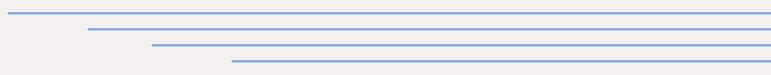




A Personal Guide to  
Bass Clarinet  
**Repertoire**

By  
Dr. Sarah Watts  
With guest  
contributions



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This book is dedicated to:  
All Bass Clarinet Players

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## INTRODUCTION

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Writing a recommended repertoire list is always going to be personal. It is therefore important for me to state now that if another of my bass clarinet colleagues had undertaken this task, then the list would be very different.

My inspiration to write a personal guide is after 20 years of specialising in solo bass clarinet performance and discovering and commissioning a wealth of music for the instrument, together with teaching and performing in many countries around the world. During 2021, the pianist Susan Tomes wrote *The Piano: A History in 100 Pieces*<sup>1</sup>, and I admired the way she selected repertoire and also gave personal and historical information to help the listener engage with each piece.

The bass clarinet has a huge amount of repertoire, and can play any genre of music, but has many schools of thought and approach when it comes to teaching. Unlike the clarinet that has a more standard core repertoire including classical and romantic works, the bass clarinet as a solo instrument developed much later meaning that teaching methods became very personal to soloists who started to teach. For example, the Czech player Josef Horak and Dutch contemporary pioneer Harry Sparnaay performed very different repertoire and had different ideals around the role of the bass clarinet as a solo instrument. Horak performed many transcriptions (especially in the early days of developing repertoire) and developed the lyrical side of the instrument, where as Sparnaay devoted his life to expanding the use of extended techniques and commissioning complex new works.

My personal choices include works written for me that have become central to my concert repertoire. This includes lyrical core repertoire and works that use my research into extended techniques. I have also chosen to include transcriptions, as whilst we have enough repertoire to only include original compositions, I enjoy playing arrangements and strongly feel that a wider audience needs to hear everything we can offer. I have also included examples of orchestral and chamber repertoire as it is important to acknowledge that the bass clarinet can and does have many places functions in the twenty first century.

I chose to only select 55 works than to simply write a list, to try and give a coherent list that gives all players who are interested in solo repertoire a starting point. I have also chosen to only list pieces that are available to all, either via publishers or composers. I've seen many lists, but ultimately they aren't helpful in list only format. Where do you start when simply presented with a list of 500 works?

Therefore, this guide is not by any means a definitive or exhaustive guide. There are hundreds of pieces that I couldn't include. It is also lacking in terms of diversity and inclusivity in terms of equality of composer representation. The message that I take from this is that I have to do more work to make my own recitals more inclusive and that the bass clarinet community as a whole needs to continue to strive to help do this by recommending existing works and commissioning new works that address the need to further improve programming as we go forward.

<sup>1</sup> Tomes, Susan. *The Piano: A History in 100 Pieces*. 2021 Yale University Press.

To expand on my personal collection, I have invited some of my colleagues (and friends) to select their top 5 works to expand the list to beyond simply my taste. These colleagues are all respected soloists and teachers with international reputations and have contributed to the development of the instrument and its repertoire. I have also included a larger list by the Italian soloist Paolo de Gaspari, who teaches in several conservatoires, and from his conversations with the late Harry Sparnaay, a list that Harry did of his top choices.

So here we are. A compact guide with plenty of choice for all players. A list where all can select individual starting points, explore repertoire further, and hopefully as time goes on create more new works, their own repertoire and be a part of the future of our wonderful instrument. This list is my journey and story so far and I look forward to its next chapters and future additions.



## INTRODUCCIÓN

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Escribir una lista de repertorio recomendado siempre será algo personal. Es importante mencionar que si otro de mis colegas de clarinete bajo hubiera emprendido esta tarea, entonces la lista resultante sería muy diferente.

Mi inspiración para escribir una guía personal es los veinte años de especialización e interpretación del clarinete bajo solista, de comisionar y descubrir una gran cantidad de música para el instrumento, a la par con la enseñanza y las presentaciones en muchos países alrededor del mundo. Durante 2021, la pianista Susan Tomes escribió *'El piano: una historia en 100 obras'*<sup>1</sup>, y admiré la manera cómo seleccionó el repertorio y proporcionó información personal e histórica para ayudar al oyente a involucrarse con cada obra.

El clarinete bajo tiene una gran cantidad de repertorio y se puede tocar en cualquier género musical, pero tiene muchas escuelas de pensamiento y enfoque cuando se trata de enseñar. A diferencia del clarinete, que cuenta con un repertorio estándar que incluye obras clásicas y románticas, el clarinete bajo como instrumento solista se desarrolló mucho más tarde, lo que significa que los métodos de enseñanza se volvieron muy personales para solistas que empezaron a dar clases. Por ejemplo, el clarinetista bajo checo Josef Horak y el pionero holandés Harry Sparnaay interpretaron un repertorio muy diferente y tuvieron diferentes ideales en torno al papel del clarinete bajo como instrumento solista. Horak realizó muchas transcripciones (especialmente en los primeros días del desarrollo del repertorio) y desarrolló el lado lírico del instrumento, mientras que Sparnaay dedicó su vida a expandir el uso de técnicas extendidas y comisionar obras nuevas y complejas.

Mis elecciones personales incluyen obras escritas para mí que se han convertido en el centro de mi repertorio de concierto. Esto incluye repertorio básico lírico y obras que utilizan mi investigación en técnicas extendidas. También he optado por incluir transcripciones, ya que si bien tenemos suficiente repertorio con las composiciones originales, disfruto mucho tocar arreglos y creo firmemente que el público necesita escuchar todo lo que podemos ofrecer. También he incluido ejemplos de solos orquestales y repertorio de cámara, ya que es importante reconocer que el clarinete bajo puede y tiene muchos lugares en el siglo XXI.

Elegí seleccionar solo cincuenta y cinco obras en lugar de simplemente escribir una lista, para tratar de publicar una guía coherente que ofrezca un punto de partida a todos los intérpretes que están interesados en el repertorio solista. También decidí incluir piezas que están disponibles para todos, ya sea a través de editores o los mismos compositores. He visto muchas listas y en última instancia, no son útiles en el formato de listas en sí. ¿Por dónde empiezas cuando simplemente te presentan una lista de quinientas obras?

Por todo esto, la presente publicación no es de ninguna manera una guía definitiva o exhaustiva. Hay cientos de piezas que no pude incluir. También necesita mejorar en términos de diversidad e inclusión y de igualdad de representación de los compositores. El mensaje que rescato es que tengo que trabajar más para que mis propios recitales sean más inclusivos, y que la comunidad del clarinete bajo en su conjunto debe continuar esforzándose para ayudar a este propósito, recomendando obras existentes y comisionando nuevas composiciones que aborden la necesidad de mejorar aún más la programación a medida que avanzamos.





## CHAPTER 1. MY PERSONAL TOP 10

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I have decided to start my guide with a list of my Top Ten works. This is an impossible ask, but one that gave me a chance to really think about works that have resonated with me and that show both the development and diversity of the instrument. I'm sure that some entries will be controversial with my colleagues, but I hope this list respects the history and journey so far of the instrument, whilst highlighting my own path and thoughts as a performer and researcher.

### 1. **God Bless The Child. A transcription of an Improvisation on Billie Holiday's 'God Bless The Child', by Eric Dolphy.**

My number one choice was unquestionable and there is no doubt in my mind worthy of the top spot. Eric Dolphy's improvisations on God Bless The Child in the 1960s are for me the most important and iconic solos in bass clarinet history. They have inspired and continue to inspire many leading pioneers of the instrument including the great Harry Sparnaay. As well as being a bridging link with classical and jazz traditions, this improvisation has played a pivotal role in the development of the contemporary bass clarinet.

Dolphy performed improvisations on this song numerous times in the 1960s that feature on some of his albums. There are also a number of transcriptions widely used today. I use the David Ocker version myself, but many performers use the Roger Jannotta (1977) transcription based on Dolphy's performance in Denmark on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1961.

Published by: The Jannotta Transcription is available as a free download via:

<https://www.earspasm.com/free-downloads/god-bless-the-child-sheet-music>

Recording: Eric Dolphy – live in Germany (starting at 4min 50)

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x15elq4>

### 2. **Cello Suite No. 1, by J.S Bach**

I'm sure that my number two entry will be controversial, but the importance of Bach should not be underestimated. Bach has formed a central part of my practice since I started playing bass clarinet, and I continue to play Bach to this day. There is no better work for developing and improving sound, technique, breath control, and understanding harmony.

The Bach Cello Suites fit the range of the bass clarinet perfectly and are widely used as etude choice, set works in orchestral auditions and in concert performances. I have performed them many times in recitals myself and will always continue to do so.

My justification in making this number 2 in my guide is the direct link to Eric Dolphy who used Bach in his own practice. You only have to listen to God Bless The Child to hear the Bach influences. Dolphy transcribed the first movement of the Cello Suite No. 1, and his handwritten version is in the Dolphy files in the Library of Congress. Whilst I prefer to simply read off the cello part in bass clef, Dolphy chose to transpose this movement to remain true to the original pitch.

If it's good enough for Dolphy, then it's place at number two is good enough for me!

Published by: I advise playing from an Urtext edition of the cello score.

Recording: Listen to cello recordings! My personal favourites are the recordings of Yo-Yo Ma.

### 3. Solo from 'Emma d'Antiochia', by Saverio Mercadante

The first ever bass clarinet solo is claimed to be in the 1835 opera 'Emma d'Antiochia', by Saverio Mercadante. This demanding virtuosic solo was written for the Glicibarifono which was invented and played by Caterini Caterino. It was in the key of C and the solo went down to a low C.

The impact the instrument had on Mercadante is clear to see in an 1847 letter written to Catterini.<sup>2</sup>

*Dear Sir,*

*It is with pleasure that I accede to your wish that I write to declare the advantageous effect on me produced by the instrument you have invented, namely the Glicibarifono, when I had occasion to compose a special part for it in my opera Emma di Antiochia in Venice.*

*Let me add to the many favourable remarks I have already made to you about the instrument in question, which I should like to see adopted in all orchestras and bands, sure of the most happy results.*

*Meanwhile please accept the most sincere and regard from one who prizes being able to call himself*

*Your admirer*

*Saverio Mercadante (in his own hand)  
To Mr Catterino Catterini  
Distinguished Professor of Music*

Published by: A transcription for Bass Clarinet and Piano has been published via the Accademia Italiana Clarinetto

. <https://www.accademiaitalianaclarinetto.com/spartiti-sconti-2021>

Recording: Rocco Parisi – Bass Clarinet and Gabriele Rota – Piano. 2021:

[https://youtu.be/Hvjot\\_Iejj0](https://youtu.be/Hvjot_Iejj0)

### 4. Black Arrow, by Sungji Hong

I have selected Black Arrow, for bass clarinet and fixed media (2005) by the South Korean Composer Sungji Hong, as this is a work written for me early in my career that has now become a successful and popular work with many other players having performed it.

This is not an easy work and uses extended techniques including slap tongue, key clicks, glissandi and multiphonics, but is a highly effective work that is rewarding to play and learn.

<sup>2</sup> The Opera Orchestra in the 18<sup>th</sup> – and 19<sup>th</sup> – Century Europe, edited by Niels Martin Jensen and Franco Piperno. Chapter XX From the Glicibarifono to the bass clarinet: A chapter in the history of Orchestration in Italy, by Fabrizio Della Seta. Berliner Wissenschafts – Verlag.

Hong has recently written me two further works – Exevalen for solo bass clarinet (2019) and Ekvallein for bass clarinet and electronics (2021).

Published by: [www.tetractys.co.uk](http://www.tetractys.co.uk)

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet <https://youtu.be/cXtVgEQ5z3M>

## 5. Ballade, by Eugene Bozza

This five minute work for bass clarinet and piano is one of my favourite pieces for bass clarinet and one of the first pieces that I learnt as a student. Composed in 1939, it is considered the first original work for bass clarinet and piano by a French composer. The work is a perfect contest piece and a good showstopper. It can be played on a low E flat bass clarinet, but I do put a low D in the chromatic descent before the final section to help balance the handover with the piano part. This piece is an ideal work for students starting out on bass clarinet and wanting to develop technical confidence. It does not use the altissimo register and leaves room for musical characterisation and interpretation.

This work won me a huge amount of funding as a student in the days when Dame Evelyn Barbirolli and Dame Thea King were on many competition panels. Not known for her quiet discretion, Lady Barbirolli always gave her thoughts away, so I was delighted and amused when mid-performance of this piece in the Royal Overseas League Competition, she said at the top of her voice ‘This is such a good piece!’ From then on I always included this piece when I knew she was on the jury. It is also featured on my debut album SCAWFELL.

Published by: Southern Music

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. SCAWFELL 2008: <https://open.spotify.com/track/OSSmCveWd7WS4br5mtPVFq?si=36adfa12aa9241e9>

## 6. Sonate, by Paul Hindemith

This work is a transcription from the bassoon sonata and whilst the publishers of the original bassoon version will not acknowledge or publish the bass clarinet edition, this work is considered core repertoire within the bass clarinet community, with several released recordings.

The Czech bass clarinet soloist Josef Horak was playing bass clarinet one day, when a man walked in the room and asked many questions about the instrument. Eventually he asked Horak if he played the bassoon sonata by Hindemith, and Horak replied he knew the work but didn’t think that the composer would approve. The man then introduced himself as Paul Hindemith and gave his approval for the work to be transcribed and performed on bass clarinet. The piece has been in our repertoire ever since. Horak told this story many times, including at the 2005 bass clarinet convention in Rotterdam, which was a few weeks before his death.

Published by: Today players transpose the bassoon part and use the bassoon piano part published by Schott.

Recording: There is a CD recording of Josef Horak performing, but appears to be out of print.

## **7. Symphony Number 7, Dmitri Shostakovich**

Dmitri Shostakovich completed the Leningrad Symphony (No. 7) in 1941 and it was premiered in 1942.

For me, Shostakovich's use of bass clarinet is ground-breaking in terms of orchestral writing, and whilst other composers had used bass clarinet in solo passages, I am always fascinated by how Shostakovich writes for the auxiliary wind instruments. Shostakovich writes substantial passages for solo bass clarinet in many of his works including the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> symphonies and violin concerto No. 1.

I have selected the seventh symphony for the long slow solo in the second movement (Fig. 97). This solo for me is one of the most haunting solos in bass clarinet orchestral repertoire. It requires lots of stamina, breath control and there are many ways to interpret it (every part I've ever seen and played from has different ideas for breath points).

The premiere was by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra in Kuybyshev on 5th March 1942, but the conditions in which the Symphony received its first Leningrad performance on 9th August 1942 are incomprehensible. The Leningrad Radio Orchestra, conducted by Karl Eliasberg was the only remaining orchestra in the sieged city and had been reduced to 15 players – many members had died or left the city to fight. The re-formed orchestra were starving given extra rations to enable them enough stamina to play. To this day I have no idea how the bass clarinettist in the orchestra had the strength to play that part in rehearsals and concert in such conditions. This entry in my top ten is dedicated to him.

Published by: You can view a complete part via the New York Philharmonic archives.

Recording: Lorenzo Antonio Iosco – Bass Clarinet. Hong Kong Philharmonic 2018.  
<https://youtu.be/xBM0nelzdtU>

## **8. Soft, by Franco Donatoni**

Soft, for solo bass clarinet was written by the Italian composer Franco Donatoni in 1989 for Harry Sparnaay. Soft is a piece of music where you still discover more about how to interpret it years after you first learn, and for me this makes it a special work. I first performed this work in January 2002 in London's Purcell Room and it stays firmly in my personal list of one of the most important works written for the bass clarinet.

Donatoni knows how to write for all the clarinets (Clair, for clarinet (1980) and Ombra for contrabass clarinet (1984) are also incredibly well written works. Soft is in two movements and uses the full range of the instrument. It is technically demanding, and on first look rhythmically complex, but once you understand Donatoni's language you are left with phrases and sections of rhythmic vitality that are excitingly coherent in nature and a musical journey of dynamic extremes.

For me, Donatoni's music is close to perfection and I love the process of learning, practising, interpreting and performing his works.

Published by: Ricordi, Italy

Recording: Paolo di Gaspari – Bass Clarinet. The Essential Bass Clarinet. 2016.  
<https://open.spotify.com/album/5sBePITSz2tvCjE1M7q3Vg?si=DTAAVY4zTdKb8lzLG9d1fQ>

## 9. Vox, by Marc Yeats

Marc Yeats wrote VOX, for solo bass clarinet for me in 2001. It was one of the first works written for me and at the time pushed me as a player both technically and musically. This work is a two part 12 minute tour de force exploring the many voices and extended techniques of the instrument. It is a dramatic work to perform and listen to.

Originally this work used the Henri Bok multiphonic charts, but these sections were revised in 2012 during my PhD research into multiphonics and the new edition published by Metropolis, Belgium alongside my book 'Spectral Immersions' and other works written for my PhD using my new charts.

Vox is a special work for me and has remained a part of my concert repertoire for the past 20 years.

Published by: Metropolis - <https://ummpstore.com/products/yeats-vox>

Recording. Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet. Live concert, Weymouth, England. 2014.  
[https://youtu.be/Jmdw7jBsA\\_g](https://youtu.be/Jmdw7jBsA_g)

## 10. Fall of the King, by Antony Clare

Fall of the King for bass clarinet and piano was composed in 2013, by my pianist in SCAW, Antony Clare for our second Album Timeless Shades.

This was the second work Antony wrote for us, the first being SCAWFELL for our first album of the same name. Fall of The King, has become the finale work for many of our concerts. It is an epic piece that shows the power and of the instrument over more than a 4 octave range and is a work that doesn't call for or need extended technique. It can be and has been performed to many audiences – both classical and contemporary.

The title came after the music and has no specific meaning. It is up to the player and the audience to come to their own conclusions as to what the piece is about.

Published by: Self Published. Email: [aclare@waitrose.com](mailto:aclare@waitrose.com)

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. Timeless Shades, Cuillin Sound. 2013.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/2ycfPHb1XuQ5Ye15vzFgQe?si=c4b31d5979b94f68>



## CHAPTER 3. MY EXTENDED PERSONAL LIST

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### 11. Edifice, by David Bennett Thomas

Edifice, for bass clarinet and piano, was composed for SCAW (Sarah Watts and Antony Clare) in 2008. This is a superb work that has become a core piece of repertoire and an excellent work for students looking for an advanced, but accessible recital work. The work starts and ends with spacious slow writing that takes advantage of the lyrical bass clarinet sound. The central section is fast Allegro that requires the bass clarinet to dance across leaps and registers. It ticks a very nice box of being contemporary in style, with hints of Jazz, but remains extremely accessible to all audiences. Bennett Thomas has also written *Conversation Pieces* for bass clarinet duo (2009) and *Ebb* for bass clarinet and bassoon (2012), that have also become core chamber works.

Published by: Self-Published <http://www.davidbthomas.com>

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. rarescale Plays David Bennet Thomas, rarescale, 2009. [https://youtu.be/MKXoR\\_YXRWM](https://youtu.be/MKXoR_YXRWM)

### 12. Sequenza IXc, by Luciano Berio

Sequenza IXc, is the third version of the ninth sequenza. Originally (IXa) written in 1980 for clarinet, Berio then did an edition for alto saxophone (IXb) in 1981 before working with the Rocco Parisi on the bass clarinet version which was premiered in 1997.

The bass clarinet version for me personally is the most exciting of all three, due to the huge range of the bass clarinet. The full range from low C to high F (nearly four and a half octaves) is used and this gives the work an added sense of drama, excitement and atmosphere. The composer told Parisi that he admired the work of the great violinist Paganini and this is very evident in the virtuosic nature of the work.

The composer also writes:

*'It is essentially a long melody implying, like almost every melody, redundancy, symmetries, transformations and returns. Sequenza IX is also a "sequence" of instrumental gestures developing a constant transformation between two different harmonic fields: a seven-note one (F sharp, C, C sharp, E, G, B flat and B natural) appearing always in the same register, and a five-note one appearing in ever-different registers. The latter penetrates, modifies and comments on the harmonic functions of the first seven-note field.'*

Published by: by Universal Edition

Recording: Alain Billard – Bass Clarinet. Sequenzas I – XIV. Naxos  
<https://youtu.be/9kOSH7yFi7A>

### 13. Roddy's Reel, by Sir Harrison Birtwistle

Sir Harrison Birtwistle wrote Roddy's Reel, for solo bass clarinet, at my request for the islanders on the Hebridean Isle of Raasay in 2009. Birtwistle lived on Raasay for 10 years in the 1970s and 1980s, and I moved into my cottage in 2008. The piece was performed at the first Isle of Raasay Bass Clarinet Course in April 2009.

Roddy's Reel isn't the first work written by Birtwistle about Raasay, but it was the first piece to be performed on the island. It is a piece that engages with a non-contemporary audience as it has elements of folk influence, and uses audience participation. The work needs three performers; solo bass clarinet, solo clapper and an audience leader. The audience have to clap and also make sounds that emanate the Inner Sound (the stretch of Sea that looks from his past former home to the Cuillin Mountains on Skye). The work also contains quotations from Sorley McLean's *'The Cuillins'* and was named and dedicated to his neighbour Roddy McLeod.

This is a moderately difficult work, but one that can bring contemporary music to a general audience, by one of the UK's leading composers.

Published by: Boosey & Hawkes [www.boosey.com](http://www.boosey.com)

### 14. Phantasy Quintet, by York Bowen

The Phantasy Quintet Op. 93, for bass clarinet and string quartet, was composed between 1932 and 1936 for the renowned bass clarinetist and saxophonist Walter Lear. The Quintet is dark and intense in language. It also gives Bowen's favourite instrument the viola an important part, which really works well with the darker colours of the bass clarinet.

York Bowen was (1884-1961) was a British composer (and son of a whisky distiller). His music was post romantic in style and also crossed over at times in to a British light music style. This style of music fell out of fashion early on in his career and his music never achieved the popularity it deserved until it started to be rediscovered in the last 20 - 30 years.

Published by: Emerson Edition.

Recording: Robert Plane - Bass Clarinet. York Bowen. Chandos. 2014.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6xV0tGqejkXYZTpcp7Bf15?si=c0989feb7c864606>

### 15. Looking Ears, by Ton Bruynel

Looking Ears for bass clarinet, grand piano and soundtrack, was composed by the Dutch composer Ton Bruynel for Harry Sparnaay in 1972.

Bruynel (1934 - 1998), was one of the first composers to set up his own electronic studio. Almost all of his works combine music performed live with taped sounds whose timbres, though electronically generated, closely relate to those of the instrument. Looking Ears is no exception and it was the quality and imagination of the tape part that drew myself and my pianist Antony Clare to this work. The bass clarinet and piano writing is a mixture of notated and graphic score style improvisation. The piano part has inside the piano effects on the strings - it needs to be played on a grand piano for the piece to work.



The improvised nature and the way as a musician you need to integrate with the tape part keeps this work exciting and fresh. It is a great work to perform and one that led me to also discover 'Save The Whale' for contrabass clarinet and tape that unfortunately remains unpublished.

Published by: Donimus.nl

<https://webshop.donemus.com/action/front/sheetmusic/1850>

Recording: Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet and Polo de Haas – Piano. Looking Ears Complete. NEAR 2005.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1yDTaTUN0q1Y9uKQ1EJs75?si=1176d5ea26834c33>

## 16. Mountains, by Cornelius Cardew

Mountains (1977) is a solo work for bass clarinet by the British avant-garde composer Cornelius Cardew (1936-1981).

Mountains was composed in 1977, for Harry Sparnaay. The title is likely inspired by the Lindberg Mountain in Boswil, Switzerland where they met and became friends at a conference. Mountains is an intriguing work with a range of influences, not least for the theme which is a quote from the Gigue from keyboard Partita No.6 in E-minor (BWV 830), by JS Bach. The theme takes on mutated twists and turns and the work is technically challenging with a Cardew trademark graphic score inserted in the middle of the work and a cadenza of mountaineer flourishes.

For performers wishing to explore graphic score notation, then it is worth seeking out Cardew's Treatise. Written 1963 -7, this 193 page graphic score has no instructions or rules. It is simply left to the player/s (any combination or number) or conductor to interpret it.

Mountains Published by: Forward Music Limited. 1988.

Treatise: Published by Peters Edition

Recording: Chris Cundy – Bass clarinet. Mountains. Aural Terrains. 2020

<https://chriscundy.bandcamp.com/album/mountains>

## 17. Blunt Instrument, by Greg Caffrey

Blunt Instrument for bass clarinet and piano was composed for SCAW (Sarah Watts – bass clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano) in 2009, by the Northern Irish Composer Greg Caffrey.

This is a real powerhouse of a duo that needs a competent pianist. It's insane, powerful and dangerous to perform. The composer writes: *"The furious nature of this piece, which offers little in the way of respite for the performers, results in a virtuosic display on both instruments. Extremes of range and violent punctuations, on the piano, meet with intricate canonic passages that are pulled here and there through the use of temporal modulations and contrasted overlapping tuplet values"*.

Blunt Instrument was a Finalist work in the Taukay Edizioni Musicali International Composition Prize 2012.

Published by: <https://www.gregcaffrey.com>

Recording: Belfast 2016. SCAW <https://youtu.be/jA2NMehhkd4>



## 18. Urban Myths, by Joe Cutler

Urban Myths, was composed for bass clarinet and harpsichord by the British composer Joe Cutler in 1999 for Harry Sparnaay and Annelie De Man.

The work is in three movements. and it is a set of miniature urban fairy tales. i/ *Chasin' The Skunk* was inspired after watching a cartoon and in keeping has a sting in its tail. ii/ *Secret Garden* refers to a quiet garden in a North London park, close to where the composer grew up, and iii/ *Hokus Pokus* is so called because the performers have to play a torrent of notes "as if possessed"...

It is great fun work to play and is technically challenging in both notes and duo performance. It can be performed with either harpsichord or piano. I have also performed it many times with an electronic keyboard with a good harpsichord setting.

Published by Wise Music. <https://www.wisemusicclassical.com/work/58161/>

Recording 1: Bass Clarinet and Harpsichord. Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet and Annelie De Man – Harpsichord. Ladder of Escape 10. 2008.

[https://open.spotify.com/album/6JyvgE5LCO0fQ7DuS7XpzY?si=deQ\\_z4dfSiCVfLgW\\_TaJag](https://open.spotify.com/album/6JyvgE5LCO0fQ7DuS7XpzY?si=deQ_z4dfSiCVfLgW_TaJag)

Recording 2: Bass Clarinet and Piano. Sarah Watts – bass clarinet and Antony Clare – piano. SCAWFELL, 2008.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5IAaVoRw7MIMBdN561vpcf?si=clKLdlzqSHS3dmLpsQVMog>

## 19. Timeless Shades of Green, by Stephen Davismoon

Timeless Shades of Green, for bass clarinet and piano was written for SCAW's second album in 2013. This sublime work features and explores the use of integrating multiphonics into a work with piano and used test charts for 'Spectral Immersions' and Sarah Watts research into bass clarinet multiphonics.

Davismoon wrote about the piece 'It was composed during the weeks leading up to and shortly after the birth of my son, when he – with swift, lance-like directness – erupted into our midst. I wished for it to be a work expressive of being in anticipation/in contemplation, characterised by a kaleidoscopic use of subtle shifts of sonic energy. It is dedicated to Lance Harvey Davis – welcome son'.

Published by: Metropolis Music.

[https://ummpstore.com/products/davismoon-timeless-shades-of-green?\\_pos=1&\\_sid=0ead4241a&\\_ss=r](https://ummpstore.com/products/davismoon-timeless-shades-of-green?_pos=1&_sid=0ead4241a&_ss=r)

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet. Antony Clare – Piano. Timeless Shades. Cuillin Sound 2013.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/3a9tqdRY6ZGH6tW48Lowos?si=487744d9a736497e>

## 20. **Sonata on Welsh Folk Songs, by Wolfgang Gabriel**

The Austrian composer Wolfgang Gabriel composed the Sonate Op. 30a a uber Walisische Volkslieder, for bass clarinet and piano in 1975 for the Due Boemi Di Praga (Josef Horak – Bass Clarinet and Emma Kovárnová – piano).

The 20 minute four movement work as the title suggests is based on Welsh Folk songs. The composer is married to a Welsh Opera singer and this was the inspiration for the link to folk songs. The traditional songs used in the work are: Malltraeth Cob, The Ox-Driver's Song, The Bardsey Boat Lament, The Cap of Broad Lace, The Black Mare and See-Saw, and Swaddled One.

Whilst the work doesn't make use of the lower extended bass clarinet range, it highly features the altissimo range that Josef Horak loved to exploit. This makes the work an advanced level sonata with some tricky high note passage work. This is a must sonata for players who appreciate the lyrical side of the bass clarinet and also are drawn to traditional folk music. The Third movement is heart-breakingly powerful and based on a Welsh boating tragedy.

Published by: Alea.

<https://bassclarinet.ecwid.com/Gabriel-Sonata-Op-30-Hard-Copy-p145130429>

Recording: SCAWFELL Album. SCAW (Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. Clarinet Classics. 2009.

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5IAaVoRw7MIMBdN561vpcf?si=0zzM3yBtQoab0V5KMISmNQ>

## 21. **Sonata, by Harald Genzmer**

Sonata for solo bass clarinet, for solo bass clarinet was composed in 1984, by the German composer Harald Genzmer (1909 – 2007). Genzmer studied composition with Paul Hindemith, and also clarinet and piano performance whilst a student at the the Berlin Hochschule für Music.

He later taught composition at Musikhochschule of Freiburg and the Munich Hochschule für Musik.

The solo sonata is a substantial solo work and an ideal work for students wishing to improve their technique. It has four movements:

1. Moderato
2. Presto
3. Intermezzo: Tranquillo
4. Finale: Vivacissimo, Moderato

Published by: Peters Edition

## 22. Prelude, by Ruth Gipps

The Prelude, Op. 51 for solo bass clarinet was composed in 1957, by the English composer Ruth Gipps. Her husband the clarinetist Robert Baker acquired a bass clarinet in the late 1950s and Gipps composed her Prelude for bass clarinet in response. Baker premiered it in 1957.

Gipps (1921 – 1999), was an oboist, pianist and composer. She was taught composition by Gordon Jacob and mentored by Vaughan Williams. She claimed that her music was ‘obviously and incurably English,’ a quality that to her was extremely important. She often drew on English folk music and poetry in her music.

When faced with Ruth Gipps as a student, Sir Hugh Allen, the director of the Royal College of Music, declared that she ‘will go far because she is obstinate. She is damned obstinate!’ Her refusal to move away from ‘lush tonal music’ and refusal to embrace modernist directions impacted on her success as a composer during her lifetime, but her music is now receiving the attention and performances that it deserves.

The Prelude is lyrical and shows of the lush mellow qualities of the bass clarinet. A perfect recital filler and an excellent piece for students – especially those looking to learn an accessible work by a female composer.

Published by: Emerson Edition (hard copy or digital download):

<https://www.juneemersonwindmusic.com/PRELUDE-Op-51-d3be186d-e21c-4652-b786-df6b3eefccef.html>

Recording: Mark O’Brien – Bass Clarinet (City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra).

[https://youtu.be/ctCb4\\_ueBWg](https://youtu.be/ctCb4_ueBWg)

## 23. Total Absorption, by Perry Goldstein

Total Absorption for solo bass clarinet, was composed for Michael Lowenstern in 1994, by the American composer Perry Goldstein.

This four minute work is a technical minefield of virtuoso challenges. From fast low note passage work, to leaps around the registers, Total Absorption begins with a few notes at breakneck speed, before gradually adding more pitches, registers, gestures and dynamics in a celebratory event that requires the performer to dance around the instrument with flair and virtuosity.

The title refers to the gradual incorporation of all twelve tones of the Western scale through the course of the piece, as well as to the fierce demands made on the concentration of the performer. The piece needs a fearless performer, who can achieve a manic breathless energy and also capture the intended ‘rambunctious jazziness’ of the work. Not for the faint hearted, but a fantastic recital piece and a great technical challenge!

Published by: Self published. <https://perrygoldstein.com>

Recording: Michael Lowenstern – Bass Clarinet. SPASM, All Music, 1996:

<https://youtu.be/vpdbTi8AkuE>

## **24. The Kaleidoscopic Pocket Hockets Boogaloo for Bass Clarinet Choir, by Arthur Gottschalk.**

The bass clarinet choir has emerged as a tour de force over the past ten years. There are now many original works and arrangements for low clarinet choirs stemming from the Isle of Raasay Bass Clarinet Course and other emerging choirs. I have chosen this work as quite simply it is fun, great to play and I've done it quite a few times with both professional, student and amateur players.

Commissioned by Rico Reeds, Boogaloo was written in 2011 for premiere by Rico artists at Clarinetfest 2011 in California. The instrumentation is 8 bass clarinets and 2 contrabass clarinets.

Programme notes:

*'The Kaleidoscopic Pocket Hockets Boogaloo takes its title from Tom Wolfe's "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test," and its inspiration from the literary genre described as "Hysterical Realism." Hysterical realism, also called recherche postmodernism, is a term coined in 2000 by the English critic James Wood to describe a literary genre typified by a strong contrast between elaborately absurd prose, plotting, or characterization and careful, detailed investigations of real specific social phenomena. He used the term to denote the contemporary conception of the "big, ambitious novel" that pursues "vitality at all costs" and consequently "knows a thousand things but does not know a single human being." He decried the genre as an attempt to "turn fiction into social theory," and an attempt to tell us "how the world works rather than how somebody felt about something." The Kaleidoscopic Pocket Hockets Boogaloo uses elaborate and extravagant virtuosity from its performers and their instruments, incorporates styles ranging from Adams-like minimalism to Taj Mahal funk, and cites motives and progressions from works as diverse as "Grazin' in the Grass," "The Horse," and Stravinsky's "Ebony Concerto." But it does not know a single human being'.*

Published by: Potenza Music

Recording 1: Clarinetfest 2015. <https://youtu.be/7Ae-86oQxSc>

Recording 2: RNCM bass clarinet choir, Manchester 2019.  
[https://youtu.be/bl9YnT7vq\\_s](https://youtu.be/bl9YnT7vq_s)

## 25. Minnesang, by Piers Hellawell

Minnesang for bass clarinet and piano, was written for Sarah Watts and Antony Clare in 2011, by the British composer Piers Hellawell. The work is of advanced level and a work that requires a strong duo partnership, but a rewarding work to learn and perform. Hellawell has an extensive output of works and another favourite for those who also play clarinet is *High Citadels*, 2004 for clarinet and piano.

Hellawell writes: *‘The driving force behind this piece [Minnesang] was the bass clarinet itself, an instrument whose belated coming-of-age owes much in the UK to redoubtable exponent Sarah Watts. With its title best translated as ‘love-singing’, my piece finds bass clarinet and piano first locked into a shared display of exuberance and agility; this nervous energy and exchange pervades only the first part, though, before a reflective, singing quality takes over for the work’s later stages.*

*The title Minnesang, though derived from the courtly love poetry of the German Middle Ages, points less to the strict song-form of that tradition than to the celebration of love in art, and can best be translated as ‘love-singing’.*

Published by: Peters Edition

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. Timeless Shades. Cuillin Sound. 2013.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5CGld1pLUXgn5VvSv9LdPh?si=af5b7fc6c2c1436f>

## 26. Mladi, by Janacek

Mladi (Youth) was composed by the Czech composer Janacek during his 70<sup>th</sup> year in 1924 for wind quintet + bass clarinet. The title Youth refers back to the composer’s youth – specifically the period 1865 to 1874 and the work is in four movements. Janáček often made use of what he called “speech melody” and the the principal theme in movement one (that returns in the final movement), derives from the wistful sigh of “Youth, golden youth.” The third movement quotes Janáček’s *‘Little March of the Blue-Boys’*.

Mladi is an important early chamber music work that includes the bass clarinet. It is a popular work and the addition of bass clarinet to the traditional wind quintet format adds colour and warmth to the ensemble. Others have followed this format including the Papageno Variations Op.153, by Wilfred Joseph and Prelude, In Memoriam & Finale, by Guy Woolfenden.

Published by: G. Henle Verlag

Recording: I have chosen this recording in memory of Sebastien Bell, who was my Head of Wind during my studies at the Royal Academy of Music and who supported my wish to become a bass clarinet specialist.

Sebastien Bell – Flute, Janet Craxton – Oboe, Antony Pay – Clarinet, Michael Harris – Bass Clarinet, Martin Gatt – Bassoon, Phillip Eastop – Horn. Decca, 1980.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/64Qm2Ni0pNdNS2GU4GfU00?si=9919bb7c8768439c>

## 27. Press Release, by David Lang

Press Release is a high energy ten minute work for solo bass clarinet. Composed in 1991 for the American bass clarinetist Evan Ziporyn, this work has become a popular work that presents many fun technical challenges. A big James Brown fan, Lang created a driving funk feel, by taking influence from Brown's bass lines.

The title was inspired by the bass clarinet keys and fingerings and the composer writes in his programme note:

*“Because of the way the bass clarinet works, I thought you'd have to press the keys down to make all the low notes, and you'd release the keys to make the high notes.... press release. I was really proud of myself because I thought I had made this funny joke, and then of course Evan said, “You know, a lot of those high notes you play with all your fingers down, and a lot of those low notes you play with all your fingers up.” But I didn't think it was worth it to change the title.”*

Published by: <https://davidlangmusic.com/music/press-release/>

Recording: Evan Ziporyn – Bass Clarinet. This Is Not a Clarinet, 2001. Cantaloupe Music  
<https://evanziporyn.bandcamp.com/album/this-is-not-a-clarinet>

## 28. Sprezzatura, by Guus Janssen

Sprezzatura (1984) for solo bass clarinet, was composed by the Dutch composer Juus Jansen for Harry Sparnaay.

Sprezzatura is an exploration of multiphonic spectral frequencies created by lots of specific non-standard finger trills on standard low note fingerings, and subtle embouchure changes. This is interweaved by melodic fragments.

The composer's programme notes state: [Sprezzatura (as defined by Baldassare Castiglione in *Il Cortegiano*, Firenze 1528): perfect manners combined with ease and naturalness of bearing (indicative of the courtier's disdain or lack of anxiety to prove his good breeding); (in general) studied carelessness. In: Reynolds, Barbara, *Cambridge Italian Dictionary*, p. 774]. The piece represents an attempt to achieve by a roundabout virtuoso way a simple composition for Harry Sparnaay.

The use of triadic structures creates a powerful presence, and the composer also states that the harmonics then become a kind of cantus firmus.

Published by: Donemus. [www.donemus.nl](http://www.donemus.nl)

Recording: Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet. Ladder of Escape, 1986. Attica.  
<https://open.spotify.com/track/2XWLWREZh7A2qh0LrnOCr1?si=f7ba28b88b7c4c42>

## 29. Music: for bass clarinet and piano, by Theo Loevendie

Music: for bass clarinet and piano, was composed in 1971 by the Dutch composer Theo Loevendie for Harry Sparnaay's duo *Fusion Moderne*.

This 9 minute work is full of explorations of different techniques from knocking on the wood of the piano and inside the string work on the piano, to multiphonics and altissimo explorations on the bass clarinet. In addition to becoming a serious composer of contemporary music, Loevendie was also a Jazz musician and improviser. The influences of both Jazz and improvisation are very prevalent in this work and also in his *Duo* (1988) for solo bass clarinet) with both featuring strong present bass lines.

Published by: [www.donemus.nl](http://www.donemus.nl)

Duo, for solo Bass Clarinet published by: <http://www.peermusicclassical.com>

Recording. SCAW duo. Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. Live Performance. Date unknown.

[https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/music-for-bass-clarinet-and-piano-by-theo-loevendie?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/music-for-bass-clarinet-and-piano-by-theo-loevendie?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

## 30. Aulos, by Ivana Loudova

Aulos is the second piece in *Air and Aulos*, by the Czech composer Ivana Loudova.

Aulos was composed in 1976 for Josef Horak, in memory of Claude Debussy, and in addition to being a solo work, can also be linked together with Debussy's *Syrinx* and performed as a duo with flute. The composer has notated this on her website and made it available as a free download:

<http://loudova.cz/en/sheet-music-downloads/chamber-compositions-for-solo-instruments/aulos-2/>

*Air*, was composed in 1972 for Bass Clarinet and Piano (for Due Boemi Di Praga) and is published by Alea.

Published by: as download or hard copy by Alea:

<https://bassclarinet.ecwid.com>

## 31. Spasm, by Michael Lowenstern

There are so many brilliant pieces by the bass clarinetist/composer Michael Lowenstern. I've chosen *Spasm* (1996), for bass clarinet and electronics for my personal list, as it's a work that I was determined to learn as a student and felt an immense amount of satisfaction when I achieved my goal of getting it to performance standard. I've performed it many times since and every time I come back to it I remember why I love bass clarinet. This piece is difficult, non-stop, high intensity and thrilling to listen to and perform. Audiences love it and I always get kudos from my students when I tell them I know the composer too!

*King Friday* comes a very close no. 2 for me, and *Ten Children* is another favourite with many students. Mike's website and YouTube channel are also go to resources that are full of info, videos, music and general great geekiness.



Published by: [www.earspasm.com](http://www.earspasm.com)

Recording: Michael Lowenstern – Bass Clarinet. SPASM. All Music, 1996  
<https://youtu.be/wVB3fjCpGVM>

### **32. Des Huguenots, by Mayerbeer**

Giacomo Mayerbeer's opera Des Huguenots, premiered at the Paris Opera in 1836. The dramatic 25 bar bass clarinet solo in act five is the first solo inspired by and featuring Adolphe Sax's new bass clarinet design. Whilst other forms of bass clarinet had existed previously such as the bassoon form bass clarinet, the instrument used by Mayerbeer in his opera was the Adolf Sax instrument later patented in Brussels in 1838 and that inspired many composers after to include bass clarinet in their orchestral works.

Published by:

[https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/d/d0/IMSLP746875-PMLP39995-Meyerbeer-Huguenots\\_-\\_04\\_Clarinet\\_1-2.pdf](https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/d/d0/IMSLP746875-PMLP39995-Meyerbeer-Huguenots_-_04_Clarinet_1-2.pdf) (Page 126)

Recording: Thiago Tavares. 2021. <https://youtu.be/n-rNCJjPijl>

### **33. Black, by Marc Mellits**

Black, for two bass clarinets was composed in 2008, by the American composer Marc Mellits. Written for Squonk, this five minute duet is probably one of the most performed bass clarinet duos ever written! Minimalist, punchy and funky in style, it is a favourite work amongst students and professionals alike.

It took me a while to perform it, but I performed it in a concert in Kansas in 2018 with my friend and colleague the late Tod Kerstetter. We also gave a good attempt at playing it after eating Tod's Caroliner Reaper chillies. This is a challenge I wouldn't recommend trying! This entry into my Personal Guide is dedicated to the memory of Tod Kerstetter who died in 2021.

Published By: Self Published <https://www.marc mellits.com/black-two-bass-clarinets>

Performance: Squonk (Jeff Anderle and Jonathan Russell). San Francisco, CA, 2014:  
<https://youtu.be/A1z5J-UrufM>



### 34. Amhrán Fheilimidh, by Ryan Molloy

Amhrán Fheilimidh is a 5 minute solo bass clarinet work by the Northern Irish composer Ryan Molloy. Composed for me in 2017, this work explores Irish Gaelic melody and throws, whilst interspersing the main folk melody with a choral of multiphonics.

My own love of folk music and having worked with Ryan many times, this work brings together folk music and contemporary music in a way that blends the two into one. It is fulfilling to perform and it brings two genres together perfectly.

Ryan writes the following about his work:

*'This particular work draws on an iconic traditional song entitled Báidín Fheilimidh from the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking area) of northwest Donegal. Báidín Fheilimidh ('Phelim's Boat') is a jaunty, repetitive communal song in 3/4 that we learnt in our youth during summer trips to the Gaeltacht. The song tells the story of Feilimidh's little fishing boat that is travelling to the island of Gola just off the coast of Donegal. It celebrates how fantastic the boat is - 'she is tiny, ...lively, ...beautiful, ...trustworthy etc' - before bemoaning the destruction of the boat in the second verse as it founders off the coast of Tory Island. However, we never hear what becomes of Feilimidh! My short Amhrán Fheilimidh ('Phelim's song') plays with both sides of the story, reflecting on the playfulness of the original but also trying to evoke aspects of the vast expanse of the sea, from its physical characteristics to its poetic awesomeness'.*

Published by: CMC, Ireland. <https://www.cmc.ie/music/amhran-fheilimidh>

Recording: Sarah Watts - Bass Clarinet. Live Performance. France, 2017.

[https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/amhran-fheilimidh-for-solo-bass-clarinet-by-ryan-molloy?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/amhran-fheilimidh-for-solo-bass-clarinet-by-ryan-molloy?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

### 35. Darkness Visible, by George Nicholson

Darkness Visible, for bass clarinet and piano, was written in the early summer of 2012, by the British Composer George Nicholson and is in memory of the British clarinettist Alan Hacker (1938-2012). The work was composed for SCAW's second album Timeless Shades

It is a study in darkness and shade, with the bass register of both instruments tending to dominate. Any movement towards brighter and clearer textures is brought about through the use of bass clarinet multiphonics and piano harmonics, i.e. by means of lighter sonorities and overtones that are rooted in the lower register. The paradox is aptly summed up by Milton's words in Paradise Lost:

*...on all sides round  
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames  
No light, but rather darkness visible  
Served only to discover sights of woe...*

Published by: [www.uymp.co.uk](http://www.uymp.co.uk)

Recording: Sarah Watts - Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare - Piano. Timeless Shades, 2013. Cuillin Sound.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/7nulWJrXbZi7x9MvZNkED6?si=6b99b28fcc414c3a>

### 36. Shadow Play, by Patrick Nunn

Shadow Play, for solo bass clarinet is one of two works written for me by the British composer Patrick Nunn. This 7'30 minute work was composed in 2013 (revised 2015) for 'Spectral Immersions' and was one of a collection of works to utilise my new SW multiphonic charts.

The composer writes in his programmes notes:

*'Shadowplay aims to integrate multiphonics as a part of the harmonic nature of the music, whilst expressing the delicate softness of the multiphonics and exploring how they might serve as reflective shadows and as an alternative colour on previously heard musical material'.*

This is an exquisite work that shows off the melodic scope of the bass clarinet combined with spacious multiphonics and tremolos'.

Nunn also wrote 'Paradoilia 1', for bass clarinet with sensors and live electronics in 2012, which was nominated for a 2012 British Composer Award.

Published by <https://composersedition.com>  
[http://www.patricknunn.com/scores\\_shadowplay.html](http://www.patricknunn.com/scores_shadowplay.html)

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet. Morphosis, 2016. Red Sock Records.  
<https://music.apple.com/us/album/shadowplay/1085291022?i=1085292911>

### 37. Nose, by Roderik de Man

Nose, for bass clarinet and wine glass, was written for Harry Sparnaay in 2005, by the Dutch composer Roderik de Man. It also requires a bottle of fine red wine and a cork screw! The music itself is 2.5 minutes, but this is a theatre piece and it is always fun to fill the glass on stage to the correct level for glass to have a certain pitch when struck.

Sparnaay had great fun with this work and commented on my Facebook page when I performed this:

*'I had once sparkling white wine and sometimes I had to stop because of the burps. Was an interesting performance. Also you can make the organisers desperate telling them you need a Rioja from 2001!'. He then added 'Also funny is when you write to the organiser you tell his what you need, like: two music stands, a bottle of red wine and a cork screw and don't give any explanation. I got immediately an answer. Mr Sparnaay, don't worry, after the concert we will have a drink together. And my answer was, again without explanation: no, no. I need the wine during the concert. I could hear him thinking .... Hahaha'.*

My experience of Nose? I learnt in a concert that you can't rehearse it with water as the level of liquid to get the correct pitch changes between water and wine ....

Published By: Periferia/United Music & Media Publishers.  
<https://ummpstore.com/products/de-man-nose-for-bass-clarinet-and-wine-glass-bc3397pm>

### 38. You Can't Get A Good Man Down, by Chiel Meijering

You Can't Get A Good Man Down, is a fun work for 6 bass clarinets by the Dutch composer Chiel Meijering. Composed in 1991, it can be performed live or multi-tracked with the soloist playing part 6 live.

This is another high energy, audience friendly work and one that I learnt and performed as a bass clarinet student in Rotterdam where we performed it live. I later multi-tracked the parts and have since performed it many times with my backing track. The work calls for a ghetto blaster towards the end which adds an exciting colour addition to the texture.

Meijering has an amazing output of music and another favourite work is *He was a great man and he loved base-ball : for bass clarinet, harpsichord and prerecorded soundtracks*, 1990. This is actually for 2 bass clarinets and four harpsichords, so as with Good Man, I multi-tracked the parts with my duo SCAW and we now perform it with electric piano and the backing track.

Meijering has also created some works for solo bass clarinet and backing track during the pandemic. These include *Happy Hours (Beat the isolation Blues!)*.

Published by: [www.donemus.nl](http://www.donemus.nl)

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinets. Studio Recording. Confetti, Nottingham. 2007  
[https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/you-cant-keep-a-good-man-down-by-chiel-meijering?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/you-cant-keep-a-good-man-down-by-chiel-meijering?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

### 39. Autumn Sonata, by Thea Musgrave

Autumn Sonata - Concerto for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra, was composed in 1993, for Victoria Soames-Samek. It was Cheltenham Festival in July 1994. with the City of London Symphony Orchestra and the composer conducting.

The composer was influenced by the poetry of Georg Trakl, the Austrian poet who died just after the onset of World War I. She had already set one of his poems in her previous composition Wild Winter. In Autumn Sonata, Musgrave returned to his poems and chose several short fragments to preface the major sections of this autumnal dream landscape. The five movements and coda are played without any break and last about 20 minutes.

This was the first work for solo bass clarinet that I ever heard and was the work that sparked my interest and ultimately inspired me to explore further repertoire.

Published by: Novello & Co Ltd (World)

Recording: Victoria Soames-Samek – Bass Clarinet, Thea Musgrave – Conductor. BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. Thea Musgrave. Clarinet Classics, 1997  
<https://music.apple.com/us/album/thea-musgrave-works-for-clarinet/219122131>

#### **40. Spiegel im Spiegel, by Arvo Part**

I worked in person with Arvo Part on the B flat clarinet version of Spiegel im Spiegel at the Royal Academy of Music in 2001. Part left a lasting impression on me and this work remained very special due to the close collaboration. In 2007, the composer authorised my bass clarinet version and gave permission for me to record it for my debut album SCAWFELL.

I have performed Spiegel im Spiegel many times since and it remains a core work that can fit in many concert settings. It is now published as a bass clarinet edition with Universal Music and is a test of breath control and stamina.

Published by: Universal Edition

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. SCAWFELL, Clarinet Classics, 2008.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/22USGOQHzmI8PlFpTS7poa?si=b38a427eb88e4e74>

#### **41. A Sisters' Notebook, by Lola Perrin**

Her Sisters' Notebook was composed in 2011 using my test multiphonic charts for 10 part bass clarinet choir. The original version is for 9 multi-tracked bass clarinets and one solo live part. In 2015, Perrin did a second version for 10 live clarinets.

Lola Perrin is a pianist and composer and the movement is for 10 players and in 10 movements (to represent the 10 fingers a pianist uses). The piece takes influences from a combination of fragments by Kassia (c.850AD, Constantinople) and the painting, "Kiss 19" by David Oates.

The piece follows 'Kiss 19' from top to bottom.

Movements 5, 6 and 7 feature the solo part (part 1) only as the piece centres around the sole use of spacious and atmospheric multiphonics.

Her Sister's Notebook is minimalist in style and whilst 27 minutes is well structured with the 10 movements creating a stunning sound-world. Part 1 needs a player who is competent in multiphonic production, but the remaining 9 parts are accessible to intermediate to advanced standard players.

Published by: Spartan Press: <http://www.spartanpress.co.uk/> (PDF publication available).

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet. Live premiere performance, Plymouth, UK. 2011.

[https://youtu.be/Wk461zLR\\_Pg](https://youtu.be/Wk461zLR_Pg)

#### **42. Histoire du Tango, Astor Piazzolla**

The Histoire du Tango is a four movement work by the Argentinian composer Astor Piazzolla. Written in 1985, for flute and guitar, this work has since been adapted and arranged for many combinations. The whole set works beautifully on bass clarinet and I use the version for soprano saxophone and piano. It is a staple work for my duo SCAW and we often include one or two movements in our recitals. They show off both the virtuosic and lyrical sides of the bass clarinet.

The four movements take the listener on a journey of the history of the Tango and are titled: Bordello 1900, Café 1930, Nightclub 1960, and Concert d'Aujourd'hu (music of today).

Published by: Soprano Saxophone transcription published by: Henri Lemoine.

#### **43. Lied, by Francois Raase**

François Rasse (1873 - 1955) was a Belgian composer and violinist, student of Eugène Ysaÿe. Lied (1921) is one of the earliest works written for bass clarinet and piano and exploits the lyrical qualities of the bass clarinet.

Only requiring a low E flat bass clarinet, this work doesn't use the lowest notes or the altissimo register making it accessible to players of all standards. This is perfect concert filler and a must for players wishing to improve tone quality, lyrical and legato playing.

Published: Metropolis.

<https://ummpstore.com/products/rasse-lied-bass-clarinet-and-piano>

Recording: Sebastien Tozzola - Bass Clarinet and Anaïs Crestin- Piano. Bajo Templado, 2018. <https://open.spotify.com/track/5gZmuOTIFc3hhGTjeU00BM?si=db6a7beb9f37499c>

#### **44. Chimaera, by Enrique Raxach**

Chimaera, for bass clarinet and stereophonic magnetic tape, was composed in 1974 by the Spanish born Netherlands based composer Enrique Raxach. This 9 minute work is one of the first works I performed for bass clarinet and tape and is a difficult work spanning the complete four octave plus range of the bass clarinet. The ending also incorporates multiphonics, singing and slap tongue. The backing track is ethereal and creates a haunting atmosphere. The live part is integrated by timed points throughout the piece.

This is another work composed for Harry Sparnaay and features on his 1978 album 'Fusion Moderne - Bass Clarinet Identity' where the liner notes say "The confrontation between the two (clarinet and tape-noise) works like an exorcism in which the soloist tries to exorcise the inscrutability of the background with *his* background."

Published by: [www.donemus.nl](http://www.donemus.nl)

Recording: Harry Sparnaay - Bass Clarinet, Fusion Moderne - Bass Clarinet Identity -1978  
<https://youtu.be/vQciZq09b84>

#### **45. Sonate, by Othmar Schoeck**

The Sonate, Op. 41 for bass clarinet and piano, by the Suisse composer Othmar Schoeck (1886 - 1957) is a substantial three movement work composed in 1927-28. The work is dedicated to Werner Reinhart who was a Swiss amateur patron of composers and writers, and an amateur clarinetist, merchant, and philanthropist.

The Sonate has many stylistic influences in the writing. The opening movement has elements of Brahms phrasing, but it's likely the work as a whole has influences of Busoni, Berg and Honegger.

Schoeck's compositional output included over 300 songs and as an accompanist was said to have been a master at Romantic style rubato which is evident in the piano writing of this sonata.

Published by: Breitkopf and Haertel

Recording: I have chosen a recording that is an arrangement for bass clarinet and orchestra, by Willy Honegger. Bass Clarinet - Bernhard Röthlisberger, Mario Venzago - Conductor, Berner Symphonie-Orchester. Othmar Schoeck. Musiques Suisses, 2015  
[https://open.spotify.com/album/5gAYMUvr6x0p9bOuZwsCEL?si=c0cQ\\_c21S\\_WyfEBy-f2UJq](https://open.spotify.com/album/5gAYMUvr6x0p9bOuZwsCEL?si=c0cQ_c21S_WyfEBy-f2UJq)

#### **46. Legende & Divertissement, by Jules Semler Collery**

The French composer Jules Semler Collery (1902 - 1988), composed Legende & Divertissement for bass clarinet and piano in 1953. This was one of the first works for bass clarinet and piano that I performed, having been sent a copy of it in 1998 by Josef Horak. Semler Collery composed some symphonic works, and outputs, but a large number of works are small scale chamber works composed for wind instruments.

The Legende & Divertissement is typically French in style and form. The Legende is like a fantasia showing off the bass clarinet's lyrical and virtuosic skills in flourishing cadenza moments, followed by a traditional quick Divertissement. The work is intermediate in level and a good contest, audition or recital work. It was dedicated to Jean Dubois, who was the bass clarinet in the L'Opera Comique, Paris

Published by: Peer Music

Recording: Lorenzo Antonio losco - Bass Clarinet, John Alley - Piano. London, 2014  
[https://youtu.be/9ca-0\\_gRwLY](https://youtu.be/9ca-0_gRwLY)

#### **47. Jackdaw, by Wayne Siegel**

Jackdaw, for bass clarinet and computer was composed in 1995 for Harry Sparnaay, by the Danish composer Wayne Siegel. This ten minute work has become a popular work with many students and professionals including it in concert programmes.

The composer writes:

*'A jackdaw is a small, European crow, and the character of the piece as well as many of the sounds are inspired by this audacious yet clever bird. Since I have a tame, pet jackdaw, I was able to record the bird under perfect conditions. Many of the sounds played by the computer consist of these recordings processed by the computer, such as jackdaw cries filtered by the formant of a bass clarinet or long bird calls stretched to 10 times their original length using the phase vocoder. Bass clarinet sounds sampled and processed by the computer and computer controlled live processing that change the sound of the instrument during performance are also used. As the composition progressed my hunch was confirmed: the jackdaw and the bass clarinet are related!'*

In 2021, Siegel finished a transcription *Salamander* for bass clarinet and computer in a collaboration with Sarah Watts.

Published by: Self Published: [http://waynesiegel.dk/?page\\_id=708](http://waynesiegel.dk/?page_id=708)

Recording: Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet. Devil’s Golf Course, 1997. Dacapo  
<https://youtu.be/dXPKqQC9gk4>

#### **48. Sonata, by Lubos Sluka**

The Czech composer Lubos Sluka (1928 – ), wrote his two movement sonata in 1956 for cello and piano. After meeting the Czech ‘paganini of the bass clarinet’ Josef Horak, Sluka made a transcription for bass clarinet and piano. This featured using the altissimo register of the bass clarinet which Horak was well known for using. The bass clarinet was later published by Supraphon, Prague in 1972 before heading out of print. It is now available to purchase via Sluka’s website alongside other works for bass clarinet and piano including *DSCH* – a short work and homage to the composer Shostakovich.

The Sonata is based on a Cantilena (Lullaby or melody in a smooth, lyrical style), and this can be best heard in the slow first movement that exploits the lyrical mellow tones of the bass clarinet.

Published by: Self Published – <https://lubosluka.com/en/>

Recording: Henri Bok – Bass Clarinet and Rainer Maria Klass – Piano. Music for Bass Clarinet and Piano, 1999. Clarinet Classics.  
[https://open.spotify.com/album/5ZAu4QFyHJsQddEewSGvs9?si=bsClijAYSrC0Dga\\_VKyY2A](https://open.spotify.com/album/5ZAu4QFyHJsQddEewSGvs9?si=bsClijAYSrC0Dga_VKyY2A)

#### **49. Ladder of Escape, by Michael Smetanin**

Ladder of Escape, for was composed in 1984 for seven bass clarinets and two contrabass clarinets, for Harry Sparnaay’s ‘Het Collective’. It can be performed live, or more commonly now for multi-tracked bass/contrabass clarinets and live soloist.

The importance of this work shouldn’t be underestimated. It is the title work of Sparnaay’s ‘Ladder of Escape’ album (1989, Attacca. Re-released 2014) and influenced and inspired players such as Michael Lowenstern.

This is simply happy disco music, fun to play, fun to listen to and will engage any audience.

Published by: Australian Music Centre

<https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/product/ladder-of-escape>

Backing track also available from: [www.earspasm.com](http://www.earspasm.com)

Recording: Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet. Ladder of Escape, 1989.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/5Tp27BY41nInNCmY51RfmK?si=f754c296725346ba>



## 50. **Mi Cantare!, by Miroslac Spasov**

Mi Cantare, for solo bass clarinet was composed by the Macedonian composer Miroslav Spasov in 2013. Spasov was my PhD supervisor and oversaw my work, analysis and compilation of my SW multiphonic charts and *Spectral Immersions*. Mi Cantare! Is one of a selection of works composed for me, but I have selected this one due to the connection with my research, and also the use of Macedonian folk melody. As seen from other submissions to this guide, I am very inspired by multiphonics and folk music. This short six minute work also challenges the performer with high altissimo control.

Published by: Metropolis Music Publications

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet. *Spectral Immersions*. 2013.

<https://youtu.be/r6Vwc1ix9uk>

## 51. **Nieuw Werk, by Paul Termos**

Nieuw Werk, for bass clarinet and piano was composed for Harry Sparnaay in 1976, by the Dutch composer Paul Termos.

This 6.5 minute work is minimalist in style, with an edgy rhythmic punch. In addition to composing Termos was heavily involved in the improvisation scene in the Netherlands. He wrote two works for the bass clarinet, the other being *Buste* for two clarinets. Termos died in 2003, and I was honoured to be asked to perform Nieuw work in a final concert of his works for him a few weeks before he passed away. I promised him I would always play Nieuw Werk and it became a staple work with my duo SCAW and featured on our first CD. This is a great piece and a good duo challenge for students wanting to explore 1970s bass clarinet repertoire.

Published by: Donemus. [www.donemus.nl](http://www.donemus.nl)

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. SCAWFELL, 2008. Clarinet Classics.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/08v3s6wSFwHZVFWqsAtefn?si=9e20caffa0124487>

## 52. **Glitschig by Sohrab Uduman**

Glitschig for bass clarinet and piano, was composed for Sarah Watts and Antony Clare in 2013, by the Sri-Lankan born, British based composer Sohrab Uduman.

Uduman writes that the work is “*a journey through a world of rapidly changing, jagged rhythms and angular melodies drawn out from a single gesture. The title of the piece (meaning slippery in German, as well as implying glitch) refers to the way musical textures slide and collide with each other as well as the use of echo and feedback-like ideas together with amplification and distortion of detail. Each feature, character, of the opening phrase for the two instruments becomes a character of the music’s changing textures; at times seizing upon the rhythmic elements, at others, fixating on the contour or colour of the sound*”.



This work is a true advanced duo work. With hints of Dolphy inspired Jazz fusion, the work whilst contemporary has influences of notated improvisations and is a tour de force for both players.

Published by: <https://sohrabuduman.co.uk/works>

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet and Antony Clare – Piano. Studio Recording. Keele University, UK. 2015

[https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/glitschig-by-sohrab-uduman?si=d15688cc9df24823ad10f87ff3c9da83&utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/glitschig-by-sohrab-uduman?si=d15688cc9df24823ad10f87ff3c9da83&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

### **53. Ten Wee Drams – Various**

This is a multiple entry, but it was impossible to pick a single dram from the collection. Ten Wee Drams were composed in 2019 to celebrate the tenth Isle of Raasay Bass Clarinet Course.

Ten short pieces were commissioned and written by Scottish based composers and premiered in the Isle of Raasay Distillery. Each piece is about the culture, heritage or landscape of the Hebridean Island of Scotland that overlooks the Cuillin Mountains on the Isle of Skye. The only other remit was that they all had to be accessible for performance by other players of intermediate to advanced standards.

Some of written for contrabass clarinet, but the composers gave permission for all to be performed on bass clarinet too.

The pieces are:

Piers Hellawell: Time, The Deer

Adam Lee: Hallaig

Stuart MacRae: MOBOFCROWS

Iain Matheson: While We Wait

Alasdair Nicolson: Bring my pipes and I'll go home

Oliver Searle: The Illicit Still

Jane Stanley: The Faery Cup

Pete Stollery: ...the vivid speechless air...

William Sweeney: ....ruadh, uaine, da fhilleadh

Sarah Watts: The Sound of Temptation

Published by: The Scottish Music Centre:

<https://www.scottishmusiccentre.com/shop-all/p/ten-wee-drams-download>

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet. [https://youtu.be/Qs\\_R2UPMO-k](https://youtu.be/Qs_R2UPMO-k)

#### **54. Screapadal, by Sarah Watts**

I wrote Screapadal during my bass clarinet multiphonic research. I wanted to write a piece that took inspiration from the Isle of Raasay, and that combined folk tradition and multiphonics. Having compiled the largest collection of multiphonics to date for bass clarinet and created the SW charts, I also wanted to explore the use of multiphonics as a harmonic tool and not just as an extended technique effect.

Screapadal is one of townships on the East coast of Raasay that was decimated by the clearances. The title is also the same as the poem by the gaelic poet Sorley McLean, whose words gave me the musical ideas and themes for each section of the work.

Published by Metropolis Belgium.

Recording: Sarah Watts – Bass Clarinet

[https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/screapadal-swatts?utm\\_source=clipboard&utm\\_medium=text&utm\\_campaign=social\\_sharing](https://soundcloud.com/sarahwatts/screapadal-swatts?utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing)

#### **55. Monolog, by Isang Yun**

Monolog, for solo bass clarinet was composed in 1983, by the Korean composer Isang Yun. Written for Harry Sparnaay, this work pushes the capabilities of the instrument in alternating sustained and frenetic sections to create a work of extreme intensity and beauty. The piece comes from is an elaboration of the middle movement (for bass clarinet) of the clarinet concerto which he wrote the year before.

Published by: Boosey and Hawkes

Recording: Fie Schouten – Bass Clarinet. Monologues 2020. Orlando Records, 2021

<https://fieschoutenclarinets.bandcamp.com/album/monologues-2020>



## CHAPTER 4. COLLEAGUES CONTRIBUTIONS

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To get a better overview of the massive output of bass clarinet music, and to try and make my personal guide better reflective of the taste and work of my many friends and colleagues who also specialise, I invited some of my colleagues to submit their short top choices too. As with my list, all the works have a brief explanation of why they have been chosen and information on publishers.

I would like to thank everybody below who contributed, and it has been amazing for me to also discover a huge amount of repertoire that I wasn't aware of too!

### JASON ALDER (UK AND USA)

#### **Sprezzatura, for Solo Bass Clarinet, by Guus Janssen. 1985**

When I first started studying in Amsterdam it was to focus on the bass clarinet, but I didn't yet know what direction I wanted to go with my music. It was after working on this piece that my teacher said I seemed to have a real affinity for the contemporary music, and that's what motivated me to spend more time going in this direction, which has led me to where I am today. What I really love about this piece is how he uses the multiphonics, which are not merely as a sound or colour in the music, but writing actual harmonic lines with them, and he does so in a beautiful way.

Published by: <https://webshop.donemus.com/action/front/sheetmusic/1380/Sprezzatura>

Recording. Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet

<https://open.spotify.com/track/2XWLWREZh7A2gh0LrnOCr1?si=58c37108457345e7>

#### **Mladi, for Woodwind Sextet, by Leoš Janáček. 1924**

This is such an important piece because it is one of the earliest chamber music works to use the bass clarinet, which still had very little chamber repertoire until about 10–15 years ago. I think it's quite fun and quality writing, and find it a pity that the woodwind sextet setting didn't gain more traction!

Published by: <https://www.baerenreiter.com/en/shop/product/details/TP528/>

Recording: Prague Wind Quintet “Leos Janáček: Concertino, Pohádka, Mládí & Capriccio“

<https://open.spotify.com/track/3Fw9R9MpHpTqMF6JPGDKtE?si=fb91b371ab234cc9>

### **Tsmindao Ghmerto, for Solo Bass Clarinet, by Evan Ziporyn. 1994**

I fell in love with this piece the first time I heard it. Evan combines singing while playing to recreate the harmonies of this Georgian Orthodox hymn. The effect this has on the bass clarinet sound is as if it's been run through some sort of electronics and distortion, yet it's completely acoustic. It's a fantastic use of this contemporary technique with centuries-old music.

Published by: Self Published. <https://www.ziporyn.com/music.html#clarinet>

Recording: Evan Ziporyn – Bass Clarinet. Bang on a Can “Cheating, Lying Stealing“  
<https://open.spotify.com/track/5M1cij7sMBd89fTK6zKZCQ?si=ebc9481ef9d94111>

### **Duo, for Solo Bass Clarinet, by Theo Loevendie. 1988**

I had to learn this piece as part of my audition to the Conservatorium van Amsterdam, and is one of the first contemporary works I worked on. Despite its name, this work is for solo bass clarinet. Loevendie comes from both a jazz and classical background, and that's reflected in his writing. In this piece, the bass clarinetist is simultaneously playing both a bass line in the low register and the melodic line in the upper ranges.

Published by:  
[https://shop.peermusic-classical.de/theo-loevendie-duo-fuer-bassklarinet-50390?change\\_language=en](https://shop.peermusic-classical.de/theo-loevendie-duo-fuer-bassklarinet-50390?change_language=en)

Recording: Harry Sparnaay – Bass Clarinet. “Ladder of Escape“  
<https://open.spotify.com/track/14k70stpZ7Dc5NhdzdRhun?si=8fd9df466e304ffe>

### **Concertino, for Bass Clarinet and String Quartet, by Tristan Keuris. 1976/77**

There is a substantial amount of clarinet quintet music, yet next to nothing for the bass clarinet with string quartet! This is one of the few pieces, and I think it's a great work. Keuris achieves very nice colours combining the bass clarinet with strings, with good melodic content and challenging rhythms. When I performed this for my final exam in Amsterdam it was relatively unknown, but I see more people have been performing it recently and hope that trend continues to bring this piece to the forefront of our repertoire!

Published by: <https://webshop.donemus.com/action/front/sheetmusic/2277/Concertino>

Recording: Jason Alder – Bass Clarinet.  
<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8263C0DA5E9BE741>

### **Jason Alder Biography**

Dr Jason Alder is a low clarinet specialist and researcher. He is well-established as an improviser and performer of contemporary music, and frequently works with composers to develop and premiere new pieces for clarinets of all sizes, both as a soloist and in various ensembles. He is often found performing, lecturing, or on panel discussion at festivals around the world.

Jason studied at Michigan State University (US- BMus), Conservatorium van Amsterdam (NL- BMus), Artez Conservatorium (NL- MMus), and completed his PhD at the Royal Northern College of Music (UK) with his thesis “Compendium of Sonic Possibilities of the Contrabass Clarinet: A Study of Cross-Compatibility and Composer Collaboration.” The upcoming release of his newest album “Mileu Interieur” contains solo works for clarinet, bass clarinet, and contrabass clarinet written for him by Thanos Chrysakis. He is also a featured soloist on the soundtracks for the Paramount film “Spell” and BBC drama “Ridley Road.” Jason is an endorsing Artist for Selmer clarinets, D’Addario reeds, Behn mouthpieces, and Silverstein ligatures.

## **LARA DIAZ (SPAIN)**

### **Ballade, for Bass Clarinet in Bb and Piano, by Eugene Bozza. 1939**

It is important to me because it is one of the first original works I played. It is a very good recital piece, with contrasting sections and very good to develop different skills for the bass clarinet students.

“Ballade“ is the first work for the bass clarinet by a French composer which incorporates a degree of the brilliant agility so common in French composition for the soprano clarinet.

Published by: Southern Music Company

### **Touch-And-Go, for violin, Bass Clarinet and Piano, by Roderik De Mann. 2012**

I included this work because it is an excellent chamber music example and challenge for the three players. Harry Spaarnay asked me to premiere it with Trio Contrastes, because he was not able to do it (It was a recording, but not premiered). We did it a few months after his death. It was a very moving and emotive moment.

*Touch and Go* is quite a demanding composition as the title indicates. The expression: “a touch & go situation” which means it can either go well or become hazardous. All parts have this risk but if the players perform it well they will be rewarded with success!

Published by: Donemus

### **Bass Clarinet Double Concerto, by Jonathan Russell. 2007**

I included this work because it is challenging, demanding and impressive for the audience solo work but...what could be better than one bass clarinet? Two bass clarinets! Jon is a virtuoso bass clarinet player and it is shown in this work.

In Jon’s words, “the basic idea for the *Bass Clarinet Double Concerto* was of Weber’s clarinet concertos meeting heavy metal. The underlying spirit of the work – a mixture of heavy, driving grooves, virtuosically dancing lines, and tender lyricism – comes from the combination of these two sources”.

Published by: Self Published <https://jonrussellmusic.com>

### **Conversation Pieces, for 2 Bass Clarinets, by David Bennett Thomas. 2009**

It is a fantastic piece for a recital (ten duets in ten minutes), the whole work or any combination of the duets. I enjoy playing it very much, it is challenging and helps to develop several skills and at the same time is funny.

David writes great works for bass clarinet. This work shows a great variety of styles, rhythms, a very large tessitura, altissimo register, sound effects like glissando, key clicks, metronome... and very extreme dynamic changes.

Published by: Self Published <https://www.davidbthomas.com/>

Recording: Lara Diaz. 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=El1c5V7p6pl>

### **Suite Popula Española, by Manuel de Falla. 1914 (Transcribed for bass clarinet and piano, by Lara Díaz, 2021).**

I grew up listening to and playing Falla's music, but I always wished he had written an original composition for the clarinet as a solo instrument. The choice of the bass clarinet to develop this version is motivated by the unique expressive qualities of this instrument, as well as its very extensive tessitura and the wide range of sound possibilities it offers.

The different mood, phrasing, articulation and rhythm of the pieces, the range from low to altissimo register and the incomparable Spanish style make this work an excellent study material for those interested in Manuel de Falla's music.

Published by: Ediciones Manuel de Falla

Recording: Lara Díaz - Bass clarinet, Juan Francisco Vicente - Piano. Live performance. Gyor, Hungary. 2021. <https://youtu.be/tB5KmoFAeto>

### **Lara Díaz Biography**

Lara Díaz is an active Spanish clarinetist and bass clarinet soloist. She has performed at major festivals in Europe, the U.S., Canada, South America and Asia, both as a soloist and with Trio Contrastes and the Formica's Age Duo (violin and bass clarinet). She acts as a jury at international clarinet and bass clarinet competitions too.

She also takes part in the international bass clarinet quartet Four New Brothers. She is a professor in Salamanca, and has directed the Wind Section of the "Ciudad de Salamanca" Symphony Orchestra since its creation. She leads "Antonio Romero" clarinet and bass clarinet masterclasses since 2003. Lara Díaz is the Spain country chair for the ICA and board member of the European Clarinet Association.

She has recently published the transcription for bass clarinet of Manuel de Falla's *Suite popular española* in Manuel de Falla ediciones.

## STEFANIE GARDNER (USA)

### **Finger Fitness Etudes for Auxiliary Clarinets Books 1&2, by Kristen Denny-Chambers**

These etude books are incredible resources for young and intermediate players to get acquainted with bass clarinet. The etudes are fun, tuneful, and designed to develop bass clarinet specific techniques and finger patterns in an engaging and progressive manner. The etudes are written primarily in the chalumeau and clarion registers, and the composer explores a variety of genres and characters, including Latin styles, march, swing, boogie-woogie, waltz, and more.

Denny-Chambers writes that the studies are intended for “...developing pre-college students, undergraduate players and clarinet enthusiasts...[and] advanced and professional players will love them too.”

Published by: <https://clarinetplayground.com>

Recording: Michael Lowenstern – Bass Clarinet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBZM-busASc>

### **Andante and Allegro for Bass Clarinet and Piano, by Yvonne Desportes**

This solo work is very accessible (does not require a low C instrument) with lots of fun 16th-note passages and beautiful lyrical writing. There are several repeated passages requiring rapid facility back and forth over the break, and many of the lyrical lines are in the lower clarion range, where the player must exhibit careful control of pitch.

Published by: Southern Music

### **Chips Off the Ol’ Block, by Eric Mandat**

I love playing Mandat’s *Chips Off the Ol’ Block!* True to Mandat’s style, this funky and technical masterpiece is outrageously fun and a challenge even for the experienced bass clarinetist. This virtuosic work explores multiphonics, quartertones, glissandi, altissimo, and flutter tonguing.

Published by: Self Published: <https://www.ericmandat.com/store>

Recording: Sauro Berti – Bass Clarinet. 2014.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HtwvoMKb0XM>

### **Paisaje Folklórico No. 2, for Bass Clarinet and Piano, by Sebastian Tozzola**

Argentinian composer and bass clarinetist Sebastián Tozzola writes in a gorgeous improvisatory style with beautiful and expressive singing in the altissimo register. Check out *Paisaje Folklórico No. 1* for unaccompanied bass clarinet and *7 Pasos* for two bass clarinets if you like this composer!

Published by: Alry.

<https://bassclarinet.ecwid.com/Tozzola-Paisaje-Folklorico-nro-2-PDF-p151584612>

Recording: Sebastián Tozzola – Bass Clarinet. 2018 <https://youtu.be/NjEu6Dd1Q9k>

## **Concerto for Bass Clarinet, by Jonathan Russell**

This virtuosic piece for the bass clarinet begins with a slow, lyrical first movement leading directly into a solo cadenza, then progresses into fast groove sections with overtone multiphonics, and EXTREME altissimo! I absolutely adore this work and have been fortunate to perform it several times. Jon's writing is both powerful and captivating to the audience and shows how versatile the instrument is. Everyone will go home singing tunes from this masterpiece.

Published by: Self Published.

<https://jonrussellmusic.com/product/bass-clarinet-concerto/>

Recording: Jonathan Russell – Bass Clarinet. Princeton University Orchestra, Michael Pratt conductor. 2018 <https://youtu.be/iDCqkx1Oq8>

### **And some Chamber music recommendations:**

#### **Coal Seams, for Clarinet and Bass Clarinet by John Steinmetz (2019)**

1. Under Ground
2. The Devourer
3. Gone is Gone

*Coal Seams* utilizes the entire range of the bass clarinet with beautiful melodies, funky grooves, and features some of the most beautiful folk song writing I've ever heard. Composer John Steinmetz utilizes fun slap tonguing, glissandos, and intricate interplay between clarinet and bass clarinet.

This piece was commissioned by my duo, Égide Duo, whose mission is to collaborate with composers to create and present music that addresses social change, including issues involving the environment/climate, animal and human rights, and equality. The duo aims to provide clear and pointed musical commentary on issues that affect our society today and tomorrow in an effort to draw attention to and encourage active public engagement on such issues

#### **Composer's Notes:**

*I haven't visited coal country in Appalachia, but readings, songs, and images from the region moved and disturbed me, and led into these musical explorations. This piece enters coal country via imagination, digging around in three seams of impressions and emotions.*

*"Under Ground" imagines descending into the earth, into the dark.*

*"The Devourer" starts playfully, then one instrument steals notes from another, and eventually they tussle and crash. The music evokes an imaginary being, endlessly hungry for wealth and power, that leaves devastation in its wake. Yet deep inside itself, the Devourer wails with unfilled need.*



“Gone is Gone,” a made-up folk song, mourns what is lost and broken: lives, communities, landscapes. The idea here, and the hope, is that acknowledgement and mourning might help to honor the people, the places, and the need for renewal.

Joshua and Stefanie Gardner commissioned *Coal Seams* for their duo, *Égide*, that uses music to confront issues in the world. While discussing possible directions for the piece, I learned that Joshua Gardner grew up in coal country. His arresting photographs of landscapes affected by mining gave the piece its direction.

The music touches only a few of the images, ideas, and feelings that came my way. Some of the things that stuck with me: Miners loving their families and their work. Unsafe, illegal conditions in mines. Insufficient inspections. Black Lung afflicting younger miners. A bankrupt mining company, unable to pay miners’ medical expenses, reappearing under a different name. Forests and rivers buried. Cities hungry for electricity. Coal smoke polluting air and raising temperatures. Industry dominating state politics. Absentee landowners. Wealth extracted and exported. Communities trying to revive.

Published by: Self Published. <http://johnsteinmetz.org/compositions>

Recording: Joshua and Stefanie Gardner – *Égide* Duo. 2020  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPN6keOo5HY>

### **Five Miniatures, for Reed Quintet, by Deborah Kavasch**

I met Deborah Kavasch, or “Deb,” in 2015 while at a guest artist residency with my reed quintet, Paradise Winds, at California State University (CSU) Stanislaus where we held masterclasses, performances, and coached student composers on how to write for reed quintet. Deb is on the composition faculty at CSU, and at the time, her late husband, John Marvin was on faculty there too. At the end of our residency both Deb and John decided to write pieces for us. Deb’s *Five Miniatures* is one of these pieces, and it highlights the sensitivity, power, and flexibility of the bass clarinet. The fourth movement, “Lazily,” is a featured bass clarinet solo.

#### **Composer’s Notes:**

*I was intrigued by the various timbral and articulatory combinations available in the reed quintet, with compatibilities potentially greater than those available in the standard woodwind quintet. The idea of miniatures allowed me to make short explorations into contrasting movements. The sprightly Miniature I pairs the double reeds in a dance-like inverted duet offset by a darker, mysterious melody in doubled octaves between the alto sax and bass clarinet and quicksilver legato lines in the clarinet. The instruments trade varying fragments of these ideas, ending with runs that trail off against high trills. Miniature II uses sustained tones into which instruments softly emerge and disappear as they expand their timbral palette while slowly rolling out chromatic, shifting melodic fragments. The use of clarinet multiphonics midway through the movement increases the textural complexity, and the movement fades to a final clarinet/bass clarinet chord. The lively Miniature III initiates trills alternating with short chromatic runs; it is contrasted in the middle by unison ensemble melodic fragments, then continues with alternations of the two textures. Miniature IV was inspired by the idea of a lazy summer afternoon and features the bass clarinet in an unabashedly B-flat tonality, its solo passages spiced with chromatic runs and short repeated-note filigrees in the accompanying instruments. Although Miniature V was first conceived as a pointillistic middle movement, it quickly evolved into an “homage to Igor” with its unrelenting staccato texture and short quotes taken primarily from the final “Sacrificial Dance” in Stravinsky’s *The Rite of Spring*—it just had to be placed at the end of the set!*

Published by: Self Published. <http://deborahkavasch.com/compositions>

Recording: Paradise Winds. 2017.

<https://open.spotify.com/track/67VEU8U08w9U2usWlh5BZD?si=42374a07e25b49ab>

### **Threshold of the Year to Come, by Joel Love**

I've always been a HUGE fan of Joel's music and was thrilled when he agreed to write a piece for Égide Duo. I absolutely adore this virtuosic writing for clarinet and bass clarinet. Joel utilizes stunning jazz harmonies, soaring melodies, crazy fun grooves, multiphonics, slap tonguing, harmonic glissandos, and extreme altissimo for both the clarinet and bass clarinet. *The Threshold of the Year to Come* explores the emotions experienced during the pandemic: Anxiety, Anger, Hope, and Joy.

Composer's Notes:

*For this work, I found four short texts that were parallel to experiences I had during the pandemic and chose to base my movements on each of them. The first movement is about the general anxiety at the beginning of the pandemic. Kierkegaard's epigram, "Anxiety is the dizziness of freedom" was appropriate; though most of us still had quite a bit of freedom, those freedoms carried quite a lot of dizzying risk. The second movement is based on a Maya Angelou quote, "Bitterness is like a cancer. It eats upon the host. But anger is like fire. It burns it all clean." The quote and movement reflect the fierce anger and helpless disappointment I felt as I watched people die needlessly due to the failings of our top officials. Movement three explores the idea of hope and is based on an Alfred Tennyson excerpt: "Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering 'it will be happier'". The final movement is an expression of joy that celebrates the recovery of our lives as we remember all of the pain and begin to recover from the pandemic. This is well-expressed in the Joseph Campbell quote, "Participate joyfully in the sorrows of the world. We cannot cure the world of sorrows, but we can choose to live in joy."*

Published by: Murphy Music Press. <http://murphymusicpress.com/search/Joel%2BLove>

Recording: Joshua and Stefanie Gardner - Égide Duo. 2021 [https://youtu.be/cE1m\\_5IDXQc](https://youtu.be/cE1m_5IDXQc)

### **Up and Away for Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, and Piano, by Alyssa Morris**

This chamber work is lyrical, fun, and super audience friendly. This piece is originally for oboe and bassoon and was adapted for clarinet and bass clarinet by the composer quoting many famous orchestral excerpts for both clarinet instruments. The clarinet and bass clarinet version was commissioned by Égide Duo.

Composer's Notes:

*Up and Away is a musical depiction of the life of a Balloon. Little Balloon is brought to life, with effervescence, lightheartedness, and wonder.*

*"Inhale/Exhale" is a depiction of blowing up the balloon, watching it float, letting air out of Balloon and hearing the little squeal and sputter as it flies around the room. This movement also introduces Balloon's "light" -motif (haha.) This theme can be heard in bars 4 to 13. Listen for the "light" -motif again at bars 34-40, a diminution of the motif at bars 80, 83, and 85, and then in its full form at the end.*

Movement 2, “Life on a String,” is about teenage angst and rebellion. Little Balloon is not so little anymore, and wants to prove that it has a mind and ideas of its own. So many times Balloon has felt that people want it to fit a certain mold. But Balloon just wants to be itself. This angst can be heard as each instrument quotes a passage that has become synonymous with what most people think that instrument is. The “light”-motif can once again be heard in bars 33–36, and bars 78–81.

Movement 3, “Letting Go,” portrays the wisdom that comes with old age. This movement is Balloon’s reflection at a life full of happiness, sorrow, love, learning, and meaning. “Letting Go” is a quiet resignation, knowing that we are not always in control of what happens in life. However, we are in control of what we choose to do with what we have been given. The “light”-motif can be heard once more throughout bars after bar 30.

*It is my hope that the listener will find some of themselves in the Balloon; in the joy, frustration, lightheartedness, loneliness, wisdom, and hope.*

Published by: Self Published. <http://www.alyssamorrismusic.com/compositions>

Recording: – Égide Duo. 2019 [https://youtu.be/Vh822nzi\\_kU](https://youtu.be/Vh822nzi_kU)

### **Eyes to See Them, Lips to Tell for Reed Quintet, by Alyssa Morris**

Each movement in this original work for reed quintet is about a different endangered species: the Malayan Tiger, the Blue Whale, the Axolotl, the Queen Alexandra’s Birdwing Butterfly, and the Mexican Wolf. The title of each movement comes from the text of the Anglican hymn “All Things Bright and Beautiful.” The writing for bass clarinet is excellent and there are several bass clarinet solos with fun, yet challenging bass lines. Morris utilizes the full range of the bass clarinet and demonstrates the flexibility and power of the instrument in this reed quintet setting.

#### **Composer’s Notes:**

“Bright and Beautiful” features the Malayan Tiger, also known as Pak Belang (a Malay nickname that means Mr. Stripes). “Mr. Stripes” sounded to me like the title of a hip jazz chart. This movement is a bright, punchy, pouncing jazz tune.

“Creatures Great” features the Blue Whale, the largest animal known to have ever existed. The movement features the sounds of the waves interspersed with whale calls, overshadowed by a sweeping melody.

“Creatures Small” features the Axolotl, also known as the Mexican salamander. Since this animal originates from lakes underlying Mexico City, this movement incorporates the sounds of Mariachi music.

“Glowing Colors, Tiny Wings” features the beautiful Queen Alexandra’s Birdwing butterfly (whose wings are not very small at all). This beautiful creature from the forests of Eastern Papua New Guinea is the largest butterfly in the world. The movement features the fluttering sounds of butterfly wings and a pentatonic melody nostalgic of native music from the region.

“The Lone Wolf’s Hunting Call” features the Mexican Wolf. The entire movement is based on the beginning motive: a dictated Mexican Wolf call.

Published by: Self Published. <http://www.alyssamorrismusic.com/compositions>

Recording by: Paradise Winds. 2020. <https://youtu.be/sjFxmCY5B8>

### **Stefanie Gardner Biography**

Dr. Stefanie Harger Gardner is residential faculty at Glendale Community College (AZ). Gardner maintains an active performance career, performing with the internationally recognized Paradise Winds, grant-winning Égide Duo, Arizona Opera, the Phoenix Symphony, Red Rocks Chamber Music Festival, and the Seventh Roadrunner Ensemble. She has performed in conferences for the International Clarinet Association, the International Double Reed Society, the North American Saxophone Alliance, and the International Viola Congress. Gardner's chamber music albums are recorded on the Soundset label and can be heard on iTunes, Spotify, and YouTube. In 2012, Gardner won first prize at the International Clarinet Association Research Competition with her study, "An Investigation of Finger Motion and Hand Posture during Clarinet Performance." She received Bachelor, Master, and Doctor of Musical Arts degrees in Clarinet Performance from ASU studying with Robert Spring. Gardner is a Silverstein Pro Team Artist and Henri Selmer Paris/Conn-Selmer Performing Artist.

### **MICHAEL LOWENSTERN (USA)**

#### **Ladder of Escape, for Solo Bass Clarinet and Tape, by Michael Smetanin (1984)**

This piece changed my life. I moved to Holland in July, 1989 and found Harry's new CD (of the same title) in a record shop, bought it, and listened to this piece a million times. It was the first piece I wanted to learn when I began studying with him, but he made me wait, preferring to start me off with...

Published by: Australian Music Centre

<https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au/work/smetanin-michael-ladder-of-escape>

#### **Monolog, for Solo Bass Clarinet by Isang Yun (1983)**

This piece was, at the time, the hardest bass clarinet piece I had ever played. Dynamic range, extreme altissimo, large leaps—it had it all, and a story behind it to boot. Yun, who was kidnapped by South Korean secret service under pretenses of espionage, was imprisoned, tortured, and threatened with life imprisonment for two years. After international uproar, he was finally released in 1969 and returned to Germany. To me, this piece is about controlled rage, with moments of anguish and extreme outbursts of emotion.

Published by: Boosey & Hawkes <https://boosey.com/cr/music/Isang-Yun-Monolog/4420>

#### **Duo, for Solo Bass Clarinet, by Theo Loevendie (written in the 1980s, but published in 1990)**

The first track on Sparnaay's album Ladder of Escape was this ditty. It was next on my list of pieces to learn, after the Yun, and was my introduction to slap tonguing. It took about 2 weeks for me to learn how to slap-tongue (and it was literally one morning that I woke up and could do it. I will never forget that surprise, after trying and failing for a solid two weeks. Yeah, I know, many people try for years. I guess I was lucky).

A former jazz clarinetist, Loevendie infuses jazz into many of his contemporary classical works, and Duo is a terrific example. Polyphonic lines (really, just a bass and a solo line), when pulled off effectively, give the impression of two separate personalities on stage. A terrific piece!

Published by Hal Leonard: <https://www.halleonard.com/product/228749/duo>

### **Échange, for Solo Bass Clarinet and Ensemble, by Iannis Xenakis (1989)**

Written for Sparnaay in 1989, Xenakis reportedly had a heart attack while composing it. The piece does have a clear, specific shift toward pseudo-tonality at about 12 minutes into the piece—which comes off as oddly sentimental, as if Xenakis was lamenting his own mortality. Clearly, at the end, he comes to grips with it, as the final 30 seconds of the piece is the shrill, static sound (played by high woodwinds and violin harmonics) of a flat-lined EKG. Intense stuff.

Published by: (Out of print, but I've made my copy available for free here: <https://www.earspasm.com/free-downloads/iannis-xenakis-echange-sheet-music>)

### **Spasm, for Solo Bass Clarinet and Tape, by Michael Lowenstern (1993)**

So yeah, I had to put a piece of mine on here, but this piece has special meaning for me, since it's the first piece I put out into the world that I actually felt proud of, it's the first piece I played at my first concert at an ICA clarinet conference in 1994, it's the title of my first album from 1996, and it's the first piece of mine Harry said "didn't suck."

Published by: Earspasm.  
<https://www.earspasm.com/digital-sheet-music/spasm-sheet-music-and-electronics>

### **Michael Lowenstern Biography**

Michael Lowenstern, has performed, recorded and toured as a soloist and with ensembles of every variety, and is widely recognized one of the most innovative bass clarinetists in the world.

Career highlights include long tenures with the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and John Zorn, and touring with ensembles as diverse as the Steve Reich Ensemble, Orpheus Chamber Orchestra and the Klezmatics. To date, he can be heard on over sixty recordings, two of which have won Grammy awards. Michael has released eight solo albums of his own.

He is currently in his eleventh year creating content for his YouTube channel, to the delight (and consternation) of millions of viewers across the globe. He lives and works in New York City.

[www.earspasm.com](http://www.earspasm.com)  
[www.michaellowenstern.com](http://www.michaellowenstern.com)

## **MARCO ANTONIO MAZZINI (PERU)**

### **Concertino Silvestre (2009), by Rafael Junchaya**

This is the first and to date, only bass clarinet concerto written by a Peruvian composer. It's a fantastic three movement piece very well written for the instrument, with a modern sound yet very melodic. This is a great challenge for any bass clarinetist.

The piece has two versions, Concertino, for string orchestra/percussion/soloist and Concerto, for full orchestra and soloist.

Published by: Self Published. [rjunchaya@gmail.com](mailto:rjunchaya@gmail.com)

Recording: Marco Mazzini – Bass Clarinet. Steven Decraene – Conductor. GUSO. 2009  
<https://youtu.be/c8U0cAy8ozY>

### **10 Estudios para clarinete bajo (2013 – 2019), by Mauricio Murcia.**

These wonderful studies are a great option for musicians looking for new challenges. The syncopated rhythms, beautiful melodic lines and often big interval jumps, make each study an excellent alternative to play live. My favorite ones are number 2 and 9.

So far, these are the only studies written for bass clarinet by a Latin American composer (by the way, Mauricio from Colombia is a terrific clarinet player).

Published by: Self Published. Email: [mauriciomurciabedoya@gmail.com](mailto:mauriciomurciabedoya@gmail.com)

Recordings:

Thiago Tavares – Bass Clarinet 2021 Estudio 1 [https://youtu.be/\\_leLcK4o4gk](https://youtu.be/_leLcK4o4gk)

Marco Mazzini – Bass Clarinet. 2021 Estudio 2 <https://youtu.be/KjFMr37f9CE>

Mariana Clavijo – Bass Clarinet 2021 Estudio 3 [https://youtu.be/C4nKU\\_4PYqM](https://youtu.be/C4nKU_4PYqM)

Gonzalo Quintero Florez – Bass Clarinet 2020 Estudio 9 <https://youtu.be/aV2TjZBl9Oc>

### **Chants de la Nuit, for Bass Clarinet and Piano, by Maurice Faillenot.**

This beautiful piece, by the French composer Maurice Faillenot is a must for all bass clarinetists. From the beginning the slow, dark lines are held with unpredictable and fantastic harmonies, showing beautifully the lower register of the bass clarinet. The piece has no high notes to worry about but many flexible tempos, which makes it very enjoyable to play with the piano.

Published by: JW Pepper

<https://www.jwpepper.com/Chants-De-La-Nuit/10519572.item#.YfqWYurMJPY>

Recording: with Piano: <https://youtu.be/bcq1tYAUdU>

With String quartet: Marco Mazzini – Bass Clarinet. 2020 [https://youtu.be/p3Hc\\_OLKm8o](https://youtu.be/p3Hc_OLKm8o)



### **Necrólogo, for Bass Clarinet and Piano, by Iclí Zitella.**

If you are searching for a short, cool piece for bass clarinet, this is it. Necrólogo tells the story of a human sacrifice and the composer (from Venezuela) uses the lower register of the bass clarinet to climb little by little to a high climatic trilled note, where the pianist has to shout! The piece ends with the bass clarinetist playing and singing inside the instrument, as to announce that the sacrifice has been done. Highly recommended.

Published by: Self Published. Email: [iclizit@yahoo.com](mailto:iclizit@yahoo.com)

Recording: Marco Mazzini – Bass Clarinet. 2007 <https://youtu.be/WneHK4zPcGE>

### **7 Pasos, for two Bass Clarinets (2014), by Sebastian Tozzola.**

Music for two bass clarinets, elegant, challenging and very well written by Argentinian bass clarinetist Sebastián Tozzola. These pieces are a great option to play with students and play live. I recommend searching for other pieces by this composer, he has written a lot of interesting music for the bass clarinet.

Published by Alea: <https://bassclarinet.ecwid.com/Tozzola-7-Pasos-PDF-p151584581>

Recording: Sebastián Tozzola – Bass Clarinet 2017 <https://youtu.be/oKfnND0Twr0>

### **Marco Antonio Mazzini Biography. (Peru)**

Awarded by the International Clarinet Association for “his dedication to enriching the next generation of young South American clarinetists” and by the Peruvian Ministry of Education with a “Golden Chaski”, clarinetist Marco Antonio Mazzini has performed internationally in such prestigious places as Carnegie Hall (New York), Tama Center (Tokio), Paleis voor Schone Kunsten (Brussels), Bijloke Concert Hall (Gent), Gasteig Cultural Center (Germany), FilmMuseum (Amsterdam) and the Paris Conservatory.

He has appeared as a soloist in concert halls in South Africa, Europe, North and South America. In 2009 he won the competition held by Google to be part of the YouTube Symphony Orchestra performing at Carnegie Hall under the baton of Michael Tilson Thomas.

He is currently director of the organisation Clariperu. He is a full time teacher at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú. Marco Antonio is the continental chairman (South America) for the International Clarinet Association.

Social media

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/marcoamazzini/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/marcoantoniomazzini>

YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/c/marcomazzini>

## **RICHARD NUNEMAKER (USA)**

### **Some Etudes and Orchestral Essentials:**

- ✓ Rose Studies. 32 and 40. If you can play these on bass clarinet you can play anything on bass clarinet. Readily available online and in music stores.
- ✓ Transcriptions of the Bach Cello Suites. These teach flexibility and musicality on the bass. A tremendous learning tool. Available online and in most bass clarinet music catalogs.
- ✓ Shostakovich Violin Concerto. Learning this is one thing. Performing this teaches “grace under fire”. A real technical challenge.
- ✓ William Schuman Symphony #3 (Toccata). Extends the range of the bass clarinet and again learning is one thing. Performing this teaches (like the Shostakovich), “grace under fire”. You have got to be in total control of the solo and you have to “blow it out into the hall”. Performing this solo you have no time to “think”. It has to flow from your fingers.
- ✓ Both Grofé “On the Trail” (dotted quarter at mm 132–136) and the Gershwin “Piano Concerto in F” No. 17 first movement (half note at mm 88). Both great learning tools for staccato. If you can play these at tempo you can tongue anything.
- ✓ Opening (Prelude) to the first act of “Tristan und Isolde”. This is a great piece to get your circular breathing chops in shape. If you can circular breath through-out the entire Prelude never breaking and always coloring the line with the basses and cellos, you will have your circular breathing down.

### **Solo and Chamber choices**

Alone Together, for Bass Clarinet and Double Bass, by Janice Misurell-Mitchell. (1987)

This is a great duo piece for bass clarinet and double bass. Virtuoso playing for both instruments, based on a recording by Eric Dolphy and Richard Davis on the Arthur Schwartz and Howard Dietz tune “Alone Together”.

Published by: Self-published. [jmisurell@aol.com](mailto:jmisurell@aol.com)

Recording: Eric Dolphy – Bass Clarinet Richard Davis – Double Bass. The original piece. Eric Dolphy: Conversations. 1963 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NF3Ppbq7Bzs>

Recording: Richard Nunemaker, Bass Clarinet, Peter Herbert, Double Bass. Janice Misurell-Mitchell work, MMC records. 1992.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=55ivckOp3Gg>

### **Shevet Achim (Brothers Dwell), for two Bass Clarinets, by Meira M. Warshauer. (2001)**

Commissioned by Richard Nunemaker and recorded by Richard Nunemaker and Timothy Zavadill, this is a wonderful duo for two bass clarinets exploring the full range of the instruments and a full emotional commitment for the performers. A landmark composition for two bass clarinets.



Published by: Self-published. Kol Meira Publications, [meira.warshauer@gmail.com](mailto:meira.warshauer@gmail.com), <https://meirawarshauer.com/>

Recording: Richard Nunemaker and Timothy Zavadill, Bass Clarinets. Music For The Ears Of the World, AUREC, 2003. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_J6ZIoCYRg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_J6ZIoCYRg)

### **Improvisation on 'Lines Where Beauty Lingers' for Solo Bass Clarinet, by M. William Karlins.**

Commissioned and recorded by Richard Nunemaker. This piece is based on the jazz composition "Lines Where Beauty Lingers" by Ron Thomas. It takes the form of a theme and variations. A wonderful work for advanced high school and college students that includes some notes in the extended lower range and slap tongue.

Published by: Tritone Press. (2002)

Recording: Richard Nunemaker – Bass Clarinet. The Louisville Project, 2002 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tOS1qvFmqBs>

### **Last Movement. Espresso con moto, from Clarinet Quintet, by Marc Satterwhite. 2002**

Commissioned and recorded by Richard Nunemaker, this is the final movement of Marc Satterwhite's "Clarinet Quintet". This is a wonderful moment for bass clarinet and strings. A great teaching/learning aid for playing in tune and blending with strings. Lots of sub-tone playing.

Published by: Self-published. [marc.satterwhite@louisville.edu](mailto:marc.satterwhite@louisville.edu)

Recording: Richard Nunemaker, Clarinet, Peter McHugh, Marcus Ratzenboeck, Violins, Christian Frederickson, Viola, Paul York, Cello. The Louisville Project, 2002 [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVezriH\\_8r0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iVezriH_8r0)

### **Richard Nunemaker Biography**

Richard Nunemaker has had a varied and prolific career as a symphony musician, concert soloist, recording artist, producer, educator and author. Richard Nunemaker played clarinet, bass clarinet and saxophone with the Houston Symphony Orchestra from 1967-2008. He also played principal clarinet and saxophone with the Houston Latin American Philharmonic Orchestra from 2012- 2016. He was a member of the Chicago Civic Orchestra in 1966, the Louisville Orchestra from 1964-1966 and the Erie Philharmonic from 1962-1964.

A strong advocate of music by living American composers, Nunemaker has commissioned over one hundred works for clarinet and saxophone. As a record producer, he has produced and recorded five solo CDs featuring some of this music.

Richard Nunemaker was a member of the faculty for the University of St. Thomas, Houston from 1975-2016. He has a B.S. in Music Ed. and a Performers Certificate from SUNY @Fredonia and a M.M. and is an Alumni Fellow from the University of Louisville. [www.RichardNunemaker.com](http://www.RichardNunemaker.com).

## **FIE SCHOUTEN (NETHERLANDS)**

### **Façade-Trio, for two Bass Clarinets and Percussion, by Georges Aperghis. 1988**

The trio is quite challenging for all players, technically - very high and low for the bass clarinets and very complex rhythms for the percussionist - that we ended up performing the trio with somebody conducting the ongoing 5/4 bar. The music goes loud and very soft and tender, the 2 bass clarinets mix in sound perfectly with the kickdrums (2) and the metal plates in the percussion. As a whole: an experience in an unknown soundworld.

Published by: Editions Durand

Recording: CD Nature (2020)

<https://fieschoutenclarinets.bandcamp.com/track/fa-ade-trio-1998-georges-aperghis>

### **Advice from a Caterpillar, for Bass Clarinet Solo, by Unsuk Chin. 2007**

A lyrical, sometimes wild piece with aspects of improvisation. It comes from the opera *Alice in Wonderland* by Unsuk Chin, it's the moment that the big caterpillar starts to speak while smoking... it pushes my imagination into a strange curling world...

Published by: Boosey and Hawkes

Recording: CD Ladder of Escape 11 (2014)

<https://fieschoutenclarinets.bandcamp.com/track/advice-from-a-caterpillar-unsuk-chin>

### **Chu, for Soprano, Clarinet/Contrabass Clarinet and Cello, by Jonathan Harvey. 2002**

This trio starts off with sounds from Tibetan music, bells and the singer sings Ohm! Extremely well instrumented and divided in three parts, where the first two are on traditional Tibetan text and the last one on a poem by a Tibetan poet who fled and lives now in the UK. The first and the last part the clarinetist is playing b-flat and mixes in high notes and multiphonics with the cello. The middle part is for contrabass clarinet and the cellist is on the low strings, the singer goes wildly over the basses..

Published by: Faber Music

Recording: Live recording 2014

<https://soundcloud.com/fie-schouten/jonathan-harvey-chu-2002>

### **Featherlight Monkeys, for three Bass Clarinets, by Ig Henneman. 2016**

A trio starting very powerful, organlike, with the three bass clarinets in the low register, slowly it goes up flying. The piece is partly inspired on a poem about 'featherlight monkeys' who seem to fly away, bodiless.. the piece functions the best in a larger not too dry room, the very high passages won't be aggressive but they bring a feeling of space.

Published

by:

Donemus

Recording: Live performance in Bimhuis, Amsterdam

<https://youtu.be/07yoSlaMB08>

### **Leichte Überlappungen, for two Bass Clarinets, by Tobias Klein. 2018**

Very playful duo, challenging for the bass clarinet as all the pieces by composer/bass clarinettist Tobias Klein. The two bass clarinets overlap and cross each other. It has something very 'open' in sound, because of the unison fifths and fourths. In the recordings I often cannot hear who is me and who is my colleague! In concert this is also a nice acoustic 'game' not to know who is doing what.

Published by: Self Published: <https://www.tobiasklein.nl/compositions.php?c=1>

CD Chambery (2018)

<https://fieschoutenclarinets.bandcamp.com/track/leichte-berlappungen-2018-tobias-klein>

### **Fie Schouten Biography**

Dutch clarinettist Fie Schouten is an Amsterdam based specialist in the performance of new music with a preference for playing on the low clarinets. Schouten can be heard extensively as a soloist and with her own ensembles. She has had around 100 pieces written for her, which she has premiered in various formations and produced 8 CD's with contemporary chamber music. Fie Schouten is Artistic Director of a bass clarinet festival titled 'Basklarinet Festijn' with a fourth edition in 20/21. In 2015 Dutch Donemus Publishing published her album of bass clarinet miniatures. Schouten is Professor of Bass Clarinet/contemporary music at the Prince Claus Conservatoire Groningen. Since 2008 she has been one of the Stockhausen-soloists performing many works by Karlheinz Stockhausen with renowned ensembles. She studied clarinet and bass clarinet at the Amsterdam Conservatoire and cites Harry Sparnaay as her most important teacher. [www.fieschouten.nl](http://www.fieschouten.nl)

### **JONATHAN RUSSELL (USA)**

#### **Six Cello Suites, by J S Bach**

Fantastic music, of course, and a great way to work on fundamentals: tone quality, evenness, consistency of sound across registers, phrasing, etc. Reading from the original cello part, untransposed (so sounding a major second lower than Bach wrote)

Published by: [Free download of the cello version:](#)

[https://imslp.org/wiki/6\\_Cello\\_Suites,\\_BWV\\_1007-1012\\_\(Bach,\\_Johann\\_Sebastian\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/6_Cello_Suites,_BWV_1007-1012_(Bach,_Johann_Sebastian))

### **Black, for two Bass Clarinets, by Marc Mellits. 2008**

My duo Sqwonk commissioned this piece from Marc, and it has been thrilling to watch it become so successful. Really fun to play and audiences always love it!

Published by: Self Published <https://www.marcmellits.com/black-two-bass-clarinets>

### **Tocatta and Fugue by J.S. Bach, arranged for two bass clarinets by Jonathan Russell**

This is one of the first arrangements I made for Sqwonk. Another crowd-pleaser, it's amazing how effectively the original organ version translates to just two bass clarinets.

Published

by: <http://jonrussellmusic.com/works/j-s-bach-tocatta-and-fugue-in-d-minor/>

### **Bass Clarinet Concerto, by Jonathan Russell (2014) (versions with orchestra, wind band, clarinet choir, or piano reduction)**

I wrote this as my dissertation piece for my Ph.D. in Composition. It takes advantage of all the things I like to do most on bass clarinet: low grooving, altissimo soaring, klezmer-y wailing, and overtone harmonics.

Published by: Self published

<http://jonrussellmusic.com/works/bass-clarinet-concerto-piano-reduction/>

Supra, for 9 Bass Clarinets, by Jonathan Russell (2012)

I wrote this piece for ClarinetFest 2012. It is inspired by the vocal polyphonic folk music of Georgia; I sang in a Georgian choir for several years, and I came to absolutely love the music.

Published by: <http://jonrussellmusic.com/works/supra-bass-clarinet-version/>

### **Jonathan Russell Biography**

Jonathan Russell (b. 1979) creates music by turns tender and fierce, playful and profound, propulsive and still. In his work, he seeks to embody and express the full range of human experience, speaking directly to people's hearts, minds, and bodies. The extraordinary sound and spirit of the bass clarinet is a driving force behind much of Jonathan's work. His numerous compositions for bass clarinet(s) include solo works, sonatas, concertos, duets, trios, quartets, chamber works, and large bass clarinet ensembles. He was a longtime member of the Edmund Welles bass clarinet quartet, is a current member of the Sqwonk bass clarinet duo, and is founder and leader of Improbable Beasts, a 15-member professional bass clarinet ensemble in the Boston area. As a performer, Jonathan appears frequently as a bass clarinet soloist, and as a classical and klezmer clarinetist. He lives in Cambridge, MA, with his wife and son.

<http://jonrussellmusic.com>

## **PETRA STUMP AND HEINZ-PETER LINSHALM (AUSTRIA)**

### **Monolog for Bass Clarinet solo, Isang Yun (1983)**

We have included this piece because it combines highest virtuosity and deep intense musicality in a classical way of playing the bass clarinet and Yun uses the range and the expression possibilities of the instrument masterly.

The piece is an elaboration of the middle part of the clarinet concerto by Yun and shows a brilliant combination of western music and Korean ornamental influences.

Published by:

[https://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/catalogue/cat\\_detail?=&musicid=1643&langid=2](https://www.boosey.com/pages/cr/catalogue/cat_detail?=&musicid=1643&langid=2)

Recording: Heinz-Peter Linshalm – Bass Clarinet. 2002.

<https://duostump-linshalm.bandcamp.com/track/i-yun-monoiog-1983-f-r-bassklarinette-solo>

### **CAPRICCIO, detto: "l'Ermafrodita" for Bass Clarinet solo, by Claudio Ambrosini (1983)**

Ambrosini has written a piece of enormous beauty with hardly any normal played tones and invites to a completely different hearing experience going into both directions of fragile and powerful playing.

To use the words of the composer: „Our listeners will really be surprised, as I was, by the discovery of the richness, – I would say – the “hermaphrodite” quality of the bass clarinet, capable at the same time of strong „masculine” utterances and of very gentle, evocative, „feminine” behaviours...“

Published by:

<https://www.worldcat.org/title/capriccio-detto-lermafrodita-per-clarinetto-basso-1983/oclc/271379136>

Recording: Petra Stump-Linshalm – Bass Clarinet. Live Performance. 2012.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lmCaCOahlhw>

### **ASSONANCE II, for Bass Clarinet solo, by Michael Jarrell (1989)**

ASSONANCE is for every ambitious bass clarinet player a must as it is a rather classical piece but although using a variety of contemporary playing techniques which is just fun.

This piece is a kind of serious sport moving around all different playing techniques and if you have practised this piece you can play quite some other pieces by Jarrell as he uses or rather develops the material of Assonance I for clarinet (s.a. Assonance III, Essaims Cribles...)

Published by: <https://www.henry-lemoine.com/en/catalogue/fiche/25338>

### **1+1=1, for 2 Bass Clarinets, by Pierluigi Billone (2006)**

Billone has explored not only the boundaries but far beyond the boundaries of bass clarinet playing and this marvellous piece which carries the listeners and the players easily through the 72 minutes of its duration visiting manifold sound worlds.

Essential topic of the piece is that the sound of two bass clarinets does not mean two different voices, but stays together as one big sound, like one drop of water and another drop of water is still one.

Published by: Self Published <https://www.pierluigibillone.com/en/home/>

Recording: Petra Stump, and Heinz-Peter Linshalm – Bass Clarinet. Recording with score follow. 2006. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TtruYROTXY4&t=90s>

### **MADAME PELE, for Bass Clarinet solo, by Petra Stump-Linshalm (2021)**

Surely this piece is a conclusion of my knowledge of bass clarinet playing but nevertheless I keep searching for my own language in music without denying my history.

The piece is a homage to the Hawaiian goddess PELE – a goddess of destruction just as well as a goddess of creation, because lava also creates new land and life. There are many legends about the fiery Pele, but it is said that she can be soothed and negotiated with gentle chants.

Published by:

<http://shop.apoll-edition.work/index.php?route=product/search&search=madame%20pele>

### **Duo Stump-Linshalm Biography**

Two clarinet players are an admittedly very small line-up, but this duo's courage and propensity for the eccentric which have inspired numerous composers to compose for them. Among them are big names such as Pierluigi Billone, Beat Furrer and Chaya Czernowin. Petra Stump-Linshalm and Heinz-Peter Linshalm are virtuosic performers who succeed at drawing the maximum out of their instruments. They elicit the most unlikely sounds from different members of the clarinet family and carefully investigate the acoustic potential they hold. Their precise and brilliant playing builds on soft vibrations and minimal shocks, microtonal oscillations and tones. The duo's repertoire comes from both contemporary and classical music which is performed with a tremendous sensibility and in keen technical adeptness.

[www.stump-linshalm.com](http://www.stump-linshalm.com)

### **Petra Stump Biography**

Petra Stump-Linshalm studied at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and at the Conservatorium van Amsterdam.

As a musician Petra pays attention not only to the classical repertoire, but also to contemporary and improvised music. Dedicattee of numerous premieres such as Billone, Czernowin, Furrer, Gander, Stockhausen a.o.

Winning various awards she also pays attention to record a lot of chamber music.

As a composer her works are accepted with great interest and she won the „Publicity Prize 2020“. All works are published by Apoll Edition in Vienna. In 2018 the highly acclaimed portrait CD “FANTASY STUDIES” was released by Orlando.

Petra and her husband are the editors of “clarinet update – Neue Musik für junge Klarinettenisten” published by Doblinger.

Presenting contemporary and classical music to children in concerts and workshops supplements the artist’s scope of work. Petra is a senior lecturer of chamber music at the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna.

### **Heinz-Peter Linshalm Biography**

Heinz-Peter Linshalm studied Clarinet at the mdw – University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna and Bass Clarinet at the Hochschule der Künste Bern.

Heinz-Peter Linshalm plays all the instruments of the clarinet family, from the piccolo clarinet to the double bass clarinet. His repertoire ranges from classical to contemporary pieces, he won prizes at various competitions like Concours Nicati – Interpretation contest for contemporary music of Switzerland.

Since 2011 he teaches at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna.



## CHAPTER 5. A CONSERVATOIRE LIST AND HARRY SPARNAAYS' LIST

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The Italian soloist Paolo De Gaspari teaches solo bass clarinet at Trinity Laban, London and Masters in solo bass clarinet, at The Royal Conservatoire, Mons, Belgium.

*“In this list I would like to indicate pieces that are useful to students in order to face and solve technical and musical solutions that will be later present in other works. My idea is to offer students the widest possible musical experience, studying pieces that belong to different languages and styles. I probably won't indicate all the most important pieces that are present at the moment, but I will try to indicate those that I think are useful at a didactic level to urge my students to a wider vision of music and curiosity about different musical languages, so that the extended technique is not just a virtuosity as an end in itself, but a way to say something else.*

*Paolo De Gaspari”*

[www.paolodegaspari.it](http://www.paolodegaspari.it)

### Pieces with Piano

#### **L. Sluka, Sonata, 1956**

Wonderful music, I consider like “Brahms clarinet sonatas” . Range, music, expression, in a unique musical language.

Published by Musica Humana

#### **O. Schoeck, Sonata op. 41, 1931**

Very good work, full, density of musical meaning.

Published by: Edition Breikof:

#### **S. Collery, Legende et divertissement**

Good work, with an important introduction and a lot used for orchestral auditions.

Published by: Edition Diewa:

#### **H.J. Zander , Ballade, 1993**

Modern language, lot of energy, also a very good example to use and study high notes register.

Published by: Elite edition:

### **Easy and accessible repertoire with Piano**

#### **E. Bozza, Ballade, 1958**

Published by: Southern Music

#### **F. Rasse, Lied, 1921**

Published by: Metropolis, Belgium



**D. Brossè, Elegy, 2000**

Published by: Metropolis, Belgium

**P. Hindemith, Bassoon Sonata, 1938**

Published by: Schott (bassoon version – performer needs to transpose to Bflat and use original piano part).

**S. Collery, Cantabile 1956**

Published by: Decruck Edition

**Advanced works for Solo Bass Clarinet**

**F. Donatoni, Soft I, II, 1989**

The piece! For me the best piece ever, no other words to add.

Published by: Ricordi:

Recording: Paolo De Gaspari – bass clarinet The Essential Bass Clarinet. 2016

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5sBePITSz2tvCjE1M7g3Vg?si=uKIRCOTLRUStUvya7-U-hw>

**C. Ambrosini, Capriccio detto l'Ermafrodita, 1982**

A wonderful piece, very difficult, written only with extended technique, a futuristic piece.

Published by: Self Published. [audio.ambrosia@libero.it](mailto:audio.ambrosia@libero.it)

**L. Berio, Sequenza IXc, 1998**

Version made by Rocco Parisi, from the clarinet version IXb and published by Berio.

Published by: Universal Edition

**L. De Pablo, Oculito, 1977**

Very difficult, but splendid.

Published by: Suvini Zerboni:

**D. Lang, Press Release, 1991**

Simply wonderful, you have to study it.

Published by: Red Poppy

Recording: Paolo De Gaspari – Bass Clarinet The Essential Bass Clarinet. 2016

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5sBePITSz2tvCjE1M7g3Vg?si=uKIRCOTLRUStUvya7-U-hw>

**T. Loevendie, Duo for solo bass clarinet, 2002**

Very interesting work, difficult, but with a lot of musical ideas.

Published by: Peer music:

### **Accessible works for Solo Bass Clarinet**

#### **Loudova, Aulos, 1976**

Nice piece written in idea by Debussy 's Syrinx, you can perform as solo , as duo together Syrinx flute piece

Published by: Schirmer Co

#### **Bush suite op 37a, 1980**

4 movements, good technique, no extreme extensions are required.

Published by: Amadeus Werlag

#### **H.J. Zander, Capriccio for Solo Bass Clarinet, 1995**

Good for practising and to get confidence with high register.

Published by: Elite edition:

#### **H. Genzmer, Sonata for Solo Bass Clarinet, 1994**

Interesting work, often required in competitions.

Published by: Peters Edition:

### **Bass Clarinet and String Quartet**

#### **Y. Bowen, Fantasy quintet op 93, 1954**

In a late romantic style. A nice piece.

Published by: Emerson edition.

### **Bass Clarinet and Tape or Computer**

#### **W. Siegel, Jackdaw, 1995-2000**

Wonderful work, a must in your repertoire

Self Published: [http://waynesiegel.dk/?page\\_id=708](http://waynesiegel.dk/?page_id=708)

Recording: Paolo De Gaspari – Bass Clarinet The Essential Bass Clarinet. 2016

<https://open.spotify.com/album/5sBePITSz2tvCjE1M7g3Vg?si=uKIRCOTlRUStUvya7-U-hw>

#### **R. de Man, Yuxtaposiciones, 2008**

Difficult but splendid

Published by: Periferia Music.

**L. Ceccarelli, Birds, 2009**

Full range of extended technique, a very impressive piece

Published by: Self Published. <https://www.edisonstudio.it/luigi-ceccarelli/>

Recording: Paolo De Gaspari – Bass Clarinet The Essential Bass Clarinet. 2016  
<https://open.spotify.com/album/5sBePITSz2tvCjE1M7g3Vg?si=uKIRCOTLRUStUvya7-U-hw>

**Accessible repertoire for Bass Clarinet and Tape**

M. Lowenstern, drift, 2005

Very nice and funny piece, audiences love it.

Published by: www.earspasm.com

**G. Gioia, Mirrors, 2009**

Nice piece, easy for audiences, with lots of Mediterranean melody influences.

Published by: Self Published.

[https://www.free-scores.com/download-sheet-music.php?pdf=17699:](https://www.free-scores.com/download-sheet-music.php?pdf=17699)

**Bass Clarinet and Concert Band**

**K.Vlak, concerto, 1989**

In a classical style a very good concerto, difficult also for the band.

Published by, Molenaar Edition

**“Rock n’ roll pieces”, Energy, influence with difference styles, no borders languages, gasoline for your brain and heart...**

**Ivan Fedele, High, 1996**

For Solo Bass Clarinet, Influence with jazz and funky language.

Published by, Sugar music

**M. Lowenstern, Spasm, 1993**

For Bass Clarinet and Tape, a spectacular piece.

Published by: www.earspasm.com

**E. Dolphy, God bless the child, 1961**

Solo Bass Clarinet, a wonderful work you have to know.

Published by: Various transcriptions. See Sarah’s Top 10!:

**G. Brophy, NRG, 1998,**

Published by: Australian Music Centre – <https://www.australianmusiccentre.com.au>  
For Solo Bass Clarinet, as the title says...pure NRG!

**M. Mellits, Black, 2008,**

Published by: Dacia Music:  
For two Bass Clarinet, too nice!

**Paolo De Gaspari Biography**

Studies clarinet and pedagogic music and then decided to dedicate himself to the bass clarinet – his true passion – and to chamber music. Winner of a scholarship, he graduated in bass clarinet at the Rotterdam Conservatory with Henri Bok and perfected his skills in modern and contemporary music and in extended technique.

Since 1998 he has carried out an intense international teaching and concert activity and has performed for the most important clarinet festivals in Europe, with over two hundred concerts as a soloist and in chamber music ensembles. He has given master classes and concerts in important European and American musical institutions such as, among others, University of Bangor Wales, Sibelius Academy Helsinki, Royal College of Music London, Royal Northern College of Manchester, Conservatorio Berganza Madrid, Conservatorio di Milano, University of Rio de Janeiro, Merida Projecto Musica Mexico and Utrecht Conservatorium, Holland.

From 2003 to 2015 he was a bass clarinet teacher at the International Academy of Bass Clarinet in Pordenone, since 2007 he has been a visiting clarinet professor at the Royal Conservatoire of Birmingham in England, and since 2016 he has been a titular bass clarinet professor at Trinity Laban Conservatoire in London. Since 2019, he has also been a professor of bass clarinet at the Royal Conservatoire of Mons in Belgium.

[www.paolodegaspari.it](http://www.paolodegaspari.it)

**Harry Sparnaay 1944-2017 (Netherlands)**

A must read book for any bass clarinet enthusiast and player is the late Harry Sparnaay's *Harry Sparnaay; A Personal History*, Periferia Music.

Published by:

<https://ummpstore.com/products/sparnaay-the-bass-clarinet-a-personal-history>

This is a unique insight into Sparnaay's career and his thoughts on all aspects of bass clarinet writing, performance, extended technique and repertoire. There are many examples of repertoire that Sparnaay commissioned and performed over his career.

Many colleagues spoke extensively with Sparnaay about bass clarinet music, but this shortlist was created by Sparnaay (whilst corresponding with Paolo De Gaspari some years ago) as his personal selection of important bass clarinet pieces. There is a more extensive list in *Harry Sparnaay; A Personal History*, but thank you to Paolo for sending this shortlist over, and the final pieces (in a simple list form) go to Harry Sparnaay, with gratitude from all his friends and colleagues.

Isang Yun: Monolog, for Bass Clarinet Solo  
Claudio Ambrosani: Capriccio detto l'Ermafrodita, for Solo Bass Clarinet  
Luigi Ceccarelli: Birds, for Bass Clarinet and Electronics.  
Franco Donatoni: Soft, for Solo Bass Clarinet  
Brian Ferneyhough: Time and Motion Study 1, for Solo Bass Clarinet  
Andrew Ford: Ringing The Changes, for Flute, Bass Clarinet and Piano  
Lucien Goethals: Difonium, for Bass Clarinet and Tape  
Jonathan Harvey: The Riot, for Flute, Bass Clarinet and Piano  
Guus Janssen: Sprezzatura, for Solo Bass Clarinet  
Jos Kunst: Solo Identity 1, for Solo Bass Clarinet  
Tristan Keuris: 7 Pieces, for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra  
Theo Loevendie: Incantations, for Bass Clarinet and Orchestra  
Theo Loevendie: Duo, for Solo Bass Clarinet  
Roderik De Man: Écoute, écoute, for Bass Clarinet and Tape  
Roderik De Man: Yuxtaposiciones, for Bass Clarinet and tape  
Paolo Pizzetti: Il volto della note, for Flute, Bass Clarinet and Piano  
Enrique Raxach: Chimaera, for Bass Clarinet and Tape  
Klas Torstensson: Spans, for Bass Clarinet solo  
Othmar Schoeck: Sonate, for Bass Clarinet and Piano  
Hindemith: Sonata for Bass Clarinet and Piano (Bassoon Sonata)  
Mauricio Kagel: Schattenklänge, for Bass Clarinet Solo  
Arnold Schönberg: Pierrot Lunaire  
Adolph Busch: Suite Op.37a, for Solo Bass Clarinet



## **EPILOGUE/CONCLUSION**

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As mentioned in my introduction, this list isn't exhaustive, and as I write this, you will be playing repertoire not included, and new music will be being composed! I have the rest of this page blank, so that you can insert extra repertoire choices here. Please also send me your top five choices, so that I can add to this list over time!

Dr. Sarah Watts

[www.sarahkwatts.co.uk](http://www.sarahkwatts.co.uk)

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

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A massive thank you to all my colleagues who have contributed to this guide. I am so grateful for you introducing me to lots of new repertoire too!

Thank you to Marco Antonio Mazzini for help with proofreading, formatting and editing this document and Clariperu for launching the Guide in April 2022.

I would also like to also remind all readers that whilst we have included many links to tracks for free listening via streaming, I would encourage you all to purchase a download or hard copy where you can of a complete album. You will also discover much more repertoire this way too, and in many cases get access to valuable programme notes.

## SARAH WATTS

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Sarah Watts studied clarinet at the Royal Academy of Music with Angela Malsbury and Victoria Soames Samek (bass clarinet). Sarah then decided to specialise in the bass clarinet and continued her studies at the Rotterdam Conservatorium bass clarinet with Henri Bok, funded by the Countess of Munster Musical Trust and a Leverhulme Trust Studentship. Sarah was awarded the Exxon prize for the best classical music student in Rotterdam.

Successes include: Winner, UK Howarth Clarinet Competition 2000; Winner, Hawkes Clarinet Prize (RAM) 2001; Winner, Sir Arthur Bliss Chamber Music Prize (RAM) 2000; Winner of wind section and Faber Prize, UK Performing Australian Music competition, 2001 (her clarinet and bass clarinet recital was broadcast on ABC radio); Finalist, Wind section, Royal Overseas League Competition 2000.

Sarah specialises on the bass clarinet and has gained an international reputation as an artist, teacher and researcher on the instrument. She has performed solo repertoire across the UK, Ireland, Asia, Europe and the Americas and has attracted composers including Sir Harrison Birtwistle, Piers Hellawell and William Sweeney to write works for her. In January 2003, Sarah performed a solo bass clarinet recital in London's Purcell Room as part of the Park Lane Group Young Artist Series.

Sarah is Director of Performance at the University of Sheffield and teaches bass clarinet at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester. Sarah hosts bass clarinet courses on the Isle of Raasay in Scotland and tutors on other wind chamber music courses in the UK. She has given workshops on bass clarinet technique at many establishments around the world.

Sarah performs with Hard Rain Soloist Ensemble, rarescale and SCAW. She completed a PhD in bass clarinet multiphonic analysis at Keele University, and published 'Spectral Immersions; A Comprehensive Guide to the Theory and Practice of Bass Clarinet Multiphonics' with Metropolis Edition.

Sarah is a Henri Selmer Paris artist, a Vandoren UK artist and a Silverstein Inspiring Pro artist. In 2016, she was made an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music (ARAM), London.

[www.sarahkwatts.co.uk](http://www.sarahkwatts.co.uk)



