



It was in the Vienna of the later eighteenth century that the famous clarinet virtuóso Anton Paul Stadler and Theodor Lotz, Royal Instrument Maker to the Viennese court, extended the compass of Stadler's B flat and A clarinets from their "fingered" low e to c below that. This hybrid instrument, a combination of the classical five-key clarinet and the basset-horn, was called the bass clarinet. Today, in order to avoid confusion with the modern day bass clarinet, scholars have adopted the term "basset-clarinet" to refer to this extended range clarinet. Only within the past fifty years has any interest in the basset-clarinet been shown, and at present, very little information concerning this instrument has been discovered. Thus, it becomes a prime responsibility of modern scholarship to give the basset-clarinet, its music, and its players the most careful attention. The purpose of this thesis is to explore the phenomenon of the late eighteenth-century Viennese basset-clarinet and the two known concertos written for it.

In this study, information covering the origin, characteristics, and players of the basset-clarinet will be given, along with background material concerning the two concertos and their composers. Since both of these

Chapter 1

The Late Eighteenth-Century Viennese Basset Clarinet



he late eighteenth-century Viennese basset-clarinet was actually a hybrid combination of the classical five-key clarinet and the basset-horn. By using the principles of these two existing instruments, Theodor Lotz and Anton Stadler worked together to create the basset-clarinet. This new instrument was first introduced at the Royal Imperial Theater in Vienna on February 20, 1788. The program for this concert reads:

Herr Stadler the elder [Anton], in the service of His Majesty the Kaiser, will play a concerto on the *Bass-Klarinet* and a variation on the *Bass-Klarinet*, an instrument of new invention and manufacture of the Royal and Imperial Instrument Maker, Theodor Lotz. This instrument has two more low tones than the normal clarinet.¹

The description of the basset-clarinet revealed in this account gives the impression that this new instrument was much like an average clarinet of the day, but with two added keys to produce two notes lower than e. In order to further understand the construction and characteristics of the basset-clarinet,

¹Program of February 20, 1788, national Hoftheater Osterreichsche nationalbiothek, Vienna, quoted in Pamela Poulin, "The Bassett Clarinet of Anton Stadler," *College Music Symposium*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Fall, 1982), p. 73.

a short background and discussion of its “parents,” the classical five-key clarinet and the basset-horn, is necessary.

According to J.G. Doppelmayr’s *Nachrichten von den Nürnberger Mathematicis und Künstlern*, published in 1730, Johann Christoph Denner, an instrument maker of Nuremberg, invented the first clarinet around the beginning of the eighteenth century. This clarinet had eight tone holes and two keys (covering two more holes): one to produce a’, one to produce b’ flat, with the two used together to produce b’ natural. It was made of boxwood, had a body which was divided into three pieces, and was most commonly in the key of either D or C. Because of this instrument’s lack of popularity, technical developments came slowly, but shortly after 1750, several crucial improvements led to what is now known as the classical five-key clarinet.

No single person can be given credit for developing the classical five-key clarinet. In his book, *The Clarinet*, Geoffrey Rendall states that according to Jean Lefèvre’s *Methode de Clarinette* of 1802, Barthold Fritz, an organ-builder of Brunswick, added the three extra keys to the clarinet. This, however, cannot be further documented, and therefore must be treated as mere speculation. Most accurately, this instrument was created by a combination of both German and French efforts. The bell of the two-key clarinet was lengthened to accommodate the addition of an e/b’ natural key, and following this, a flat/e’ flat and f sharp/c’ sharp keys were added. Like the two-key clarinet, this instrument was also made of boxwood, but now instead of a body of three pieces, it consisted of six, the mouthpiece, the barrel, the left-hand joint, the right-hand joint, the lower joint, and the bell. According to Anthony Baines’ book, *Woodwind Instruments and their History*, during this time B flat and C clarinets were the usual ones, while A clarinets were comparatively rare. Baines continues to explain that rather than have an A clarinet, a player would simply have a joint which could easily convert his B flat clarinet into an A clarinet.

By 1770, the classical five-key clarinet was well established and increasing in popularity. In Eugene Rousseau’s summary of a detailed study of clarinet instructional material, he concludes that the five-key clarinet was the most popular instrument written for from around 1770, and it was used until well into the nineteenth century.² This classical clarinet is also the instrument

²Matthieu Frederic Blassius, *Nouvelle methode de clarinette et raisonnement des instruments, principes et theories, de musique* (Paris 1802 or 1803), p. 45–46, tr. from Eugene E. Rousseau, “Clarinet Instructional Materials from 1732 to ca. 1803” (Ph.D. diss., Iowa, 1962, p. 111), quoted in Peter Clinch, “The Clarinet to the Nineteenth Century—A Doc-

which initially inspired Mozart, as well as both Karl and Johann Stamitz to compose many great works for it.

Chapter 2

Somewhere later on



It sounds as if Mozart were composing an aria for one of his operas. The basset-clarinet's vocal quality easily lends itself to the beautiful melody. In this movement, Mozart also uses the basset notes in a lyrical manner:



Figure 2.1: Measures 40 through 50 of the Adagio from Mozart's clarinet concerto

The dark, rich tone of these low notes adds to the smooth, vocal character of the movement.

As in the first movement, Mozart uses wide leaps and sweeping arpeggios and scales to emphasize the lower register. Two examples of this are seen here: Traditional version: And:

The image displays three staves of musical notation. The first staff, labeled '40', shows a melodic line in the treble clef with a wide interval leap and a sweeping arpeggio. The second staff, labeled '44', features a treble clef with a descending scale and a sixteenth-note arpeggio marked with a '6'. The third staff, labeled '48', uses a bass clef for the lower register, showing a descending scale and a sixteenth-note arpeggio marked with a '6'.

Figure 2.2: Measures 1 through 5 of the allegro molto maestoso from Süßmayr's clarinet concerto (2nd draft)

A most helpful source for studying the range of the basset-clarinet is the music written for it. Both the reconstructed version for the Mozart Clarinet Concerto in A and the fragments of the Süßmayr Clarinet Concerto in D give ample evidence of this instrument's range. A passage cited from each will best illustrate this point. From Mozart, measures sixty-one and sixty-two of the third movement:

For comparison the traditional version for standard A clarinet will also be given:

These measures show how the basset notes are written. Like the basset-horn, b ass clef notation is used in writing the lower notes.

Figure 2.3 shows three staves of musical notation for measures 40 through 50 of the Adagio from Mozart's clarinet concerto. The first staff (measures 40-43) is in treble clef and features a melodic line with slurs and ties. The second staff (measures 44-47) is in bass clef and contains a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth notes and slurs, including two sixteenth-note groups marked with a '6'. The third staff (measures 48-50) is in bass clef and continues the rhythmic pattern, also featuring a sixteenth-note group marked with a '6'.

Figure 2.3: Measures 40 through 50 of the Adagio from Mozart's clarinet concerto

Figure 2.4 shows three staves of musical notation for measures 40 through 50 of the Adagio from Mozart's clarinet concerto. The first staff (measures 40-43) is in treble clef and features a melodic line with slurs and ties. The second staff (measures 44-47) is in bass clef and contains a complex rhythmic pattern with sixteenth notes and slurs, including two sixteenth-note groups marked with a '6'. The third staff (measures 48-50) is in bass clef and continues the rhythmic pattern, also featuring a sixteenth-note group marked with a '6'.

Figure 2.4: Measures 40 through 50 of the Adagio from Mozart's clarinet concerto

Chapter 3

Testing Fonts



This is a test. This is only a test. Had this been a real emergency, you would have been informed of where to tune within your viewing area to get up to date information. Since this is only a test, go somewhere else...

This is a test.

This is a test.

Weifer also die Tafel alle Differenzen / auß welchen die...

3.1 Setting Up Illumination

Note that wrapfigure works for things other than text. As the Archimedian spiral to the left shows, it is also possible to wrap text around encapsulated postscript as well as pretty much anything that can be put into and mbox.

This is a test. This is only a test. Had this been a real emergency, you would have been informed of where to tune within your viewing area to get up to date information. Since

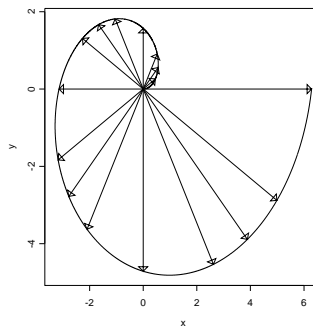


Figure 3.1: Archimedian Spiral.

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