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RESEARCH PAPER FOR A MASTER'S RECITAL OF MUSIC FOR CLARINET: FOR AN ACTOR: MONOLOGUE FOR CLARINET (IN A) BY SHULAMIT RAN, FIVE PIECES FOR SOLO CLARINET BY GORDON JACOB, AND HOMMAGE Á C. M. VON WEBER FROM HOMMAGES FOR SOLO CLARINET BY BÉLA KOVÁCS

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by

Brandon Louis Keith Spradlin

B.M., University of Alabama, 2018

A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Master of Music

School of Music
In the Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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Approved by:

Dr. Eric Mandat, Chair

Graduate School
Southern Illinois University Carbondale
April 9, 2021

AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

Brandon Louis Keith Spradlin, for the Master of Music degree in Music, presented on April 9, 2021, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: RESEARCH PAPER FOR A MASTER'S RECITAL OF MUSIC FOR CLARINET:
FOR AN ACTOR: MONOLOGUE FOR CLARINET (IN A) BY SHULAMIT RAN, *FIVE
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MAJOR PROFESSOR: DR. ERIC MANDAT

This research paper will cover the pieces performed by Brandon Louis Keith Spradlin on his graduate recital. This paper will serve as extended program notes for the pieces: *For An Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (In A)* by Shulamit Ran, *Five Pieces for Solo Clarinet* by Gordon Jacob, and *Hommage à C. M. Von Weber* from *Hommages for Solo Clarinet* by Béla Kovács.

The chapters in this paper will provide general biographical information about each composer as well as an analysis of each piece.

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CHAPTER 1

FOR AN ACTOR: MONOLOGUE FOR CLARINET (IN A)

Shulamit Ran is distinguished as both a pianist and composer in not only the United States, but also across Europe and in her home country of Israel. She was born on October 21, 1949, in Tel Aviv, Israel. She began composing at the age of seven by composing songs using Hebrew poetry.¹ She went on to study composition and piano with Alexander Boskovich and Norman Dello Joio. She attended college in the United States at the Mannes College of Music in New York. She has been awarded numerous awards for her orchestral works as well as her solo and chamber pieces, including a Pulitzer Prize for her work *Symphony* performed by the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1991. Since 1973, she has served as a professor at the University of Chicago Department of Music where she holds the position of Andrew MacLeish Distinguished Service Professor.² Her composition *For An Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (In A)* was composed in 1978 for Laura Flax, a clarinetist for the Da Capo Chamber Players. *For An Actor* is part of her second style period of composition and was her first solo work for clarinet.³ This piece, composed by Ran as a memorial for Flax's mother Hazel, was first performed by Laura Flax May 10, 1978, at Carnegie Recital Hall in New York.⁴

¹ "Shulamit Ran," accessed November 6, 2020, <https://music.uchicago.edu/people/shulamit-ran>.

² "Shulamit Ran," accessed March 5, 2021, <https://www.presser.com/shulamit-ran>.

³ Christine Allegra Banks, "Shulamit Ran's compositions for solo clarinet" (2005), *ETD Collection for University of Nebraska - Lincoln*. AAI3176769. Accessed March 7, 2021, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/dissertations/AAI3176769>.

⁴ *For An Actor: Monologue for Clarinet* by Shulamit Ran: Program Notes for Master's Recital" Google Scholar, accessed March 29, 2021, https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1034&context=music_graduate_recitals.

For An Actor is very challenging with many different marks and designations from the composer denoting styles of articulation or the ebb and flow of certain figures. Ran also uses a large number of tempi throughout the piece. In many instances a melodic idea or phrase will begin at one tempo, and either speed up or slow down into a new tempo. She also employs the use of many extended techniques throughout such as pitch bending, multiphonics, and flutter tonguing. These extended techniques, as well as the various changes and freedoms given to the performer, allow for a performance much like an actor would give in shooting scenes for a movie. In her program notes, Ran states:

For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (1978) owes its inspiration in large part to the intensely personal ethos with which the clarinet is associated in my mind. To me, the instrument in its contemporary usage suggests an incredible gamut of gestures, dynamics, and emotions. Accordingly, in MONOLOGUE, the player assumes the role of a virtuoso actor who, by purely physical means, goes through a kind of wordless 'monodrama'. Though not literally in sonata form, the parts of Monologue nevertheless parallel that form, consisting of: exposition or unfolding in two stages; development-disintegration including a cadenza; coda echoing the opening materials.⁵

The different parts of *For An Actor* are described well by Dr. Eric Mandat:

The end of line 1, page 4 is the end of the first state of unfolding; it's logical at this point to make a long diminuendo and to make a complete break before continuing with line 2. The development proper begins in line 7, page 4 following the caesura. The cadenza is marked at the beginning of line 6, page 5, and continues until the caesura at the end of line 2, page 6. At this point the development continues based on material from the second stage of the unfolding (from lines 4-5, page 4). The disintegration begins with the "very evenly paced" quarter notes in line 2, page 7. The coda is easy enough to recognize after the caesura in line 4, page 8.⁶

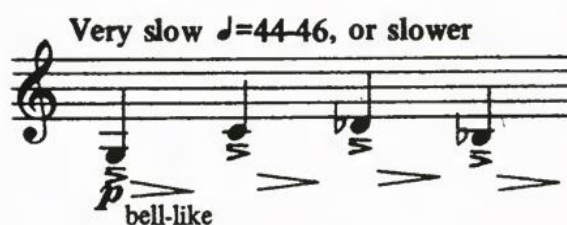
Within this piece, there are small motivic ideas that provide a basis for development throughout the piece. The first four notes of the piece, as seen in Figure 1, are the first motive of the piece.⁷

⁵ Shulamit Ran, *For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (in A)* (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: T. Presser, 1978), p. 1.

⁶ Eric Mandat, "Masterclass—*For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (in A)* by Shulamit Ran," *The Clarinet* 32, No. 4 (2005).

⁷ Ibid

Figure 1: Motive A



The notation of “bell-like” with this idea gives the performer the chance to demonstrate their control and flexibility over their sound while making the note sound and then decay. It is also a good way to announce to the listener through manipulation of sound that these four notes are important and will be heard again, much like bells of a church or a clock tower are heard throughout the day. In Christine Banks’s dissertation she references two other dissertations which analyze *For An Actor* and the dissertation written by Gary Wilson Behm discusses these four notes but not about how they are manipulated within the work.⁸ Shortly after this motivic idea the listener are introduced to the second motivic idea as seen in Figure 2.⁹

Figure 2: Motive B



This motivic idea starts on the fundamental pitch, followed by a leap down of a third, followed by a step up of an augmented second, and then followed by the leap down of a third. This motive connects to the first; it provides a sense of propulsion forward with the crescendo that happens

⁸ Banks, “Shulamit Ran’s Compositions for Solo Clarinet”, p. 17

⁹ Mandat, “Masterclass”.

on the note just before then slowing down throughout the idea, which leads into the third motivic idea as seen in Figure 3.¹⁰

Figure 3: Motive C



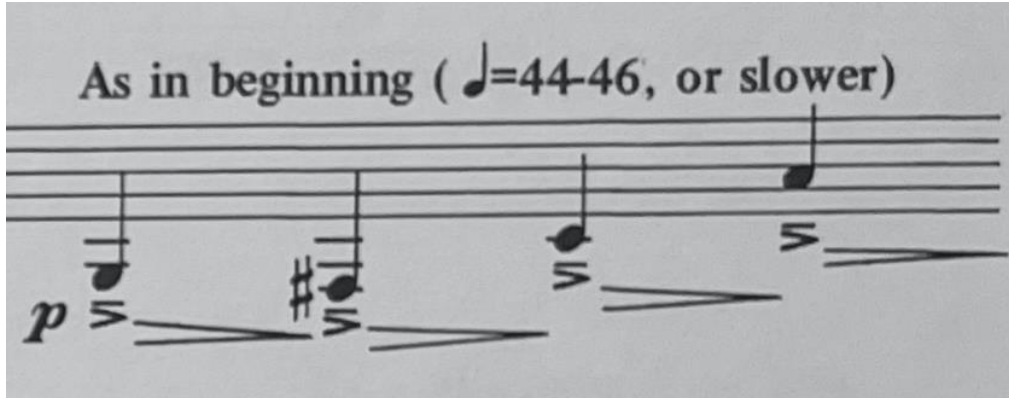
This motivic idea is set with the notation of ethereal at a tempo slower than that of the beginning. This can be played with the idea of the tone being almost transparent, without much body to the tone, giving it a sound that signifies the end of the first phrase and the motivic ideas. Throughout this piece these three motives, especially the idea of the four note progression as seen in Motive A, are transformed and used in fragmentation, augmentation, diminution, and transposed to connect certain phrases or ideas. These motivic ideas are also used in certain cases to end or begin new sections of the piece. Many phrases within the development section of this piece use a four note beginning which is a reference to Motive A. The beginning of the coda also begins with a variation of Motive A that has been transposed up a fifth and inverted.¹¹ The beginning of the coda can be seen in Figure 4:¹²

¹⁰ Mandat, “Masterclass”.

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Shulamit Ran, *For an Actor: Monologue for Clarinet (in A)* (Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: T. Presser, 1978).

Figure 4: Coda opening



The reason for presenting these three motives in the first line of the piece is so that they can linger in the listener's ear, and, when these motives come back, they will be recognized. As a player it is important to understand these ideas and where they occur in the music. The performer can use these ideas as ways to shift the mood of the piece depending on the phrase that preceded or follows. For example, one of these four-note motivic ideas that precedes a fast-moving passage with many notes can be played with more lift to prepare the listener for what is to come musically or played with more weight if the following section is slower.

For An Actor also challenges the performer with the use of various extended techniques throughout the composition. One prominent technique used is the multiphonic, produced by using a certain fingering and manipulating one's air pressure as well as the pressure on the mouthpiece and reed. Within the multiphonic, the amount of pressure from the lips, placement of the tongue in the mouth, and the speed of the air can change which pitches are audible and which pitches are emphasized. Another technique that is used extensively throughout this piece is the different types of articulation. This piece contains flutter tonguing, many types of accented and unaccented legato and staccato tonguing, and tonguing that accentuates a beat or the off beat. All of these forms of articulation help to give emphasis to certain notes or the beginning of ideas much like the first four notes of the piece. The range of this piece is also very extensive for the

performer, spanning virtually the entire range of the instrument from low E to extreme altissimo C. The other dissertation that Banks references in her dissertation is by Gary Steven Dranch. In Dranch's dissertation he discusses these techniques at length as well as the concept of body movements for how the player should move while performing.¹³

Overall, this piece gives the performer great freedom and flexibility within passages of notes for rubato and stretching and compressing phrases. This opportunity of interpretation gives the performer the ability for a unique portrayal every time it is rehearsed or performed, as well as changed characteristics of certain phrases or ideas depending on interpretation. The true beauty of a piece like *For An Actor* allows for a different performance each time it is played.

¹³ Banks, "Shulamit Ran's Compositions for Solo Clarinet", p. 16

CHAPTER 2

FIVE PIECES FOR SOLO CLARINET

Gordon Jacob is a very influential English composer and music educator. He was born on July 5, 1895, in London and died on June 8, 1984. Much of his study as a composer came at the Royal College of Music in London. He served during World War I as a soldier in the army, being lucky to survive the war as he was one of only sixty survivors of his battalion.¹⁴ He has composed many works for orchestra, chamber ensembles, and solo works, as well as band and military music. He is well known for being commissioned to write music for the 1953 coronation of Queen Elizabeth II.¹⁵ After finishing his studies in London, he came back as a lecturer for the Royal College in 1926 and taught there until his retirement in 1966.¹⁶ Jacobs had a fruitful musical career, being widely renowned as a composer and as a teacher. He wrote many essays on music and also published four books, many of which focused on orchestration and composition. He wrote *Five Pieces for Solo Clarinet* early in 1972. This piece was written and dedicated to Georgina Dobree, a famous English clarinetist during the mid-late 1900s. This piece consists of five “movements”: Preamble, Waltz, Homage to J. S. B., Soliloquy, and Scherzo and Trio.¹⁷

In the first movement of the piece, “Preamble,” one of the main motivic ideas is the

¹⁴ “Gordon Jacob: Biography & History,” AllMusic, accessed March 5, 2021, <https://www.allmusic.com/artist/gordon-jacob-mn0001465200/biography>.

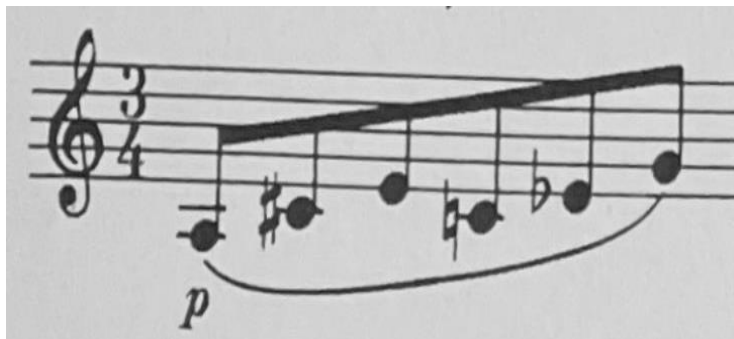
¹⁵ Ibid

¹⁶ “Gordon Jacob,” Boosey & Hawkes, accessed November 11, 2020, https://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/composer/composer_main?composerid=2871.

¹⁷ Ruth Jacob, “Gordon Jacob Home Page,” accessed July 2, 2020, <http://www.gordonjacob.net/>.

use of triads. The movement begins with an A-major arpeggio followed by a C-minor arpeggio as seen in Figure 5:

Figure 5: Opening Motive for “Preamble”



The triads are arranged from major to minor with the roots of the chords being a minor third apart. This is evident in the relationship shown in Figure 6:

Figure 6: Measure 10 of Movement 1



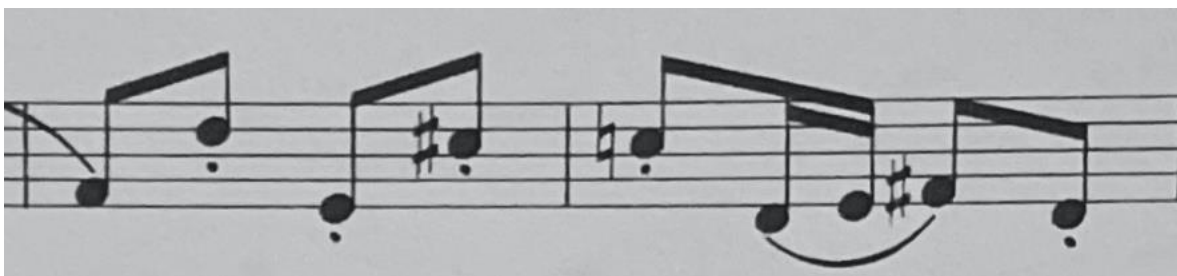
Throughout the movement the use of the triad is extensive, with some triads using displaced octaves such as in m. 3 where there is an A-major arpeggio, but all three notes exist in different octaves. Another small motivic idea in this movement is the movement of a half step followed by a leap. The first instance of this idea happens in m. 2, going from the F-sharp to F-natural, followed by a leap up to B-flat. Another stylistic feature of this movement is the phrase length. Each phrase is roughly two bars in length with a pick up note leading into each new phrase. The

only instance where this does not happen is in m. 15, where the phrase begins on the downbeat and lasts for four bars before a pick note on the and of four leads to the next phrase. This change in phrase structure helps to set an expectation for the listener that the movement will soon be ending.

Movement two is a “Waltz” in 3/4 time with a metronome marking of quarter note equals 112 beats per minute. This movement, like the first, is driven by the motivic idea of triads throughout. It begins, however, to incorporate scale-like ideas unlike the first movement, which primarily focused on leaps and skips with some chromaticism. This movement also begins to use ornaments such as the mordent in m. 18. It is also slightly more demanding in terms of the technique required when compared to the first movement. This movement demonstrates a larger range on the instrument, beginning to move into the altissimo register. Another difference between this movement and the first movement is the phrase lengths. The overall length of phrases within this movement tends to be four bars, with the occasional two bar phrase. This phrase structure helps to solidify the dance-like feel of the waltz with a regular phrase structure with an occasional phrase extension.

The third movement, titled “Homage to J. S. B.,” is noticeably different from the first two movements in terms of style and character. This movement is written distinctly in the style of Johann Sebastian Bach as noted in the title of the movement. This movement includes extensive repetition of notes and has many fast moving lines. This movement also has phrases with large leaps that help give the music another dimension of sound that is more enthusiastic. For example, in m. 7, the first and third eighth notes connect the previous bar to the second note in m. 8. The second and fourth eighth notes are a part of an upper line that is established in the beginning. This can be seen in Figure 7:

Figure 7: Measure 6 and 7 of Movement 3



Another feature that this movement contains is a return of the opening melodic material. There is a recapitulation of the primary theme from m. 1 through m. 4 stated in the pick-up into m. 25 through m. m. 28. This movement also further extends the range of the instrument, pushing to altissimo F in bar three. This movement also continues in the progression of technical demand in being more difficult than the movement preceding it due to the added leaps and jumps of awkward intervals. Another key aspect of this movement is the inclusion of more articulations where many of the phrases are to be slurred or lightly tongued. Staccato articulation is also added into the leaping motives.

Movement four is titled “Soliloquy” and is significantly slower than movements two and three. This movement uses motivic devices in the first movement such as the triad motive seen in m. 1, or the half-step motion followed by a leap in m. 12. Another small motivic fragment used throughout this piece is the motion of an augmented second within phrases. This first appears in measure two between the D-sharp and C-natural. This idea shows up in multiple measures on this movement. As seen in Figures 8 and 9, this motive occurs repeatedly in different contexts of the movement.

Figure 8: Measure 21 of Movement 4

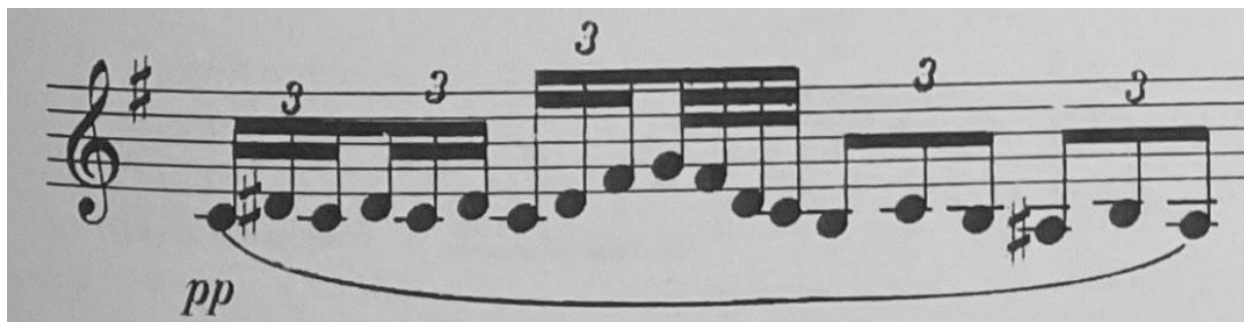
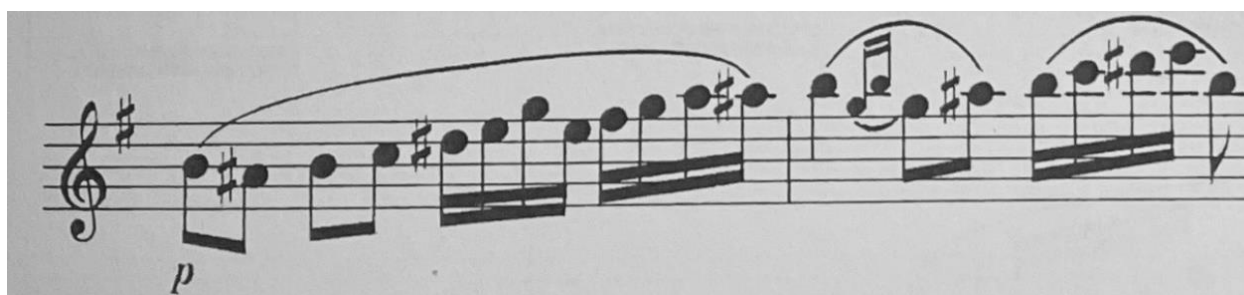


Figure 9: Measures 17 and 18 of Movement 4



The final movement, “Scherzo and Trio” is the longest and most demanding of the five movements. This movement contains a D.S. after the trio, having the user replay the Scherzo section of the movement. The significance of this is the relation to the form of the movement (ABA). This movement along with the third movement are the only two movements where there is a return of the primary thematic material. This movement also stretches the range of the instrument to its highest point up to altissimo G in m. 39. The motivic ideas in this movement are pulled from the previous movements such as the triad motive in the first movement as referenced in Figure 4. Another point to look at is the melodic content of the trio in relation to the scherzo. In many ways the melody in the trio is an augmentation of melodic content from the scherzo. Not only does this provide a contrast between the two sections, but it also creates a connection between them.

Overall this piece has simple motivic ideas and is not the most challenging in terms of difficulty. According to Jacobs, a piece does not have to be overly complex to be successful, instead, he declares: “The aim of the composer should be to make his music as clear and limpid as possible. Some composers cannot leave their music alone and are forever adding counterpoints until the texture of the music begins to suffer.”¹⁸ In other words, more is not always better, and with *Five Pieces for Solo Clarinet*, this is definitely the case. The use of the simple ideas and compounding them to create motivic relationships serves to bring together the five movements into a fun solo piece for players to practice and study.

¹⁸ Gordon Jacob, *The Composer and His Art* (London: Oxford University, 1955), p.14.

CHAPTER 3

HOMMAGE À C. M. VON WEBER FROM HOMMAGES FOR SOLO CLARINET BY BÉLA KOVÁCS

Béla Kovács is a critically acclaimed Hungarian clarinetist and composer born in Tatabánya, Hungary, on May 1, 1937. He attended the Franz Liszt Academy of Music for his studies and later became a professor at the same place.¹⁹ While a student, he became a member of the Hungarian State Opera Orchestra at the age of 19, where he would later go on to hold the principal clarinetist position until 1981. As a clarinetist, he is highly considered to be one of the best interpreters of Hungarian clarinet music from works of composers such as Bartók.²⁰ Another major accomplishment for him was that he helped to co-found the Budapest Chamber Ensemble in 1961.²¹ In 1964 he was awarded the Liszt Prize. As a performer, he is known to have many acclaimed performances of important repertoire in the clarinet literature such as Mozart's *Clarinet Concerto* and the Brahms clarinet sonatas. He is well known for his method books *I Learn to Play the Clarinet 1 and 2*. His book *Hommages for Solo Clarinet* is a collection of pieces in the style of different famous composers. These pieces contain inspiration and melodic and motivic ideas from works of the composers. The *Hommage À C. M. von Weber* is a theme and variations starting with a short exposition. After the exposition, the theme is introduced and then followed by five variations.

¹⁹ "Béla Kovács," Grove Music Online, accessed July 2, 2020, <https://www-oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy.lib.siu.edu/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000015435?rskey=qD45Ub>.

²⁰ "Béla Kovács: Biography & History," AllMusic, accessed March 5, 2021, <https://www.allmusic.com/artist/b%C3%A9la-kov%C3%A1cs-mn0001957093/biography>.

²¹ Ibid

The opening of this piece begins with a strong introduction from the clarinet and shows off a large range and the dynamic power of the instrument as seen in Figure 10:

Figure 10: Opening measures 1-4

This opening is similar to the opening of Weber's *Clarinet Concerto No. 2*. Both introductions display a wide range of the instrument and establish the presence of the soloist as seen in Figure 11:

Figure 11: Opening statement of Soloist for Weber's Second Clarinet Concerto

This exposition begins strong but moves to piano at the end to set up the beginning of the theme. This theme also has a motivic pattern of moving through different key areas through arpeggiation and scale-like passages. Even though the key area moves around the main area for the exposition is C Minor.

The theme moves from the minor key established in the previous section into C Major. This section is divided into four distinct phrases moving from tonic to dominant, dominant to tonic for the first two phrases, and repeating this pattern for the second phrase.

The first variation is also in C-Major and is more up-tempo than the two previous sections. This variation is comprised of triplets with articulations on unaccented notes. This melodic idea closely resembles Variation 1 of Weber's *Introduction, Theme and Variations for Clarinet and Piano* as seen in the comparison of Figures 12 and 13:

Figure 12: First two measures of Variation 1 in Weber's *Introduction, Theme and Variations*



Figure 13: First two measures of Variation 1 in *Hommages*



This variation can be broken into two long phrases beginning on m. 1 and m. 9. Both of these phrases end in tonic but contain various pitches outside of the key area to prolong the resolution. The opening material presented in the first four measures also come back in the final four measures of the variation. Another small feature in this variation is the use of the grace notes to begin a phrase. The only instance where this does not happen is in m. 9 where there is a grace note on beats one and three as seen in figure 14.

Figure 14: Variation 1 of Weber *Hommage*

Variation two shows a drastic change from the previous variation. This section is comprised primarily of long passages with many notes as the main thematic element. This variation is influenced by the third variation of Weber's *Introduction, Theme and Variations*. For example, in Figures 15 and 16, there is a close relationship between the shape of the lines.

Figure 15: First two measure of Variation 2 in *Hommages*Figure 16: Measures 6-7 from Variation 3 of Weber's *Introduction, Theme and Variations*

The use of rubato is integral in this variation, giving the performer the flexibility to shape the line. This variation also contains many large leaps for the player. Like the theme and the first variation, this variation is also in C Major. One of the difficulties of this movement is that even though it is slow and the performer has the ability to compress and decompress certain lines, the

overall tempo of the piece must stay the same. Whenever the performer takes time in one section, they must make it up in another.

Variation three is a short variation that uses fast moving lines of sixteenth notes to propel the melody forward. The main motivic idea in this variation is stated in the first measure with the sixteenth note triplets followed by the two eighth notes. This idea shows up at the start of each phrase and contrasts well with the running lines of notes.

Variation four brings back material presented in the second variation. It is a slow variation with moments where the performer can stretch the line and take time during certain figures. Unlike the second variation, however, this one is much more strict in regards to melody and metrically keeping the beat, so there is much less rubato and flexibility across phrases in comparison.

Variation five is the longest of the variations with two distinct sections. The first section of material is comprised of long strings of sixteenth notes. This melodic idea can be seen in Weber's *Concertino* in the third movement. This comparison can be seen in Figures 17 and 18.

Figure 17: First two measures of Variation 5 of *Hommages*



Figure 18: Excerpt from “Allegro” in Weber’s *Concertino* Movement 3



This section continues for the first half of the variation with a small repeat near the end. The second half of the variation is pulled from thematic material from the last movement of Weber’s *Clarinet Concerto No. 1*. The ending of this Hommage is typical for how Weber would end his concerti using either a series of trills in various octaves or, in this case, repeated tonic notes in different octaves to finish out the piece.

This piece is an accurate representation of Weber’s works for clarinet and utilizes many ideas and motives from them. Much like his other method books and teaching materials Kovács was able to use the ideas and Weber’s composition techniques to write a piece that can be studied and practiced to understand Weber’s music and compositional style.

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