

Peculiarities of Clarinet Concertos Form-Building in the Second Half of the 20th Century and the Beginning of the 21st Century

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Abstract: The article deals with clarinet concertos composed in the 20th–21st centuries. Many different works have been created, either in one or few parts; the longest concert that is mentioned has seven parts (by K. Meyer, 2000). Most of the concertos have 3 parts and the *fast-slowly-fast* kind of structure connected with the Italian overture; sometimes, the scheme has variants. Our question is: How does the concerto genre function during this period? To answer, we had to search many musical compositions. Sometimes the clarinet is accompanied by orchestra, other times it is surrounded by an ensemble of instruments. More than 100 concertos were found and analyzed. Examples of such concertos were written by C. Nielsen, P. Boulez, J. Adams, C. Debussy, M. Arnold, A. Copland, P. Hindemith, I. Stravinsky, S. Vassilenko, and the attention in the article is focused on them. A special complete analysis is made as regards “Domaines” for clarinet and 21 instruments divided in 6 groups, by Pierre Boulez that had a great role for the concert routine, based on the “aleatoric” principle. The conclusions underline the significant development of the clarinet concerto genre in the 20th -21st centuries, the high diversity of the compositions’ structures, the considerable expressiveness and technicality together with the soloist’s part in the expressive concertizing (as a rule). Further studies suggest the analysis of stylistic and structural peculiarities of the found compositions that are apparently to win their popularity with performers and listeners.

Keywords: clarinet concerto; form-building; genres of instrumental music; creativity of the composers of the 20th and 21st centuries; schemes of \the structures.

The research of executive mastership in Music knowledge is connected with that regarding the evolution of the instrumental music genres. The first examples in the genre of clarinet concertos were

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created by J. Molter, J. Stamits and W.A. Mozart. In their creativity are formed those traits that became typical for the genre later. In the Romantic period the interest to the clarinet as solo instrument decreased and was switched to piano, but the concertos for clarinet and orchestra by L. Spohr and K.M. Weber not only inspired development of this special concert genre but gave a push to the improvement of the instrument 'clarinet'.

In the 20th century clarinet is a powerful, all-sufficient instrument that realizes its high acoustical qualities in different genres, concert being among them, as well. We want to note that in Russia several authors (A.V. Anissimov, N.M. Akhmedkhodzhaeva, V.N. Darda) looked more closely at the questions of concertizing and concert forms, especially during the Soviet period.

In the context of a research of the art of playing wind instruments the address to the genre of clarinet concerto is on the first line of the problems of modern music knowledge and so must be named actual. In the Chinese scientific and methodical literature — well-known to one of the authors of the article (Zhao Yu) — this problem was not touched at all.

Contemporary music in its various genres has become in many aspects a subject of scrupulous studies in musicology. Our research deals with professional problematic of the instrumental concert genre, viewed more narrowly, namely, connected with clarinet performance.

The purpose of this article is to identify the situation relating to the evolution of concerto performances, created for the concertizing clarinet and orchestra or instrumental ensemble, in 20th–21st centuries. The main objective poses the problem of exploring the evolution of the specific concert genre in the contemporary clarinet music. In the context of studying in the clarinet art an access to the genre of Clarinet Concerto is at the forefront of research and it aims solving special problems of modern musicology.

The extent of coverage of the research in the field of executive art of playing the clarinet and its concert repertoire at the given time is quite low. Only as late as at the turn of the 20-21 centuries, some studies appeared, aiming to explore the instrumental concert genre; this marked a certain trend in musicology. The instrumental concert genre has been considered in the socio-cultural context in theses by E.G. Antonova, M.G. Aranovsky, N.M. Akhmedkhodzhaeva, D.A. Dyatlov (see References) and others. At the same time, a number of studies elaborated by S.E. Artemyev, V.N. Darda, I.K. Kuznetsov and

others (Ibid.) approach this genre from the position of performing history, particular instruments or creative heritage of individual composers (schools). One would wish to read a comprehensive paper on the instrumental concert, but no such essays are available so far. It's quite the same that there are no research papers devoted to the interpretation of the clarinet concert of the 20-21 centuries (one should note in this regard S. E. Artemyev's full-featured thesis considering *the Concerto* for clarinet and orchestra of the 18th century). For the first time, the theme of this article was worked on (in a bit other sense) in the article for the collection from the conference "Art, Design and Contemporary Education" in 2015-2016, as well (see *References*).

Studies in the executive mastership are connected with a research of the evolution of the genres of instrumental music. The initial period of genesis and development of clarinet concert is investigated widely. It is known that the most early is the composition of Antonio Paganelli indicated by the author as *Concerto per il clareto* (1733). Possibly, it was written for *chalumeau*, the instrument-predecessor of the clarinet itself. But, before this time clarinet was used as one of the concertizing instruments in the genre of *Concerto Grosso*, particularly by J. Rathgeber in 1728.

The first concerts intended for clarinet and orchestra were written by Johann Melchior Molter in the middle of 40s in the 18th century. Molter wrote 6 clarinet concerts. The genre was at that time like the genre of Trumpet Concerto, because only the upper register of the solo instrument was used. Molter dedicated his Clarinet Concerts to the virtuoso Johann Roische who played the small clarinet in D, and this type of instrument was new.

First examples of the pieces in the genre of Clarinet Concerto are connected not only with J. Molter, but J. Stamitz and W.A. Mozart, some executors on clarinet, able to compose pieces, must be mentioned. Features that become typical in this genre were forming in the work of these composers.

As it is already said, in the Romantic period the interest to the clarinet as a solo instrument declined and it was switched over the piano, but there were written Clarinet Concerts by Louis Spohr and K. M. Weber. Louis Spohr wrote six Clarinet Concertos between 1808 and 1844 for J. Hermstedt; and they are popular among clarinetists even in our days. Carl Maria von Weber left two Concertos for clarinet and orchestra and one Concertino, all of them well known to contemporary clarinetists. But there was no real input in the

development of the genre of Clarinet Concerto after these early Romantics of 19th century.

By the beginning of the 20th century clarinet is a mighty instrument, able to realize its high acoustic features in different genres, the concert genre being among them.

In 20th and 21st centuries there are among the Clarinet Concertos multi-part and one-part structures. Cyclic forms dominate and classical formula — Swiftly-Slowly-Swiftly — may be named as a leading one.

It is well-known that the scheme of the classical concert cycle is from the Italian overture. But in the 20th and 21st centuries sometimes such 3-part concert cycle exists in variants. For example, in the second Concertino by E. Makonchi the structure is: 1. Poco Lento, 2. Vivo - Poco Lento, 3. Allegro Ritmico. B.A. Tchaikovsky gave a new variant: 1. Moderato, 2. Vivace, 3. Allegro. Ida Gotkovsky composed her Clarinet Concerto with the structure: 1. Andante Misterioso. Quasi Cadenza, 2. Perpetuum Mobile. Prestissimo, 3. Final. Cadenza - A Tempo. Fred Spec wrote his Concerto with the scheme of tempos and genres: 1. Andante con moto; espressivo/Interlude, 2. Adagietto teneramente (attacca), 3. Allegro; affrettando. M. Pitering — I. Psalm. Prelude, II. Quilters' Psalm, III. "...like rain on the fields...". Jone Karbon — 1. Toccata (Allegro), 2. Variazioni semplici (Andante), 3. Scherzo (Allegro). I. Toveyoulu — 1. Eleganza, 2. Molto Espressione, 3. Moto. Jone Kariliano — I. Cadenzas, II. Elegy, III. Antiphonal Toccata, A. Copland — 1. Slowly and expressively, 2. Cadenza, 3. Rather fast, Anri Tomazi — I. Allegro giocoso, II. Nocturne - Scherzando; III. Scherzo Final, Shandor Weress — 1. Andante, 2. Allegro vivace, 3. Allegro con spirit; or, for example, such original 3-part cycle as «Prelude, fugue and rifles» by L. Bernstein and so on.

Not less interesting are the 4-part cycles composed by F. Buzoni, N. Bacri, I. Gotkovsky (Lyrical concerto), P. Hindemith (there are peculiarities in the tempos: 3 parts of 4 are in high motos).

J. France, E. Sigmeyer, Kalvin Akho, Govard Bleik, Peter Maxwell, L.K. Knipper and others composed 5-part cycles. Only one Concerto was written in the 7-part structure by K. Meyer in 2000.

Very interesting is the structure of the 3-part concerto composed by Aaron Copland for the clarinet and string orchestra with harp and piano (written in 1948), where the lyrical first part is connected with the help of Cadenza in a chain of variations composed on the jazz

theme in which there is simultaneously the disintegration of the action unit of the tempo, and then the precipitation of the *moto* comes.

So, in the Clarinet Concertos of the 20th and 21st centuries the structures are extremely multivariied. For example, written in the first half of the 20th century, outstanding Concertos by K. Nilsen (1928) and Hindemith (1947) are composed in different structures: the concerto by Nilsen has a one-part structure like Liszt's piano concertos, and in Hindemith's Concerto for clarinet and symphonic orchestra there are 4 big parts, contrasting each other.

In the Clarinet Concertos of many composers the influence of jazz harmony and jazz music in whole can be clearly seen where they are responding to the functions and the role clarinet is playing in the jazz art. We can mention the Concertos by Hindemith and by A. Copland – both dedicated to the legendary jazz man Benny Goodman. M. Arnold's Concert No. 1 was composed for clarinetist Frederick Thurston, but later this piece was executed by B. Goodman, so, the Second Concert was dedicated to him who performed it in 1974. There was one more well-known clarinetist who played it, Jack Brymer.

How the genre of the clarinet concerto was functioning in the 20th century and how is it developing in the 21st century in conditions of movable, changing situation with the interpretations of the modern style Postmodernism¹? To answer, we searched for musical compositions written in the 20th and 21st centuries in the genre of Clarinet Concerto with orchestra or ensemble of instruments, sometimes only with the piano; and we elaborated a list that includes more than 100 compositions: they are opuses created in the genre of Concerto for clarinet and orchestra or in genres of symphonic pieces with clarinet solo. The list is still a manuscript, from which we selected the most interesting Concertos of such type, in the chronological order:

Carl Nielsen. Concert for Clarinet op. 57. 1928.

Lorenzo Perosi. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1930.

Alan Rawsthorne. Clarinet Concert. 1936-1937.

Darius Milhaud. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1941.

Igor Stravinsky. Ebony Concerto for Clarinet and Jazz Band. 1945.

¹ The style of Postmodernism formed in the 60th – 70th years of the 20th century is still the main one in arts. Its principles are: the use of the ready forms, irony, syncretism and eclectic confusions of different styles up to creating new combinations of features of different styles in a piece.

- Paul Hindemith. Concert for Clarinet. 1947.
Aaron Copland. Concert for Clarinet. 1948.
Malcolm Arnold. Concert for Clarinet No. 1. 1948.
Gerald Finzi. Concert for Clarinet. 1949.
Eugène Bozza. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1952.
Sergei Vassilenko. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1953.
Bertold Goldschmidt. Clarinet Concerto. 1953-1954.
Arnold Cooke. Clarinet Concerto No. 1. 1956.
Henri Tomasi. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1956.
Elie Siegmeister. Clarinet Concert. 1956.
G. de Frumerie *Concerto for clarinet, strings, harp and percussion*, 1957-1958.
Alexandre Tansman. Concert for Clarinet. 1957.
Boris Tchaikovsky. Concert for Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra. 1957.
Jean Rivier. Concert for Clarinet and String Orchestra. 1958.
Lev Knipper. Concert for Clarinet and Symphonic Orchestra. 1964.
Walter Piston, the younger. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1967.
Jean Françaix. Concert for Clarinet. 1967.
Anatoly Luppov. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1968.
Malcolm Arnold. Concert for Clarinet No. 2. 1974.
Aurel Stroe. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1975.
Marcel Poot. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1977.
Josef Tal. Concert for Clarinet with Chamber Orchestra. 1977.
Teya Massgreiv. Concert for Clarinet. 1979.
Istemihan Taviloglu. Concert for Clarinet op. 12. 1979.
Arnold Cooke. Clarinet Concerto No. 2. 1982.
Shandor Weress, *Concerto for Clarinet and harp, celesta, vibraphone, xylophone, percussion and string orchestra*, 1982.
Ann Calloway. Concert for Bass Clarinet and Chamber Orchestra. 1985-1987.
Joan Tower. Concert for Clarinet. 1988.
Edison Denissov. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1989.
John Robertson. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1989.
Frederick Speck. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1993.
John Carbon. Concert for Clarinet. 1993-1994.
Frank Stewart. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 1994.
Elliott Carter. Concert for Clarinet. 1996.
Lior Navok. Concert for Clarinet. 1996.
Jim Parker. Concert for Clarinet and Strings. 1998.
Rolf Wallin. Concert for Clarinet. 1998.
Einojuhani Rautvaara. Concert for Clarinet. 2001.
Kimmo Hakola. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 2001.
Krzysztof Meyer. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 2002.

- Magnus Lindberg. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 2002.
Kalevi Aho. Concert for Clarinet. 2005.
Sebastian Fagelund. Concert for Clarinet with Orchestra. 2005-2006.
Shigeru Kan-no. Bassettklarinetto Concerto. 2006.
Mark Petering. Concert for Clarinet. 2008.
Ilio Volante. Concert for Clarinet in B & Wind Instruments. 2009.
Frank Ticheli. Concert for Clarinet. 2010.
Sérgio Azevedo. Concert for Clarinet. 2013.
Jonathan Russell. Bass Clarinet Concert. 2015.

Clarinet concert seems to be at its height of interest.

Increasing the number of concertizing instruments, which bring the concertos closer to the *Concerto Grosso*, is typically in the case of compositions by S. Veress (*Concerto for clarinet and harp, celesta, vibraphone, xylophone, percussion and string orchestra*, 1982), G. de Frumerie (*Concerto for clarinet, strings, harp and percussion*, 1957-1958), while K. Penderecki openly shows such a predilection with his *Concerto Grosso No. 2 for five clarinets and orchestra*.

Nicolas Bacri used concert genre of the Baroque epoch: *Concerto da camera op. 61 for Clarinet and String Orchestra* (1998), recorded in *The Paris Connection 2003* album of Philippe Cuper.

A variety of *double* and *triple* concerto was also developed, for instance, in the works by G. Jacob (*Double concert for clarinet, trumpet and wind orchestra*, 1975), and D. Martino (*Triple concerto: clarinet, bass-clarinet, contrabass-clarinet*, 1977).

Some composers have created their Concerto pieces for *bass clarinet* (A. Calloway, J. Russell, T. Massgreiv, Shigeru Kanno), obviously due to the fact that clarinet music is created for particular virtuosos, to match their performing potential. For example, Peter Maxwell, thinking about the abilities of an executor, composed in 2007 a piece for bass clarinet and strings, *The Seas of Kirk Swarf*. The symphonic principle is put in the name of the “Chamber symphony No. 5 ‘Mystic wishes’ for clarinet and chamber orchestra” by E. Stankovich.

Opening the 20th century special “parade” of the big forms with the elements of concertizing “Rhapsody for clarinet and piano” by C. Debussy was executed for the first time by Mimar on 16 January, 1911. This masterpiece is beloved by clarinetists. On March 5th, 1912, for the first time “Concerto for clarinet and viola with orchestra” in E-moll by M. Brukh was executed by his son, the clarinetist M.F. Brukh.

Looking at the list of pieces in the pointed out genre, we can't not mention the genre variety: except the traditional genre "Concerto for clarinet and orchestra" or simply "Clarinet Concerto" (K. Nilsen, M. Arnold, S. Vasilenko, L. Perosi, D. Viyo, V. Pistana, P. Hindemith, A. Copland, A. Tomasi, M. Puta, E. Bozza, K. Meier, F. Spek, K. Khokalo, M. Lindberg, E. Denissov, S. Fagerlund, K. Knipper, Talib-hon Shakhidi and others), there were written the Concerto for "clarinet and chamber orchestra" (B. Tchaikovsky), for "clarinet and strings" (J. Bize, Y. Makdugal, D. Robertson), for "clarinet and string orchestra" (G. Rivier, M. Sheiber), for "clarinet and wind orchestra" (I. Gotkovsky). L. Pipkov composed an original "Concerto for clarinet and chamber orchestra with percussion".

Some composers created their concert pieces for bass-clarinet (E. Kalouei, J. Passel) that is probably connected with the fact that clarinet music is being written for concrete virtuosos, depending on their executive abilities. In this sense, a big input was made by Benny Goodman for whom the Clarinet concerto by P. Hindemith was created, played by him in 1950 with Philadelphian orchestra. A Concerto for clarinet with orchestra was composed for the same by D. Milhaud as well but was not played by him. And "Ebony-concerto" for clarinet and jazz group composed by I. Stravinsky for V. Herman and his group was recorded by B. Goodman and Columbia jazz ensemble in 1945 and it has got wide recognition.

The recordings of Concerto for clarinet by A. Copland are not lesser-known, with E. Ormandi as conductor at the both premier recordings.

John Williams wrote *Concerto for Clarinet for Michele Zukovsky* (1991). New York Philharmonic Society ordered John Coriliano *Concert for Clarinet with orchestra* in 1977 for clarinetist Stenly Drucker; its first performance and recording were successful. Similarly happened with Clarinet Concerto op. 329a (1984), created by the same author for Thea King and English Chamber Orchestra under conduction of Howard Blake, and Michael Berkeley's *Concert for Clarinet for Emma Johnson* (1991) in Great Britain as well, and in the USA (Chicago) — Christopher Rouse's *Concert for Clarinet* (2000). In Sweden Rolf Martinsson arranged such a premiere of his *Concert Fantastique* op. 86 in 2010, and in Finland — Magnus Lindberg with her *Concert for Clarinet* (2002). Ilio Volante wrote *Concert for Clarinet in B and wind orchestra 'Key issue'* (2009) performed by

Maestro Angelo La Villa, the first Clarinet in B of Grenadiers of Sardinia Wind Orchestra in Rome (Italy).

Sometimes the concerto is given a program name, for example, “Landscapes with blues” by Hartke, “Dreams and prayers by Isaak the Blind” by O. Golikov, Concerto for clarinet and orchestra c-moll “Musical Ukraine” by V. Homolyak, etc.

At last, we can't ignore the great piece of the end of the 50th – 60th years of the 20th century by P. Boulez with aleatoric principle of form-building, written for the clarinet solo and 21 instruments divided in 6 groups. The composer gave it the name “Domaines” that is hardly translated in Russian language, as variants appeared names “Horizons”, “Territories”, “Arias”... Boulez's “Domaines” holds a unique position because the aleatoric approach in the building of the composition's musical structure.

First of all, Boulez composed 6 “exercise-books” or pages, i. e., musical texts in the serial system for clarinet and indicated them by Latin letters — from A to F. Every “original” part here has its “mirror” version for a group of instruments. In whole, there are 12 “exercise-books”, each containing 6 fragments of music. As R. Heaton (2014) writes, in the first sketches the name was supposed to be “Concerto” or “Labirints”. Later on variants of the position of the written down elements were added to the exercise-books or *cahiers*. In his comments to the edition of the CD disk Heaton noted that executors are allowed to make their choice in the interpretation of different elements They may interpret tempo indications and dynamic nuances, bring additional thrills, use vibrato, flute intonations and different techniques of the “sound increasing” such as colorful applicatory or thrills on one tone, use multiphony, and so on (Heaton. 2014). So, in Boulez's piece the main idea is the executor's reaction on the text connected with the choice that alters the principle of concertizing that gives it a new life, as well. R. Heaton wrote:

‘The performer starts playing all of the six original parts, presenting them one by one. Six elements (cells) in each page (in each part) can be played sequentially in one of the two options: either vertically or horizontally. The performer is invited to make a choice in interpretation of a number of elements. This refers to tempo designations (the composition has no rhythm meter indication), dynamic shades, additional trills, use of vibrato, flute intonation and different techniques

of ‘sound expansion’, such as coloristic fingering or one-tone trills, the use of overtones and ‘multiphony’² (Heaton, 2014, p. 3).

In 1942-1943 Benjamin Britten composed — as a concert piece — *Movement for Clarinet and Orchestra*. Jacob Avshalomov named his well-known Concerto for Clarinet and chamber orchestra *Evocations* (1952). Jacques Bondon wrote a very special *Concerto d’octobre pour clarinette et cordes* (1978), which was created and recorded by the order of the *Radio France*. Toru Takemitsu named his concert piece for clarinet and orchestra *Fantasma / Cantos* (1991). There are rare pieces with names in the oeuvre of Helmut Lachenmann (*Accanto*, 1976) and Jean Balissat (*Cantabile for clarinet and Strings*, 1995).

So, it must be said that looking at the number of written concert pieces, a splash of interest to the concerto genre in the music for clarinet of the 20th -21st centuries can be seen and different types of the genre as well. The “concertizing” clarinet became a well seen phenomenon in modern music. Further researchers suppose making analysis of the stylistic and structure peculiarities of the found pieces that have to steal the scene and conquer popularity among the executors and listeners.

The composers of the 20th century created quite numerous and varying small concert forms or *concertinos*, for instance, *Concertino for clarinet and chamber orchestra* (F. Busoni, M. Seiber, D. Marteno and others). There are many different small concert forms or Concertinos among the pieces of the composers of the 20th century.

Here is the list of pieces in this subgenre (in the chronological order):

Ferruccio Busoni. Concertino for Clarinet op. 48. 1918.

Frank Stewart. Concertino for Clarinet and small orchestra. 1941.

Elizabeth Maconchy. Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra. 1945.

Jean Binet. Petit Concerto for Clarinet and Strings. 1950.

Mátyás Seiber. Concertino for Clarinet and String Orchestra. 1951.

Norman Dello Joio. Concertante for Clarinet and orchestra. 1955.

Gordon Jacob. Mini-concerto for Clarinet and String Orchestra. 1980.

Elizabeth Maconchy. Concertino for Clarinet and small orchestra. 1984.

Donald Martino. Concertino for Clarinet and orchestra. 2004.

² Multiphony is a woodwinds blow technique.

Sometimes a Concerto is assigned a special name, for instance, *Somewhere in Spring* by Martin Twycross (2012), *Gnarly Buttons* by J. Adams, etc.

There are composers who prefer making arrangements of their opuses for different instruments, for example, Willy Ostijn arranged his *Elegy for Oboe and orchestra* in order to make a concert piece for clarinet (1964).

We can point out the variety of concert subgenres used in the music of the 20-21 centuries for clarinet:

- clarinet concert (concerto) or concert for clarinet with orchestra (symphonic, chamber, string, wind);
- concert for clarinet and jazz band;
- concertino or mini-concert for clarinet and orchestra;
- concert pieces with names (program music);
- *concerto grosso*;
- *concerto da camera*;
- double concert;
- triple concert.

In conclusion:

1. The Clarinet Concerto genre was developed very highly in the 20th-21st centuries.
2. Structures of clarinet concert compositions have very high diversity in the 20th and 21st centuries.
3. Concerto's music of the 20th and 21st centuries has a great expressiveness and technicality, and the soloist's part is connected with the expressive concertizing.
4. An apart role belongs to Pierre Boulez' composition called "Domaines" composed for clarinet and 21 instruments divided into 6 groups with the use of aleatoric principle and giving a new life to the concertizing.

In such a way, the phenomenon of the Clarinet Concerto of the 20th and 21st centuries deserves a peculiar attention, looking through the structures and author's styles in the genre of the Concerto for clarinet and orchestra.

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