers well...I understand their aesthetic world, have played a number of their other pieces, know what sound-world they

inhabit, understood how literal they were in what they had written. In learning these pieces as I was involved with the composer before they wrote a note I had a sense of creating a soundtrack of this collaborative working where the notation was a good guide to a broader process which is then embodied and enacted in a performative space.

MB: Do you find it easier to learn pieces that were written for you?

PR: Not necessarily...it really depends on the piece. Some pieces that were written for me can be learnt and performed in less than 20hrs practice whereas I have played pieces that required in excess of 100hrs practice. On the other hand I have performed pieces that were written for me that took 75+hrs and ones that were not that took only a couple of hours. It depends on the work. However nowadays I would choose not to play pieces that took an excessive length of time due to practice time constraints and to a certain extent a philosophical view that artistic labour in this domain ideally does not fall to the performer to be a slave to complexity.

MB: What did you find to be the most difficult part of learning *Monster/Periastron*? Or if you can't decide what was the most difficult part, perhaps what did you find stood out as being particularly challenging about learning *Monster/Periastron*?

PR: Both required substantial creative imagination in how to shape, colour and articulate.

Perhaps the most challenging part of *Monster* is towards the end where the line in improvised. The difficulty is not so much in the improvisation but in the intensity required to bring it off. There needs to be a feeling of things coming apart at the seams. On a physical/somatic level this takes a lot of energy and willingness to go beyond stability. The requirement is to be really unhinged and unstable-the visual is highly relevant and important and cannot be simulated. You really have to 'lose the

plot' on the inside much like an actor playing a role of a character having a mental breakdown.

Periastron has major challenges with how to maintain continuity as the some of the lines are really ambiguous and require much musical and creative imagination to create a sense of unity of integration. Without careful pacing and imaginative variation this piece could sound quite static...there is real need to ornament, to vary trills, to dramatically flex the tone. The repertoire of colour required is extreme and is implicit and not explicitly conveyed. This is a piece that benefits from theatricality and drama. That said very careful practice of lines was required. Many variations were tried out and discarded. I also wrote some options within the piece that are a guide to the piece. This piece, in my opinion, is an exploration of a sonic narrative that compels the performer to reimagine or co-imagine a terrestrial sound world that negates clear notational convention. The performance preparation involves a learning process to create an otherworldly sound world that is facilitated by allowing quarks and leptons into the mix. Being fixated on preconceived notions of what the notes/notation should sound like is rather inhibitory to this process.

MB: Can you recall a situation when you learnt a piece that was unlike anything you had learnt before? What effects did this experience have on you?

PR: So many of the pieces that I have learnt and continue to learn are in many ways 'unlike what I've learnt before'. Actually I try to approach each piece and indeed each new performance of a piece as starting over. Some pieces do stand out from others, unfortunately often because they were deeply unsatisfying to prepare and to perform. I am more judicious in what I choose to play now so this doesn't really happen very often. On occasion I have spent many hours on a piece that I thought at the outset would be a good piece to play and that I would want to play it often only to be proven

wrong. Alas I have often performed pieces only once, that took many hours to prepare-
likely in excess of the time to write them.

APPENDIX B

Interview with Paul Roe, 3 August 2017

National Botanical Gardens of Ireland

Duration: 1:00:00

Marcella Barz: When did you first become interested in commissioning music for the bass clarinet?

Paul Roe: Probably from what I can remember, towards the latter part of the nineties, at that stage I'd been playing a lot of contemporary music with Concorde for the previous, say, eight years or something like that. And then I was doing more and more stuff on the bass clarinet and came to realize that actually, there's very little music that's written by Irish composers for the bass clarinet, [inaudible, 0:32–0:34] growing the repertoire a bit.

MB: Do you remember the first piece you commissioned?

PR: Well I think it's important to make this distinction in terms of commissioning because there's an official commissioning process which is, you could say, somewhat formal. In other words, you decide to commission a composer through the commissioning scheme that's run by the Arts Council of Ireland. And there's a quite defined process there about how much per minute and the evidence that's needed to get that funding, and the documentation. So that's a very official process. I think it's only one commissioning round a year now – there may have been two. And so you have that process, and that's somewhat limiting because of course there are many composers and many pieces to be written for many different instruments and there's

only so much funding. So if you were to go only on that system, of commissioning composers, you may have very few pieces.

So I took it upon myself to just ask composers: ‘hey how about you writing some pieces?’. And it was always very relaxed: ‘you know if you fancy it I’d really love to play a piece you might write’. Or often they might come to me and say — well, and subsequently they’d come to me and say ‘we’d like to write pieces’. So I suppose I’ve had a lot of pieces written for me. Some were official commissions, in other words, they were funded by the Arts Council and the composer got paid. But many others were simply — I asked for them and the composers were very happy to write them and they often weren’t paid for them. That said, neither is a performer paid unless they manage to make the gig. We get into the whole area of Aosdána; some composers are members of Aosdána where they actually get funded. They get an annual fee from Aosdána and that gives them the latitude to compose pieces. There’s a stipend of 17,000 Euro per year that composers who are belonging to this organization can draw down, providing they’re not earning above a certain amount of money. So that gives them the latitude to take on work where they’re not officially commissioned.

And it’s kind of a controversial one in a way, and I suppose we shouldn’t stray into this too much. [...] ¹ I have a feeling that they’re quite happy and willing to do [that] because it’s part of what they do as members of this organization. That said, I have asked a composer who was a member of this organization, who shall remain nameless, and ‘would he like to write a piece’, and he was very keen. But I said to him: ‘look, you know, there isn’t any official commission for this but if you’d like to we’d happily perform it here, here, and here’, and he kind of said: ‘oh, could you not get funding here, funding there, funding in this other place’ — so in the end it didn’t happen.

¹ Some parts of the interview were inaudible due to wind in the microphone and will be marked as above.

Sometimes that can be a deterrent. Mostly composers are very happy to write music when they feel there is an opportunity it will get performed.

There's basically an official commissioning process but if you were to stick to that then there wouldn't be an awful lot of works written. I've just made a habit of — as I befriend composers, get to know people—or even my students—I'll say: 'come on, write a piece for the bass clarinet'. And I think that's a really nice way to go at it. I also think the way I go at it is in a very relaxed way, it's: 'if you fancy, if you're not too busy, it'd be great'. I suppose you could call it a collaborative approach. It's not too stiff or it's not too defined either. I always enter into it with: 'look it, if I can help you on this process — great!'. But I've had — we've had quite a few pieces that have been officially paid for as well. An interesting side note to say about that: if you commissioned a composer you're supposed to fill in all this administrative form. But there's no part of that where you're paid. So you put in all of this work and do the performance but potentially you wouldn't get paid whereas the composer would. What actually happens often times, and this has happened to me, thankfully, a composer will say to me: 'will you commission me to write a piece?' And I go: 'sure! But you'll have to fill in the form and I'll sign it'. And that has happened and that has been successful.

In fact, recently a composer got in touch with me, same thing, 'I want to write a new piece for voice and bass clarinet'. It's with a jazz musician, a jazz singer. Then we decided well actually you know what we might do is we might make it project funding, which is a different stream. That way, we'll all get paid — potentially! To say a little further about the commissioning ... then, a major point was when I commissioned five composers all in one round, which was unusual. I don't think this had happened before where in one commissioning round by the Arts Council, that I put in a submission for five new works, which were what I used for my PhD research and it got funded. That was really great as well because it meant these composers I was working closely with

on my PhD research were being paid. So I didn't feel quite so much a sense of going to them cap in hand: 'oh, do you mind'. They're being paid and they were happy to also facilitate my inquiry and so forth. So you can imagine five new pieces that were commissioned and paid for in the space of a couple of years really was a big chunk. And that spawned a whole lot of other pieces and other interest around the bass clarinet and bass clarinet solo works.

MB: What effect do you think Concorde has had on the bass clarinet repertoire, and specifically solo [repertoire]?

PR: Well, Concorde and the bass clarinet begins to a certain extent with Harry Sparnaay. When I started playing in Concorde first, I can't remember for sure, but I have a fair idea that I predominantly played clarinet and not so much bass clarinet. We did have Harry over as a guest soloist on a number of occasions. And obviously Harry's influence coming to visit Concorde that I really got on with him first of all as a person. We shared a lot of the same humour, I suppose, and the same passion and desire for new music. So Concorde, bass clarinet, Harry Sparnaay, in the beginning.

Then obviously from that point then, meeting composers as a member of the ensemble. Cause first of all when I was with Concorde I was primarily an ensemble player who did some solo pieces, but I suppose it's fair to say when I reflect back now, as time has gone along I've done more and more solo stuff within Concorde. So most concerts we do in Concorde I would have some solo pieces or a piece for solo bass clarinet, solo clarinet, or duos... Actually, I think that was also because most of the stuff we [Concorde] did was for the full ensemble, five instruments, sometimes six. Then over the years we began to play in different spaces, we did more duos, more trios, more solos, and of course all of that inspired me to get more repertoire. And then I suppose as I started getting to know composers in the context of Concorde and

chamber music [...] composers who had already written pieces for Concorde: 'hey, how about writing a piece for the bass clarinet?'

By the time it came to asking a group of composers to write pieces for me, in the early 2000s, whenever it was, 2002, three, I had already known all of these composers for some time and I was able to go, 'oh, I'd love if Stephen [Gardner] would write a piece for me, I'd love if Ed [Bennett] would write a piece for me, I'd love if Ronan Guilfoyle would write a piece for me, if Jane [O'Leary]', and so forth. And that was really the backdrop to it. I began to play more and more bass clarinet, as well as clarinet, in the group. And then I did some duos with Harry, we did some work together. I played with Harry at the International Bass Clarinet Festival in Rotterdam in 2005.

MB: *Continuum* and *The Lads* were the first solo bass clarinet pieces written by Irish composers. Was it your idea to commission these pieces?

PR: You know, both of those pieces take me back. I'm sure you have the year, I don't know the years actually.

MB: 2000

PR: Oh okay... Those pieces represent for me relationships, to a certain extent. And reflecting back now seventeen years on the relationship with those two other artists, this is quite interesting. *Continuum* was written by a good friend of mine called Rob Canning and at the time that he wrote this he was doing a lot of exploration with technology and different approaches to composing. Rob, you know, was really pushing the envelope in terms of technological development. So when I'm talking about it now, I'm mindful of what he went on to do and I'm mindful of other things he had me doing, like walking down the street with radio receivers playing in the middle of the night when it's raining, and people looking at me, I'm playing at the corner side. So I have

very happy memories of him and very happy memories of that encounter. And I have happy memories of going down to his studio in Wicklow where he was working at the time. And staying overnight and drinking beer and smoking cigarettes and having fun and listening to Stockhausen, and I know he was very influenced by Stockhausen at that time. So for me the music is inseparable from the relationship and the memory that that brings for me. I suppose what sticks out to me about *Continuum* is — first of all I was definitely tremendously inspired by Rob's... He had all of these wacky ideas and he was doing all of these kind of quirky readings of different subjects. So we used to have really interesting conversations about all sorts of stuff.

That certainly helped me in terms of my development as well, as an artist. And I think I would have helped Rob too to explore what it is like working with a musician, a real live musician. You could say in a way, Rob is possibly like some composers who like to do things in his own space, spends a lot of time in his studio tweaking, twiddling the knobs, and creating sounds. So I think it was a really nice encounter, creative encounter between us. One of the things I remember which made the piece a challenge, unfortunately, subsequently to play it, and that's why I haven't played it all that often is because at the time you had to have a digital delay machine to play it, in order to have the delay. I think it was seven seconds, I can't remember... It was a long delay. In order for it to work with the piece it needed to have this particular delay machine. And at that stage, of course, Rob had all this machinery at his studio, in his house. It was a real pleasure. And also that's one of very few pieces that's actually really quite easy to play, which is nice. Often in contemporary music programmes, as you know so well, it's a pretty tough gig. That's an easy piece to play and its very satisfying and I think it's a really good piece. It has its own world. Now I've been talking a lot about that one piece. Let me move straight away — by way of contrast, in a sense, to talk about *The Lads*.

The Lads was written by Michael Holohan who again, I have known for those years. And he entirely represents a whole different approach to composition. You may call it much more traditional. Certain his medium for writing music, which is still hand written to this day, I think he still hand writes his music. I don't think he uses software, I might be wrong. He wrote a piece for me this year. I played a piece of his this year and it was all handwritten. *The Lads* is an interesting exploration in terms of collaborative process as well. Michael was working with a craftsman on the piece called *The Lads*. And he wanted to incorporate the clarinet, bass clarinet, into these pieces of furniture. He wrote these two pieces [*Chatterbox* for clarinet and *O Breath* for bass clarinet]. I learned *The Lads* and it was very traditional. It didn't sound remotely contemporary, totally the opposite of Rob's. To me it sounded almost like a study to a certain extent. I enjoyed it but I thought... yeah, it certainly wasn't pushing the boundaries of composition. But that said, the choreographic element of it was really quite challenging because with that piece I had to put my arms in through one aperture – my right arm through one aperture and my left arm through a different aperture [gestures] and then the clarinet in between. So from a choreographic point of view it was interesting. But musically I think I would say, from a performer's perspective, really a totally different engagement than the Rob Canning thing. And I suppose you might say this about contemporary music in a way, the interesting thing about it is to explore *new* ideas, *new* things. And I would say Michael is much more of a traditionalist, if you could put it like that. So they represent, actually, really two good extremes, in a way. One that was really cutting edge — Rob, I can tell you now, for the seventeen years since has gone on to continue to be really quite out there.

MB: I thought you mentioned he [Michael Holohan] revised the bass clarinet movement recently?

PR: Yes. *The Lads* [*Chatterbox*] is very traditional, a lot of the chromaticism, a lot of chordal movement, and you know, kind of standard clarinet-ty pyrotechnics. Whereas

O Breath for the bass clarinet is, I think, much more pushing the envelope, interestingly enough. I remember it was written as a tribute to some people who had died in containers, which was very sad actually. At the time, I think it was in Liverpool or somewhere like that, anyway, these Chinese people were stowed away to find a new life and a lot of families died in these containers. So it was really terrible, terribly sad. That particular movement represents that breath, the lack of breath. So throughout the bass clarinet you have that sense of [blows air] the wheezing of the bass clarinet. It was very effective.

But there was one section in it, page two, where he wrote a series of multiphonics without any reference to any technique in terms of research. I looked at it and I thought: 'oh my God, how am I going to do this?'. You've got a whole page of multiphonics. And as you know from playing multiphonics, they have quite complicated fingering systems. First of all the fingering systems are complicated but then also each multiphonic has a totally different blowing response. Not like when we're playing on the clarinet where the blowing response for each register is more or less the same. Yes, we have to shift subtly different things. Multiphonics — there's huge differences in terms of the blowing pressure required. So he had all of these multiphonics. Apart from the technical change in one fingering to another, if you were to do with multiphonic fingerings, then you also have to adjust your embouchure and your blowing pressure for each one. So I, as you do as a contemporary performer, you connect with the music and the composer and the idea and the intention and the motivation, and you don't have to adopt an overly literal approach to doing exactly what's on the page. Because often composers have an idea of what they'd like it to sound like and it doesn't necessary have to be to the letter [...] to put it like that.

I came up with a strategy that I thought would work to make that piece work, because as you know with multiphonics, typically you'll hear the top note and you'll hear the lower note and the notes in between, of the chord, can vary quite considerably. What I

chose to do was to play it with more or less traditional fingerings, normal fingerings for the high pitch, and then undertone it for the lower pitch. I remember distinctly — that's why I'm finding this interesting that you're holding this interview with me. I can remember where I was, I can remember the room I was in, I can remember Michael being at the piano because I started playing these chords [sings]. And he began to look a bit disappointed. And I just soldiered on: 'it's grand'. And he kind of goes: 'oh!'. And he started playing the chords on the piano, and he said: 'oh, that's not really what I've written here'. I had to say to him like, 'listen, this is one instrument and you go [blows air] and then it's quite amazing that you can make multiple pitches, but you can't do it like a piano' [laughs]. So he was a little bit disappointed. And I'd put quite a bit of work into it so you can see how collaboratively things could fall apart quickly enough if you were too sensitive. He was okay with the compromise I'd come up with. You know, that's how I did the piece. The chords didn't really bear any relation to what is possible.

MB: So is that was the revision was [about]?

PR: I don't know, you know, I can't remember to be perfectly honest with you...

Maybe! There's one final thing, actually, that I'd like to say about this piece, which I found very touching. And I think it's a very important story. Sometimes as performers we go out to play and we may feel, 'oh, I don't feel like it, I'm not in the humour today', but you have to do it. That's the job, you're professional. And you put on a brave face and you do it. I remember playing those pieces, in Drogheda, and again I remember the space, I remember how I was feeling, I wasn't feeling in great form or something. I came out and I played the pieces, *The Lads* [Chatterbox] and *O Breath*. That was okay, I didn't think anything of it. This woman came up to me after the performance and she was immensely touched by the performance. I'd explained the piece was about the loss of breath of these people and their lives draining away in this container. And she said she had had a baby, I don't know whether it was that year, but it had died of cot death. And that when I was playing this piece it brought all of that back, the baby and maybe

just running out of breath. She was immensely moved by it. So I suppose the moral of the story is [that] music communicates in a way that is beyond any sort of logical understanding. It touches people in so many ways and it is associative with all of our lives and our experience in our lives. Sometimes as performers we may forget that. I think there's something about trying to remember that all of the time, to be respectful to that possibility. Even if we're not feeling it, maybe it's moving somebody tremendously in the audience.

MB: How do you think playing with electronics has changed in the past seventeen years?

PR: I've always enjoyed it, you know. I've always been intrigued by trying things out. I've never been afraid, I've never been one of these musicians, 'Oh I can't do that!' I think that's one of the signs of a contemporary musician in contrast to someone who's a bit more conservative. I've never been too afraid to try all sorts of crazy things on the instrument including water in the bell of my bass clarinet and [...] tennis balls and all this sort of thing. But as regards technology, I think, well of course what's happened in technology in all other ways it's become much more easy to do things. There's much more ease to do things. I spoke about *Continuum* and how what Rob was doing there was a very complex manoeuvre at the time that can probably be done very simply now on an iPhone or something. But he needed a special digital delay machine, a special one. Not just an ordinary one because he needed lengthy delay as opposed to two seconds. He wanted a big delay. From a technology point of view it's become much more accessible to do these things. And it's become more mainstream, it used to be a bit of its own thing. And I think gradually, little by little, it's beginning to be more nuanced in how it's being used. I think in the past composers — and it is a trap I think for composers to fall into this idea of creating pieces that are a compendium of effects. Just because the technology allows so much — I think in the early days in particular there was a tendency to really overdo it. There wasn't so much subtlety in the use of

technology. So I think that's changed. There's much more diversity in the area of electronic music as well.

Personally, I think the idea of live instruments and technology is very attractive because you get a blend of new interaction, new sounds, new technology, but also there's a human side to it. I've never really been a major fan of just laptops or laptop music making. No disrespect to those who do that. Or people who stare at screens who don't really engage with an audience. It just doesn't really appeal to me and doesn't seem like an engaged process really. Watching it's a bit nerdy. I think having technology and the human being is a very engaging thing. I'm thinking about your final performance there recently and how engaging it was to watch you playing, but watch the screen [referring to Katharine Norman's *Paul's Walk*], listen to the music. It's a very immersive and compelling experience. I think the interaction of the two is good.

I think the more we can begin to – and they're trying to do this – integrate the elements so that there is greater connection, artistic connection, aesthetic connection is important. We're seeing more and more of that. And you would have played *Stung* by Frank Lyons who really begins to integrate technology into the piece rather than having two separate things. And of course now, Matthias Mueller and his work with SABRe (Sensor Augmented Bass Clarinet Research) and now that's gone onto production for the regular clarinet as well. What that seems to be all working towards is more integration and I really think that's a good thing. Whereas before, there was a touch of kind of a bit nerdy, a bit geeky, and then let's just add on a piece.

Actually, let me tell you another story. A guy who shall again remain anonymous, who had *really* written a lot of electronic music. That was his metier, if you like. And then he was commissioned by Concorde to write a piece for us. And I met him at his house a couple of times and it really felt like the instruments were kind of: 'oh I've better do something with these people, I've got a clarinet, what'll they do, okay'. Or: 'I've got a

flute, okay, what'll I do'. And he had the most amazing sounds but then what he produced for the instrumentalist was — it was like 90% technology and 10% the instrument. And now it's become much more fifty-fifty. Actually, last night I went to see *Biophilia* [concert of the album by Björk] and that's really beautifully integrated. You've got this choral voices of these girls' choir and you've got the soloist Björk, and you've got the technology guys doing their stuff and you've got video. I think there's been a lot of influence in electronic music from other music forms, which I really like too. I'm hopeful one of these days we might get a kind of, one of these sort of heavy beats pieces for bass clarinet. Although Sqwonk are kind of doing that sort of thing.

MB: Was *Rattle* your idea, or was it Amanda [Feery]'s idea?

PR: *Rattle* was the first time I came across Amanda, she first really crossed my radar in a way. To be honest with you, I can't really talk a lot about the genesis of the piece because I don't really remember. I know she was a clarinet player, and I would have come across her from going in and out to CMC because she was working in CMC at the time. I knew her to be quite an engaging sort of a person. You know when you get to talk to people that they have a sharpness of mind, or a curiosity, I suppose, is what you'd be looking for as people who are thinking about collaboration and things like that or people that you might like to write pieces for you. I certainly got a sense from Amanda that she wasn't interested in just... what you might call a composer who composes in a more traditional way. She certainly wanted to explore boundaries and explore new sounds and new ways of doing things and new approaches.

So when it came to *Rattle*, I thought her ideas were really, really good. The idea of the snare drum at the beginning of the piece, the elements of improvisation in it, and I also thought the way she notated was cool as well. She didn't get bogged down in finding the notation. She really had a sound idea and she got it on the page and it may not be exactly easy to literally play. But it allows a lot of exploration from the performers

perspective as well. Even just in terms, as you found yourself, you explored the beginning: 'now how can I make that sound that she's looking for?' I really like that sort of thing in these encounters where there's a lot of space for you to engage with the material that's there as opposed to something that's set. I also liked that she had played the clarinet and that what she was interested in exploring in the piece was not the nice traditional beautiful clarinet sounding – she likes the squeaks and the squawks, all the things that we're trying to avoid. I found that very creative and an interesting approach to it. I also found working with her was very agreeable in that she was open to the type of ways I had decided to play the improvised sections. I just entered into the process to see what could I bring to this that would fill it out, would create and sound what both the composer and myself could come to. Maybe that sounds ridiculous.

That piece went on to be played quite a bit. I think Jane [O'Leary] would have known about her and then because we thought it was very good and I think we ended up playing the piece a few more times in the context of Concorde. She also, there was an element with that piece, from what I gathered [...] electronic part. I don't think that ever happened. I think she always intended for it to have an electronic part and she never quite got around to that. Then it was recorded by CMC for one of their CDs. And it's been played by other players, which I always think is always nice as well. Deirdre O'Leary's played it and you and myself have played it and I don't know maybe some other players have done so as well. I think it's really nice when a piece goes on to be played by other performers and gets a whole new perspective on things too. It develops a whole new life as well.

MB: What does the title [*Rattle*] refer to?

PR: Its funny how, we as performers, as artists, as musicians, we're naturally, I would say, tuned into sound. So rattle, you could think that's kind of a rattle-y sound off the

piece at the beginning. But that's not what it refers to at all. A rattle is a kind of a cough that I think her granny had. I think that's where the title comes from, a cough that her granny had. That was called a rattle in the chest, you know, a chesty cough, a rattle, or a wheeze or something. Would you just check that with Amanda? Names are evocative. I could say that they can influence how we approach playing pieces. I remember also a piece by Stephan Gardner which is called *Trane*. It sounds quite a lot like a train at different points in it – the machine, the train – but actually it was really influenced by John Coltrane. But people will do puns on language and things like that. Language is sound and it influences people.

MB: What was your approach to the improvised section [in *Rattle*]?

PR: My approach to the improvised section was, first of all, to contextualise what I did in what came before and what comes after. What happens before the improvisation is this linearity, and then this ostinato pattern that's linear. There's some certain amount of jumping around in the registers. And then this kind of improvised section, and I'm now talking about the multiphonic improvised section. [...] In a sense that the multiphonics are quite imprecise. I tried to create that as a real big contrast to what had come before. It almost represents a middle section of the piece. When I was doing it I took that into account. I certainly wasn't trying to be too literal about what she had written. I wanted it to match from a sound world point of view, how I perceived it to be. Then the later section where there's a lot of scalar type of things... To me, that's beginning to wind back up into the next section which is a return of the same motif but in a different register. So it felt, an idea to have it more, I suppose, traditional approach [...] that side of it.

I think more than anything what's important is to convey the energy of the music itself. So the improvisation will want to be reflective of the energy that has come out of the rest of the performance as well. It wants to fit into that energy space. I think when I'm

improvising like that, it's a visceral experience that I'm looking to create from both myself, but also in terms of the sound that's created will have a direct visceral, physical connection. That said, I did in the end write out a section of the improvisation so that there's an element of me repeating that. I don't think that's necessarily... It's one way of doing it. I think you've come up with other ways, Marcella, which I really like. I've tried different ways of doing these things. I think I wrote out some of the sections because I felt it linked better to what was coming before. Whereas if I'd have just improvised it may not have stayed within the three bars, or the five bars, it may have gotten longer or shorter. And it may have sounded not really within the context of [...].

MB: Do you know what the title *Stung* refers to?

PR: I love the title. To be honest with you I can't remember. I think he may have told me, but I don't remember if he did. He wrote a piece for bass clarinet and accordion and that's a lovely name as well [*Thud*]. That's equally a nice, punchy name. I suppose going back to the titles of pieces, like *Rattle*, the single word rattle has a certain energy about it. And *Stung* also has an immediacy about that. I find it really evocative and it's got a [makes a 'stung' noise], I don't know, it moves something in me anyway.

Again, this is totally crazy and I don't think I've thought of this before, but a sting, I don't know whether you know what a sting is, but a sting in musical terms is like a thirty second clip that you might hear in an ad, an ad break. It may be because that piece is a series of stings, in a way.

Again, when I think about these pieces that have been written for me, I think about the person and I think about the engagement that led up to the piece. I knew Frank a long time before he wrote *Stung*. I'd played some of his other pieces, his other chamber pieces. In fact, I can probably say that about most of the solo bass clarinet pieces. Probably I played chamber music pieces of all of those composers before they wrote

solo pieces. In a lot of cases, anyway. You could check that. That certainly meant I was doing a bit of practice based research inadvertently, 'I'd definitely like him to write a clarinet piece and I wouldn't like her to write one or him to write one', and so forth. And often it's based on the person. And Frank again, as you know, is very agreeable, very nice fella. [He's] got lots of really great ideas, very self-effacing, very easy to work with, very easy to have a collaborative process. And we've spoken a long time about working together, doing some pieces, and eventually Frank came up with this piece. We'd had many conversations over the years about how composition and performance were really closely related and that when composer and performer work closely together it works really, really well. And he himself is a performer, a guitarist, and he played in all sorts of bands. He has a strong feeling of what it's like to be a performer and has a great interest in jazz, and great interest in John Coltrane, Pat Metheny, all these jazz musicians. So all of that goes into the mix with this piece. *Stung* is definitely influenced by Coltrane, which is interesting as well because of Stephan Gardner's piece [*It's the hole that kills you not the bullet* (2005) for bass clarinet and tape]. So *Stung* – yeah, definitely influenced by jazz, influenced by John Coltrane, influenced by technology, influenced by improvisational styles. Frank knew I was interested in improvising and I was interested in creative music making. And he knew that we would get along well, which is what you want when you're working with people. That's really the backdrop to *Stung*. And he wrote a piece for bass clarinet and accordion as well [*Thud* (2013)], using similar ideas where the live electronics is changed each time the piece is played. That's a very attractive side to the piece.

MB: Where did the term 'Balkan trill' come from? Was that your term or was that Frank's [term]?

PR: Ah, no. That was my term, but I can't claim any ownership of it either. I first heard the term 'Balkan trill' from David Krakauer when I was in New York in 2008 when I studied klezmer. He told me about Balkan trilling and he does a great Balkan trill. He

does a lot of great things actually, but his Balkan trill is pretty impressive. So if you listen to Krakauer he does a pretty wild Balkan trill. Balkan of course coming from Balkan music. Balkan trill is suggestive of a particular style of music, Balkan music. And then the trill obviously is trilling with the finger and also the embouchure at the same time.

MB: So you would have shown him that trill?

PR: I did. That's correct. He would have come to my house, actually, now that I think of it. I've often had composers come to my house and record me doing all sorts of crazy noises and stuff. They then — they work with that. They might have their reference books and stuff like that but then they have this audio recording of the stuff that I particularly like doing or can do and that gives them a palette with which they can work. One of the challenges of working like that then is often I'll do stuff and I don't know what I'm doing and they go: 'yes I love that, that's great!' And they might come back and they go: 'do you remember you did that thing?' And I go: 'no'. 'You know the thing that's like [sings]', and I go, 'is it this?', 'no, no, it's not that. It's like that, but it's not...' [laughs]. That has led to some really interesting conversations trying to recreate what had been played spontaneously in the moment. But that's the beauty of creativity really. I think if we could adopt that approach to making music, whether we're playing Brahms, or Mozart, or contemporary music, that we actually interact with it in real time, now, in this very moment. Obviously within the bounds of stylistic considerations. But to adopt an approach that's not pre-cooked, I think works so well. Obviously you've got to do that in contemporary music to be convincing. [...] I always remembered hearing Sabine Meyer playing Mozart concerto on the radio and just being stunned. It sounded like contemporary music to me. Not the harmonies, not the notes, not any of that, but just the freshness, as if it was just composed yesterday. This piece had been written 200 years ago or something. And that was because of the engagement and the freshness and the charisma and her great artistry of course. But I

think that's always been something I think I would prioritize, whatever music you play. To actually be alive to the moment. Not to adopt an attitude of trying to do something that's a museum piece. That it should always be living. Music is living, you know.

MB: Before working with David Bremner on *Composure*, had you ever worked with a graphic score before?

PR: Yes, I've worked with graphic scores quite a bit over the years. The guy who probably most got me into graphic scores was Rob Canning. He had quite a range of interesting graphic scores from Earle Brown to Stockhausen ones, and various other ones. And Rob had explored different ways of notating music as well, in an incredibly creative fashion. I mean, you should look at some of his scores. Rob's scores are amazing to look at. I certainly was aware and I knew of course about *Treatise*, this famous work by Cornelius Cardew. So I knew about this work and with David Bremner then, he knew that I knew and I knew that he knew, we knew that this was a medium by which we could work collaboratively. He was very interested in the idea of collaborative working and exploring what happens when we change the context, we tear away the traditional way of notating music. Again, as I think about the piece, I think about David, I think about the person, I think about the interactions I've had with them. I'm now finding it really, even in this interview, how joyful it is to remember these things. I'm also thinking about how – I don't know whether or not you know this – you know Elgar's Enigma Variations, well each one of those variations was written about a friend. In a way, when I think about each of these pieces, I think about the friendship and I think about the artistic engagement and the fun that came out of those things, and the joy of doing that sort of work. The actual resulting piece of music is one thing, but the process is a whole other thing, which is really interesting. The whole graphic score thing... it has great possibilities in a way. I'm a bit unsure as to what to say about graphic scores.

MB: What was challenging about it?

PR: What was challenging about it, curiously enough, in a way, was more for David than it was for me in a way. I don't mind taking risks, I don't mind trying things, I don't mind if it's not right when I'm playing contemporary music. What was challenging about it was first of all the size of the score was very difficult to transport. So actually in a very practical way of course you could manage. You could play it off an iPad or you could get a smaller version of it. The original version, which is A0 or something, it's a big version, it looks amazing. The success of that piece, actually, is how it looks and how people engage with how it looks. When I play this piece, I play with my back to the audience so the audience can see what I'm playing. I think another way of doing it would be to have it up on the wall or as a video or something or as a slide. But people love looking at it and hearing it unfolding. I always find it highly amusing because people coming up after will say to me 'oh, I loved when you got to this bit, and you got to that bit, and you got to the other bit'. You could say they are very much involved in the creative process. They're hearing something that I'm playing and I'm playing something that may relate to what they think, but it may not at all. Some of that piece, I did attempt to do what I thought the actual images represented in terms of high-low, thick-thin, loud-soft, these sort of things. But then also I used it as a stimulus, to just respond to it in a non-literal fashion. In the one hand, you could say, I could have adopted a programmatic approach to it. Yeah, we've ascending lines so I should go up there and then in another way I approach it in a non-programmatic, a non-linear way, and in an abstract way which was just to respond to it emotionally, viscerally, and not too intellectually. For me, I didn't find it too difficult, I enjoyed doing that. But I think for David, when he heard me playing it, I can remember him going: 'oh, okay'. And he even started saying, 'oh I could see you spend quite a lot of time on this section'. How would he know? Do you know what I mean? And I didn't say I did or I didn't, but it quite possibly wasn't. That I found very amusing.

APPENDIX C

Email Interview with Paul Roe, 23 August 2017

Marcella Barz: What is it like as a performer to perform with Concorde? How would you contrast it to playing in the orchestra (NSO)?

Paul Roe: It is really lovely to play with Concorde. I've been performing with them for something like 25yrs. It is completely different to playing with the NSO in many ways. Concorde feels like family-we are know each other's foibles well, we are tolerant of our idiosyncrasies and happy for our colleagues to shine. We intuit each other's movements, gestures and find it quite easy to prepare works quickly. There is no sense of judgement. We enjoy the creative exploration together-there is always a sense of the collective. I have played many, many solo pieces in Concorde concerts but I never see myself as different-I am a member even when playing solos. It's not about me shining at all. It's about the group. We support each other beyond the group-as you can imagine over many years there has been various issues in members lives and we endeavour to be there for each other. As I say it's like a family. Really Jane's leadership has created a culture of creativity, fun and curiosity. For me playing in Concorde is a joy... a creative freedom. We don't worry too much about perfection or dotting every i and crossing every T...music is after all communication and not didacticism.

On the other hand playing in a big orchestra such as the NSO is often quite an isolating experience. You are a small cog in a big machine and at times your small cog has a big part to play. Professional orchestral playing, like professional sport is about production. Of course what's being produced is sometimes transcendent performance but often it is about efficiency and not making mistakes, about playing right, about responding to direction, about fitting in. Speed is important-speed of learning, delivering and performing. Naturally exemplary sight-reading is crucial. An ability to handle

performance stress/anxiety is a must. For me playing in an orchestra was inhibitory artistically, emotionally and psychologically. I felt constrained and it really seemed like a production process, with line managers and other hierarchical structures. Ego is important, bullet-proof confidence an asset and overall toughness a must. Sensitivity is inherent in most musicians but the orchestral path requires one to damp down sensitivity in favour of robustness. Unfortunately this encourages an arrogance amongst some musicians who hold position as preeminent to contribution and a displaced sense of power. Community is entirely compromised in orchestral settings and as for collaboration this is simply not a feature. Orchestras suit some people but they are extremely stifling for many. The fortunate ones leave. However many having trained all their lives find positions in orchestras and make economic/relational commitments that condemn them to work in an environment that shuts them down on many fronts. As I say there are those it suits-typically confident, forthright, robust personalities but many others it doesn't. There is a premium on knowing and certainty, for me artistry is about the search and any answers arrive at simply raise more questions to explore.

MB: Have any repeat performances of *The Lads* included the box from the containers exhibition or do you not have access to it anymore?

PR: There were a few performances in the box! but as for it's whereabouts now I don't know. I think M. Holohan would have an idea-and would be happy to share with you.

MB: What qualities as a performer/collaborator do you think have influenced the composers that you have worked with?

I like this question very much-it causes me to think. I think the individual matters enormously-I'm struck by the difference you bring to performing works I have performed many times. I am attracted and interested. It's a combination. The performer, composer, the music, the context all matter so much. I think the qualities I have that have inspired composers are all part of me, of course there are elements but

just like a composer it's the totality of the artistic personality that counts. However let me consider some qualities of mine would have influenced composers. I am curious, philosophical, interested in exploration, non judgemental (try to be), fun. I am easy to work with-have a genuine interest in people and creativity and somewhat self-effacing. As a player, which for me is of secondary importance the qualities are musical imagination, flexibility, wide sound palette, technically supple, dynamically varied, intellectual engaged, emotionally connected and somatically embody the work.

MB: How do you think you have affected the output of solo bass clarinet repertoire as opposed to if it had been someone else commissioning all of these pieces?

PR: Another great question... the works reflect both composers and my interests artistically-colour, imagination, gesture, dynamism, energy, intensity. Another performer may be for example be about their virtuosity, individual charisma, impressive technical fireworks etc. to place it back on you-you bring a feminine energy, an elegance, an engagement that is about the music and your part in the music as opposed to some whom it's about them. To use a phrase I came across recently there is a shift required in the world (of leadership) that is from the current love of power to the power of love. It sounds corny but I think viewed in a broader context what it means is the everyone has a unique and beautiful perspective if allowed the opportunity to express it.

APPENDIX D

E-mail Interview with Frank Lyons, August 28 2017

Marcella Barz: What does the title *Stung* refer to?

Frank Lyons: Interesting question! As you'll be aware, the late, great saxophonist Michael Brecker was the main inspiration behind this piece; I'm constantly fascinated and moved by his playing. I remember searching in my mind for a descriptive word of how I felt after listening to a particularly fiery Brecker solo, on the track Tumbleweed I think, and that feeling was 'stung'!

APPENDIX E

List of Solo Bass Clarinet Compositions by Irish Composers (including works with electronics)²

Date Composed	Title of Composition	Composer	Premiered by	Instrumentation
2000	Continuum	Rob Canning	Paul Roe	amplified bcl, tape, and digital delay
2000	The Lads (‘Chatterbox and ‘O Breath’)	Michael Holohan	Paul Roe	cl+bcl
2001 rev. 2012	Music Box	Elaine Agnew	Paul Roe	bcl, pre-recorded voice track
2003	Ashes	Ian Wilson	Sarah Watts	bcl
2004	Motus	Kevin O’Connell	Sarah Watts	bcl
2005	a piacere	Jane O’Leary	Paul Roe	bcl
2005	an alsation ate my dog	Karen Power	Deirdre O’Leary	bcl, tape
2005	It's the hole that kills you not the bullet	Stephen Gardner	Paul Roe	bcl, tape

² Most of this list was compiled using the Contemporary Music Centre Ireland’s online database. The pieces that were not listed on CMC’s website were found in Paul Roe’s personal collection, as well as listed on the websites of composers. The vast majority of them are available through CMC.

2005	Níl Aon Ór ag an Fear Bás	Peter Moran	no information	bcl
2005	Monster	Ed Bennett	Paul Roe	bcl, tape
2005	Music for Bass Clarinet	Ronan Guilfoyle	Paul Roe	bcl
2006	Time and Space Died Yesterday	Eibhlís Farrell	Paul Roe	bcl
2007	are you sure you're hearing what's written	Karen Power	no info.	bcl, tape
2007	Corcra	Deirdre McKay	Paul Roe	bcl
2007	Fab-land	David Morris	Paul Roe	bcl
2007	Grace Park	Peter Moran	Paul Roe	bcl
2007	Other Stories	Christopher Norby	Paul Roe	bcl
2007	our headlights blew softly into the black, illuminating very little	Jonathan Nangle	Deirdre O'Leary	bcl, tape
2007	Whispering the Turmoil Down	Judith Ring	Paul Roe	bcl, tape
2007	Wild Cooking	Neil Burns	no info.	bcl
2008	The End Is The Beginning Is The End	Daniel McDermott	Paul Roe	bcl
2008	Ruach	Anne-Marie O'Farrell	Deirdre O'Leary	cl+ecl+bcl

2009	Composure	David Bremner	Paul Roe	bcl
2010	Charm and Strange	Emma O'Halloran	Paul Roe	bcl
2010	Crevice Cradle Cracks	Ailís Ní Ríain	Deirdre O'Leary	bcl, tape
2010	Periastron	Gráinne Mulvey	Paul Roe	bcl, tape
2010	Rattle	Amanda Feery	Paul Roe	bcl
2010	Séamsur I	Ryan Molloy	no info.	bcl
2010	Stung	Frank Lyons	Paul Roe	bcl, live electronics
2011	A Dark Song	Frank Corcoran	Fintan Sutton	bcl
2012	Linea	Martin O'Leary	Paul Roe	bcl
2012	Multiphonic Study	Greg Caffrey	Sarah Watts	bcl
2013	Cloughlea	Alyson Barber	Paul Roe	bcl
2013	hhhmmm...	Elaine Agnew	Paul Roe	bcl
2013	a point on many lines	Scott McLaughlin	Henri Bok	bcl
2013–14	Music for Joey	Marian Ingoldsby	Paul Roe	cl+bcl (+electronics)
2013	We Swim	Ben McHugh	Paul Roe	bcl, live electronics
2014	Gáeth Ard Úar	Eoin Mulvany	no info.	bcl

2014	Three Pieces for Bass Clarinet and Electronics	Matthew Whiteside	Joanna Nicholson	bcl, electronics
2015	Star Maker	Amanda Feery	Paul Roe	bcl
2016	Invasive Sounds	Enda Bates	no info	bcl, electronics