HISTORICAL AND PERFORMANCE PERSPECTIVES
OF CLARINET MATERIAL
PERFORMED IN A THESIS RECITAL

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ABSTRACT

This document is designed to accompany the writer's Lecture-Recital performed on June 6, 1983. It presents all the material from the lecture in a more detailed and extensive account.

A discussion of clarinet solo material, representative of four periods and/or styles in the development of the clarinet repertoire, is featured: an unaccompanied twentieth-century work, Heinrich Sutermeister's Capriccio; an early classical concerto, Karl Stamitz's Concerto in E-flat Major; a French Conservatory Contest Piece, Charles Lefebvre's Fantaisie-Caprice; and a late romantic sonata, Johannes Brahms' Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120, No. 2.

Sutermeister's Capriccio (1946), for a clarinet, was commissioned as a contest piece for the Geneva Conservatory. The composition is of a quality particularly suitable for a contest, for two contrasting ideas permeate the entire work: one is rough and crisp with staccato passages; the other is smooth and calm with legato passages. It is this writer's opinion that Capriccio reflects the influence of Sutermeister's cinematic works.

Karl Stamitz's Concerto in E-flat reflects the features of the French school of clarinet playing as exhibited by the first well-known clarinet virtuoso, Joseph Beer. This concerto also shows the influence of Mozart, as many mutual features occur between Stamitz's Concerto in
E-flat and Mozart's Concerto in A.

Significant contributions to woodwind literature have been made by French composers. This is, in part, attributable to the Paris Conservatory, which since the late nineteenth century has commissioned French composers to write contest pieces for the final performance examinations. Such works have included Debussy's *Première Rhapsodie*, and Lefebvre's *Fantaisie-Caprice*.

Johannes Brahms' fascination with Richard Mühlfeld, eminent clarinetist of the Meiningen Orchestra, manifests itself in four chamber works he wrote for the clarinet. Brahms' *Clarinet Quintet* Op. 115 is regarded as one of his greatest masterpieces. The Two Sonatas for Clarinet and Piano Op. 120 offer quite a contrast. The first, in F minor, is predominantly the more passionate of the two, whereas the second, in E-flat major, is of greater intimacy of expression.
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PREFACE

This document is designed to accompany my Lecture-Recital performed on June 6, 1983. Included is all material from the lecture in a more detailed and extensive account.

A discussion of clarinet solo material, representative of four periods and/or styles in the development of the clarinet repertoire, is featured: an unaccompanied twentieth-century work, Heinrich Sutermeister's *Capriccio*; an early classical concerto, Karl Stamitz's *Concerto in E-flat Major*; a French Conservatory Contest piece, Charles Lefebvre's *Fantaisie-Caprice*; and a late romantic sonata, Johannes Brahms' *Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120, No. 2*. Each of the four chapters is devoted to one work of the recital and the order of chapters corresponds directly to the order of the recital programme (refer to the Appendix).

The repertoire is approached from the perspective of the performer. Effort is made to show the importance of structural features and interpretation, as well as thorough knowledge of historical fact, in order to project an accurate, as well as personal, realization of the music.
I gratefully acknowledge the tremendous support of my wife, Ruth, whose interest in my doctoral studies greatly enhanced the quality of my work. In addition, I am indebted to my committee members and especially to my clarinet instructors, Ronald de Kant and Wesley Foster, whose demonstrated high performance standards exerted profound influence on my clarinet artistry.
CHAPTER I

Heinrich Sutermeister's Capriccio

Heinrich Sutermeister, born in 1910, is a Swiss composer noted primarily for his operas and works for cinema, radio, and television. He studied at the Munich Academy of Music under Carl Orff. His style emphasizes sweeping melodic lines, diatonic tunefulness, and, generally, ease of comprehensibility. It is structurally straightforward, pleasing, and effective. In addition to his vocal, orchestral, and chamber music, he wrote two works for clarinet: a Concerto (1975), and an unaccompanied work, Capriccio (1946).

The Capriccio, for A clarinet, was commissioned as a contest piece for the Geneva Conservatory. It is unusual in that it is one of very few unaccompanied clarinet works that is easily understandable by the listener. The composition is of a quality particularly suitable for performance in a contest, for two contrasting ideas permeate the entire work: one is rough and crisp with staccato passages; the other is smooth and calm with legato passages. Both are presented in the opening line of the piece (Example 1).

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Example 1. H. Sutermeister, Capriccio, mm. 1-4.

The first subject is developed in the opening and closing portions of the work, while the second is elaborated upon in the middle section; thus the form is ternary (ABA'). The rugged idea is characterized by spirited, funny, and rough playing, through light staccato runs and rapid embellishing passages. The other theme is much more elegant and sweet-tempered, featuring a cantabile style with wide leaps and soft dynamics. There are many sudden changes of dynamics, meter, and mood—demonstrated by the inscribed qualifying terms spirito, legatissimo, grazioso, giocoso, eleganza, ruvido, and amabile—all of which contribute to the capricious character. It is this writer's opinion that Capriccio reflects the influence of Sutermeister's cinematic works and as such, it would not be difficult to set a program to it: the frolicking material might represent a mischievous, impatient little boy, contrasting with the smooth material, suggesting the pleasant, comforting mother. The capricious temperament of this work seems to evoke the mood of the clarinet parts in Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf and Strauss's Till Eulenspiegel. At the coda (meno mosso), the little boy shows signs of seriousness and determination, as the theme is fragmented and slower; but it ends in the gay and whimsical mood in which it began.
CHAPTER II
Karl Stamitz's Concerto in E-Flat

The Mannheim School has been credited with establishing the clarinet as a concerto solo instrument. Although earlier clarinet concerti had been written—notably four by Johann Melchior Molter, ca. 1746, for D clarinet—the fact remains that the Mannheimers were the first to establish a consistent tradition of solo clarinet writing, as well as to produce the first line of virtuoso clarinet soloists and several virtuoso clarinetist-composers.¹

Johann Stamitz (1717-1757), one of the first leaders of the Mannheim School, was responsible for establishing a tradition of prominent parts for wind instruments, including clarinets, in his symphonies. Often the clarinet parts were played by oboists, who doubled on clarinet, but from 1758 the Mannheim Orchestra regularly listed a pair of clarinetists in its membership. Johann Stamitz wrote one clarinet concerto, but his son Karl (1745-1801) composed several: one for clarinet and bassoon, one for two clarinets, and at least eleven solo concerti.

Karl Stamitz wrote most of his clarinet concerti for Joseph Beer (1744-1811), who was the first well-known clarinet virtuoso. Beer's particular importance lies in championing the role of the clarinet as

a brilliant solo instrument throughout Europe and in his formation of a typically French school of playing. According to F. Geoffrey Rendall, Franz Tausch, a clarinet virtuoso of Mannheim and a contemporary of Beer, put beauty, expression, and gradation of tone first, whereas Beer placed these secondary to brilliance and volubility. Brilliance and volubility have long been characteristic of the French school.

Clarinetists often regard the works of Karl Stamitz as having been written considerably earlier than Mozart's famous concerto, despite the fact that Stamitz and Mozart were contemporaries. Mozart was awed by the clarinets he heard in the orchestra at Mannheim. In a letter to his father of December 3, 1778, Mozart stated, "Ah, if we only had clarinets too! You cannot imagine the glorious effect of a symphony with flutes, oboes and clarinets." Although impressed by the clarinet he still used it sparingly in his orchestral works. It is also regrettable that Mozart failed to write a concerto for Beer as he had been requested. Beer's international reputation would have assured instant success for such a work. Apparently, the offer was rejected because Mozart did not find favor with Beer's offensive personality and improper behavior.

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3 Ibid.

4 However, Anton Stadler, for whom his great concerto was written, was no better a person and was constantly in debt to Mozart. (It is believed that Stadler pawned the manuscripts of the Quintet and Concerto.) Mozart's Concerto did not seem to enjoy any immediate popularity and little, if any, outside Vienna. No contemporary of Stadler appears to have played it; Beer preferred Mozart's Variations on the
It was not until recently that all of Karl Stamitz's clarinet concerti were published. In his works Stamitz uses the clarinet chiefly as a singing instrument and in most cases prefers an expressive melodiousness to virtuosity. Technical demands are limited and the chalumeau register is primarily used for chordal figures. He utilizes the juxtaposition of registers by great leaps in the melodic arc of the clarinet and by the repetition in the high register of a passage first played in the low one. Formally, the first movements are prototypes of the later Weber concerti, falling into the basic sonata-allegro form, and like the Weber concerti, they usually contain a number of rapidly moving technical passages. The second movements are usually in a three-part song form and consist of a melodic solo line of classical grace and charm set over a simple accompaniment. The third movements are generally rapid rondos which are similar in their technical demands to the first movements. As in other concerti and symphonies of this formative period of music, these final movements are often light-hearted and somewhat less

March of the Samnites of which he alone possessed the manuscript. This was presumably an arrangement of his variations on a theme from Les Mariages Samnites of Gretry K. 352.

5 In her article of 1964 Elsa Ludewig mentions only four currently published, fearing that the others were lost during the Second World War. However, Arthur H. Christmann states that early manuscripts, many of which have appeared in print during the last two decades, are available in various European libraries.

musically gratifying than the first two.\(^7\)

The Concerto in E-flat, according to Helmut Boese's authoritative dissertation, *Die Klarinette als Soloinstrument in der Musik der Mannheimer Schule*, ("The Clarinet as Solo Instrument in the Music of the Mannheim School"), is Karl Stamitz's eleventh clarinet concerto.\(^8,9\)

Because this concerto is a larger and meatier work than Stamitz's previous ones, Pamela Weston believes that it must have been written after 1792, when Beer was in the employment of the Prussian court.\(^10\) Thus, this concerto was conceived well after Mozart's concerto of 1791.

It is entirely possible that Stamitz and Mozart may have heard each other's clarinet solo writing. Many similarities exist between Stamitz's Concerto No. 11 in E-flat and Mozart's Concerto in A. In sheer length, the Stamitz concerto, which takes over twenty-two minutes to perform, surpasses all his previous ones and approaches the half hour required

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\(^8\) Christmann, *Concerto in E-flat* by Karl Stamitz, citing *Die Klarinette als Soloinstrument in der Musik der Mannheimer Schule*.

\(^9\) Most of Karl Stamitz's clarinet concerti are in B-flat Major or E-flat Major, because the five-key clarinet for which he wrote functioned best in these keys. (As a B-flat instrument, the clarinet was incapable of playing many of the accidentals well; thus, Stamitz's writing was predominantly diatonic.) Some confusion does arise, however, when referring to individual concerti, as he wrote several in each of the two keys and all are not numbered properly.

for Mozart's. The form of the first movement—sonata-allegro—is the same in both concerti. Although it is pointless to compare the two purely on musical qualities, an examination of the clarinet idiom does reveal other mutual features. The rhythms of the opening bars are very similar (Examples 2a and 2b).

Example 2a. W. A. Mozart, Concerto in A, first movement, mm. 57-58.

Example 2b. K. Stamitz, Concerto in E-flat, first movement, mm. 50-51.

The use of the low-register of the instrument for harmonic figuration (Examples 3a and 3b), the bold use of triads over an extended range (Examples 4a and 4b), all echo devices used by Mozart.\(^\text{11}\)

\(^{11}\) Christmann, *Concerto in E-flat* by Karl Stamitz, Preface.
An important melodic device is the use of appoggiatura figures, which occur frequently in both concerti (Examples 5a and 5b).
Example 5a. W. A. Mozart, Concerto in A, first movement, mm. 172-173.

Example 5b. K. Stamitz, Concerto in E-flat, first movement, mm. 83-84.

While composing this concerto, Stamitz collaborated with Beer on the thematic material and virtuoso aspect of the composition. The main technical problem presented by this work is that of sheer breath support needed for the long passages and phrases. As with other Stamitz concerti, the first movement here is the most extensive and substantial of the three. In common with most eighteenth century composers, Stamitz did not provide a cadenza; instead he urged the soloist to write or improvise one of his own.

The title of the second movement, "Siciliano," is somewhat unusual as a concerto movement. The Harvard Dictionary of Music defines a Siciliano as a 17th- and 18th-century dance of Sicilian origin, in very moderate $\frac{6}{8}$ or $\frac{12}{8}$ meter, usually with a flowing broken-chord accompani-
ment and a soft, lyrical melody with dotted rhythms. All these features are presented in this work.

Of interest in the second movement, as well as the others, are the ornaments, which are of the *stile galant* school, in which ornamentation is added to the melodic line, as opposed to the ornamental method of the *empfindsamer* school, in which it is an essential component of the line. Other than the trills, the ornaments of particular importance are the appoggiatura, the acciaccatura, and the slide. The appoggiatura is indicated by a small quarter or eighth note appearing just before the principal note to which it is connected by a slur. The interval between it and the principal note is always a second; this embellishment is performed by taking a minimum of one-half the value of the principal note and placing it on the beat. By writing an appoggiatura a composer was able to use a note foreign to the chord without disrupting the harmonic tradition of the time. The acciaccatura is written as an appoggiatura with an oblique line through the stem and hook of the eighth note. In performance it is customary to place this grace note slightly before the beat in which the principal note occurs. Finally, the slide, a rather rare ornament, consists of two or more grace notes preceding the principal note. These appoggiatura-like notes are reproduced as thirty-second notes, and the remaining time is taken by the principal note. Performers should be careful, however, because there is considerable freedom in the interpretation of ornaments and experts disagree as to

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how they were first performed.  

The final movement, Rondo, in $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, is lively, consisting of rapid scale and arpeggiated figuration. As in the other movements, all melodic interest lies primarily in the clarion register. The theme, recurring throughout, is horn-like, evoking the mood of a hunting scene. Pick-up notes and repeated notes, as in the Mozart Concerto in A, are a feature of this theme (Examples 6a and 6b).

Example 6a. W. A. Mozart, Concerto in A, third movement, mm. 1-4.

Example 6b. K. Stamitz, Concerto in E-flat, third movement, mm. 1-4.

The Stamitz Concerto No. 11 in E-flat is hardly a masterpiece, but it is a charming and fluent example of the typical instrumental composition of his time, possessing a melodic grace that is most pleasing to the listener. It is a sound musical work of the Mannheim School, and,

like Stamitz's other concerti, is a significant, pioneer work in the clarinet repertoire.
CHAPTER III
Charles Lefebvre's Fantaisie-Caprice

Significant contributions to woodwind literature have been made by French composers. This is, in part, attributable to the Paris Conservatory (more accurately, the Conservatoire National Superieur de Musique), which since the early 19th century, has been one of the central training institutions for composers and performers in Europe. Each year French works are used as contest pieces for the final performance examinations:

The culmination of a student's study at the Paris National Conservatory is an attempt to win a Premier Prix (First Prize) with the limit of five years time or before reaching the maximum age. These annual competitive examinations are an essential part of the curriculum for all instruments. The student has one month to memorize the required solo, which is called a "solo de concours" or "morceau de concours", and the competition is open to the public. The jury consists of the leading artists and the composer of the year's solo. After qualifying in Solfege (sight-singing, while conducting), Musical Analysis and Sight-reading with the instrument, a student is permitted to perform the final competition.¹

According to George Wain, winning a First Prize carries tremendous prestige and assists the winner in attaining a future orchestral position.²

² George Wain, "Conservatoire National de Paris," The Instrumentalist XII (September 1957), 99.
First Prize winners in clarinet have included Cyrille Rose, Paul Jeanjean, Louise Cahuzac, Henri Lefebvre, Gaston Hamelin, Augustin Duques, and Daniel Bonade.

Before 1897 works of the standard clarinet repertoire, such as Weber's concerti were used as contest pieces, but since that date composers have been specially commissioned to write them. Many of these composers—Debussy, Tomasi, Milhaud, Widor, and Francaix—have gained international reputations. Traditionally, the composers of the examination solos dedicate their pieces to the current professors. Prosper Mimart, for example, clarinet professor at the Paris Conservatory from 1905-1918, was the dedicatee of Debussy's 1910 contest piece, *Première Rhapsodie*. This work has become a staple of the clarinet repertoire, and is among its most frequently performed and recorded pieces.

Solos written between 1887 and 1918 reflect the tastes of the operatic and vocal composers Weber, Hann, Messager, Mouguet, Rabaud, and Coquard. In the previous century clarinet artistry emphasized technical facility and brilliance, for example Joseph Beer's rendition of Stamitz's Concerto; the newer works, however, are noted primarily for exploiting the expressive qualities of the clarinet, with beautiful lyric passages emphasizing tone quality and style. The second half of each solo usually stresses staccato and/or technical dexterity. Even more recent solos, dating from the 1950's, stress difficult technical and musical demands well beyond the abilities of younger students and amateurs.

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3 Mimart gave the first public performance with piano accompaniment on January 16, 1911.
One of the earlier commissioned contest pieces for clarinet is *Fantaisie-Caprice* by Charles Lefebvre (1843-1917). It was used in 1905, 1915, and 1916 as the examination piece. Current sources provide little information about this French composer, though it is known that he won the Paris Conservatory's coveted *Prix de Rome* in 1870 for his cantata *Le jugement de Dieu*. Although highly regarded by the French critics during the late 19th century, he was not as accomplished as the leading French composers of the time. In addition to his compositional skills, he taught the ensemble class at the Paris Conservatory.

*Fantaisie-Caprice* is a short lyrical work with the technical demands based largely on diatonic harmony and few notes in the altissimo register. As its title suggests, the work is in a free form. Interest lies almost exclusively in the clarinet part, with the piano accompanying in chordal figurations. The beginning, labelled *Poco largo*, is of markedly improvisatory character with the runs spanning the entire compass of the instrument. The theme is angular, covering a wide range (Example 7).

Example 7. C. Lefebvre, *Fantaisie-Caprice*, mm. 2-4.
Of particular importance is the opening four-note motif in the clarinet, which pervades the entire work in varying guises (Example 7). In the following section, at a faster tempo (Allegro), the motif appears with the juxtaposition of duple and triplet rhythms (Example 8).

Example 8. C. Lefebvre, Fantaisie-Caprice, mm. 30-34.

Next is a contrasting section that is lyrical and very expressive. The finale (Moderato), in $\frac{6}{8}$ meter, is a florid presentation of the motif (Example 9).

Example 9. C. Lefebvre, Fantaisie-Caprice, mm. 134-137.

Like many other French contest pieces, this work ends with a flourish. Though a light work, and not as serious or as well composed as Debussy's exceptional Première Rhapsodie, Fantaisie-Caprice is representative of the examination requirements and compositional style of this period of the Paris Conservatory.
CHAPTER IV

Johannes Brahms' Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120, No. 2

When Johannes Brahms (1833-1897) sent the manuscript of his *G Major String Quintet* to his publisher, Simrock, in 1890, he included a note saying, "The time has now come for you to say goodbye to any further compositions of mine." His doctor reported that Brahms "rejects the idea that he is composing or will ever compose again."¹ At fifty-seven years old, Brahms had resolved to retire from composing music. Many of his life-long companions were already dead and the composer felt deserted and lonely.

Incentive was restored in March 1891, when Brahms met the eminent clarinetist of the Meiningen Orchestra, Richard Mühlfeld. At this time the Meiningen was one of the leading orchestral ensembles in Europe and had toured with Brahms, in addition to premiering several of his most important works. Mühlfeld had joined the orchestra in 1873 as a violinist, but by 1876 he had taught himself to play the clarinet so well that he could assume the heavy responsibilities of first clarinetist. According to Geoffrey Rendall, this change made Mühlfeld play less as a clarinetist than as a fine and sensitive musician, who excelled in

¹ Martin Bernstein, jacket notes for *Brahms Sonatas for Clarinet and Piano* (Decca Gold Label).
artistic phrasing and the finer points of style. Technically, he was no doubt inferior to some of his contemporaries. Opinions of his tone and intonation vary. Some important critics found him deficient in both; others praised the velvet quality of his lower register. Rendall continues that no artist has ever had a more profound influence. Furthermore, his influence was salutary in stressing the importance of musicianship and interpretation over brilliance of technique and showy execution.

Brahms was so taken by Mühlfeld's wonderful playing that he soon set to work to compose two pieces for an idiom he had never used before in his chamber music. While preparing these works, Mühlfeld gave Brahms detailed instructions as to the tonal and technical qualities of the clarinet. Brahms requested that Mühlfeld play the entire clarinet repertoire for him, and repeatedly asked for the Mozart Quintet K. 581 and Weber Concertos. As a result of his efforts, Brahms' Clarinet Trio Op. 114 and Clarinet Quintet Op. 115 were premiered with Mühlfeld in December 1891. Both works were well received, and the "Adagio" from the Quintet was replayed as an encore. The Clarinet Quintet is regarded as one of Brahms' greatest masterpieces.

Three years later, in July 1894, Brahms composed, for his own pleasure, two Sonatas for Clarinet and Piano. It was not until Septem-

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3 Ibid.
ber of that year that he made any mention of them to Mühlfeld. Brahms' own participation in the first performance of these works demonstrates how highly he regarded them. They seemed to give him a new lease on life, for in 1895 an extensive tour was arranged for himself and Mühlfeld to perform these works. Mühlfeld's interpretation of these works was so fascinating that Brahms claimed that they were to be played by "piano and Mühlfeld." When one hears these works, it is evident that Mühlfeld's lyrical, luminous style had profound influence on Brahms' clarinet writing. It has been said that at this time Brahms' compositions displayed a mood of reflective, mildly melancholic lyricism to which Mühlfeld's style was unusually apt. Alternative versions of these sonatas were arranged by the composer for violin and viola.

The two sonatas offer quite a contrast. The first, in F minor, is

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5 Brahms' feelings for Mühlfeld manifested themselves in two affectionate nicknames—"My dear Nightingale" and "Fraulein Klarinette." Additional evidence of the fascination exercised upon listeners by the playing of this celebrated clarinetist is afforded by the portraits of him by two famous painters, A. E. F. Menzel and Pierre-Auguste Renoire.

6 Burnett James, jacket notes for Brahms The Two Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120 (Seraphim S-60302).

7 The violin arrangement is virtually never heard, for it loses much of the music's uniqueness and, in addition, calls for changes in the keyboard part. On the contrary, the viola version was a welcomed addition to the viola repertoire, which is still today very limited.
predominantly the more passionate of the two, whereas the second, in E-flat major, is of greater intimacy of expression. Andrew Kenner, a Brahms scholar, states that in the E-flat Sonata, "the opening movement possesses a relaxed, clear-eyed simplicity of great poetry and serenity—and, perhaps most apparently, an impression of continuous flowing invention." This "relaxed, clear-eyed simplicity" as well as the "mildly melancholic lyricism," which was mentioned previously, are both apparent immediately as the first theme is heard (mm. 1-8). Although the first movement is in sonata form, the exposition, development, and recapitulation are not sectionalized by doubled bars because of the "continuously flowing invention." The development, which begins with an elaboration of the opening theme, is approached by a series of rising octaves alternating between piano and clarinet, making for a gentle transition (mm. 48-52).

The second theme, like the first, is long-breathed, artfully lending a supple movement to the piano's quiet, regular accompaniment. It is gently reflective and for a few bars canonic; the piano imitates the clarinet one beat later (mm. 22-29).

Essentially, these two themes are not different in character. Contrast in this exposition is achieved by way of its assertive bridges.

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8 Andrew Keener, jacket notes for Brahms: The 2 Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120 (Chandos ABR 1020).

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid.
The first bridge, which leads from the first to the second theme, not only shows this assertiveness, but also is an example of a Brahms "natural ritard." Instead of writing ritardando in the score, Brahms chose to lengthen the note values gradually giving the same effect as a ritardando (mm. 15-21).

Cross rhythms—triplets against pairs of eighth notes—are another feature of this movement. They first appear in the exposition in measures 36-39, as another assertive bridge leading to the third theme. These become especially prominent in the development in measures 74-87, an extensive section employing the juxtaposition of triplets against duples.

In the development, a fragment of the opening theme appears throughout and takes on a darker, intense color as it is treated sequentially, before easing itself into the recapitulation, where the opening theme is now characterized by triplet accompaniment (mm. 88-103). The triplets continue to undergo transformation as Brahms introduces them into the serenity of the coda (mm. 150-173). This coda begins in the same way as the development did, preceded by rising octaves.

An unusual feature of the second movement is that instead of being a slow movement it is an allegro, like the first. Contrast is achieved by various means: changing the tonality from E-flat major to E-flat minor; changing the meter from duple to triple; and changing the mood from placid to impassioned, as represented by the composer's qualifying

11 Ibid.
terms, amabile and appassionato respectively. The second movement, though still "Allegro," is really quicker than the first. This movement is in ABA form, with the B section as a Trio.

Emotional interest is immediately aroused when the clarinet plunges into the spirit of the first subject at the opening bar, followed by the piano, in spells of eight bars each. The scheme of the first section appears to be to follow this subject twice with two auxiliary motifs; on the second occasion new motifs are introduced.\(^{12}\) By this time four motifs have appeared, providing for the restlessness of this section as compared with the Trio, which has only one subject.\(^{13}\)

Contrast in this movement is provided by the appearance of a second subject in the B section, cast in the subdominant of the relative major key, B. The subject is first stated by the piano with lower octaves and full chord harmony. Here, Brahms is successful in treating the piano orchestrally, as he requires maximum tonal quantity and sonority from the instrument. Free from syncopation or other displacements of the natural accent, as well as from the bar-subdivision into six eighth-notes, this cantabile section suddenly reaches the impassioned quality of the A section in measure 126, when all these missing features

\(^{12}\) The first motif begins in measure 17 and the second in measure 27. After another statement of the subject, motifs three and four appear in measures 49 and 66 respectively.

are supplied. After a four bar bridge and a two bar announcement of the coming theme, the A section returns. This is the same as the opening section with the addition of a final cadence.

The Finale, like that of Brahms' and Mozart's Clarinet Quintets, is a set of variations. The theme is delightfully folklike. The first four variations are in the "Andante" tempo of the theme in $\frac{6}{8}$ time. However, the note values and character of each variation lead quite easily to subtle changes of tempo. In the minor fifth variation, the meter is changed to $\frac{2}{4}$ and the tempo is faster, "Allegro."

The first four bars of each variation are repeated, though written out in full, as first one instrument then the other plays the melody. In its initial presentation, this theme ends with a seemingly innocuous little figure, harmonized ingeniously as an imperfect cadence on its first appearance, and treated as a full close at the end of each variation. Brahms' development of this cadence as the variations progress is richly imaginative, nowhere more so than with his use of it as the doorway to the Pui tranquillo coda, which follows the restless, minor-key fifth variation. This coda is the heart of the movement, where theme and cadence figure are combined before reaching a dashing, triumphant conclusion.

The wide appeal of this work and its companion (Op. 120, No. 1), among clarinetists, violists, and audiences, helps the listener to

\[14\] Ibid., pp. 328-329.

\[15\] Keener, jacket notes to Brahms: The 2 Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120.
understand how Brahms was further inspired to continue his endeavors as a composer.
APPENDIX

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Recital Hall
Monday, June 6, 1983
8:00 p.m.

*GRADUATE LECTURE-RECITAL

Karem J. Simon, clarinet
assisted by
Terence Dawson, piano

Capriccio

Concerto in E-flat Major

Allegro
Siciliano
Rondeau

Fantaisie-Caprice

- INTERMISSION -

Sonata in E-flat Major, Op. 120, No. 2

Allegro amabile
Appassionato, ma non troppo Allegro
Andante con moto

*In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate of Musical Arts degree with a major in Clarinet Performance.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Capriccio—Heinrich Sutermeister:


Concerto in E-flat Major—Karl Stamitz:


Fantaisie-Caprice—Charles Lefebvre:


Sonata Op. 120, No. 2—Johannes Brahms:


Bernstein, Martin. Brahms Sonatas for Clarinet and Piano Op. 120 — with Reginal Kell, clarinet; Joel Rosen, piano. Decca Gold Lable.

Cobbett's Cyclopedic Survey of Chamber Music. 2nd ed. S.v. "Brahms, Johannes," by Donald F. Tovey.


---------. Brahms The Two Clarinet Sonatas, Op. 120 — with Gervase de Peyer, clarinet; Daniel Barenboim, piano. Seraphim #S-6032, 1977.


