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A Guide to Understanding, Interpreting, and Performing David Bruce's *Gumboots* (2008)
for Clarinet (doubling bass clarinet) and String Quartet

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts

by

Dawn Marie Hamilton

2017

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2017

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Guide to Understanding, Interpreting, and Performing David Bruce's *Gumboots*
for Clarinet (doubling Bass Clarinet) and String Quartet

by

Dawn Marie Hamilton

Doctor of Musical Arts

University of California, Los Angeles, 2017

Professor Mark L. Kligman Co-Chair

Professor Gary G. Gray, Co-Chair

David Bruce's 2008 work, *Gumboots*, is a worthy and exciting addition to a small and select group of compositions. Along with the well-loved quintets of Brahms and Mozart, Weber, and a few more recent works such as Osvaldo Golijov's *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, *Gumboots* offers a well-composed work with both musical, emotional, and social substance. The work is challenging and requires a very versatile and adept clarinetist who can ideally double on the bass clarinet (although it is not required). Music plays a significant role in mankind's ability to convey emotional and profound ideas. *Gumboots* is a work that capitalizes on this capability. It is deserving of significant attention, being a joy to both listen to and play. Through communications with the composer and other performers familiar with the piece and by drawing on the author's personal experiences in performing the work, this dissertation presents a thorough and detailed investigation of *Gumboots* to assist the future performer, or listener, in better understanding the work. It provides biographical background about the composer and the commission and composition of the piece; a detailed musical analysis focusing on how the

compositional elements of the work support its emotional life; a chapter exploring a number of varied non-Western influences in the piece, including klezmer, early music, jazz, blues, and African dance; a discussion of all publicly available recordings of *Gumboots* (as of August 2017); and a chapter dedicated to performance practice issues and solutions for the clarinetist, string players, and the ensemble. David Bruce is an eclectic contemporary composer who will undoubtedly continue to make significant contributions to the world of classical music, and hopefully many more to the clarinet repertoire.

The dissertation of Dawn Marie Hamilton is approved.

Mark C. Carlson

John A. Steinmetz

Neal H. Stulberg

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University of California, Los Angeles

2017

To my husband, Levi, for your infinite and enduring love and support.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1: Composer David Bruce and the Origins of Gumboots	1
CHAPTER 2: Compositional Analysis	10
Introduction	10
Part 1	13
Part 2	18
Dance 1	19
Dance 2	22
Dance 3	25
Dance 4	29
Dance 5	31
CHAPTER 3: Roots and Influences—A Stylistic Melting Pot	37
Klezmer	37
Early Music	41
Blues	42
Jazz	43
African Dance	46
Concerning the Issue of Cultural Appropriation	49
CHAPTER 4: Recordings—Variation in Interpretation and Performance	52
Todd Palmer and the St. Lawrence String Quartet (World Premiere, 2008)	54
Sarah Beaty and Ensemble ACJW (2010)	57
Todd Palmer and the St. Lawrence String Quartet (2010)	59
John Klinghammer with the Art of Elan (2010)	60
James T. Shields with the Albuquerque Chamber Soloists (2015)	61
Lisa Kachouee and the Westheimer String Quartet (2017)	62
Julian Bliss and the Carducci String Quartet (World Premiere Recording, 2016)	63
CHAPTER 5: A Performance Guide—Considerations, Concerns, and Clarifications	
For the Clarinetist	66
Reeds	66

Part 1	
The Bass Clarinet in the Altissimo Register	67
Bass Clarinet Altissimo Fingerings	67
Bass Clarinet Intonation	69
On the B \flat Clarinet, from Rehearsal K Onwards	71
Part 2	
Dance 1	72
Dance 2	75
Dance 3	76
Dance 4	76
Dance 5	79
For the Strings	80
For the Quintet	
Seating	84
Rehearsal	85
Tempos	86
Rhythmic Cohesion	89
Notation	93
Part 2 Attaccas	95
Page Turns	95
Programming	96
Conclusion	98
Appendixes	
A. Full text of <i>Gumboots</i> Program Note by David Bruce	100
B. Correspondence with David Bruce	101
C. Correspondence with <i>Gumboots</i> Clarinetists	105
D. Correspondence with <i>Gumboots</i> String Players	130
E. Bass Clarinet Fingering Chart for mm. 151–195, by Performer	135
F. Bass Clarinet <i>Gumboots</i> Altissimo Fingering Chart by Pitch	142
G. <i>Gumboots</i> Performance History by Clarinetist	145
Bibliography	149

List of Figures

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>	<u>Description</u>
2.1	13	Structural Diagram of Part 1.
2.2	14	Opening Phrase of Part 1—Example of Heterophony.
2.3	14	Triplet Ostinatos in the Strings in Part 1 (mm. 37–43).
2.4	15	Example of Rhythmic Obscurity in Part 1 (mm. 44–9).
2.5	16	Crossfade between the Bass Clarinet and First Violin at Rehearsal D.
2.6	17	Viola Ostinato Beginning at Rehearsal K.
2.7	18	Example of Varied Rhythmic Pulses in Second Half of Part 1 (mm. 282–5).
2.8	19	Structural Diagram of Dance 1.
2.9	19	Dance 1 “a” Melodic Material in the Clarinet (mm. 326–8).
2.10	20	Dance 1 “b” Melodic Material in the Clarinet (mm. 342–5).
2.11	20	Clarinet <i>subito aggressivo</i> during “b” Motif in Dance 1 (m. 346).
2.12	21	Dance 1 “c” Melodic Material (mm. 351–7).
2.13	22	Cello Glissando at the End of Dance 1.
2.14	22	Structural Diagram of Dance 2.
2.15	23	Example of Polyrhythms in Dance 2 (mm. 407–11).
2.16	23	Violin II Septuplets in Dance 2 (mm. 446–49).
2.17	24	Clarinet Melody at Rehearsal K in Dance 2.
2.18	24	Violin II Melody at Rehearsal K in Dance 2.
2.19	25	Frenzied Clarinet Line at m. 500 in Dance 2.
2.20	25	Structural Diagram of Dance 3.
2.21	26	Dance 3 “a” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 540–51).
2.22	26	Dance 3 “b” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 557–68).
2.23	27	Example of Compound Meter and Varied Accent Patterns in Dance 3 at m. 557.
2.24	28	Comical Viola Excerpt in Dance 3 (mm. 591–2).
2.25	28	Humorous Tutti Decrescendo at the End of Dance 3.
2.26	29	Structural Diagram of Dance 4.
2.27	29	Dance 4 “a” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 650–61).
2.28	30	Dance 4 “b” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 687–92).
2.29	30	Dance 4 “c” Material in the Clarinet (at Rehearsal U).
2.30	30	Dance 4 Transition from “c” to “d” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 720–9).
2.31	31	Opening of Dance 4 (mm. 650–6).
2.32	31	Violin II “like a clucking chicken” in Dance 4 (mm. 773–74).

2.33	31	Structural Diagram of Dance 5.
2.34	32	Violin I in Dance 5 (mm. 842–45).
2.35	32	Violin II and Viola Rhythmic Pattern in Dance 5 (mm. 853–57).
2.36	33	Dance 5 “a” Motif in the Clarinet at Rehearsal Y.
2.37	33	Dance 5 “b” Motif in the Clarinet at Rehearsal AA.
2.38	33	Dance 5 “b” Motif in Violin I at Rehearsal BB (mm. 878–82).
2.39	34	Rhythmic Interlocking through the Ensemble in Dance 5 (mm. 853–7).
2.40	34	Clarinet Trills in Dance 5 (mm. 829–33).
2.41	35	Clarinet Quasi-tremolo in Dance 5 (m. 852).
2.42	35	Final Measures of <i>Gumboots</i> .
3.1	39	Viola Mordents in Part 1 (m. 110).
3.2	39	Bass Clarinet Part at Beginning of Part 1 (mm. 4–8).
3.3	40	Clarinet Part at the Beginning of Dance 3 (mm. 549–53).
3.4	40	Clarinet Grace Notes at the End of Dance 3 (mm. 637–40).
3.5	40	Clarinet Mordent-like Figures in Dance 5 (mm. 902–4).
3.6	40	Clarinet Trills at the End of Dance 5.
3.7	41	Viola Part at Rehearsal E.
3.8	43	Violin I Grace Note Glissandos in Part 1 (mm. 55–8).
3.9	44	Clarinet Glissando at Top of Dance 3.
3.10	44	Cello Upwards Glissandos in Dance 1 (mm. 328–9).
3.11	45	Clarinet Part “b” Material in Dance 1 (mm 347–8).
3.12	45	Clarinet “Growl-like” Flutter-Tongue in m. 377 of Dance 1.
3.13	46	Cello Jazz Slap Bass in Dance 5 (mm. 852–3).
3.14	49	Example of Baka Pygmy Influence in Dance 5 at Rehearsal Y.
4.1	54	Table of Tempos of <i>Gumboots</i> Recordings.
4.2	55	Revised Version of Clarinet Part at Rehearsal H in Dance 2.
4.3	56	Added Clarinet Sixteenths in Dance 4 (mm. 674–78).
5.1	70	Alternative Fingering for Long B Using Side “Register” Key.
5.2	71	Clarinet Septuplets (mm. 271–73).
5.3	71	Clarinet Articulation of Final Note of Part 1.
5.4	72	Dance 1 “b” Material in the Clarinet Part at Rehearsal B.
5.5	73	Clarinet Tremolos in m. 356 of Dance 1.
5.6	74	Articulated Sextuplets in the Clarinet Part at m. 371.
5.7	74	Articulated Thirty-Second Notes in the Clarinet Part at m. 387.

5.8	74	Articulated Thirty-Second Notes in the Clarinet Part at m. 391.
5.9	77	Spasmodic Clarinet Run in mm. 694–95 of Dance 4.
5.10	78	Spasmodic Clarinet Run in m. 705 of Dance 4.
5.11	78	Clarinet at m. 729 in Dance 4.
5.12	81	Violin II Harmonics at Rehearsal A in Part 1.
5.13	82	Viola Ostinato at Rehearsal K in Part 1.
5.14	83	Three Octave Jump in First Violin Part of Dance 2 (mm. 525–31).
5.15	83	Violin I Pizzicato to Arco Jump in Dance 3 at Rehearsal R.
5.16	84	Viola Written Instructions in Dance 4 (mm. 688–92).
5.17	86	Table of Recommended Tempo Ranges for Gumboots.
5.18	91	Transition from $\frac{6}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ at rehearsal G in Dance 1.
5.19	91	Violoncello Part in Dance 2 (mm. 481–485).
5.20	94	Hauptstimme and Nebenstimme Notation in Dance 4 (mm. 735–8).
5.21	94	Example of Beaming vs. Accent Patterns in Dance 5 (mm. 848–50).

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My thanks to David Bruce for being so willing and patient with my many questions and requests and for allowing me to use copyrighted material from the score and parts of *Gumboots* to illustrate musical examples. I am also grateful to the many musicians who have performed *Gumboots* and were willing to answer my questions as well as share their thoughts about and experiences with the piece: Alex Morris, Elizabeth Dickenson, Eunae Koh, Evan Hesketh, Gary Gorczyca, James T. Shields, John Klinghammer, José Luis Estellés, Julian Bliss, Kate Hatmaker, Matthew Hunt, Ralph Skiano, Pamela Helton, Pamela Freund-Striplen, Peter Wright, Sarah Beaty, Stephanie Nagler, Susan Pardue, Todd Palmer, and Tony Striplen.

And last but far from least, I am ever grateful to my family for their steadfast love, support, and confidence in me.

Resumé

Education

University of California, Los Angeles (Los Angeles, CA)	
Master of Music, Clarinet Performance	2015
Dominican University of California (San Rafael, CA)	
Bachelor of Arts in Music, with a Performance Emphasis	2012
<i>Magna cum laude</i>	
Lawrence University (Appleton, Wisconsin)	2001 - 2004

Teachers

Gary Gray, University of California, Los Angeles	2012 - 2017
Anthony Striplen, San Francisco Opera	2010 - 2012
Diana Dorman, Dominican University of California (San Rafael, CA)	2008 - 2010
Fan Lei, Lawrence University (Appleton, WI)	2001 - 2003
Richard Hawkins, Interlochen Arts Academy (Interlochen, MI)	2000 - 2001
Barbara Duman (Reston, Virginia)	1996 - 2000

Honors/Awards

Mimi Alpert Feldman Scholar, UCLA	2014 & 2017
Concerto Soloist with the UCLA Symphony	2013
Bernhard Crusell— <i>Concerto No. 2 in f minor</i>	
Herb Alpert School of Music Scholarship	2012 - 2014
San Francisco Alumni Chapter of Mu Phi Epsilon scholarship recipient	2011
Concerto Showcase Soloist, Dominican University of California	2010
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart— <i>Clarinet Concerto in A Major</i> , K. 622	
Elected member Alpha Chi National College Honor Scholarship Society	2010
Concerto Showcase Soloist, Dominican University of California	2009
Carl Maria von Weber— <i>Concertino in B\flat Major</i> , Op. 26	
Inductee to Gamma Sigma Honor Society, DUoC	2009
Dean's List, DUoC	2008 - 2010
Music Department & Academic Presidential Scholarships, DUoC	2008 - 2010
Conservatory Trustee Scholar, Lawrence University	2001 - 2003
Dean's List, Lawrence University	2001 - 2002

Professional Performing Work

**Member American Federation of Musicians Los Angeles Local 47*

Los Angeles Opera	2017
Principal clarinet, LA Opera Youth Orchestra Camp Production of <i>Brundibár</i>	
2nd/bass clarinet, Gala concert with Placido Domingo and Ana Maria Martinez	
2nd A clarinet, <i>Salome</i>	
Multi-Ethnic Star Orchestra of Los Angeles	2016
Principal clarinet, Oman Tour	
Recordings	
TV Series: <i>Bartlett</i> , directed by Martin Edwards, music by Peter Golub	2017
PBS American Masters: “Jacques Pépin: The Art of Craft,” music by Peter Golub	2017
<i>Love’s Labours Lost</i> , directed by Kathleen Marshall, music by Peter Golub	2016
<i>Eric Zeisl</i> CD recording, with the UCLA Philharmonia, Yarlung Records	2014
South Bay Stories Show (Hermosa Beach, CA), musical storyteller	2016
Pacific Serenades “A Potpourri/PacSer, the Next Generation”	2015

Teaching

Clarinet Instructor	
Santa Monica Conservatory of Music	2017
Santa Monica Youth Orchestra	2015 - 2016
Elemental Music	2014 - 2016
UCLA Music Outreach Program	2013 - 2015
Private Studio	2013 - 2017
Teaching Fellow, UCLA Clarinet Studio and Woodwind Chamber Ensembles	2012 - 2017

Other Work

The Recording Academy—GRAMMYs Classical Awards Coordinator	2015/'16/'17
Pacific Serenades part-time Administrative Assistant	2016
Project/Administrative Coordinator	
A Concert Celebrating Sheridan Stokes (UCLA)	2017
“Precision, Ambiguity, and Creativity in Science & the Arts Symposium” (University of San Diego)	2016
Regent’s Lecture Concerts & Events with David Krakauer (UCLA)	2013 - 2014

CHAPTER 1: Composer David Bruce and the Origins of *Gumboots*.

“Often witty and always colourful, pulsing with earthy rhythms, Bruce’s music has a directness rarely heard in contemporary music, but also contains an emotional core of striking intimacy and sensitivity.”¹

Gumboots (2008), a work celebrating the steadfast resilience of the human spirit, is an ideal example of how the music of David Bruce, demonstrating emotional accessibility and containing many cultural references, provides an artistic statement that is relevant in our modern society. Given its inspirational theme and expertly crafted musical content, it has already been capturing the hearts of audiences for nearly a decade. This chapter will provide biographical background about David Bruce as well as context regarding the commission and composition of *Gumboots*.

Born thirty-five miles north of Manhattan in Stamford, Connecticut, in 1970, Bruce moved to England with his family when he was just a few months old. His father worked as a chemical engineer while his mother stayed at home full time. Their household was not an especially musical one; however, Bruce’s grandparents on both sides brought some music into the family. His granddad on his “Mum’s” (as Bruce would say) side played piano by ear. As a child of approximately four years, Bruce apparently took quite a liking to Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance*. Just a few years later, he was demanding piano lessons, and by the time he was a teenager, he was writing pop songs and composing instrumental pieces for various school ensembles.

Bruce holds degrees from Nottingham University and the Royal College of Music, as well as a Ph.D. in composition from King’s College, London, where he was a student of the world

¹ From the “long” biography on the composer’s website (davidbruce.net/biography.asp). Accessed November 30, 2016.

renowned composer Sir Harrison Birtwistle.² While at the Royal College of Music, he studied with George Benjamin (b. 1960). In one of his blog posts, Bruce writes about his recollections of the “lessons” he and other students would attend with George:

I will always remember the lessons George Benjamin gave us at the Royal College of Music in the early 90s. In fact, they weren't lessons and they weren't at the Royal College (though they were paid for by them)—they took place roughly once a month at George's home, usually on a Sunday, and were somewhere closer to lecture, informal chat, intellectual debating society. They were the kind of events as a young artist you dreamed of being able to attend—like those given by Benjamin's own teacher Messiaen in Paris. There were great sandwiches at lunchtime (free food was always the way to any student's heart), in fact the only thing that prevented them being truly legendary was the lack of alcohol. If they'd taken place in a smoke-filled back room of a North London pub, I think it would by now be a shrine. But for George—always boyish in both appearance and in the giggling delight he took in his subject—well, I guess smokey pubs just weren't his style.

So on these Sunday mornings somewhere between ten and twenty usually rather gaunt composer-types would file in to George's house. There would generally be a morning session and an afternoon on a separate topic. In the morning, he might take half an act of Janacek's *Kata Kabanova* and pick apart the ingenious ways he stretched and pulled a main theme, less a straightforward 'thematic development' and more theme-as-elastic-band which maintained its most general shape but could be stretched to snapping point anywhere along its length. Then in the afternoon he might invite somebody amazing from the music world to come and talk. To this day I can't believe I missed the one when the great Indian bansuri flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia came—I knew and loved his playing even then, and can't think what could have been more important.

What made these sessions so riveting was George himself. He was so enthusiastic and full of passion it was impossible not to get caught up in it. I used to bring even non-musician friends along just to feel the extraordinary atmosphere of excited learning. I think they were the first events where I actually felt someone was teaching me things I needed to know as a composer, there was no waffle, this was visceral, direct injections into the nervous system of composing. Indeed, I think the main thing I took away from all those sessions was how to learn, which, in a tritely simplistic way you could describe as 'quality not quantity'. I think until that point, as quite a late starter in my knowledge of classical music I had always felt a little daunted by the Julian Andersons of this world, who could expound at length about the fascinating second theme of Glazunov's 3rd Symphony. But here I realised that a day spent by yourself looking—really looking—at a

² Sir Harrison Birtwistle (b. 1934) is a British composer. His first instrument was the clarinet, which provided him with a scholarship to the Royal Manchester College of Music. Among other accolades, Birtwistle received the 1987 Grawemeyer Award and was knighted in 1988. He taught composition at King's College London from 1994 to 2001.

single page of a Beethoven Symphony could yield more priceless information than a lifetime of academic textbooks. And I think it's the self part of that equation that is particularly important. We're all as artists trying to discover that thing which is as sickeningly easy to describe as it is unbearably hard to understand—our 'true voice'. And it's only by looking at things with your own eyes rather than through someone else's that you can start the process of finding it.

And it's strange now to realise that that mantra applies to George's lessons themselves. However much I loved those sessions, looking back from where I am now I can see that my 'true voice' is quite a long way from George's and that deeply inside I even knew that back then. I remember, for example, taking some pieces along to show George. One little piece 'Baka Studies' played around with some African rhythms. It was by far the best thing I had ever done, but although he said nothing negative, I could sense that it was too straight-forward for George, he called it 'cute'. For quite a few years after that I attempted to follow the path I admired rather than my own inner calling. What a paradox. One piece from that time ended with a great little interlocking hocketing groove. It sounded great, and was the moment everyone picked out from the piece—“loved that bit at the end”. That was my own voice poking out, but I wasn't ready to accept it at that stage, I dismissed that moment and binned the piece. I wanted to write something that George would have called something better than 'cute'.

What George would think of what I'm doing now, I really don't know. But the important thing is, it doesn't really matter. I have to trust what I do, and what I like, follow my own path. People usually say that, meaning “even if it's so obscure no one will like it”, but in my case, the bravery has come from accepting that my own path might be something that speaks much more simply and directly and that I should follow it, even if it leads me far away from people whom I still greatly admire, like George.³

Bruce credits both Birtwistle and Benjamin as having had significant influence on his musical development.⁴ With the guidance of these two remarkable teachers, and inspired by composers such as Stravinsky, Debussy, Sibelius, Janáček, Berio, and Bartók, Bruce gradually developed his own unique and eclectic compositional style.

Over the past twenty-five years, Bruce has received much acclaim and many awards for his music, including winning the Royal Philharmonic Society Composition Competition in 1994 and being awarded the Lili Boulanger Memorial Prize in 2008. He has had works commissioned

³ From David Bruce's Blog: “George and I - memories of George Benjamin's all-day classes at RCM” (<http://www.davidbruce.net/blog/post410.asp>). Accessed May 28, 2017.

⁴ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #6.

by the Royal Opera House, the London Philharmonic, Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble, Dawn Upshaw, the San Diego Symphony (with whom he was associate composer during the 2013–2014 concert season), CHROMA, Camerata Pacifica, and Carnegie Hall. In 2006, under the direction of Osvaldo Golijov and Dawn Upshaw for a composer’s workshop at Carnegie Hall, Bruce wrote a piece entitled *Piosenki* (2006) for soprano and baritone with a chamber ensemble of nine players: flute (doubling piccolo and alto), clarinet (doubling bass clarinet), horn, trumpet, percussion, violin, viola, cello, and bass. Subsequently, Bruce received a commission in early 2008 from Carnegie Hall to write a work for clarinetist Todd Palmer and the St. Lawrence String Quartet, and thus began the story of *Gumboots*.

Being tasked to write a composition for the specific instrumentation of clarinet and string quartet, any composer’s first and immediate reference point would be the two most well-known and certainly most well-loved works for that instrumentation: Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet in A Major, K. 581 (1789) and Brahms’ Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op. 115 (1891). Indeed, when delivering a few spoken remarks at the premiere of *Gumboots* Bruce mentioned that Mozart’s “ethereal” quintet, which was chosen to open the program, did provide inspiration for his commission. Carl Maria von Weber (1786 - 1826) also wrote a clarinet quintet in the early 1800s that is still performed with some frequency today, but beyond these three, very few other works for this instrumentation currently enjoy much popularity or even familiarity within the clarinet repertoire.

Of the contemporary repertoire, Golijov’s *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* (1994) would probably be considered the most known and loved work for this instrumentation. However, it is quite prohibitive for many players to actually perform, given its level of technical and stylistic difficulty as well as its requirement for doubling on the B \flat and bass clarinets (unlike the Mozart, Brahms, or Weber). In addition to the recent time he spent with Golijov, Bruce was also quite familiar with *Dreams and Prayers*. As Todd Palmer told me in our correspondence: “David was very aware of Golijov’s work, and having played the clarinet himself, David wrote

very well for the instrument.”⁵ Golijov’s influence shows particularly in his writing for the bass clarinet in a similarly rather ‘extreme’ way (to be discussed further in chapter 3). Yet Bruce’s work is still very much his own.

During an interview at Carnegie Hall in 2010,⁶ Bruce explained that at the time the quintet was commissioned “I was exploring the different African traditions of various kinds. I came across the gumboot dancing . . . I was struck by the contrast between the sort of dark place it had emerged from and the liveliness of the dance.” In my correspondence with the composer, Bruce mentioned that he often does not title a work until the majority of the work is complete. In the case of this particular commission, he actually wrote the dances first before he developed a clear sense of the music with which to precede them. The completed composition was approximately twenty-four minutes, broken into two parts of relatively equal length. The first part, a single movement, is “tender and slow moving, at times ‘yearning,’ [and] at times seemingly expressing a kind of tranquility and inner peace.”⁷ The second part was broken into six short dance movements (which were reduced to five after the premiere),⁸ in complete contrast to Part 1. The first movement, once composed, provided “a sort of counter-balance to the dances.”⁹ His intention in naming this composition was about “finding a resonant title that . . . [would] stimulate the listener.” Its purpose being to evoke an emotional framework through which to interpret the music, rather than attribute a strict, specific, and potentially limiting storyline. As Bruce explains, “the piece may well have had a very different life if it were called

⁵ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #2.

⁶ Transcribed from YouTube interview: “David Bruce and Ensemble ACJW” ([youtube.com/watch?v=zPRT5BS8scg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPRT5BS8scg)). Accessed December 12, 2016.

⁷ For the full text of Bruce’s program note for *Gumboots*, see Appendix A.

⁸ There were originally six dances. One was removed after the premiere. See David’s blog post: “Forgotten Boots” (<http://www.davidbruce.net/blog/post380.asp>). Accessed August 26, 2016.

⁹ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #10.

‘Clarinet Quintet,’ if you see what I mean. I suppose it’s part of the packaging the piece comes in.”¹⁰ In the composer’s program notes he explains,

There is a paradox in music, and indeed all art, the fact that life-enriching works have been produced, even inspired by conditions of tragedy, brutality and oppression . . . ‘Gumboot dancing’ bears this trait. It was born out of the brutal labour conditions in South Africa under Apartheid, in which black miners were chained together and wore gumboots (Wellington boots) while they worked in the flooded gold mines because it was cheaper for the owners to supply the boots than to drain the floodwater from the mine. Slapping the boots and chains was used by the workers as a form of communication, which was otherwise banned in the mine, and this later developed into a form of dance, characterized by a huge vitality and zest for life. For me this is a striking example of how something beautiful and life-enhancing can come out of something far more negative. Of course, this paradox has a far simpler explanation—the resilience of the human spirit.¹¹

This is inarguably true. Humanity is nothing if not resilient. We are continually being forced to reconcile with our inner and outermost demons, both individually and as a society. Artists have long been serving as mediators in this struggle. Whether as creators, deliverers, or recipients—artists and their art provide us with the opportunity to better connect with our own emotions as well as with each other. Music has a unique ability to affect its listeners not only psychologically and emotionally, but through dance, physically as well. This connecting of the mind, body, and spirit is one of music’s most precious gifts.

Within the genre of classical music alone, there are numerous examples of works composed in response to extreme oppression or in the wake of enormous tragedy. Alban Berg’s opera *Wozzeck* (1922) was, under the surface, truly about class struggle. Its welcome reception (and the lack of understanding of its intentions) by the bourgeoisie angered and frustrated Berg.¹² Olivier Messiaen’s *Quartet for the End of Time* (1941) was composed and, rather amazingly, premiered while Messiaen was a prisoner in Stalag VIII A during World War II. Although many accounts regarding the work’s composition and premiere have been

¹⁰ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #10.

¹¹ For the full text of Bruce’s program note for *Gumboots*, see Appendix A.

¹² I thank Professor James Newton for this idea, taken from a conversation about Gumboots during the fall of 2016.

exaggerated¹³ (including Messiaen's own), the circumstances were still undeniably oppressive, and the composition's resulting success rather extraordinary. John Adams' *On the Transmigration of Souls* (2002) concerning the terrorist attacks of September 11th was awarded the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Music, as well as three Grammy Awards in 2005 for its world premiere recording. The work was commissioned by the New York Philharmonic, and apparently, Adams accepted it with great reluctance. In his autobiographical book, *Hallelujah Junction*, Adams describes how "it seemed an impossible assignment to compose a piece with a subject like this . . . I decided that the only way to approach this theme was to make it about the most intimate experiences of the people involved" (264-5). Although not true of every composition of this type, many do contain a generally universal overarching theme about overcoming the pain and anger of significant oppression or trauma to find again, somehow, a true passion and joy for life — despite all circumstances.

Gumboots was composed in an effort to capture that emotional journey. It was not intended to be a strict representation or interpretation of the rhythms or history of gumboot dancing, but rather to embody the spirit of the remarkable trait of human resilience that its history encompasses. Bruce's program note continues,

[A]lthough there are some African music influences in the music, I don't see the piece as being specifically 'about' the Gumboot dancers, if anything it could be seen as an abstract celebration of the rejuvenating power of dance, moving as it does from introspection through to celebration. I would like to think [. . .] that the emotional journey of the piece [. . .] will force the listener to conjecture some kind of external 'meaning' to the music—the tenderness of the first half should 'haunt' us as we enjoy the bustle of the second; that bustle itself should force us to question or reevaluate the tranquility of the first half. But to impose a meaning beyond that would be stepping on dangerous ground—the fact is you will choose your own meaning, and hear your own story, whether I want you to or not.

In terms of the performers themselves, Bruce comments in the same interview at Carnegie Hall mentioned previously that he tries not to "impose a vision" on those performing the work.

¹³ Rebecca Rischin, *For the End of Time: The Story of the Messiaen Quartet* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

Ethnomusicologist John Blacking writes: “If music does not ‘speak for itself,’ it cannot be considered successful as a special mode of nonverbal communication: all that can be said about a piece of music, and more, should be heard in the notes” (195).¹⁴ And, without a doubt, *Gumboots* is a piece of music that speaks for itself. In my correspondence with a number of musicians who have performed the work, this sentiment was repeated with great frequency. Clarinetist James Shields, principal clarinetist of the Oregon Symphony and New Mexico Philharmonic, said: “I think the music is so well written that thinking about the extra-musical storyline wasn’t necessary, and the music really drives you to strive for creating the most captivating atmosphere throughout.”¹⁵ John Klinghammer, third/bass clarinetist with the Kansas City Symphony, further expressed,

Of course, the program notes are very interesting and worth considering as one prepares the work. That said, Bruce sums up what he was trying to get at with the music very well . . . the general sense of sadness, anguish and struggle transforming into joy and dance. I want the audience to feel the pain of the opening movement in the cries of the bass clarinet, this is such a moving moment! And then the final dance is so wild and joyful, I just want to send that energy out to the audience and have them come away humming and tapping and feeling good about the world, and about chamber music! Part of why I started the Eko Nova series in Omaha was that desire to bring music like this to an audience willing to give it a chance . . . to show people that “new” music isn’t necessarily all screeching and sound effects, but can be powerful and joyful and beautiful in a way that even the uninitiated to classical chamber music can appreciate in a real way.¹⁶

I could not possibly agree with these sentiments more. *Gumboots* is extraordinarily relatable on an emotional level. It is especially programmable for this reason alone. Beyond this, it is also a welcome addition to the repertoire for this instrumentation, utilizing the extreme versatility of both the B \flat and bass clarinets, showcasing both beauty and technique, as well as power and delicacy. It is less sizable than the Brahms *Quintet*, which runs approximately thirty-five minutes, but more dramatic than the Mozart. It is more approachable for the clarinetist than the

¹⁴ John Blacking, “Chapter 11. Trends in the Black Music of South Africa, 1959-1969,” In *Musics of Many Cultures: An Introduction*, edited by Elizabeth May (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

¹⁵ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #4.

¹⁶ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #4.

Golijov while still introducing the variety that comes with involving the bass clarinet. As is clearly evidenced by its increasing number of performances over the past ten years,¹⁷ its popularity is already well-established and only continues to grow. Mark Pullinger, of *Gramophone Magazine*, wrote in June of 2016 that *Gumboots* is “[a]n engaging new work which deserves a place in the chamber repertory.”¹⁸ This is a piece that undoubtedly has a significant chance of becoming a standard of the clarinet repertoire over the next fifty years.

This dissertation will show how the extraordinary resilience of the human spirit to triumph over tragedy is exemplified through *Gumboots*. To do this, I will begin in the next chapter by providing a map of the compositional geography of the piece and how it brings this emotional storyline. Chapter 3 will focus on the work’s various stylistic influences. Chapters 4 and 5 will provide in-depth discussion of variations in performer interpretation as well as performance practice concerns and solutions.

¹⁷ For a comprehensive list of performances of *Gumboots*, see Appendix F.

¹⁸ www.gramophone.co.uk/review/bruce-gumboots-brahms-clarinet-quintet (accessed January 13, 2017).

CHAPTER 2: The Compositional Geography of *Gumboots*.

“The inspirational theme of the piece is very clear and it has been outstandingly expressed by David Bruce. In this way, the music speaks very eloquently for itself when you play it trying to listen to what the music is actually asking you to do (in terms of singing, dreaming with the soft textures, or dancing, articulating with more edgy style, using a variety of tone colours ...), getting into the flow of the music rather than interfering with a too-serious academic approach that takes away the natural freshness of the composition.” - José Luis Estellés¹⁹

This chapter will offer the reader a sense of the general compositional geography of *Gumboots*. My main focus is to show how the emotional character of the piece is brought out through its compositional components. This information may enable the performer or listener to better understand how each moment in the piece relates to those surrounding it as well as to the work as a whole.

To portray the landscape of this work, I will consider structure, melody, harmony, and rhythm, particularly how they help to communicate the emotional storyline of the composition. It is through Bruce’s expert use of these elements that his poignant narrative comes to exist. I will first address each of these aspects briefly in a general manner before examining them in more contextual detail while moving chronologically through the piece. Style will be discussed separately in the next chapter. I have included a number of musical examples; however, a full perusal score is also available for viewing on David Bruce’s website.²⁰

Although every individual will experience this piece differently, to me the music outlines a clear emotional journey. It elicits strong feelings of pain and sorrow that eventually intensify into anger. Then the drive behind that anger transforms into determination for living that, in

¹⁹ José Luis Estellés is one of the clarinetists who has performed *Gumboots* and with whom I have been in contact. This quote is taken from correspondence. See Appendix C, question #4.

²⁰ Perusal score available at: davidbruce.net/scores/bruce_gumboots_perusal.pdf (accessed June 4, 2017).

turn, gives way to joy and optimism. The analysis to follow draws on this personal interpretation.

Structure

In discussing structure, I will concentrate on highlighting how various moments of the piece relate to others as well as to the composition as a whole. As mentioned in chapter 1, *Gumboots* is written in two parts, which are relatively comparable in length. Part 1, a single movement, is slow and mostly quiet, but gradually and painstakingly builds tension towards a loud cathartic climax before receding again. One reviewer described this movement as “plaintive and yearning with desolate landscapes and horizons that seemed to stretch forever.”²¹ Given its length, having an awareness of the overall structure of Part 1, particularly as it relates to the entire piece, is useful for the performer to be able to better execute the pace of the movement’s emotional arch. Part 2 consists of five generally loud and quite lively dances that are intended to be felt as a single entity and to create a counterbalance to the first part. Within Part 2, each dance gradually transitions the music’s emotional energy. This overall layout effectively supports the overarching motion of the work from music that evokes a sense of grief and anguish to that which elicits a sense of pure jubilation.

Melody

The melodies in *Gumboots* are mostly either scalar or chordal. This, in combination with a narrow range in pitch, make the melodic lines vocal in nature. They are generally simple and always conspicuous, the sorts of tunes a person will walk away singing. Accidentals are rare. The contemplative recitative style of the melodic lines in Part 1 makes them melodies that, when

²¹ Geraldine Freedman, “Review: Crowd packs first concert at new Zankel concert hall.” *The Daily Gazette*. February 6, 2010. https://dailygazette.com/article/2010/02/06/0206_review (accessed July 22, 2017).

played with fastidious sensitivity, can make you “hold your breath while listening.”²² In contrast, the melodies in Part 2 are highly energetic. Each dance contains only a few main melodic ideas, which are then expanded upon in various ways.

Harmony

Each movement of *Gumboots* retains a clear tonal center. The harmonies that accompany the melodic lines are generally chordal and consonant. Part 1 is entirely diatonic, filled with spare and open sonorities. The first two dances in Part 2 are in minor keys but the third, fourth, and fifth are solidly in major keys, facilitating the emotional progression from anger to ecstatic exuberance.

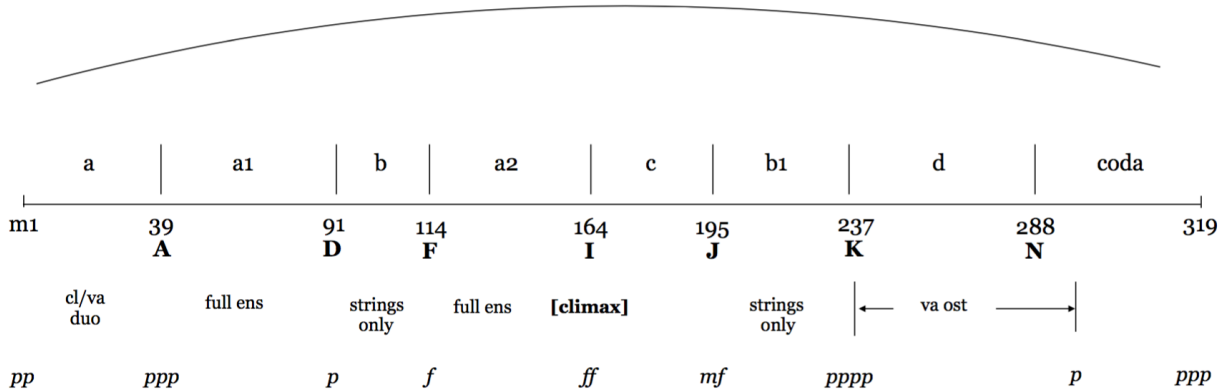
Rhythm

Part 1 begins with an amorphous vagueness, but then a somewhat reluctant pulse is soon introduced that gradually becomes more insistent, thus helping to facilitate the building of intensity to the movement’s climax. Once this powerful climax subsides, an extended section of cadenza-like solos in the strings creates an ebb and flow as the emotional force of the climax washes away. Eventually, a stubbornly persistent optimistic ostinato is introduced by the viola, foreshadowing the pervasive rhythmic energy of Part 2. But the pulse eventually fades back out, and the movement ends in quiet stillness. In Part 2, each of the dances has its own solid groove and uniquely identifiable rhythmic motifs. These gradually become increasingly complex with the introduction of polyrhythms and cross-rhythms, clearly contributing to the shift in emotions the music evokes.

²² Jack Fishman, “Post Beethoven.” March 17, 2012. <http://blog.mysanantonio.com/jackfishman/2012/03/post-beethoven> (accessed July 22, 2017).

Part 1

Figure 2.1: Structural Diagram of Part 1.



The opening duo between clarinet and viola (see Figure 2.2) is rather like that perfect first sentence of a good book that draws you in immediately. The first pitch, when played so that there is no discernable beginning to the note and so that it is impossible to distinguish between the sound of the bass clarinet and the viola, can be extraordinarily magical. The resulting color of the combined sounds is part of what attracts the ear's attention. The clarinet and viola then emerge from this melded sound as they move forward independently through a beautiful heterophonic melodic line. Heterophony refers to two instruments playing the same melodic line but not precisely together and with slightly different inflections. This is a crucial element to be aware of in the first half of Part 1 and will be addressed further in terms of performance practice in chapter 5. To assist with this concept, Bruce actually notates each part slightly differently. He also directs the performers to play “like two players playing the same melody at the same time, but each with subtly different style, sense of embellishment, etc.”

Figure 2.2: Opening Phrase of Part 1—Example of Heterophony.

Like two players playing the same melody at the same time, but each with subtly different style, sense of embellishment, etc.
Sparingly use an exaggerated, slow vibrato throughout introduction.

$\text{♩} = 50$

Bass Clarinet in B \flat (Clarinet in B \flat)
pp very tender, with great melancholy, like a distant harmonica
all grace notes are very fast 'folk-like' grace notes—the note written should be fingered, but the actual pitch of the grace-note should not be allowed to speak fully.

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
poco vib., molto sul tasto sempre
pp very wispy and distant throughout the introduction 3
Violoncello

Subsequently, rather than rising dynamically, this introduction decrescendos to *pianississimo* (*ppp*), drawing the listener in and creating a sense of agitated introspection.

With the entire opening passage in unison, there are only hints of harmony that appear as the heterophonic lines move independently and the two instruments briefly play different pitches at the same time. Otherwise, harmony does not truly enter until m. 26 with the viola's ostinato under the bass clarinet's held note. These triplet ostinatos in the strings (see Figure 2.3) throughout the first half of the movement provide both harmony and forward momentum. However, because they only consist of two pitches (one of which is a harmonic and speaks more quietly), these triplets sound duple instead, and therefore elicit rhythmic vagueness.

Figure 2.3: Triplet Ostinatos in the Strings in Part 1 (mms. 37–43).

Vn. II
pp

Va.
pp

Vc.
pp

In addition, besides the “not quite togetherness” of the heterophonic melody, notes are frequently tied across beats and barlines (see Figure 2.4). This further obscures the rhythmic pulse and creates a sense of suspension above which the melodic lines soar freely.

Figure 2.4: Example of Rhythmic Obscurity in Part 1 (mm. 44–9).

The musical score for measures 44-49 is presented in five staves. The top staff is for Bass Clarinet in Bb, showing a melodic line with many tied notes across bar lines. The Violin I staff has a similar melodic line. The Violin II staff is mostly silent. The Viola staff features a complex rhythmic pattern of triplets, with dynamic markings *p*, *II*, and *III* above it. The Violoncello staff has a simple, steady bass line. The score is marked *sempre legato* and includes various articulation marks like slurs and accents.

After the opening duet, the first violin replaces the viola (see also Figure 2.4), joining the bass clarinet in unison with the same melodic line as at the beginning. Meanwhile, the other strings begin moving in and out of the accompaniment material, but each independently of the others, adding harmonic and rhythmic texture that begins moving the piece forward. The harmonic motion, shifting only every few measures, is slow but helps to create the forward motion through the movement.

This steady increase in intensity is interrupted at rehearsal D. To me, the music seems to take a step back, pausing as if taking a deep breath before pushing on. The strings exemplify this brief hesitation by taking over (the bass clarinet and violin literally do a crossfade on a unison note; see Figure 2.5) with cadenza-like solos over chordal accompaniment, passing from the first violin down to the viola.

Figure 2.5: Crossfade Between the Bass Clarinet and First Violin at Rehearsal D.

91 $\text{♩} = 100$
 Bs. Cl. in B \flat D cross-fade with Vn. I
sfz ppp
 Vn. I
 cross-fade with clarinet
 senza vib., imitating a viol
 freely, quasi-cadenza, colla parte
ppp p 3 3

The bass clarinet joins again underneath the viola solo, but soon takes over and drives the emotional progression of the movement forward with more force and volume than before. At this point, the heterophony is left behind and the bass clarinet takes over the melodic line.

There is one more brief pause (mm. 135 - 140) in the forward drive as the bass clarinet withdraws for a few measures while the strings decrescendo before leading a strong crescendo into rehearsal G. Here Bruce introduces pulsing quarter notes on a repeated pitch in both the viola and the cello. These immediately create a new sense of urgency. The bass clarinet reenters one measure after G with shorter melodic fragments rising quickly in pitch, driving the musical and emotional intensity towards the climax of the movement at rehearsal I.

Just four measures before rehearsal I the triplet ostinatos disappear. They are replaced with solid chords heightening a fairly sudden halt in the forward motion. Additionally, the harmony shifts to d minor (from the general C major of the rest of the movement), helping to intensify the angst of this climax that maintains its power for fourteen measures. After this prolonged climax, the bass clarinet continues to cling to the intensity of the preceding measures through dynamics, but suddenly drops down four octaves. In this low register, the bass clarinet moves upward stepwise along with the strings, until it jumps suddenly back up to a fortissimo high F# (sounding concert E6) in m. 165. This is the highest pitch the bass clarinet plays in the piece, and it creates an unexpected secondary climax. This moment reminds me of one last sob

and gentler sound quality, while remaining in the same pitch range. The persistent ostinato underneath the soft and now slightly less heart-wrenching melodic lines push and pull against each other, emulating the inner struggle of an individual dealing with conflicting emotions. The violins and cello enter with their own independent rhythmic materials at varied intervals (see Figure 2.7) adding to the viola's ostinato and thickening the rhythmic texture. This also foreshadows the rhythmic complexity to come in Part 2.

Figure 2.7: Example of Varied Rhythmic Pulses in Second Half of Part 1 (mm. 282–5).

The musical score for measures 282-285 is presented in a five-staff format. The top staff is for Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), starting at measure 282 with a melodic line. The second staff is for Violin I (Vn. I), featuring triplet patterns in measures 282-284 and a section starting at measure 285 marked 'col legno battuto' with a 'pp' dynamic and 'as before' instruction. The third staff is for Violin II (Vn. II), showing a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 283 with a 'p' dynamic. The fourth staff is for Viola (Va.), playing a consistent eighth-note ostinato throughout. The bottom staff is for Cello (Vc.), playing a rhythmic pattern starting at measure 283 with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) instruction and fingerings II and III indicated.

All of this fades gradually away, beginning with the loss of the viola ostinato, bringing the motion of the music to a distant halt. A final series of soft chords, with high harmonics in the violins and a flutter-tongue-like articulation in the clarinet, paint an image of sadness, resignation, and exhaustion.

Part 2

Each of the five dances in Part 2 is just two or three minutes in length. They are all fairly straight-forward in terms of their structure, melodies, and harmonic language. However, as mentioned, each is faster, lighter, and more rhythmically complicated than its predecessor. The

melodies are generally simple, but develop throughout each dance as a result of changes in rhythm, pitch, harmony, and/or increased ornamentation. A very basic structure of each dance will be diagramed individually below. The architecture of all five dances together produces a clear and poignant musical progression and resulting emotional shift from start to finish.

Dance 1. Angry, “with attitude”

Figure 2.8: Structural Diagram of Dance 1.



Dance 1 opens solidly in G minor, the harmonies of the “a” section shifting simply between tonic and dominant. This dance is the slowest and heaviest of the dances, exemplifying the anger subliminally hinted at in Part 1. Dance 1 can be broken down into six sections (see Figure 2.8). The “a” and “b” sections carry the two main (and contrasting) melodic ideas and are the only two sections that repeat.

Figure 2.9: Dance 1 “a” Melodic Material in the Clarinet (m. 326–8).

grace notes always before the beat

The musical notation shows three measures of music for the clarinet. The first measure contains a series of eighth notes with grace notes before each. The second measure contains a series of eighth notes with grace notes before each. The third measure contains a series of eighth notes with grace notes before each. The dynamic *ff* is written below the first measure.

Figure 2.10: Dance 1 “b” Melodic Material in the Clarinet (mm. 342–5).



The “a” motif (see Figure 2.9) is based on the repeated articulation of, or closely around, a single pitch. It is marked “short, spikey, with military precision” in the strings. Both of these details help to depict the composer’s descriptive marking for the movement itself as “Angry, ‘with attitude.’” The use of the lower range of the clarinet also helps to portray this emotional landscape. The “b” material (see Figure 2.10), appearing first in the clarinet at rehearsal B, is marked “flippantly.” This is ironically juxtaposed against the animosity of the “a” material while also again hinting at the direction in which the music will continue to develop. This cheeky motif is interrupted abruptly with a single rather erratic measure (see Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11: Dance 1 Clarinet *subito aggressivo* During “b” Motif (m. 346).



This is the first of a number of instances in Part 2 when the clarinet suddenly erupts in a brief wild frenzy, illustrating the composer’s sense of humor and exemplifying the impulsive and ephemeral nature of human emotion. Both “b” sections are followed by more intense, aggressive, and louder material. These sections (marked “c” and “d”) are also significantly more sustained in nature (e.g., see Figure 2.12)—in clear contrast to the short and rhythmic motion of both the “a” and “b” ideas—yet still reminiscent of the dance’s aggressive opening.

Figure 2.12: Dance 1 “c” Material (mm. 351–7).

The musical score for Dance 1 "c" Material (mm. 351–7) is presented for five instruments: Clarinet in Bb, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, and Cello. The score is marked "Agressivo" and begins at measure 351. The music is characterized by dynamic shifts between fortissimo (ff) and piano (p). The Clarinet part features a section marked "D" starting at measure 357. The Cello part also features a section marked "D" starting at measure 357. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Through the “c” section, the ensemble jumps between *fortissimo* and *piano* in a mercurial manner that suggests an inability to contain or control itself. Throughout the dance, each shift from section to section is generally abrupt and contrasting to its predecessor.

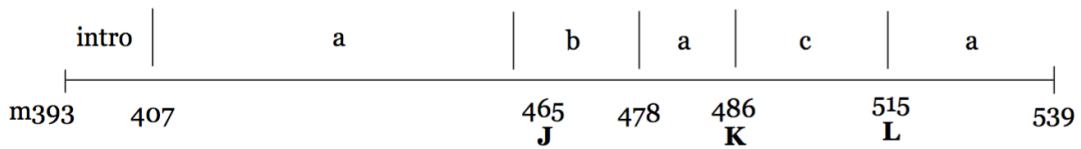
Bruce’s sense of humor surfaces again at the end of this dance with the extended pizzicato glissando in the cello (see Figure 2.13) that rings out after the rest of the ensemble cuts off.

Figure 2.13: Cello Glissando at End of Dance 1.

The musical score for Figure 2.13 consists of five staves: Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Cello (Vc.). The score begins at measure 390. The Cello part features a prominent glissando starting at measure 539, marked with a 'gliss.' annotation and a 'IV' fingering. The other instruments provide harmonic support with various textures, including pizzicato and arco passages.

Dance 2. Presto.

Figure 2.14: Structural Diagram of Dance 2.



This dance is grounded almost entirely in an e minor chord. It opens with a strong rhythmic pulse in the strings that is carried on almost continuously throughout the movement. This dance also introduces the first polyrhythms. With the tempo of $\text{♩} = 208$ in $\frac{3}{4}$ time, the movement is heard and felt in one; however, it starts and maintains a duple subdivision in the

first violin throughout most of the movement. It subsequently pits the clarinet against this pulse with quintuplets in the melodic line (see Figure 2.15). Additionally, Bruce offsets the duple division slightly every few bars with the first violin changing pitches and placing an accent on the fourth sixteenth note, instead of the first.

Figure 2.15: Example of Polyrhythms in Dance 2 (mm. 407–11).

The musical score for Figure 2.15 shows measures 407-411. The Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb) part features a melodic line with quintuplets (marked with a '5' over a bracket) and accents. The first violin (Vn. I) part is marked 'arco' and 'pp', playing a steady pulse of sixteenth notes with accents on the first and fourth notes of each group. The second violin (Vn. II) part is marked 'pizz.' and 'ffz', playing a similar pulse. The viola (Va.) part is marked 'f' and 'ffz', also playing a pulse. The violin (Vc.) part is marked 'f' and 'ffz', playing a pulse. The score illustrates the polyrhythmic relationship between the clarinet's quintuplets and the violins' duple pulses.

On the rare occasion that the duple division briefly drops out, Bruce fills the void with septuplets in the second violin against the continued quintuplets in the melodic line at m. 446 (see Figure 2.16) and again at m. 453.

Figure 2.16: Violin II Septuplets in Dance 2 (mm. 446–9).

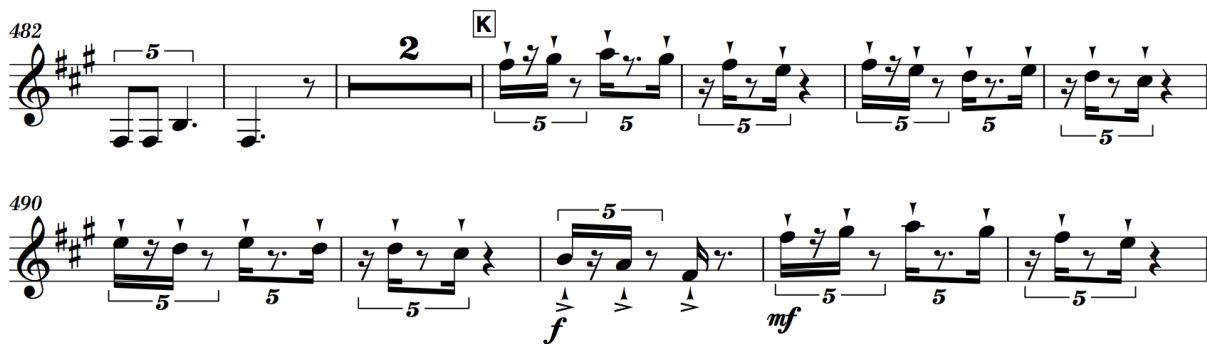
The musical score for Figure 2.16 shows measures 446-449. The first violin (Vn. I) part features a melodic line with quintuplets (marked with a '5' over a bracket) and accents. The second violin (Vn. II) part is marked 'pizz.' and 'f', playing a pulse of sixteenth notes with accents on the first and fourth notes of each group. The second violin part features septuplets (marked with a '7' over a bracket) and accents. The score illustrates the polyrhythmic relationship between the first violin's quintuplets and the second violin's septuplets.

The movement is also broken into seven-bar phrases, instead of the four- or eight-bar phrases typical of many Western musics. This makes each new phrase sound as if it is interrupting the last, cutting off the final word of its figurative sentence.

When the clarinet first enters with the main melodic material, it does so at *fortissimo* but then becomes more whimsical at rehearsal H, while the harmonic and rhythmic texture remain the same. The clarinet carries the melody alone throughout, with the exception of a tutti ensemble section (marked “b” in Figure 2.14) from 464 through 477 that is similar to the “c” material in Dance 1 (see Figure 2.12).

At rehearsal K, the melodic line becomes abbreviated, marked by short punctuated notes that are often slightly off the beat (see Figure 2.17). The overarching phrase repeats twice.

Figure 2.17: Clarinet Melody at Rehearsal K in Dance 2.



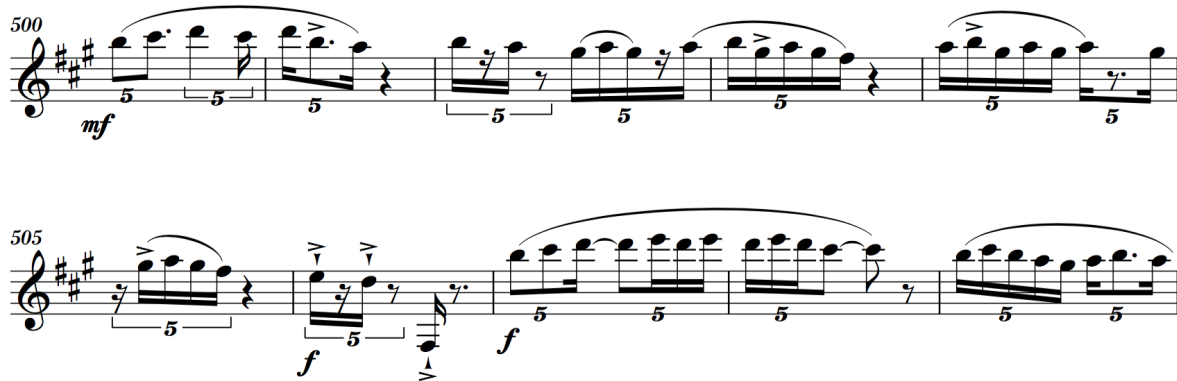
When this material repeats, a prominent sustained line is added in the second violin (see Figure 2.18), which, with its small glissandos and grace notes, alludes to the melodic lines of Part 1.

Figure 2.18: Violin II Melody at Rehearsal K in Dance 2.



At m. 500, the clarinet line becomes even more frenzied, as if the clarinetist has lost control, leading the listener forward towards the lively and effervescent dance to follow. Each phrase is seemingly interrupted at the end by a single bar with three more disjointed notes (e.g. m. 506).

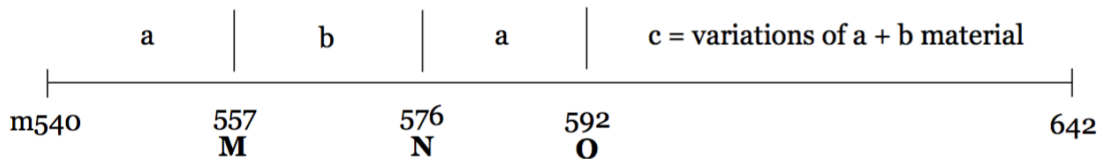
Figure 2.19: Frenzied Clarinet Line at m. 500 in Dance 2.



This manic outburst crescendos into a return of the original melody (but louder and in a higher octave), which continues to push forward excitedly, gathering momentum through an accelerando to a final *sfz* chord.

Dance 3

Figure 2.20: Structural Diagram of Dance 3.



Energetically, Dance 3 picks up right where Dance 2 left off. The long glissando in the clarinet is full of exhilaration and glee. A cheerful key of B \flat major is established immediately across the second measure as the melodic line (played simultaneously by the clarinet, first violin, and cello)

outlines the tonic triad. The second violin and viola fill in additional harmonic and rhythmic texture.

There are two main melodic motifs (see Figures 2.21 and 2.22) that are repeated and modified playfully throughout the dance.

Figure 2.21: Dance 3 “a” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 540–51).

The musical score for Figure 2.21 is titled "Dance 3. ♩ = 144". It consists of two staves of music in 7/8 time. The first staff begins at measure 540 with a *f* dynamic and a glissando marking. The melody is characterized by repeated eighth-note patterns with accents. The second staff begins at measure 546 and continues the melodic material with similar rhythmic patterns and accents.

Unlike the previous dances, the melodies of this dance are very similar to each other. As a result, the music begins to break away from the emotional conflict of the preceding dances and to suggest the coming triumph of joy and optimism.

Figure 2.22: Dance 3 “b” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 557–68).

The musical score for Figure 2.22 consists of two staves of music in 4/8 time. The first staff begins at measure 557 with a *ff* dynamic and a rehearsal mark (M). The melody features repeated eighth-note patterns with accents and some chromatic movement. The second staff begins at measure 563 and continues the melodic material with similar rhythmic patterns and accents.

The first half of the dance jumps gleefully back and forth from the tonic to the dominant. About halfway through the movement, at rehearsal O, the harmonies begin to modulate with more frequency. At m. 600, it moves permanently upwards into G major, helping to propel the movement towards its culmination. The melodic material also begins to break up here,

alternating in short two-measure phrases between bits from the “a” and “b” motifs. Again, to me this seems to portray a kind of excited indecision.

With the third dance also comes the first compound meter. In this dance, accents increasingly appear on non-strong beats and do not always line up between the different instruments. For example, in m. 557 (see Figure 2.23) the clarinet and cello have accents on beats one, three, and six; the first violin on beats one and five; and the second violin and viola on beats one, four, and six.

Figure 2.23: Compound Meter and Varied Accent Patterns in Dance 3 (m. 557).

The musical score for Figure 2.23 shows measures 557 through 560. The instruments are Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Cello (Vc.). The music is in compound meter (3/4). Measure 557 is marked with a 'M' in a box. The Clarinet part (Cl. in Bb) has accents on beats 1, 3, and 6, with a forte (ff) dynamic. The Violin I part (Vn. I) has accents on beats 1 and 5, with a forte (ff) dynamic and a triplet of eighth notes on beat 2. The Violin II part (Vn. II) has accents on beats 1, 4, and 6, with a pizzicato (pizz.) dynamic. The Viola part (Va.) has accents on beats 1, 4, and 6. The Cello part (Vc.) has accents on beats 1, 3, and 6.

There are also a handful of $\frac{3}{8}$ bars. Nonetheless, all of these various accent patterns do lock together like jigsaw puzzle pieces, creating cohesion.

Bruce’s overt playfulness appears twice in this movement. First, just before rehearsal O, the viola plays a solo line marked “comically dying” (see Figure 2.24), which interrupts the forward motion of the movement for a brief moment.

Figure 2.24: Comical Viola Excerpt (mm. 591–2).



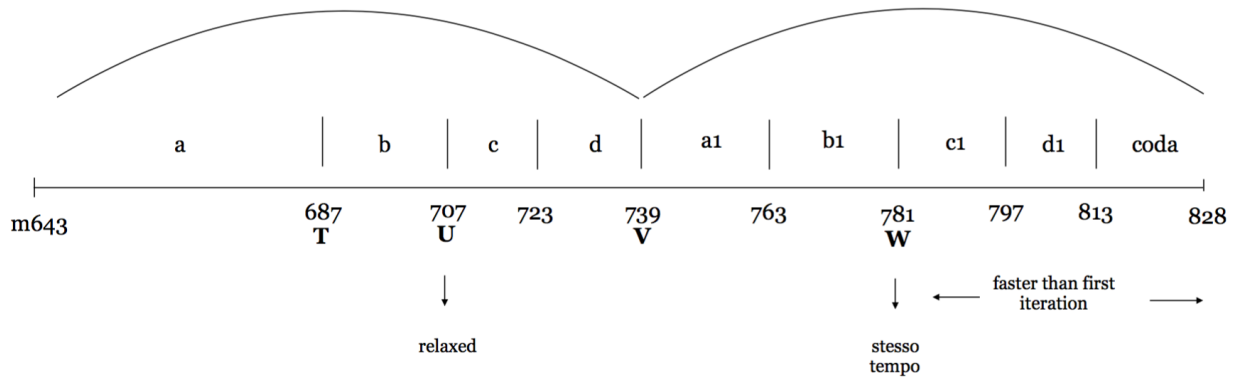
Secondly, there is a decrescendo over the final bar of the movement, ending this loud and boisterous dance in a completely unexpected way that seemingly leaves a smile hanging in the air (see Figure 2.25).

Figure 2.25: Humorous Tutti Decrescendo at End of Dance 3.

A musical score for strings and woodwinds, measures 639-642. The score includes parts for Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Violoncello (Vc.). Measure 639 is marked with the number 639. The woodwinds play a melodic line with slurs and accents. The strings play a rhythmic accompaniment with slurs and accents. The score concludes with a decrescendo over the final bar (measure 642).

Dance 4. Light and joyful.

Figure 2.26: Structural Diagram of Dance 4.



This is the longest of the dances. It has four distinct sections (see Figure 2.26), which are then repeated in the same order, but with slight variation or at a faster tempo. Each of these sections has its own melodic motif (see Figures 2.27 to 2.30). The juxtaposition of contrasting melodies is reminiscent of Dance 1. The lighthearted “a” motif is interrupted by heavier and punctuated “b” material.

Figure 2.27: Dance 4 “a” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 650–61).

The musical notation for Dance 4 “a” material in the Clarinet is shown in two staves. The first staff begins at measure 650 and ends at measure 661. The tempo marking is *mp light hearted*. The notation features a series of eighth and sixteenth notes with accents, creating a rhythmic and melodic motif. The second staff continues the material from measure 656 to 661, showing a continuation of the melodic line with a slur over the first few measures.

Figure 2.28: Dance 4 “b” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 687–92).

The “c” melodic line is marked “relaxed” and is similarly nonchalant as the “b” material from Dance 1, but then the rhythmic exuberance of the “d” material pulls the music forward.

Figure 2.29: Dance 4 “c” Material in the Clarinet (at Rehearsal U).

Figure 2.30: Dance 4 Transition from “c” to “d” Material in the Clarinet (mm. 720–8).

The movement shifts back and forth from $\frac{6}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ time, and also juxtaposes these meters against each other, creating a nearly constant hemiola feel. At the top of the movement (see Figure 2.31), the violins are effectively in $\frac{3}{4}$ while the viola and cello remain in $\frac{6}{8}$, with occasional off-beat accents. The clarinet, which has the melody upon its entrance, can be thought of in either time signature, but is almost entirely on off-beats regardless of the meter.

Figure 2.31: Opening of Dance 4.

650
Cl. in Bb
mp light hearted

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va.

Vc. *gliss.*

At tempo, the movement is both felt and heard in one, but these poly- and cross-rhythms are still competing with each other inside the larger pulse.

Bruce’s humor and creativity surface again in the second violin at m. 773 (see Figure 2.32).

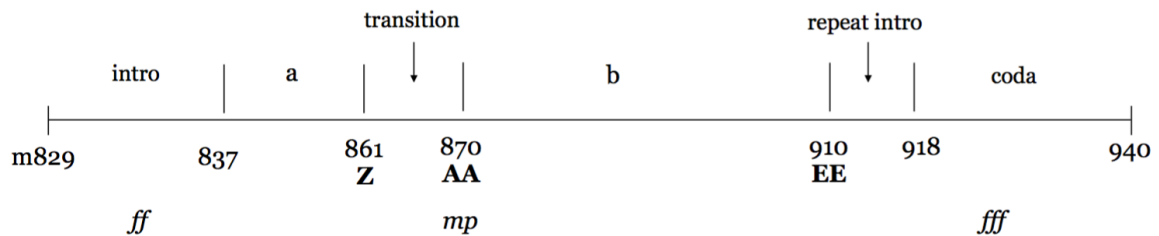
Figure 2.32: Violin II “like a clucking chicken” (mm. 773–4).

pizz.

ff ⁴ ⁴
like a clucking chicken

Dance 5. Jubilante.

Figure 2.33: Structural Diagram of Dance 5.



Dance 5 is similar in character to Dance 3, only bouncier and even more joyful with its increased melodic and rhythmic complexity. This is the dance that was most directly inspired by African rhythms, which will be discussed further in chapter 3. It is mostly in $\frac{9}{16}$ with an occasional $\frac{7}{16}$ and one $\frac{6}{16}$ bar. The beat division is marked as 2+2+3+2 at the top of the movement but changes to 3+3+3 in the ninth bar, where it remains for the majority of the rest of the movement. Despite this even division into three beats, the music does not sound as if it is in this meter. Instruments are constantly pitted against each other, playing differing divisions of the $\frac{9}{16}$ simultaneously. Furthermore, these cross-rhythms are often realized within a single instrument's line, when the melody shapes one division pattern, but the accents outline another (see Figure 2.34).

Figure 2.34: Violin I in Dance 5 (mm. 842–5).



The most constant rhythmic element throughout the movement is a rhythmic pattern carried by the second violin and viola together (see Figure 2.35); however, this pattern is frequently in conflict with the rhythmic pattern of the melodic line.

Figure 2.35: Violin II and Viola in Dance 5 (mm. 853–7).



There are two main melodic ideas (see Figures 2.36 and 2.37) in this movement.

Figure 2.36: Dance 5 “a” Motif in the Clarinet at Rehearsal Y.



Figure 2.37: Dance 5 “b” Motif in the Clarinet at Rehearsal AA.



The clarinet and first violin lead these equally, trading these melodic ideas back and forth but always delivering them with slight differences (e.g., see Figure 2.38).

Figure 2.38: Dance 5 “b” Motif in Violin I at Rehearsal BB (mm. 878–882).



With the second violin and viola holding the ensemble together, the first violin, clarinet, and cello play off of each other independently in various ways. However, they also line up intermittently with unison rhythms or melodic fragments that serve to lock the competing parts together (see Figure 2.38).

Figure 2.39: Rhythmic Interlocking Through the Ensemble in Dance 5 (mm. 853–6).

The musical score for Figure 2.39 shows five staves: Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in 9/16 time and marked *ff*. The Clarinet part starts at measure 853 with a trill. The Violin I part has a trill and a triplet. The Violin II part has a trill and a triplet. The Viola part has a trill. The Violoncello part has a trill. The music is characterized by rhythmic interlocking and frequent tremolos throughout the melodic line.

The jubilation, triumph, and festivity of this movement are further highlighted by textural elements such as the high clarinet trills at the top of the movement (see Figure 2.39) and frequent tremolos throughout the melodic line (e.g., m. 871 in Figure 2.36).

Figure 2.40: Clarinet trills in Dance 5 (mm. 829–33).

The musical score for Figure 2.40 is titled "Dance 5. Jubilante" with a tempo of 132. It shows measures 829 to 833. The music is in 9/16 time and marked *ff*. The score includes a "quasi-tremolo" in measure 851 and again in measure 932. The music is characterized by rhythmic interlocking and frequent tremolos throughout the melodic line.

Bruce echoes the frenetic bursts of the clarinet in the earlier dances with an unusually notated “quasi-tremolo” in m. 851 and again in m. 932 (see Figures 2.40 and 2.41).²³ This figure seems to express a total loss of control amidst utter exuberance.

²³ Bruce’s instructions for this quasi-tremolo are as follows: “start from the written E and trill both the 2 fingers of the r.h. and the 3rd finger of the l.h. randomly and crazily to produce something like the pitches shown.”

Figure 2.41: Clarinet quasi-tremolo in Dance 5 (m. 852).



The dance culminates with exuberant glee, loud and boisterous, accented by high klezmer-like trills in the clarinet and accented pulsing sixteenths in the violins and viola relentlessly driving the music forward to the final note (see Figure 2.42). In our correspondence, Todd Palmer mentioned to me that during a phone conversation with Bruce while the piece was still being written, Palmer told him, “Don’t you dare end it softly!”²⁴ Bruce clearly took this advice and delivered upon it with verve. The upward momentum of the final notes leaves the strings with bows up in the air and the clarinetist practically out of their seat. It almost inevitably provokes a grin from every face in the room.

Figure 2.42: Final Measures of *Gumboots*.

A multi-staff musical score for the final measures of the piece 'Gumboots', starting at measure 938. The score includes parts for Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The Clarinet part features trills and sixteenth-note patterns. The Violin I and II parts play sixteenth-note patterns with accents. The Viola and Violoncello parts play a pulsing sixteenth-note accompaniment. Dynamics range from *ff* (fortissimo) to *f* (forte). The score ends with a double bar line.

²⁴ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #16.

In summary, the compositional geography of this work is integral in bringing the emotional journey of *Gumboots* to life—from the quiet and mysterious timbre of the opening note through to the exuberant finale. This landscape is further enhanced by its stylistic content, to be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3: Roots and Influences—A Stylistic Melting Pot.

“I think my music is naturally filled with ‘associations’—whether they be cultural influences, or kind of ‘visual images’ in the music which perhaps suggest a landscape or weather, or whatever . . . The point is, I suppose, they’re all forming part of my personal ‘Brucean world.’ ”²⁵

This chapter identifies and explores the stylistic influences in *Gumboots*. The most notable of these are klezmer, early music, blues, jazz, and African dance. As mentioned in chapter 1, this work is not meant to exemplify either gumboot dancing or African music. Neither is it meant to precisely illustrate any of these other musical styles. Moreover, given both my correspondence with the composer and his public remarks about the piece, I am of the opinion that these influences should not be overthought. Still, it is useful to be able to recognize these elements and grant them consideration in performance practice decisions. Doing so will create the opportunity for the performer to execute certain details with more character. Each of the stylistic influences will be discussed in the order they appear throughout the piece, beginning with the klezmer-like stylings that can be heard in Part One.

Klezmer

As mentioned in chapter 1, David Bruce was not only familiar with Osvaldo Golijov’s work for clarinet and string quartet, *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, which bears a very strong klezmer influence, but also knew Golijov personally and had worked closely with him during a Carnegie Hall workshop a few years before. When I asked Bruce about how Golijov’s work may or may not have influenced the composition of *Gumboots*, he responded, “I wouldn’t say that piece influenced my piece, if anything I was conscious of it and was trying to steer clear of it!” In our correspondence, he further explained,

²⁵ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #12.

I've [. . .] had a long relationship with Klezmer music and some people hear that in the piece, although in [this] case I think it's reached something of a background character, that is now part of my overall sound-world, rather than a specific attempt to write in that style. I'm always interested in bringing in techniques of playing from the folk/world music worlds that are often overlooked or not known about in the classical world, and klezmer clarinet writing is full of such things.²⁶

Ethnomusicologist Joel Rubin discusses the origins of klezmer music in his chapter of Joshua Walden's *Sounding Authentic: The Rural Miniature and Musical Modernism*. "In rabbinic Hebrew ... *kley-zemer* meant 'musical instruments.' By the sixteenth century, klezmer was used by Yiddish-speaking Jews in eastern Europe to signify instrumentalists." Today, "klezmer music designates various genres of vernacular music associated with the Yiddish-speaking Jews of eastern Europe and their descendants." Furthermore, Rubin notes that "[k]lezmer music has undergone a worldwide revival since the 1970s, becoming one of the most popular world music genres, generating numerous hybrid forms, and influencing and interacting with musics as diverse as indie rock, avant-garde jazz, and contemporary art music" (Rubin, 119).

In Part 1, the beautiful melodic lines throughout the movement are extremely vocal in nature, evocative of *hazzanut* (Hebrew for cantorial music, a type of religious liturgical singing). Bruce also calls for the bass clarinetist to use vibrato, further emulating the human voice. For example, at m. 165, near the climax of the entire movement, he instructs the bass clarinet to play with "molto vib (lip), intense, full of yearning."

The extreme altissimo register of the bass clarinet also produces a very particular timbre with a natural straining in the sound. In the "classical" repertoire, as mentioned, *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* showcases the instrument's facility to produce this tone quality. The use of the bass clarinet in this way has been especially popularized over the past thirty years by

²⁶ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #12.

David Krakauer.²⁷ The track “Fun Tashlikh,” from the Klezmatics’ 1990 album *Rhythm + Jews*, is a great example of this sound as well as the cross-pollination of klezmer styling with other genres. This straining quality serves to further intensify the sense of yearning in Bruce’s music. In my correspondence with the composer, I asked about his reason for writing these sections for the bass rather than the B \flat clarinet. He explained that “[p]art of the reason for writing in the higher register is for the ‘straining’ effect, which you get when something is difficult to play, it’s a completely different effect of course to something easy that fits the instrument comfortably.”²⁸ The challenges associated with this will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5.

Additionally, many of the ornamental figures throughout the melodic lines of Part 1 are evocative of some types of *dreydlekh* (Yiddish for “ornamentation”). The mordents in the strings are good examples of this (see Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1: Viola Mordents in Part 1 (m. 110).



The grace notes in the bass clarinet part are also particularly reminiscent of *krekhsts* or *krekhstsn* (Yiddish for “sobs”) typical of klezmer style (see Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Bass Clarinet Part at the Beginning of Part 1 (mm. 4–8).



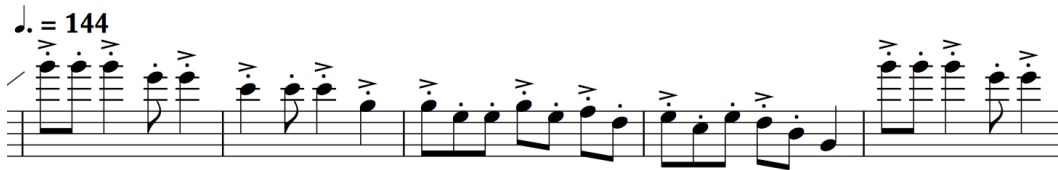
at melancholy,
ica all grace notes are very fast ‘folk-like’ grace notes—the note written should be fingered, but the actual pitch of the grace-note should not be allowed to speak fully.

²⁷ Krakauer has had a substantial impact on the klezmer revival and its use of the clarinet. Will Friedwald of the Wall Street Journal writes that “David Krakauer is such an overwhelmingly expressive clarinetist who moves so seamlessly between different genres that for a minute you’d almost think that there’s no appreciable difference between jazz, klezmer and formal classical music.” Quote from Krakauer’s website: www.davidkrakauer.com (accessed March 3, 2017).

²⁸ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #9.

In Part 2, the rhythmic patterns of the third and fifth dances are reminiscent of types of upbeat klezmer musics known as *bulgar* and *frelekhs*. The *bulgar*, in particular, is not a four-beat pattern. Bruce sets Dance 3 in $\frac{7}{8}$ with shifting two and three patterns (see Figure 3.3), using only the very occasional $\frac{4}{8}$ or $\frac{8}{8}$ bar to slightly offset the established rhythmic groove.

Figure 3.3: Clarinet Part at the Beginning of Dance 3 (mm. 549–50).



Bruce also continues to use a variety of ornamental figures that are rooted in a klezmer-folk style (see Figures 3.4 - 3.6).

Figure 3.4: Clarinet Grace Notes at the End of Dance 3 (mm. 637–40).



Figure 3.5: Clarinet Mordent-like Figures in Dance 5 (mm. 902–4).



Figure 3.6: Clarinet Trills at the End of Dance 5.



Furthermore, it is relevant to acknowledge that stylistic details are impossible to notate with precision. Like many folk musics, klezmer music developed and was passed on through oral

Blues

Part 1 also reflects some elements of the blues. Whether conscious on Bruce's part or not, this was unlikely a coincidence. Although there are varied musicological and historical opinions on the origins of blues music, it is undoubtedly a musical style that developed as, and is therefore evocative of, a cultural response to oppression. Richard Crawford and Larry Hamberlin describe the emergence and enormous impact of blues music and culture in their textbook *An Introduction to America's Music*:

In one of the most remarkable developments in American Music, blacks in the poorest region of the United States—the rural South—created the blues, a new kind of music that could express a wide range of powerful emotions. Blues music would influence nearly every style of music that developed in its wake. . . . Lacking education, property, and political power in a segregated society, the creators of blues music led lives of hardship in rural isolation. Yet their songs take a resilient attitude toward separation and loss, with emotional responses that run the gamut from despair to laughter. The blues tradition is one of confrontation and improvisation. (256)²⁹

In its entry on the blues, *Grove Music Online* states that the blues is a “secular, predominantly black American folk music of the twentieth century, which has a history and evolution separate from, but sometimes related to, that of jazz.”³⁰ The article continues by expounding:

From obscure and largely undocumented rural American origins, it became the most extensively recorded of all traditional music types. It has been subject to social changes that have affected its character. Since the early 1960s blues has been the most important single influence on the development of Western popular music.

The most important extra-musical meaning of ‘blues’ refers to a state of mind. Since the 16th century ‘the blue devils’ has meant a condition of melancholy or depression. But ‘the blues’ did not enter popular American usage until after the Civil War; and as a description of music that expressed such a mental state among the black population it may not have gained currency until after 1900. The two meanings are closely related in the history of the blues as music, and it is generally understood that a blues performer sings or plays to rid himself of ‘the blues’. This is so important to blues musicians that

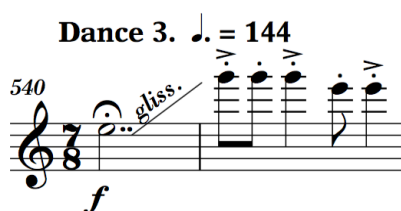
²⁹ Richard Crawford and Larry Hamberlin, *An Introduction to America's Music*, 2nd ed (New York: W.W. Norton and Co, 2013).

³⁰ Paul Oliver. *Grove Music Online*. “Blues.” http://oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/03311?q=blues&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit (accessed June 17, 2017).

I love [jazz] because it is an original kind of emotional expression, in that it is never wholly sad or wholly happy. Even the Blues has a robustness and hard-boiled quality that never lets it become sticky-sentimental, no matter how self-pitying the words are. And, on the other hand, the gayest, wildest jazz always seems to have some hint of pain in it. ... That is what intrigues me about jazz; it is unique, a form of expression all its own. I love it also for its humor. It really plays the notes. . . . It fools around with the notes, so to speak, and has fun with them. It is, therefore, entertainment in the truest sense (95-7).

In *Gumboots*, the most notable element that could be considered evocative of jazz music is the opening glissando (repeated again in m. 575) of Dance 3 (see Figure 3.9).

Figure 3.9: Clarinet Glissando at Top of Dance 3.



To me, there is an immediate association for the listener to George Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue*.³¹ The extent to which this association may be made will vary dependent upon the individual performer’s execution of the glissando (to be discussed further in chapters 4 and 5). In addition to the ornamental “bluesy” glissandos in the strings in Part 1, Bruce utilizes other more upbeat glissando effects throughout the piece (see Figure 3.10 as well as 2.13).

Figure 3.10: Cello Upwards Glissandos in Dance 1 (mm. 328–9).



Also, in the first iteration of the “b” material (see chapter 2) in the Dance 1, most clarinetists seem to take a fair amount of artistic liberty through this section (more on this in chapter 5).

³¹ Composed in 1924 for solo piano and jazz band, Gershwin’s *Rhapsody in Blue* is considered a serious classical composition but crosses boundaries freely and frequently between the classical and jazz worlds. It has become one of his most popular works. Although it features a piano soloist, *Rhapsody in Blue* is also well-known for its opening clarinet solo featuring a slow two-and-a-half octave glissando.

One of these liberties is to glissando over the barline between m. 347 to m. 348 (from the E to the G) in Dance 1 (see Figure 3.11).

Figure 3.11: Clarinet Part “b” Material in Dance 1 (mm 347–8).



Later in this same dance, especially because of the lowness of the pitch, the use of the flutter tongue in clarinet is rather reminiscent of a jazz or blues style “growl” (see Figure 3.12).

Figure 3.12: Clarinet “Growl-like” Flutter-tongue in m. 377 of Dance 1.



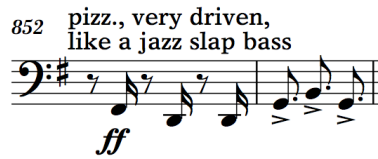
In *The Joy of Music*, Bernstein also discusses rhythmic elements characteristic of jazz music:

Rhythm is the first thing you associate with the word *jazz*, after all. There are two aspects to this point. The first is the beat. This is what you hear when the drummer’s foot is beating the drum, or when the bass player is plucking the bass, or even when the pianist is kicking the pedal with his foot. All this is elementary. The beats go on from the beginning to the end of a number, two or four of them to a measure, never changing in tempo or in meter. This is the heartbeat, so to speak, of jazz.

But more involved, and more interesting, is the rhythm going on *over* the beat—rhythmic figures which depend on something called “syncopation” [. . .]. Technically, syncopation means either the removal of an accent where you expect one, or the placing of an accent where you least expect one. In either case, there is the element of surprise and shock (102-4).

Bruce calls for a “jazz slap bass” in the cello in Dance 5 (see Figure 3.13), which, along with its off-beat syncopated groove, also hints at elements of jazz style.

Figure 3.13: Cello Jazz Slap Bass in Dance 5 (mm. 852–3).



These types of rhythmic patterns are also typical of much African music. In my research, one detail I found fascinating was the degree to which Western music, and specifically jazz, influenced the emergence of the gumboot dance style. Respected authorities on gumboot dancing in South Africa Carol Muller and Janet Fargion Topp point out in an article published in *African Music* that

[t]he gumboot style of dance draws on a variety of dance sources: Bhaca traditional dances such as *ngoma*; minstrel performance; popular social dances such as those that accompanied jazz music performance in the 1930s and 40s—the jitterbug for example; and most obviously, the tap dance popularize through films of Fred Astaire and Gene Kelley. Gumboot dancers may have been influenced by touring black dance groups. (89)³²

African Dance

*“So many of the influences on the music aren’t directly related to South Africa or Gumboot dancing, there are quite a lot of influences from African music in a wider sense, as I was looking at that at the time.” - David Bruce*³³

As previously mentioned, *Gumboots* is not solely or directly about gumboot dancing; however, as the composer did decide to affix this title to his composition, it seems appropriate to provide some additional background on the origins and characteristics of this particular form of African dance.

³² Carol Muller and Janet Topp Fargion, “Gumboots, Bhaca Migrants, and Fred Astaire: South African Worker Dance and Musical Style.” *African Music* 7, no. 4 (1999): 88-109.

³³ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #11.

In the late nineteenth century,³⁴ men traveled to Johannesburg, South Africa, from villages miles away to work in the gold mines in order to support their families back home. They lived in dormitories near the mines with their fellow mine workers. The work was hard and dangerous. The men were chained together but forbidden to speak. The mines were pitch dark and flooded with murky water. The mine owners (Englishmen) provided Wellington boots for the men because it was the most cost-effective solution. Yet, with these boots and chains, the workers developed a method of communication through rhythmic tapping of their boots. In the evenings, when the men would drink and socialize, this daytime necessity led the way to a new form of dance, providing both entertainment and competition for the mine workers. Muller and Top explain further that

[t]he aesthetic of gumboot performance also embodies the regimentation of military marching and the discipline required of labour working underground in the mines. The dancers are expected to respond quickly, without hesitation, regardless of what the leader commands. Precision of movement—starting and ending on the same beat—is crucial to effecting a powerful performance. . . . [I]n the middle of the collective performance of “*amadoubles*”, the leader [calls] for “*singles*”, the highly competitive solo performances by individual team members, where each man demonstrates his improvisatory skills in gumboot dance performance. It is particularly in these singles that the links with the tap dancing of Hollywood film stars such as Fred Astaire and Gene Kelley is evident . . . With its improvised solos and fixed arrangements, gumboot dance created a parallel structure with the musical form of a jazz ensemble (90).

These customary “singles” are actually common in many types of music, but regardless, Bruce uses this convention compositionally throughout *Gumboots* when he passes solo melodies around the ensemble. The mine workers would also add rings of bottle caps to the tops of their boots for added variety of percussive sounds.

³⁴ Bruce’s program note mentions the development of gumboot dancing occurring under Apartheid. However, Apartheid was not legally instituted until the mid-twentieth century, long after the emergence of the gumboot dance style. The racial tension and injustice (from which Apartheid came to exist) were very much present.

In our correspondence, Bruce remarked that Dance 5 was particularly influenced by the music of the Baka Pygmies in Cameroon.³⁵ He writes about this in another of his engaging blog posts,

Something I've always been drawn to in music—I admit in a slightly geeky way—are rhythmic patterns that appear to have the downbeat in one place, when it is actually somewhere else entirely. In both the following examples, it appears clear where the downbeat is, but once the full ensemble kicks in you realise it is somewhere completely different. It's just a bit of fun, but for some reason I can go back to these examples and enjoy them again and again.

The first is from the Brand New Heavies self-titled album, and is called simply BNH. Here the downbeat clearly seems to be on the first of the bass drum notes, whereas it's actually on the last. A little game to try is to beat 4 in time with either of these 'downbeats' and try to continue throughout—very difficult!

Many years ago, I took this example to one of George Benjamin's all-day-Sunday classes (at RCM), he listened with interest, then after sampling the rest of the album he said "*It's not uninteresting harmonically.*" Well all then fell about laughing that this would make a great quote on the album cover from an esteemed professor of the Royal College of Music. The second is from a great album I stumbled across earlier this year from Orchestre Baka de Gbine, recorded when members of the group Baka Beyond recorded an album with the Baka on a mobile solar-powered studio in the rainforests of Cameroon. The entry of the bass drum in this throws me every time (this rhythm, incidentally, inspired the final dance in my piece *Gumboots*). Gloriously, this song is called 'Boulez Boulez'—I'd love to know the translation, which I suspect is probably not a double homage to the composer of *Le Marteau sans Maître*, nor an invitation to play the favourite French pass-time [*sic.*].³⁶

This influence can be seen and heard clearly in Dance 5 with the off-beat accents in the cello that effectually shift what "feels" and is heard as the downbeat one sixteenth note over from the actual downbeat (see Figure 3.14)

³⁵ From correspondence with the composer, see Appendix B, question #11.

³⁶ From composer's blog post: "Rhythmic Games" (<http://www.davidbruce.net/blog/post342.asp>), accessed February 4, 2017.

Figure 3.14: Example of Baka Pygmy Influence in Dance 5 at Rehearsal Y.

51

The musical score is for a rehearsal of Dance 5, starting at measure 845. It features five staves: Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Cello (Vc.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The score includes dynamic markings: *mp* (mezzo-piano) at the start, followed by *sfz* (sforzando) for the first three measures, *sfz sfz sfz* for the next three, *sfz sfz sfz* for the following three, and *sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz sfz* for the final measures. A *più f* (più forte) marking is present in the first violin part. The cello part shows a steady rhythmic pattern with some syncopation. A rehearsal mark 'Y' is placed above the first measure.

Bruce maintains what feels like a steady beat in the cello against stronger patterns of 2+3+2+2 in the second violin and viola, with some syncopations against this in the first violin and even more in the clarinet line.

This blending of elements from various styles is part of what identifies Bruce as a composer. With *Gumboots* it helps to portray the universality of the larger emotional story and the mixing and hybridization of cultures in our modern world.

Concerning Cultural Appropriation

With the current globalization of communications and connections between today's societies, cultures are inevitably influencing each other, although not to the same extent. - John Blacking³⁷

For centuries, powerful empires have gone out to conquer foreign lands, “claim” them as their own, and force their way of life upon the native culture(s). In the article “The Interest of

³⁷ Bruno Deschênes, "The Interest of Westerners in Non-Western Music." *The World of Music* 47, no. 3 (2005): 5-15.

Westerners in Non-Western Music,” Bruno Deschênes discusses how “modernity is equated with Westernization, and many traditions are ‘trampled’ to make way for this so-called modernity” (5). Nonetheless, he also acknowledges how

[Westerners] of course change the non-Westerners and their music, and most of the new forms of music they create are a hybrid mixture of different types of music that ends up, most of the time, sounding more like Western music than anything else. But similarly, they change us as well and our music also emerges as a hybrid melting pot of exotic influences, while remaining Western-like. (8)

Cultural appropriation is generally defined as one culture employing or adopting elements of another culture. It most often carries a negative connotation akin to plagiarism or exploitation. This is a subject of significant musicological and ethnomusicological debate. Given the title of the work and the clear influence of a variety of styles with roots that lay outside of this composer’s cultural heritage, the topic bears addressing.

As discussed in chapter 1, Bruce makes clear in his program note the piece does not depict gumboot dancing, and it is worthwhile for the performers to make sure to carry this message to their listeners so as to avoid any misconceptions. Either providing a program note or speaking to your audience before your performance will serve this purpose and may also help to allow your listeners to widen their emotional capacity to relate to and respond to the piece in their own way. As John Blacking observes in the book *Music of Many Cultures*, “There is no harm in hearing all music in our own way, and it may be more realistic to admit that we can never hope to do more than that” (195).³⁸

Bruce’s reference to gumboot dancing also brings up issues of race, especially given that the composer is Caucasian and referencing a cultural heritage of black South Africans. But it is precisely this history of racial strife and long oppression of blacks under Apartheid and English colonization that the composer is attempting to bring to light in choosing to affix this title to the composition. As a result, he has brought the history of gumboot dancing to light for many people

³⁸ John Blacking, “Chapter 11. Trends in the Black Music of South Africa, 1959-1969.” From: May, Elizabeth, ed. *Musics of Many Cultures: An Introduction* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

who may never have heard of it. This contribution to societal knowledge and awareness has significant worth.

Bruce's music is a conglomeration of many influences that cross numerous racial, cultural, genre, and subgenre boundaries. In this piece, the combination of so many different influences and compositional techniques has created a whole greater than the sum of its parts. The music truly does speak for itself. The title in this case may help the listener and performer to more definitively direct their own interpretation and experience of the music.

CHAPTER 4: Recordings—Variation in Interpretation and Performance

“I loved the piece so much that I decided to create what I believe was the first commercial recording of it. I wanted everyone to know about the piece and just wanted to play it as much as I could. It’s a real gem and I hope more clarinetists learn it.” - Julian Bliss³⁹

In this chapter I will discuss the following recordings of *Gumboots*:

Live Performance Recordings

- Todd Palmer with the St. Lawrence String Quartet, 2008—World Premiere⁴⁰
- Sarah Beaty with Ensemble ACJW, 2010 (video)⁴¹
- Todd Palmer with the St. Lawrence String Quartet, 2010 (audio)⁴²
- John Klinghammer with Art of Élan, 2010 (audio)⁴³
- James T. Shields with the Albuquerque Chamber Soloists, 2015 (video)⁴⁴
- Lisa Kachouee with the Westheimer String Quartet, 2017 (audio)⁴⁵

Studio Recordings

- Julian Bliss with the Carducci String Quartet, World Premiere Recording by Signum Classic Records, 2016 (audio)⁴⁶

³⁹ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #3.

⁴⁰ Unfortunately, this recording is not publicly available.

⁴¹ www.youtube.com/watch?v=hV_1FGpv-F4

⁴² www.davidbruce.net/sound_samples.asp#gumboots

⁴³ instantcore.com/music/details.aspx?Pid=5080188

⁴⁴ www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNM1bVpMj8s

⁴⁵ lisakachouee.com/media/

⁴⁶ www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-EJyms96T8

There are two additional YouTube videos of Dance 1 alone that will not be discussed in detail. The first is of Stuart King with CHROMA (2009).⁴⁷ The quality of the recording is not very good, and the only unique thing to note about it is that the ensemble makes a significant *accelerando* at the end of the movement, which is not marked in the music. The second video is of Sarah Beaty with the Callino Quartet on RTÉ's "The Works" (2012).⁴⁸ It is not significantly different from the complete recording of hers with the Ensemble ACJW to be discussed in this chapter. To my knowledge, these are all of the publicly accessible recordings as of the summer of 2017.

The video recordings are especially helpful in observing the ensemble communication (of paramount importance with this piece) and expressiveness. They also provide occasional opportunities to identify performance practice decisions such as fingerings, bowings, and page turns.

My goal in this chapter is to provide some basic information and context regarding each recording, and then to highlight a few variations among them. This should help the performer (or listener) find their own way in navigating this work. With the exception of King and Kachouee, I have been in contact with the clarinetist from each of these recordings.⁴⁹

The table below (see Figure 4.1) lays out the tempos indicated in the score alongside those taken in each recording. All tempo markings for the recordings are approximate.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ www.youtube.com/watch?v=__mr8FsoNnQ

⁴⁸ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hrAN8xbTTIU>

⁴⁹ See Appendix C - Correspondence with Gumboots Clarinetists.

⁵⁰ In order to gather tempos from these recordings, I used the tap function of my metronome app. This is obviously a fallible method of data collection, but I have been through each recording at least twice to try and confirm my accuracy. Unfortunately, the slow tempo of the opening of Part 1 and the compound meters of Dances 3 and 5 make them even more difficult to "reverse engineer." For Part 1, I attempted to identify what seemed to be the median tempo, but most varied up to 4bpm in either direction. For the dances, I first tried to get a reading for both the eighth note (for Dance 3) or the sixteenth note (for Dance 5) divisions, and then also tried to get a reading by measure.

Figure 4.1: Table of Tempos of *Gumboots* Recordings.

	Score	Premiere	ACJW	Spoletto	Klinghammer	Shields	Kachouee	Bliss
Part 1	♩ = 50	50	44	50	46	42	* ⁵¹	40
Reh K	♩ = 76	70	62	68	68	66	—	68
Dance 1	♩ = 108	108 < 118	108	116	112	116 >	116	112
Dance 2	♩ = 208	208	190	208	208	160	208 > 184	212
Dance 3	♩ = 144	142	120	120	100	100	104	126
Dance 4								
a1/b1	♩ = 144	138	132	132	104	120 - 132	—	144
c1	♩ = 96	94 ⁵²	102	96	84	94	—	105
d1	♩ = 144	154	154	160	120	144	—	154
a2/b2	♩ = 144	138	144	144	104	132 > 120	—	144
c2	♩ = 144	120	122	132	98	108	—	144
d2	♩ = 216	172 - 204	180	180 < 212	134 < 160	144	—	172
Dance 5	♩ = 132	129	120	120	100	108	—	123

Todd Palmer with the St. Lawrence String Quartet, 2008

Gumboots received its world premiere performance in Zankel Hall at Carnegie Hall on October 23, 2008, by clarinetist Todd Palmer and the St. Lawrence String Quartet. It was met with enthusiastic reviews. Although it is not publicly available, I was able to gain access briefly to the archival recording for my own reference and research purposes. I am including a discussion about it here mainly for what it reveals about the compositional evolution of the piece after its premiere.

The most notable change Bruce made after the piece's first performance was the removal of the fifth of the original six dances. According to Bruce, he removed this dance because it

⁵¹ Unable to obtain tempos for Part 1 of Kachouee's performance due to inability to access website (expired 9/2017).

⁵² The tempo for the "c" sections of the premiere recording were particularly challenging due to due to the rhythmic notation of the original part, which will be described below. They are very approximate.

disrupted the flow of the work as a whole.⁵³ Beyond this major change, there are quite a number of smaller changes Bruce made throughout the work.

In Dance 1, Bruce changed the chord progression in the introduction. The original version remained on the tonic chord, which sounds slightly darker and more foreboding than his revision, which moves back and forth from the tonic to dominant.

The only discernable change to Dance 2 was the removal of ornamentation in the clarinet line. He kept the grace notes in measures such as 428, 430, 432, and 434 (see Figure 4.2). In the original version there were also ornaments before the downbeats of mm. 429, 433, 436, and 438. To my ear, these additional ornaments in the original version obscure the downbeat emphases necessary to both maintain the pulse and bring out the melodic line. Palmer liked them, however, and has chosen to retain them whenever he performs the piece (which can be heard in the 2010 Spoleto Festival recording).

Figure 4.2: Revised Version of Clarinet Part at Rehearsal H in Dance 2.

The image shows two staves of musical notation for a clarinet part. The first staff, labeled '428' and 'H', contains measures 428 through 434. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), and a dynamic marking of *mf*. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with grace notes on measures 428, 430, 432, and 434. Fingerings are indicated by the number '5' under various notes. The second staff, labeled '435', contains measures 435 through 441. It begins with a treble clef, the same key signature, and a dynamic marking of *p*. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, including grace notes on measures 435, 437, 439, and 441. Fingerings are indicated by the number '5' under various notes.

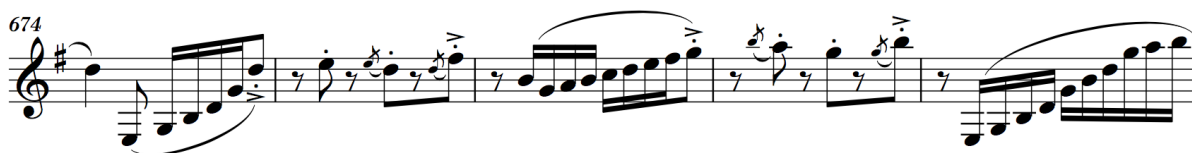
Throughout Dance 3, the original clarinet part was much more disjointed. It jumped suddenly every two bars from the top to the bottom range of the instrument. Bruce rewrote the part keeping the clarinet in the upper range, except for an occasional two bar phrase in the chalumeau register, punctuating the ends of a few phrases. The dance still begins to fragment in the second half, after rehearsal O, but this is stronger compositionally, having been preceded by

⁵³ Bruce later reworked this dance for clarinet and piano as a short standalone piece that he titled “Forgotten Boots.” See Bruce’s blog post “Boots, Forgotten, and International.” (www.davidbruce.net/blog/post423.asp). Accessed August 26, 2016.

larger, more cohesive sections. These changes significantly help to better connect the overall melodic flow of the movement.

In the revised version of the opening “a” section of Dance 4, Bruce added a great deal of ornamentation to the melodic line (see Figure 4.3). None of the sixteenth note ornamentations were in the original version. These add character and keep the music from becoming repetitive.

Figure 4.3: Added Clarinet Sixteenths in Dance 4 (mm. 674-78).



Furthermore, he originally wrote a very different rhythmic pattern for the “c” motif that trades between the clarinet and first violin at rehearsal U and again at W. This proved extremely difficult to execute, which can be clearly heard in the archival recording. It obscures where the beat lands, and sounds as if the performers are making mistakes. As this section was and is marked “Relaxed” in an otherwise busy movement, his simplification of the melodic line here helps to convey this feeling much more successfully than the original material.

As far as I can tell, there were no major changes to Dance 5.

Bruce also reworked a couple of passages in Part 1. First of all, in the original version, both the viola and clarinet cut out completely at the end of the introduction. The clarinet then reenters alone before the rest of the ensemble begins to join at letter A. In the revised score, the viola continues with its *ppp* ostinato triplets until the bass clarinet and the violins come in. The break in the original version may have been due to the need for a page turn at this spot (which is still an issue and will be addressed in chapter 5). Nonetheless, there is a greater cohesiveness to the music when the sound never quite stops. Secondly, the most marked change I heard in Part 1 was in the bass clarinet part as it approaches the climax of the movement. Instead of gradually moving higher in pitch through to rehearsal I, as it does in the revised score, it resolves sooner

and moves down in pitch. The way he rewrote the part significantly changes the direction and intensity of the build, making the climax much more powerful.

In the recorded performance, the quintet's tempos are all as marked, or very close. They add an *accelerando* at the end of the first dance, moving up to $\text{♩} = 118$. The *accelerando* at the end of Dance 2 reaches $\text{♩} = 224$. Dance 3 is just at, or one notch under marking. This is much faster than any other recordings, including the same group's performance at the Spoleto Festival (discussed below). Dance 4 follows the markings pretty closely. As with Dance 3, the fifth dance is delivered near its indicated tempo, but is not played that fast by this ensemble (or any other) anymore. I will discuss tempos further in chapter 5.

The performance was generally rawer and less precise than I had imagined it would be. This is an observation, not a criticism. Similar to many of the folk influenced works of Bartók, such coarseness often enhances the piece. Palmer's bass clarinet playing has more of a plaintive klezmer edginess than that of any other players who can be heard in the recordings discussed here. Precise execution of technical details was clearly of secondary importance to obtaining the intended effect.

Palmer and the St. Lawrence String Quartet have performed the piece many times since its premiere. Further in this chapter I will discuss a recording of their 2010 performance at the Spoleto Festival.

Sarah Beaty with Ensemble ACJW,⁵⁴ 2010

This performance was recorded on February 5, 2010 at Skidmore College. To my knowledge, it was the first complete publicly available recording of *Gumboots*. Many of the other clarinetists I spoke with mentioned that they referenced it frequently as they prepared the work

⁵⁴ Ensemble ACJW is now known as Ensemble Connect. It is comprised of the members of a two-year fellowship program at Carnegie Hall, and therefore changes in personnel every couple of years. The members from this particular ACJW ensemble and performance have gone on to create a chamber collective known first as The Declassified and currently as DECODA.

themselves. Geraldine Freedman of the Daily Gazette wrote that “Beaty was fabulous in a brilliantly virtuosic part that required a lot of flair and style.”⁵⁵

In the video, the ensemble communication, cohesion, commitment, and expressiveness are both palpable and extremely captivating. The professionally recorded video offers varied angles and close-ups that make it possible to better observe some of the ensemble’s performance practice choices. The ensemble also spent a few days prior to this performance working directly with David Bruce. A brief video regarding this, to which I also referred in chapter 1, is available on YouTube.⁵⁶

Most of Ensemble ACJW’s tempos match those indicated in the score, but there are a few deviations. The opening section of Part 1 is taken under tempo, but is right in the middle of the range of tempos taken across all of these recordings. They play significantly more below the indicated tempo at rehearsal K, more so than any other recording. Dance 2 settles in slightly under the marked tempo. This is not uncommon among the recordings I have heard. Bruce’s tempo is extremely fast given the technical demands of the movement, and in my opinion, is not absolutely necessary to successfully deliver its appropriate energy and emotion, as this recording shows (more on this in chapter 5). Dance 3 is also marked rather unrealistically, and the quintet takes the movement at a slightly more moderate tempo.⁵⁷

In the fourth dance, the ensemble takes both the “a” and the “b” material (see Figures 2.26 and 2.27 in chapter 2) marginally slower than indicated. Their “c” section is a bit faster than marked. The second iteration of the “a” material at letter V is taken as marked, thusly edging forward a little faster in its recapitulation than at the opening of the movement. The “c” material also comes back significantly quicker than before, but not quite as fast as the marked

⁵⁵ Geraldine Freedman, “Review: Crowd packs first concert at new Zankel concert hall.” The Daily Gazette. February 6, 2010. https://dailygazette.com/article/2010/02/06/0206_review. Accessed July 22, 2017.

⁵⁶ “David Bruce and Ensemble ACJW.” www.youtube.com/watch?v=zPRT5BS8scg (accessed December 12, 2016).

⁵⁷ Pulling accurate tempos of this dance from recordings is extremely difficult given the speed and complex meter. My estimate for this particular recording ranges from approximately ♩ = 115-130.

“Stesso Tempo.” The final “d” section closes out the movement briskly. This is again slower than the tempo that would translate from the previous section being played as indicated, but is accurate in maintaining the eighth note across the change of time signature.

Ensemble ACJW takes Dance 5 quite a bit faster⁵⁸ than it is marked in the score. It is undoubtedly exciting, but so fast that the players can barely keep it under control. Overall, the tempos in this recording are on the quicker side and most similar to the recordings of Palmer and Bliss.

Todd Palmer with the St. Lawrence String Quartet, 2010

This performance was recorded at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, South Carolina on March 31, 2010. The existence (and accessibility) of this recording is easy to miss (at least in its current state). It is available on Bruce’s website, but there is not a direct link to it from his page about *Gumboots*. From the “Listen” tab in the website headings, you will be able to scroll down to this recording, which you can stream in its entirety.⁵⁹

A reviewer wrote regarding this performance, “The second it ended, their listeners leaped to their feet, screaming and shouting, like they’d been blown out of aircraft ejection seats. So much for the misguided notion that you can’t please a crowd with modern music. This one should be required listening for anybody who’s afraid of the music of today.”⁶⁰

A couple of things caught my attention about Palmer’s bass clarinet playing in Part 1. The first was his use of heavy vibrato on the low notes in mm. 124 and 125. The second was his

⁵⁸ This tempo was calculated from an estimate of an entire measure at 40 beats per minute.

⁵⁹ Audio recording of Todd Palmer and the St. Lawrence String Quartet on the composer’s website: (http://www.davidbruce.net/sound_samples.asp#gumboots). Accessed June 4, 2017.

⁶⁰ Lindsay Koob, “Third Chamber Concert Inspires a Rabid Response.” *Charleston City Paper*. June 2, 2010. <https://www.charlestoncitypaper.com/charleston/third-chamber-concert-inspires-a-rabid-response/Content?oid=2032769>. Accessed June 12, 2017.

re-articulation of each pitch from mm. 186 to 194, which is not marked in the part and differs from all other recordings I have heard.

The quintet's tempos are played as marked with a few exceptions. Dance 1 moves along just a couple metronome notches up from what is indicated in the score. The second dance is delivered at tempo. Dance 3 grooves along slightly below its marked tempo at approximately the same speed as the Beaty recording. The fourth dance, also similar to the Ensemble ACJW recording, opens a couple notches under Bruce's indicated tempo, but approaches the originally marking upon the second iteration of this idea. The rest of their tempos for this movement can be noted in Figure 4.1. They take Dance 5 at about the same speed as Ensemble ACJW did. Similarly, it is full of energy but also on the edge of losing control. It is also worth noting that they take Part 1 exactly as marked, but faster than any other ensembles.

As mentioned earlier, Palmer does retain some of the extra ornamentation in Dance 2 from the original version of the piece.⁶¹ Again, Palmer's tone is generally more pointed and edgy than that of the other players mentioned here. This gives a rawness to the timbre that is certainly not uncalled for in this piece.

John Klinghammer with Art of Élan, 2010

This performance, recorded on December 1, 2010, is audio only. It can be accessed through Instant Encore. Additionally, Art of Élan has an App that can be downloaded to your phone, from which you can access hundreds of recordings. Gumboots is included in "LAUGHTER, TEARS, AND BLUES."

The ensemble takes Part 1 a bit under, but close to, its marking. I also noticed that the clarinet and viola execute the figure in m. 23 (and others like it) slightly differently, placing an emphasis on the second note of the measure, rather than the first. The string solos at rehearsal

⁶¹ Per correspondence with artist, see Appendix C.

D and J are quite slow and lingering. They do pick up the tempo at rehearsal G through the climax of the movement. The second half of Part 1, beginning with the viola ostinato at K, is also a notch under marking, but faster than many of the other recordings.

In terms of tempos, Dances 1 and 2 are essentially delivered as the score indicates. The ensemble slows quite a bit from rehearsal C to E in the first dance, but returns to tempo by G and continues accelerating to the end. Dance 3 is taken significantly slower than indicated. But as mentioned, this dance is marked extraordinarily quickly.⁶² They deliver the final two measure decrescendo with amusing cheekiness. The tempos of the various sections of Dance 4 are on the reserved side. They take Dance 5 the slowest of all of the recordings.

The strings also tune as needed between movements, and more extensively so between the third and fourth dances (to be discussed more in chapter 5).

James T. Shields with Chatter, 2015

This performance was video-recorded on December 6, 2015, in Las Puertas, Albuquerque. The video shows the entire ensemble for most of the time, making it easy to notice cuing and communication. For example, the violist gives a very clear cue for the violins and clarinet to enter during her solo at letter D. She also helps to cue the first tutti entrance of the clarinet and cello after letter K, once her ostinato has begun. Shields uses vibrato during the second half of Part 1 on the B₃ clarinet, which is not indicated in the score, but is quite beautiful and evocative.

Compared to the other recordings, Part 1 is taken on the slower end towards the top of the movement, but is right in the middle of the road from rehearsal K on. Dance 1 begins a couple of notches above marking, although it does settle down some through the movement. Shields plays the “b” motif in this movement slightly more staccato and precise according to

⁶² For more detailed discussion of tempos, see “Tempos” section in chapter 5, on page 87.

Bruce's notation, compared to the liberties other players sometimes take there. Dances 2 and 3 are both taken much slower than marked. Dance 2 seems to settle around $\downarrow = 160$, quite a bit slower than any other recording. This tempo results in a more contemplative and somewhat sad feeling, compared to the playfulness elicited at the marked tempo. They play Dance 3 at approximately the same tempo as Klinghammer's recording, but the feel is quite different. Dance 4 opens only slightly under marking. The "c" and "d" sections settle about at the score markings the first time. The second time, the "c" material is notched up, but the "d" material returns at the same tempo as its first iteration. Dance 5 runs quite a bit under the marked tempo.

Lisa Kachouee with the Westheimer String Quartet, 2017

This performance was recorded at Oklahoma City University on January 14, 2017. Only Part 1 and Dances 1, 2, and 3 are posted for this recording. This is the only performance I have heard where the clarinetist utilizes the option to switch to B \flat clarinet earlier in Part 1 (at rehearsal G) in order to play the highest bass clarinet notes on the soprano instrument. This is not an uncommon choice, but the only time I have heard it done. I was surprised to find that the shift was much less dramatic than I thought it would be. The first time I listened to it, I did not even notice that Kachouee had changed instruments until mm. 179 to 181 when the written pitches are too low for the B \flat clarinet range, and it must therefore be played an octave higher. After being momentarily confused, I realized what was going on. Upon closer listening, the change of timbre is clear, although subtle. The improvement in the security of intonation is evident. I would still argue that there is a certain element lost, but save for those few measures mentioned previously, you might not even notice it in an audio recording. And even hearing it live, if you were not familiar with the work, you would never know you were missing anything. This will be discussed further in the next chapter.

The string solos at rehearsal D especially caught my attention. They are delivered differently from any other recording I have heard, and I found them refreshing and quite stunning. When the viola ostinato enters at K, it is fairly loud and feels quite abrupt. Hearing this will help you appreciate the delicacy of an entrance from *niente*. The ostinato also stays much more prominent through the rest of the movement than in any other recording. Though the balance might be distorted by the placement of the microphones, the prominence of the ostinato in this recording creates an effect I did not expect. It pits its line against the rest of the ensemble more forcefully, which creates a sense of struggle and stubbornness. I prefer the ostinato line remaining secondary underneath the ensemble, but it was interesting to hear how this altered balance played out.

Regarding tempos, Dance 1 is quite fast. Dance 2 starts off as marked but settles back once the clarinet enters. The third dance moves along significantly more slowly than marked but similarly to Shield's performance.

Julian Bliss with the Carducci String Quartet—World Premiere Recording, 2016

Like the Ensemble ACJW, Bliss and the Carducci Quartet were able to work with Bruce in person before and while producing this recording. In my correspondence with Bliss, he mentioned that “[f]or the recording we also played it for David which was a great experience. He was very relaxed and allowed us to put our own interpretation on the piece. David stayed around and heard us record the whole piece which was also very useful. It took us a day and a half to get the whole piece down.”

In terms of tempos, they follow Bruce's markings pretty accurately, similar to both Beaty's and Palmer's recordings. When Bliss strays from the indicated tempo, however, it is almost always to go faster. Dance 1 generally pulses a notch above the indicated ♩ = 108. Dance 2 also settles a notch above its marking, very similar to Palmer's tempo in the premiere recording.

This highly animated tempo in combination with marked accents does help to maintain the sense of anger evoked in Dance 1 while its long, stepwise, and often slurred melodic material begins to elicit a more easy and spontaneous levity.

Dance 3 is the only dance that they play under the marked tempo, but as mentioned, the marked tempo for this movement is rather impractical. The fourth dance runs faster throughout nearly all sections of the movement. It opens exactly as marked. The “c” and “d” sections clock a little faster than indicated. Upon the repetition of each section, they follow Bruce’s indications, moving the second “c” section ahead much faster than the first time, which results in the “d” section running upwards of $\downarrow = 172$. Dance 5 is a few notches under the marked tempo, but similar to Palmer and Beaty’s performances. This recording illustrates the excitement of extremely fast tempos, but also the danger of broaching the limits of your listener’s speed of auditory processing. Whether this loss is greater than the gain is a matter of opinion. Regardless, they do play at these tempos flawlessly, which is no small feat.

In summary, studying these recordings significantly helped me to better understand and perform the work. They gave me a better sense of the range of possible tempos, and the effects those tempos have on the music. In many cases, they helped inspire stylistic and interpretive choices. As discussed in chapter 3, this piece has so many varied and “folk-like” influences that there is a great deal of room for interpretation. In addition, listening to a *variety* of performers and performances helps to widen a performer’s concept of the work. It also assists in processing the work as a whole, and understanding its emotional life. For me, it was indispensable to be able to listen while studying the score, in order to hear how the intricate details of the piece fit together. Playing along with recordings was also helpful for me in a number of sections. This will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Chapter Five. A Performance Guide—Considerations, Concerns, and Clarifications

“It was great fun to learn and premiere Gumboots—working with David from the inception of this now popular, substantial, and often played quintet for the clarinet and string quartet. [. . .] However, it poses a variety of challenging technical difficulties for the clarinetist. I like to think of the analogy/comparison of performing this work to being an Olympic gymnast who competes in the all-around competition; you need to know all disciplines—very well.” - Todd Palmer⁶⁴

“I guess its newness and the challenging bass clarinet part may scare some people off, but as far as I'm concerned, outside of Brahms and Mozart the list of music for clarinet and strings gets kind of short, and this is an incredible addition to the repertoire.” - John Klinghammer⁶⁵

“My initial reaction was to run screaming in the opposite direction.” - Peter Wright⁶⁶

“Thrilling and terrifying! A life affirming piece, yet painstaking in its technical challenges!! Incredibly well-crafted and written in such a way that you are very motivated to work out how it fits together.” - Sarah Beaty⁶⁷

“That piece is sick. I've played it twice at this point. I feel like I need one more go of it to really get it going—it's tough! First part is still my favorite, amazing stuff.” - James Shields⁶⁸

The purpose of this chapter is to identify potential problem spots and issues that may hinder an individual musician or the ensemble as a whole when approaching and performing this piece, and to offer advice and possible solutions. I hope this may assist the performers in

⁶⁴ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #2.

⁶⁵ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #2.

⁶⁶ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #2.

⁶⁷ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #2.

⁶⁸ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, additional comments.

learning to execute the music successfully as well as save time in the process. As a clarinetist, I will most thoroughly address concerns specific to my instrument, but I will also discuss a few issues specific to string players as well as a number of ensemble concerns and a few more general performance issues. The advice and solutions put forth in this chapter come from my own experience preparing for and performing *Gumboots*, as well as from the experiences of a number of clarinetists (Sarah Beaty, Julian Bliss, José Luis Estellés, Gary Gorczyca, Pamela Helton, Matthew Hunt, John Klinghammer, Alex Morris, Todd Palmer, James T. Shields, Ralph Skiano, Tony Striplen, and Peter Wright) and string players (Elizabeth Dickenson, Pamela Freund-Striplen, Kate Hatmaker, Evan Hesketh, Eunae Koh, Stephanie Nagler, and Susan Pardue) who have performed the work and were kind enough to answer my questions and contribute their thoughts and experiences.

FOR THE CLARINETIST

Reeds

You will need a softer bass clarinet reed to manage the quiet entrances and dynamics at the beginning of Part 1. For the B \flat , you will want a more versatile reed to provide clarity of tone in Part 1 and handle the demands of the dynamics, accents, and the extensive altissimo passages in the dances. As Klinghammer explained, “I would have loved to use a lighter reed to create a more folksy, flexible sound, but found it too difficult to get the extreme range to speak without a firm enough reed.”

Part 1.

The Bass Clarinet in the Altissimo Register

If you are not an experienced bass clarinetist, you may find this movement intimidating. Bruce does offer the option of switching to the B \flat clarinet beginning at rehearsal G, when the bass clarinet begins to climb into the stratosphere. Still, I would encourage you not to immediately dismiss the idea of playing this section on the bass clarinet. As discussed briefly in chapter 4 with regard to Lisa Kachouee's recording, two things are sacrificed when switching instruments at this earlier point. The first is the three octave leap between m. 185 and m. 186, as the B \flat cannot play the low pitches of the bass part from mm. 179 to 182, and the jump is therefore reduced to two octaves. This weakens the emotional power of the movement's climax. Secondly, the timbre of the high pitches on the bass clarinet is different. The straining in the sound of the bass playing in such an extreme range for the instrument is part of what gives this section its ability to drive straight to the heart. The visual element of seeing it performed this way will only increase this effect. Playing this section on B \flat is better than playing it on bass clarinet badly, or not playing the piece at all, but you may find that mastering the bass part proves easier than you expect.⁶⁹

Bass Clarinet Altissimo Fingerings

Choosing fingerings for this movement is a balancing act of trying to accomplish four things: tone, reliability, intonation, and physical practicality (based on fingerings of the preceding and following notes). *Gumboots*' range actually extends beyond what would be called the "altissimo" register. For lack of a better term, I will refer to it as the "high altissimo." Fortunately, the bass clarinet is actually quite forgiving in this extended range, and you can

⁶⁹ When I decided to write this dissertation on *Gumboots* and to perform the work myself, I had only a few years of scattered experience with the bass clarinet. I was unsure if I would be able to play the part at all, but I wanted to give it a fair shot. To my surprise, what had seemed like a monumental challenge proved much easier to overcome than I expected.

often adjust one fingering fifty cents in either direction with voicing adjustments alone. That said, there are simply so many variables, from player to player and instrument to instrument, that there is no magic paint-by-number formula for finding these fingerings. Therefore, you will have to sit with a tuner and try things until you discover what works best for you.

Through my own research and my correspondence with other *Gumboots* clarinetists, I have compiled a list of resources for bass clarinet fingerings. These include the following:

- 1) Henri Bok's book *New Techniques for the Bass Clarinet*
- 2) Michael Lowenstern's website
(<http://www.earspasm.com/omega/portfolio/altissimo/>)⁷⁰
- 3) Jason Adler's website (http://www.jasonalder.com/fingeringchart/Bass-clarinet_quarter-tone_fingering-chart_2ndEd--Jason_Alder.pdf)⁷¹
- 4) Mark Charette's website (www.wfg.woodwind.org)⁷²
- 5) Dr. Sarah Watts, Royal Northern College of Music (www.sarahwatts.co.uk)⁷³

I started with Lowenstern's and Adler's charts. I expanded upon these by exploring myself, as well as trying fingerings I got from other clarinetists who had performed the work. Some players mentioned that they had tried to observe what fingerings others had used in video recordings. John Klinghammer reported that "there was a lot of experimentation with adding keys and venting things trying to find the right combo. It's still a work in progress, but I think my most recent set of fingerings is more consistent than what I started with, especially in terms of intonation."⁷⁴

⁷⁰ Michael Lowenstein, "Altissimo Fingerings." Accessed July 31, 2017. <http://www.earspasm.com/omega/portfolio/altissimo/>

⁷¹ Jason Adler, "Bass Clarinet Quarter-Tone Fingering Chart, 2nd edition." 2013. Accessed August 25, 2016. http://www.jasonalder.com/fingeringchart/Bass-clarinet_quarter-tone_fingering-chart_2ndEd--Jason_Alder.pdf

⁷² Mark Charette, *The Woodwind Fingering Guide*. "Alternate Fingering Chart for Boehm-System Alto, Bass, and Contrabass Clarinet." Accessed November 18, 2016. www.wfg.woodwind.org

⁷³ Sarah is a leading expert on bass clarinet multi-phonic (www.sarahwatts.co.uk).

⁷⁴ From correspondence, see Appendix C, Questions #6 & #7.

James T. Shields wrote that for him it was very much

[t]rial and error, and I kept changing them every time I did it. I felt it was really important to get the intonation really dialed, because it's pretty tonal, and it's so intense already, it didn't need to also be heinously out of tune. The Golijov *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* also goes up to the same high F# /G \flat , and it was the same thing there—I also have performed that work twice, and both times I found myself changing the fingerings I used several times to find the right combination of sound/stability/pitch/reliability.

From a number of the sources listed previously, a handful of *Gumboots* clarinetists who had their fingerings documented, and from my own experience, I have created two “*Gumboots*-customized” fingering charts, which are included as appendices.⁷⁵ Appendix E provides chains of fingerings used by clarinetists for the section from rehearsal H to rehearsal J. Specific equipment information is included as well. Appendix F provides all the fingerings I have collected organized by pitch.

Bass Clarinet Intonation

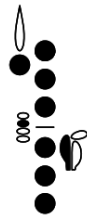
Given the range of the bass clarinet being used in Part 1, there are a few intonation challenges worth mentioning. First, the heterophonic melodic lines (played by the bass clarinet with either the first violin or viola) in the first movement are unison in pitch, even if they are not precisely lining up rhythmically. The bass clarinet is granted some extra flexibility with the use of vibrato, but there are many places where not only pitch but timbre must be matched between the bass clarinet and the strings. As described in chapter 2, the very first note played by the clarinet and viola together is stunningly powerful when it can be delivered so that it is impossible for the listener to distinguish the sound of the individual instruments from each other, until they diverge and begin delivering the melodic line independently.

⁷⁵ The high F# in m. 186 was the only note I really had trouble with -- finding a fingering, figuring out the voicing, and then hitting reliably once the other elements were sorted out. I mastered that note and the passage around it within about a week of the performance. This was also true for a number of the other clarinetists with whom I corresponded in my research. It was simply one of the last things to fall into place, but immensely rewarding once it did.)

Additionally, given the gradual, continual dynamic increase through the movement, it is easy to incrementally adjust the instrument's intonation to compensate as pitch shifts with dynamic changes. I began with the middle of the neck of the instrument pulled out quite a significant amount (on my Buffet Prestige—all the way to the cork), and then I pushed in incrementally at m. 150, just after letter D, and again before letter G. Doing this allowed me to play in tune throughout the movement without significant embouchure strain, and to use the fingerings that were most reliable and practical for me.

Finally, there is the infamous long B, which is radically sharp on almost every bass clarinet. This note occurs frequently throughout Part 1 and is always in unison with either the viola or the first violin. On my Buffet Prestige, it is faithfully twenty cents sharper than the notes around it. I could lip down this pitch enough, but not reliably, and not without sacrificing tone quality. Given the exposed nature of this pitch throughout the movement, I came up with another solution.⁷⁶ Instead of using the standard register key above the left thumb, I brought my right thumb around the side of the instrument and used the second side key from the top (see Figure 5.1 below). On some older Selmer instruments there is an option to shade the long B by closing the low C and C \sharp pads while keeping the D tone hole open. Unfortunately, modern Selmer instruments are now made so that this shading technique is no longer possible.

Figure 5.1: Alternative Fingering for Long B Using Side “Register” Key.

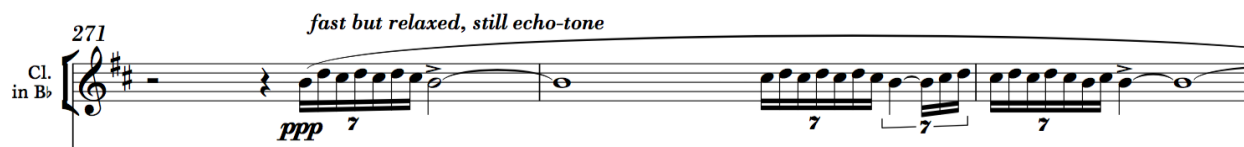


⁷⁶ Thanks to Levi Tracy for showing me this fingering.

On the B \flat clarinet: From rehearsal K onwards

The most challenging issue in the second half of Part 1 is simply staying together (more in the ensemble section below). This is deceptively difficult, and requires the utmost attention from every player. To help maintain ensemble cohesion from mm. 271 to 277 (see Figure 5.2), it is crucial for the clarinet to preserve the rhythmic integrity of the larger beat, whether or not the precise number of ornamental notes is executed. The septuplets should sound improvisational, not robotic.

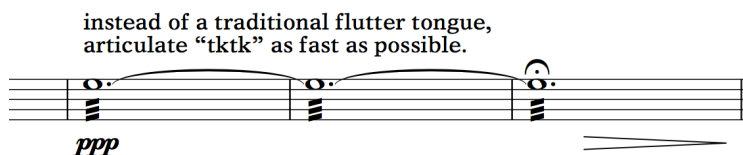
Figure 5.2: Clarinet Septuplets (mm. 271-73).



The grace notes in mm. 274 and 275 need to be delivered with care as well. I dropped one pair of grace notes (i.e. I played four grace notes in m. 274, instead of six, and two grace notes in m. 275, instead of four) in each spot in order to be clear here.

Finally, at the very end of the movement, David Bruce asks for a very specific articulation (see Figure 5.3).

Figure 5.3: Clarinet Articulation of Final Note of Part 1.



You may find that you need to find a slightly different syllable or use of the tongue to accomplish the desired result. I simply did my best to imitate what I had heard in recordings. The *ppp* marking is also a bit beyond possibility while producing this sort of articulation, and in order to get the texture of the articulation through the sound of the strings, you may need to start closer

to *piano* before fading out, or insert a small crescendo and decrescendo in, as does Sarah Beaty in the Ensemble ACJW recording.

Part 2.

Dance 1. Angry, “with attitude”

The clarinet part in the first dance is relatively straightforward. The repeated sixteenth note passages should help convey the “anger” and “attitude” called for by the composer, but if you try to incorporate this into every note, the tempo will lose momentum. Instead, digging into the marked accents will effectively communicate the intended emotions.

As mentioned in both chapters 3 and 4, some players take liberty with the articulation, rhythm, and character of the melodic line at rehearsal B (“b” material, see Figure 5.4). Some players interpret Bruce’s marking, “flippantly,” as an indication to play shorter and lighter.⁷⁷ Others convey it more casually.⁷⁸

Figure 5.4: Dance 1 “b” Material in the Clarinet Part at Rehearsal B.

340

344

347

mf flippantly

ff sub. aggressivo

mf sub. 3

⁷⁷ This can be heard in Shields’ recording discussed in chapter 4.

⁷⁸ This can be heard in Bliss’ recording discussed in chapter 4.

Listening to Bliss' recording, in particular, helped shape my own approach and interpretation of this motif. I made small adjustments where needed in order to deliver the larger character. I added a few slurs and blurred through a few rests in order to deliver it more cleanly at the appropriate tempo. Imitating Bliss, I also added a small glissando over the barline from m. 347 into m. 348.

Throughout this section, it is important to emphasize the beats so that the listener can feel the pulse. Bruce has marked some beats with tenutos (see previous Figure 5.4), but in m. 343 and m. 348 there are no tenutos on the low D's. As the ear will tend to hear the upper note as being "on the beat," care should be taken to emphasize the low D's strongly enough so that the pulse remains clear.

For the tremolo on the third beat of mm. 356 and 362 (see Figure 5.5), I played the E with my first finger down and trilled up to the G by lifting my second and third fingers.

Figure 5.5: Clarinet Tremolos in m. 356 of Dance 1.



Moving in and out of the $\frac{6}{8}$ section between rehearsal F and G can be slightly disorienting. Thinking in three, while subdividing into six, will help you to make a steady transition into G, at which point the clarinetist has the responsibility of setting the tempo with the return of the repeated sixteenths from the "a" motif.

This dance also introduces the first spots in Part 2 that require double-tonguing to play as notated, which the vast majority of clarinetists cannot do. Adding slurs where you need to is more than appropriate. As Todd Palmer expressed to me in a phone conversation, "it's not a big deal to change the articulation to accommodate one's best playing of a passage." However, it is

I chose to slur the entire run. Some players deliver it with mixed articulation. James Shields starts off double-tonguing for the first octave and turns it into a slur for the rest.⁷⁹ Another interesting solution, used by clarinetist Gary Gorczyca, is to flutter tongue through the run.

Finally, since the final two notes cannot be slurred, with the voicing change required given their identical fingering, many players choose to fill in the scale between the E and A, adding an F# and G# in between. You will hear this in the Ensemble ACJW, Todd Palmer Spoleto Festival, and the John Klinghammer recordings.

Dance 2.

The second dance presents a few more challenges. As mentioned in chapter 2, this dance is felt in one. It is relatively straightforward until Rehearsal K (see Figure 2.17), where at $\text{♩} = 208$, it is impossible to play or hear the quintuplet subdivisions precisely. The main issue is whether you land on or off the beat. Only every other measure actually lands on a downbeat. If you further lock in landing on the “and” of the beat in these measures, then the rest of the notes simply need to be placed just before or just after this simple subdivision. The strict rhythmic precision is less important than the actual horizontal melodic line that is carried out over five bar phrases, even though the notes are short and spaced apart. It is unnecessary to spend time practicing it so slowly that everything is exactly placed as notated, as this will be impossible to translate into the actual tempo. It is not technically difficult, and is much easier to play by ear. The strings remain steady beneath you, making it easy to hear the larger pulse, and fit your part into it.

At m. 500 the clarinet part becomes even more frenzied (see Figure 2.19). Here again, the *effect* is much more important than the *precision* of the notes. Emphasizing downbeats is the most helpful thing you can do to help your ensemble maintain its groove. It is also important

⁷⁹ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #15.

to remember that, despite its frenetic energy, your part is of secondary importance to the second violin throughout both of these sections. This may also help you to deliver this flurried passage more lightly and easily. In reality, it all goes by too fast for small mistakes to be noticeable to the listener.

Dance 3.

The trickiest technical challenge of the third dance is the opening glissando, which repeats again in m. 575 (see Figure 3.9). It crosses two register “breaks” on the instrument, and navigating these without interruption is difficult. Nearly every clarinetist with whom I spoke had a slightly different solution to this issue. Some players turned the indicated glissando into more of a “run.” This can be heard in the recordings of Sarah Beaty, James Shields, John Klinghammer, and Todd Palmer, discussed in chapter 4. Some players extended the front end of the glissando and delivered the top end quickly, while others did the reverse. I was able to more cleanly execute a gradual glissando from the high C# to the top G (fingered with the thumb, register key, and first finger only), than I was from the initial E up towards that first break. Julian Bliss is the only person I have heard deliver a slow and evenly gauged glissando. This is both dramatic and impressive, but may not be practical for a lot of players. I am not sure how the composer envisioned this, but I believe that you have to find what works for you. Be wary, however, not to sit on the top note, as the arrival to the G should act as the downbeat of the second measure. Figuring out how to work this cue with your ensemble is a bit tricky and may require extra attention.

Dance 4. Light and joyful.

One of my biggest challenges with this dance was fitting my part into the rest of the ensemble’s at the top of the movement. As described in chapter 2, there is a strong feeling of

hemiola, and the clarinet is right in the middle of it. It is nearly impossible to feel and hear the violin part in anything but three, but the clarinet part is much easier to feel in two. Nonetheless, it is very difficult to shut the violins out and feel the two against their three. The viola and cello can help with this, but their pattern includes a regular offbeat, and playing *pizzicato*, they are dominated by the violins' stronger *arco* sound.

I did my best to listen to and focus on the downbeats coming from all of these voices; and most especially, to the full two-bar phrase of the violins and its arch. If you try to count this part precisely you will almost certainly fail. You have to count the larger beats and fit your part into them. Doing rhythmic exercises such as speaking while tapping is useful. Playing along with a recording may help, but the recording may not be quite precise either. What helped me the most was recording the quartet playing without me, and then practicing along with that recording. Using a mobile phone application called AnyTune, I was able to slow down and speed up these recordings for my individual practice needs.

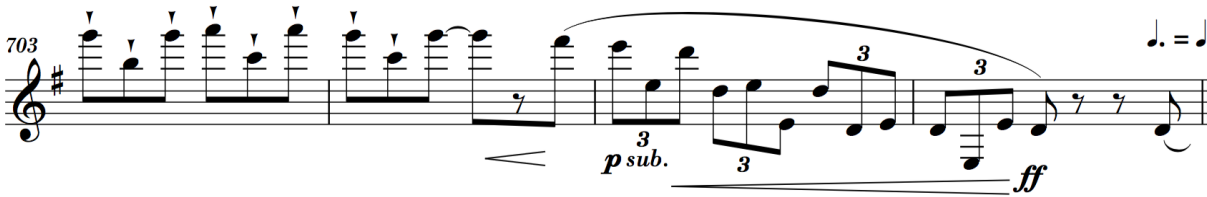
The rather spasmodic runs at m. 695 and m. 705 are quite tricky (see Figures 5.9 and 5.10). The alternative “open” fingering for the high D is extremely useful for the downbeat of 696. Getting all the notes exactly right is again less important than how they are delivered. These gymnastic runs should sound gleeful and exuberant. In the first one, the dynamics are completely irrelevant. If anything, you need to play the opposite of the printed dynamics so that the lower notes can be heard.

Figure 5.9: Spasmodic Clarinet Run in mm. 694-95 of Dance 4.



However, the crescendo is crucial for the run in m. 705.

Figure 5.10: Spasmodic Clarinet Run in m. 705 of Dance 4.



The open D fingering is also helpful throughout the $\frac{3}{4}$ sections (after U and again after W) on the first beat jumping back and forth to the F# and then the A (see Figure 5.11).

Figure 5.11: Clarinet at m. 729 in Dance 4.



Upon the reiteration of the “a” material at rehearsal V, the triplets in the clarinet line are a bit trickier to deliver than they appear. After the rhythmic challenges of the first “a” section, the new triplet line can easily be felt in three. Unfortunately, once the clarinet enters, the violins jump into a duple pulse, and you are again at odds with each other. Like the beginning of the movement, it should be felt in one with strong emphases on downbeats. If the tempo is too slow, this is not possible. If it is too fast, the melodic contour of the clarinet line is lost, and instead a more “frenzied” effect is created.⁸⁰ In contrast, a slightly more reserved delivery will allow for emphasis on certain notes to help maintain the ensemble pulse and support the melodic contour of the triplet line.⁸¹

At the very end of dance, the articulated sixteenth note passages are again impossible to single-tongue at tempo. Slurring two and tonguing two is the best option to maintain the texture

⁸⁰ E.g., listen to Palmer’s Spoleto Festival recording.

⁸¹ E.g., listen to Shields’s recording.

of the articulation notated, but slurring larger groupings cleanly is better than articulating them poorly. For example, Shields slurs groups of twos and fours, rather than slurring the full five to nine note groupings. Keeping the excitement of a fast tempo here is more important than the articulation. Additionally, the violins are slurring their runs throughout this section, so it does not sound out of place if the clarinet also slurs them.

Dance 5. Jubilante.

Most of the issues in this movement revolve around rhythmic cohesion. For the clarinetist, though, this dance is all about endurance. It is technically challenging, has essentially no rest, requires loud dynamics, and stays almost entirely in the higher registers of the instrument.

In terms of technical issues, this movement takes practice, but it lies fairly well on the instrument. The most challenging spots are the large interval leaps at the top of the movement (which return once more later), the sixteenth note runs in m. 917, the trills in m. 938 (especially the high A trill on the downbeat of m. 939), and maintaining enough stamina to play through to the final note in the altissimo range. Articulation is not an issue in this movement. In m. 907, there is a short thirty-second note run marked staccato, but this can certainly be slurred.

Emerging from the quasi-tremolos and into the downbeat of the following measure, as mentioned in chapter 2 (see Figure 2.40) is challenging. Listening to the second violin and viola pattern (see Figure 2.34) will help. Making a crescendo and speeding up the tremolo into the next measure will also help add more excitement to the figure. Lastly, the tremolo will speak more cleanly if you do not try to move your fingers too quickly. Beaty, Palmer, and Bliss all offer excellent examples of this figure in their recordings.

In Dance 5, I occasionally found it challenging to maintain my independent melodic line against the first violin's counter-melody (or vice versa). The most difficult spots seemed to be between rehearsals Y and Z, as well as from approximately m. 900 to 910. The more you know

the first violin part, the easier it will be to ignore it when you need to. Generally speaking, especially in this movement, the more you can rely on your ear and the less on reading your music, the better. You will inevitably make a few mistakes, and if you get thrown too far, jumping back into this fast-paced mixed-meter music is especially challenging. You may want to plan ahead to leave out a note here or there. I dropped the final two trills across m. 938 into 939 (the E and the A), as well as the lower A sixteenth note pickup into m. 939. This gave me an extra moment to land the high A on the downbeat of m. 939 strongly and execute the last few measures successfully.

For the Strings

In this section, I will present some of what the string players I corresponded with had to say. Complete interview responses can be found in Appendix D.

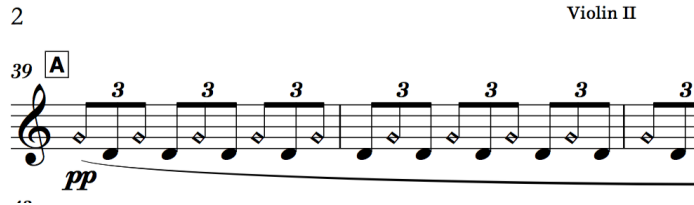
Part 1

One of the main issues for string players in this movement seems to be related to notation (which was reportedly sometimes inconsistent or somewhat unclear). Most frequently this involved harmonics. In a few cases, the harmonics simply did not speak well. Violist Pamela Freund-Striplen reported they worked better when she moved closer to the bridge. In other instances it had more to do with dynamic inconsistencies between the alternating sounding pitches and harmonics. Violinist Eunae Koh explains,

For example, in measure 39 [see Figure 5.12], the second violin has harmonics in *pp*. The harmonic sounds an octave higher 'D' and the resonance remained too long to have a clear open D string (the lower one). It ended up sounding almost just like harmonics instead of an alternation between the open D string and the harmonics. . . . We tried not using the open D string and played the same note on a different string. Then, since we had string crossing, it sounded more clear. However, somehow that resulted in too clear of a sound, and it didn't really have the foggy feeling we were aiming for. So, we decided

to use the open string. I assume that the composer might have wanted to be unclear in the texture.⁸²

Figure 5.12: Violin II Harmonics at Rehearsal A in Part 1.



In yet a few more cases, there appear to be multiple realizations possible for the harmonic notation, depending on whether they are meant to be played at sounding or placement pitch. I did not have a chance to clarify these details with Bruce directly, but my advice would be to listen to a few different recordings to see what other players have done. Additionally, remember that in Part 1, the main purpose of the frequent triplets with harmonics is to create movement, but not too clearly. As described in chapter 2, the triplet motion between only two pitches already sounds duple, and against the free and somewhat improvisational melodic line, the rhythm should feel vague. The triplets still create a sense of motion and add texture to the sound.

In terms of technical difficulties, most players reported that the parts were quite playable, albeit with plenty of practice. There are a handful of double stops in the piece that are not very practical. One second violinist mentioned they played the whole passage at M on the D string, rather than crossing strings as is notated in the part.⁸³ The most important thing to keep in mind when approaching these trouble spots, is to consider what the intended effect of the composer may have been. If you cannot deliver something as it is notated, figure out how to best manage it in a way that works for you. But remember that, more often than not, Bruce's notations are very intentional.

⁸²From correspondence with artist, see Appendix D.

⁸³ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix D.

The string soli sections should be relished. They offer a break in the growing intensity at rehearsal D, and a recovery period at rehearsal L, following the climax of the movement. They should be played freely as if improvising straight from your heart. They can evoke a very intense sadness. Listen to a number of different recordings to get a sense of the variety of interpretation of these solo lines that are passed around the quartet in these sections; but in the end, it is best to simply play from your heart.

For the violist, beginning at letter K, it is easy to get lost in the repetitive part (see Figure 5.15). This ostinato lasts for nearly two full pages. Writing in cues is essential, but there is also room for the violist to be expressive with this line, which may help to prevent getting lost in this section.

Figure 5.13: Viola Ostinato at Rehearsal K in Part 1.

4
237 **K** **Tranquillo** $\text{♩} = 76$ Viola
sul tasto, tenuto
always use open strings where poss.

pppp
emerging from nothing, becoming only a little more than nothing

240 *pp*

243

246

249

At rehearsal L, the strings should be aware that the clarinet is marked *ppp* but needs to come out over top of the strings, who are marked between *pp* and *p*. But the softer that the

strings can play the better, since the clarinet is actually able to play a true *ppp*, which can be very compelling musically.

Part 2

The first violin should note that, at rehearsal E, they do not have “flippantly” marked in their part as the clarinet does when they play the same motif at rehearsal B; however, it is reasonable to assume the term should apply in both iterations of the material.

In Dance 2, there is a three-octave leap in the first violin part to watch out for in m. 529 (see Figure 5.16).

Figure 5.14: Three Octave Jump in First Violin Part of Dance 2 (mm. 525-31).



At K, the second violin should be very assertive in coming to the foreground as notated in the part, despite all of the craziness happening in the clarinet part. The violin part is the primary line, the clarinet part is secondary. In the “c” section of Dance 4, the first violin has a similar melodic motif that should be brought out over the clarinet and rest of the ensemble.

Throughout Part 2, there are frequent jumps from *arco* to *pizzicato*, which are often tricky (e.g., see Figure 5.17).

Figure 5.15: Violin I Pizzicato to Arco Jump in Dance 3 at Rehearsal R.



Violist Pamela Freund-Striplen explained, “I notated reminders to ‘hold bow’ in some *pizzicato* passages which I would ordinarily play with a less ‘arco-ready’ grip.”⁸⁴

In Dance 4, my violist was confused about the notation and corresponding written instruction for mm. 688, 690, and 694 (see Figure 5.18). In his words,

[Bruce] indicates that the F is to be played on the G string and the D to be the open D string, but why you would “deaden” the open string before it has even been played is a mystery to me. I decided to play the open D as a left-hand *pizzicato*, and played the F *pizzicato* with the right hand.

Figure 5.16: Viola Written Instructions in Dance 4 (mm. 688-92).

r.h. should deaden the open string immediately after the first pizz before playing the second pizz. on the open string normally

ff *sfz* *sfz* *sfz*

Many issues in Part 2 relate to the entire ensemble and will be addressed in greater detail in the sections below.

For the Quintet

Seating

Preferred seating arrangements will vary from group to group as well as depend upon the acoustics of your performance space. It may be worth trying a couple of different options, if you have the time. The standard setups would be to have the clarinet either in the middle of the ensemble or on the end across from the first violin. Some of the clarinetists I spoke with preferred to sit opposite the first violin for communication; others preferred to sit in the center for the sense of immersion it provided. In either of these situations, you may then find that your ensemble prefers having the viola or cello on the “outside” of the quartet. Most performers find it useful for the clarinetist and violist to sit next to each other (regardless of how that is

⁸⁴ From correspondence with artist, see Appendix D, question #3a.

accomplished). Of course, you can always think outside the box. Clarinetist Matthew Hunt and Ensemble 360 perform routinely at a theater “in the round,” and thus usually play *Gumboots* in a circular formation. Another interesting choice is to perform the piece with the first violinist, second violinist, violist and clarinetist standing, with the bass clarinet on a long peg and the cello on a box.⁸⁵

Rehearsal

Of the musicians I talked with, the number of rehearsals varied from two to nine, but averaged around four of two or three hours each.⁸⁶ Other factors you will want to consider when estimating and planning rehearsal needs in advance are (1) whether any of the players have played the piece before and (2) whether the ensemble (or any of its members) have played together before or even play together regularly (such as a formed string quartet). I would recommend a minimum of four rehearsals if you haven’t performed the piece before, more if you are not playing with a formed ensemble. Tony Striplen, bass clarinetist of the San Francisco Symphony, shared his experience:

While I had lived with the piece for 6 months the rest of the group had not. It was a steep learning curve for the group trying to ready a challenging new piece with only 3 rehearsals in about 5 days. We were fairly successful at achieving cohesion as an ensemble, but simply ran out of time trying to take it to the next level of pure musicality and delivering an interpretation. There was not enough time to approach an interpretation. Overall, I think our group underestimated the amount of time needed to put the piece together. As an ad hoc group, some individuals were not willing to invest more rehearsal time than ultimately proved to be necessary. This would have been a very different situation if I had chosen to work with an established string quartet that conceivably could have used their regular rehearsals to learn the piece and live with it over a longer period of time.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #14.

⁸⁶ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #11.

⁸⁷ From correspondence with artist, see Appendix C, question #12.

Tempos

I initially felt that Bruce’s tempos for the dances were marked much too quickly across the board. Upon extensive listening and in-depth studying, however, I have come to believe that his tempo indications are actually carefully chosen and will very accurately produce the intended feeling(s) of the music.

From listening to the various recordings I discussed in chapter 4, I have constructed a table to show the range of tempo that I feel can work in the piece. I have included a column with Bruce’s markings, one with what I feel is the ideal tempo in each case, and columns on each side with minimums and maximums on either side of that ideal. Some of these ranges are fairly large, and so may significantly change the feel and emotion of the movement. The ideal tempo will also vary, of course, depending on acoustical environments.

Figure 5.17: Table of Recommended Tempo Ranges for *Gumboots*.

	Marked	Minimum	Ideal	Maximum
Part 1	50	40	48	52
K. Tranquillo	76	60	68	76
Dance 1. Angry, “with attitude”	108	100	108	116
Dance 2. Presto	204	180	190	212
Dance 3.	144	116	126	136
Dance 4. Light and Joyful.				
a & b 1 st time	144	116	126	144
c & d 1 st time	96 / 144	88 / 132	96 / 144	100/150
a & b 2 nd time	144	120	132	144
c & d 2 nd time	144 / 216	120 / 180	132 / 198	216
Dance 5. Jubilante.	132	104	116	124

But whatever your ideal tempo may be, it may not be obtainable due to lack of rehearsal time, technical difficulties, or ensemble issues, or other difficulties. If you cannot play something as fast as you would like, you may need to shift how you play it.

For Part 1, there is a wide range and freedom of tempo, as can be noted in the table above and the table of tempos from various recordings in chapter 4 (Figure 4.1). Playing too fast is unlikely to be a concern. The main danger is playing too slowly.⁸⁸ The melodic lines are beautiful and it is natural to want to savor them, but the music can become stagnant and even boring if it loses its forward motion. There are places where one can hold back and draw out the music (mainly in the string soli sections), but these sections will not have this impact if the overall tempo does not move. This forward motion is also much of what contributes to the gradual, powerful journey to the climax of the movement.

Although not notated, the tempo should push forward from rehearsal G to rehearsal J. At the “Poco meno mosso” marked in m. 165, but it is important for the clarinetist that the tempo does not drag. The clarinetist absolutely needs to lead through this section, while the first violinist follows and cues the rest of the strings. Similarly, in the “Tranquillo” section following rehearsal K, the viola needs to make sure to keep a steady pulse to maintain forward motion underneath the long lines above. Once the viola ostinato stops, it is easy to lose the pulse, and consequently the forward motion (which should continue through until the final few chords).

If Dance 1 gets too slow, it becomes heavy and loses the “dance” feel. If it goes too fast, it seems fleeting and loses the sense of anger it is meant to depict.

Dance 2’s marked tempo is challenging to achieve, but if it drags below the minimum tempo indicated in Figure 5.17, it also sounds heavy and the energy and forward motion of the dance is lost. Conversely, if it goes faster than the maximum noted, it feels rushed, and the listener cannot process and absorb the music quickly enough.

⁸⁸ It should be noted that there is a misprint in the score and parts at Rehearsal F. It should be $\downarrow = 50$, not $\downarrow = 50$.

Dance 3 is the one exception in Bruce's tempo markings that is absolutely too fast. The only performance I have heard that comes close to that tempo is the 2008 premiere at Carnegie Hall. As discussed in chapter 4, it sounds uncomfortably frenzied, whereas a more moderate tempo feels more appropriately bouncy, playful, and full of glee. On the flip side, in order to bring out the wonderful joyous gaiety contained in the notes on the page, it absolutely cannot go too slow. That said, tempo is only one element of the equation, and if you compare Klinghammer and Shields's recordings of this movement, you will find they sound quite different, despite being delivered at the same tempo.

Dance 4 also has some very demanding tempos, particularly the "a" and "d" sections, which are quite technically challenging. Therefore, the fastest tempo you can manage for the second iteration of the "d" material must serve as your gauge for all of the preceding tempos in the movement. Care should be taken to try and keep the relationships between sections the same as, or similar to, their original markings. For example, if you cannot take the "d" section any faster than $\text{♩} = 144$, you must save that for the second iteration, and take it slower the first time through. The tempo of the "c" section should be calculated so that a steady eighth note will be maintained across the meter change into the "d" section. The "a" and "b" sections should be the same both times, whatever that tempo may be. However, they should also be the same as the second "c" section, if possible. Beyond this, it is important that the "a" sections go fast enough that the "b" sections do not sound too slow and become disconnected. Furthermore, if the "b" section goes too slowly, the "c" section will not feel "relaxed" (as it is marked), in comparison.⁸⁹ If the "a" material goes too slowly either time, it also begins to sound careful, and mistakes become much more apparent. It is actually easier to play at a faster tempo.

There is an error in the score and parts for the tempo of Dance 5. It is marked at $\text{♩} = 132$. Instead, it should be: $\text{♩} = 132$. This is clearly reflected in all of the recordings that have been

⁸⁹ This effect can be heard in Klinghammer's recording.

discussed. The slowest of these is Klinghammer's, as mentioned in chapter 4. At ♩=108; they still make it work, but it cannot survive too much slower than that. On the other end of the spectrum, the fastest recording of this movement is again the 2008 premiere (at ♩=129), which feels too frantic to me. The next in line is Bliss's recording (at ♩=123). This tempo works very well for Bliss, but most players could not deliver it so successfully at that speed.

In the end, you may have to find a compromise between your ideal tempo and the tempo at which your ensemble is able to play.

Rhythmic Cohesion

One of the biggest obstacles to achieving your desired tempo is maintaining the rhythmic cohesion of the ensemble. Alex Morris, assistant principal clarinetist of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, describes the challenges of putting *Gumboots* together like this:

The piece is very difficult to put together. The parts are individually very difficult. They often involve techniques and styles of playing that classical players aren't used to. The faster movements in particular have very complicated rhythms, changes, overlapping parts that often don't sound like they belong together. I found that it's not really the sort of piece you can prepare and play once. I've performed it at least 10-15 times and it was only really the last few that I felt like it was really working. It took many hours of slow practice both individually and together to get everything working. I guess if I could offer advice it is to prepare very methodically. The energy of the piece will be even more effective if all of the rhythmic devices that are built into it work properly.

Most of the players with whom I have had contact feel similarly.⁹⁰ It requires a great deal of patience and focus.

As described in chapter 2, Part 1 is notated precisely, but much of it sounds rhythmically vague. This makes it deceptively difficult for the ensemble to stay together. The most important thing is not to go too slowly, for both stamina and musical motion. The first half of the movement should absolutely be felt in one. Additionally, finding a way to regularly cue

⁹⁰ See Appendix C.

downbeats and entrances will greatly assist with ensemble cohesion. In Shields' recording discussed in chapter 4, you can see him making a pronounced vertical motion with his right leg to help "conduct" and maintain the ensemble pulse and togetherness. Violinist Eunae Koh described her ensemble's experience this way:

In Part 1, there were two main issues. One is that when we tried to be together, the flow of music stopped. I think it has to do with giving cues. [. . .] it's important to show inner feeling, yearning and long phrases. Mostly, clarinet has the tune and strings are just drawing background, but since the tune doesn't really have a strong beat, it was a little confusing to be together. So, the first violin had to give cues each bar, and it was challenging not to bother the beautiful melody of the clarinet at the same time. I think the only solution is just to minimize the cue as much as possible.

From rehearsal G to H, it becomes easier to remain together because the cello is playing steady quarter notes. However, cues from H to J are very important to keep the piece moving forward, and to keep the clarinetist from becoming fatigued while playing the extended high altissimo passages. As discussed in the previous section, both of the soli string segments (at rehearsals B and J) will require a bit of time to sort out cuing.

With the entrance of the viola ostinato at K, there is finally a clear pulse; however, the ostinato's repetitions do not line up with bar lines, and the principal material is slow and amorphous, making it easy to lose track of where you are. Additionally, as mentioned in the string section, it is easy for the violist to get lost. As with the first half of the movement, some sort of continual physical conducting and cuing motions will greatly assist in keeping the ensemble together. Once the viola's ostinato stops at m. 299, it is important to keep feeling the pulse so that the slow melodic lines from there to the end do not drag too much.

A number of musicians I spoke with mentioned that they, or someone in their ensemble, actually performed many, if not all, sections of Part 1 from the score.

Dance 1 is rhythmically clear and steady, making it easy to stay together. The only potential ensemble issue is moving in and out of the § section (see Figure 5.20). It is up to the

clarinetist to maintain the tempo at G when it returns to $\frac{3}{4}$ time. Maintaining the eighth note subdivision is paramount.

Figure 5.18: Transition from $\frac{6}{8}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ at Rehearsal G in Dance 1.

The musical score for Figure 5.18 shows a transition from 6/8 to 3/4 time. The instruments are Clarinet in Bb (Cl. in Bb), Violin I (Vn. I), Violin II (Vn. II), Viola (Va.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The score is marked with a rehearsal sign 'G' at measure 383. The tempo is marked 'ff' (fortissimo). The Clarinet part features a complex rhythmic pattern with eighth notes and a quintuplet. The Violin and Viola parts have a similar rhythmic pattern, while the Viola and Violoncello parts have a simpler pattern. The Violoncello part is marked 'pizz.' (pizzicato) and 'ff'. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (Bb).

Dance 2, as long as it is fast enough to be felt in one and maintains strong downbeats throughout, is also straight-forward and presents few rhythmic challenges for the ensemble. Be careful (both individually and as an ensemble) to make sure the quintuplets do not become duple when they are broken into quarter and dotted quarter divisions (e.g., see Figure 5.21).

Figure 5.19: Violoncello Part in Dance 2 (mm. 481 - 485).

The musical score for Figure 5.19 shows the Violoncello part in Dance 2, measures 481-485. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a time signature of 3/4. The part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, with quintuplets indicated by a bracket and the number '5' above the notes. The notes are G, A, Bb, C, and D.

The more frenzied clarinet line at J and K can be confusing for the strings, but maintaining strong pulses on the downbeats around the entire ensemble will help to keep these sections

together. My ensemble had a little trouble with the stringendo at the end of the movement. Either the first violinist or the clarinetist needs to lead this very clearly.

As mentioned, the third dance is marked faster than both reason and necessity require. But even at a more reserved tempo, it presents a number of ensemble issues. First, cuing the ensemble entrance into the second measure is difficult. In addition, delivering a cue into a compound meter is even more difficult. It will likely work the best for the clarinetist to cue, but it is challenging to do while delivering a difficult upwards glissando, and will require some practice with the ensemble. Alternatively, the first violin could cue the downbeat as well, if the clarinetist is comfortable with it.

Secondly, all of the instruments' parts do not always line up with the same subdivisions of the compound meter. As Kate Hamaker, violinist with Klinghammer and Art of Élan, describes,

In Dance 3 there are times where the beat pattern for each instrument varies (some might be feeling it in 3+2+2, while others might be feeling 2+3+2 or some variation). We embraced it and simply put in beat patterns that made sense for our own parts. If everyone has a good sense of rhythm it shouldn't matter how people are feeling it individually.

There are also a couple of brief meter changes from $\frac{7}{8}$ to $\frac{4}{8}$, and back again, that take some ensemble work to navigate through.

The opening of Dance 4 is deceptively challenging to manage as an ensemble. Each individual part is very straight-forward, but they play off of each other at a very fast tempo. Marked in $\frac{6}{8}$, one would guess that it is meant to be felt in two. However, the violins are playing on the first, third, and fifth eighth notes, clearly outlining a three division. The clarinet part can be thought of in either two or three; but catching the off-beats when trying to think in such a fast three is next to impossible. This is another situation, like with Dance 2, where everyone needs to feel the pulse in one. In the end, I found that I needed to simply play this section more by ear than by calculated subdivisions. Listening to the shape of the violin line going up one measure

and down the next, helped to lock in every downbeat. Having the violins play a true *piano* and getting the viola to bring out the pizzicatos strongly, may help in fitting this section together.

The transitions between sections in Dance 4 can also be problematic. Moving into the “c” material can be awkward, and although the eighth note remains the same when moving from the “c” material into the “d” material, the change to $\frac{3}{4}$ meter is preceded by a lone $\frac{8}{8}$ bar, which can be disorienting. Listening to the cello’s quarter notes in the first bar of three will help the clarinet and first violin to arrive on the downbeat of the second bar together, where they begin playing the same melodic material together.

Dance 5 needs slow and deliberate ensemble practice in order to figure out how it fits together. The key is keeping a steady sixteenth subdivision, regardless of groupings. It is also useful to accent the downbeats of measures more strongly than other accented notes. This not only helps the ensemble stay together, but also helps the listener to hear the larger pulse of the movement. Julian Bliss describes these challenges aptly:

[I]f you listen too much to what’s going on it can throw you off! You have to keep the rhythmic feel in your head. I think the most challenging thing about this piece is to of course keep it very rhythmic, but it has to sound very easy and almost improvised at times. After a while you just have to feel it rather than counting everything.

Notation

A couple notational details warrant further explanation or clarification. First, in Dance 4, Bruce marks what look like H’s and N’s above the bars in the clarinet and first violin parts (see Figure 5.22). The “H” stands for the German word *Hauptstimme* (“primary voice”) or *Hauptsatz* (“main voice”). The “N” stands for *Nebenstimme* (“accompanying voice”). Bruce utilizes this notation simply to indicate that the primary melody is switching back and forth from the clarinet to the first violin.

Figure 5.20: Hauptstimme and Nebenstimme Notation in Dance 4 (mm. 735-8).



For both the third and fifth dances, the number of accents can be overwhelming. Violist Pamela Freund-Striplen recounted her quintet’s experience:

Some of the accents were logical to bring out, indicating rhythmic grouping, and some were clearly for emphasis. However, sometimes it seemed like overkill, making Dance 3 heavy instead of spirited. An overall direction might be more helpful to the players instead of littering the page with accents. This is easy enough to overcome.

In Dance 5, the difficulty of lining up the varied rhythmic patterns between different instruments is further compounded by parts being beamed and accented in different groupings of twos and threes. Bruce’s beaming mostly helps to show the emphases, lining the accents up so they fall “on the beat.” But this is not always the case. A bar beamed 3+3+3 may actually have accents that instead make it sound like 2+2+2+3. For example, in the clarinet part, it might be helpful to re-beam m. 850 (see Figure 5.23) to 2+2+2+3 in order to land the accents as marked.

Figure 5.21: Example of Beaming vs. Accent Patterns in Dance 5 (mm. 848-50).



Some performers have chosen to re-beam, re-bar, or re-subdivide sections.⁹¹

There was some additional confusion regarding string notation, which is addressed in more detail above within the “for the strings” section.

⁹¹ From correspondence with artists, see Appendices C and D.

Part 2 Attaccas

Following his program note, Bruce also includes a performance note regarding the flow of Part 2:

It is important that Part 2 feels like an almost continuous single movement. Therefore, the gaps between the individual dances should be as short as possible (without feeling rushed!). They should not feel like the breaks between movements, the effect should rather be something more like a wedding band that has to quickly start the next number to avoid losing the attention of the crowd.

Of course, between page turns and the need to maintain stamina, playing any of the movements *literally* attacca is not practical. Nonetheless, it is vital to the piece's overall arch to maintain a connection and sense of continuation between the movements as possible.

If the strings must tune during Part 2, the best place to do it is between Dances 3 and 4. The opening of Dance 4 naturally comes down in both volume and energy from the end of Dance 3, so it is less disruptive to tune here than between the second and third dances, for example. In terms of maintaining pitch from that point forward, the most logical place for the strings to tune, if necessary is after Dance 3.⁹² All tuning, however, should be as quiet and brief as possible.

Page Turns

Part 1 contains a few tricky page turns. Most can be sorted out with some extra copying and tape; however, a few for the violist require additional attention. The first occurs at the end of the opening duo that, given the layout of the coming pages, seems impossible to eliminate.⁹³ The solution most groups have utilized is for the cellist to turn the page for the violist. This will

⁹² This can be heard in the Klinghammer and Art of Élan recording discussed in chapter 4. They also pluck a few strings briefly between some of the other dances.

⁹³ Originally, based on listening to the archival recording of the premiere, there was a clean break in sound at the end of this opening duo. The bass clarinet then came in first afterwards, leaving the violist with time to make the page turn. But as mentioned in chapter 4, one of the changes which Bruce made after the premiere was to leave the viola holding the ostinato straight through into the start of the next section (at letter A) where the other strings begin to enter, thus eliminating the opportunity to turn a page.

not work, however, if the cellist is sitting in the center of the ensemble, with the violist to his or her left. In this case, the cellist has to reach all the way across to the far side of the violist's stand, which is both awkward and potentially noisy. In this situation, an alternative option might be to have a loose copy of the first page to the right of the violist's stand that the cellist can then pull off much more quietly and inconspicuously. There is one other spot in Part 1, just before the arpeggiated viola ostinato starts (at rehearsal K), where the rest of the strings are stranded holding a fermata while they wait for the violist to turn a page before beginning the ostinato. This may or may not be a problem, but it is potentially distracting or may take longer than is musically ideal. It is an easy page turn for the clarinetist to make, if sitting on the end, to the immediate left of the violist.

Programming

If programming decisions are within your purview, *Gumboots* is a perfect piece around which to shape a thematic program. It presents a great opportunity to confront audiences with unsettling realities, but also to send them away full of hope and inspiration. It is extremely accessible and relatable, making it ideal for any audience.

The theme of my final doctoral lecture/recital was "Music of Trauma and Resilience." I programmed *Gumboots* with the Schumann *Romances* and "Abyss of the Birds" from *Quartet for the End of Time*. The Schumann was composed by someone who struggled his whole life with mental and emotional trauma. The Messiaen was composed in extreme and oppressive circumstances. *Gumboots* depicts the emotional journey of recovery from traumatic situations and life experiences.

The recital opened with the Schumann, after which I spoke about it and the "Abyss of the Birds," which I then played in complete darkness. Following an intermission, I gave a brief lecture about *Gumboots*, with the quartet playing examples, and closed the program with a full performance of the work.

I asked the clarinetists I spoke with about why they chose to program it (if it was their choice).⁹⁴ Julian Bliss wrote that “[a]fter the first performance, I decided to programme it everywhere I possibly could. It was refreshing to have something a bit different for clarinet and quartet.” John Klinghammer said, “I perform it because I want people to hear it, and because it’s an absolute crowd favorite. Inexperienced listeners and orchestra musicians alike all seem to respond to this piece in the same way—they come away feeling like they have really heard something special.”

I also asked players what they chose to program it with and why. In a number of cases, individuals, ensembles, and/or artistic directors tied the piece into some sort of overarching thematic idea for the concert. For example, the Gold Coast Players, under the artistic direction of violist Pamela Freund-Striplen, created a program titled “Rhythm and Shoes” that unfolded as follows:⁹⁵

Tango for Una Cabeza for Violin & Piano by Carlos Gardel

Milonga del Angel for Clarinet, Cello, and Piano by Astor Piazzolla (arr. by Pablo Zinger)

Invitacion al Danzon for Clarinet, Cello & Piano by Paquito D’Rivera

– Intermission –

Gumboots by David Bruce

Bliss answered, “I found that the piece worked quite well alongside the Brahms *Quintet*. I normally play the Bruce at the end of the first half and then Brahms in the second half.” This was the pairing chosen for his recording released in 2016. Other programming choices included the Bartók Contrasts, Khachaturian Trio for violin, clarinet, and piano, or Golijov’s *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*. Each of these has folk-like influences offering a thread of commonality across a concert program.

⁹⁴ From correspondence with artists, see Appendix C, Questions #3 and 3a.

⁹⁵ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C, question #3a.

Conclusion

Gumboots is an exceptional composition and a significant contribution to the chamber music repertoire, particularly within the small circle of existing repertoire for clarinet and string quartet. It utilizes the extreme versatility of both the B \flat and bass clarinets, showcasing beauty and technique, as well as power and delicacy. Not only is it a well-constructed and intricate chamber work, but it is extremely accessible to and relatable for audiences.

In almost every live recording discussed in chapter 4, you will hear thunderous applause, often between the dances, and frequently a laugh or exclamation at the clever or virtuosic ending of one of the dances. Julian Bliss reported that he has had “a 100% success rate with this piece! People love it. One of the first comments is that they didn’t know the bass clarinet could play that high! Secondly, they comment on how much fun the dances are.” Alex Morris commented that “the [audience] response was much stronger than I had anticipated. Audiences loved the piece, they loved the story and found it very powerful and uplifting. They liked the fact that the piece has a very wide emotional range, is very tonally pleasing and is also very virtuosic.”⁹⁶ As John Klinghammer reflected,

Responses have always been incredibly positive. Many people are blown away by the range and beauty of the bass clarinet. Some respond really well to the story of the Gumboot dancers. The most meaningful responses for me have come from fellow musicians and friends who play in better orchestras than I ever will actually telling me they were moved . . . something you rarely hear a professional tell you. Our main donor's wife at our Eko Nova concert last year literally walked away humming and dancing on the arm of her husband! Nothing better than that.

Its uplifting nature makes it an ideal concert closer. As Sarah Beaty reported, “Everyone loved it! Everyone found it very visceral, immediate and said it was such an uplifting finish they were dancing out of the hall . . . I have had this response many times.” It is also an extremely challenging yet immensely rewarding work to play. As Pamela Helton of the Third Millennium

⁹⁶ From correspondence with artist, see Appendix C, question #16.

Ensemble explained, “[it] has been a staple of our repertoire ever since we found it. Audiences love it, yet it challenges us musically and intellectually, and is a blast to play.”

Gumboots delights and moves both performers and audiences. I connect with it on a deeply personal level, as a musician and as a human being. I find that its emotional power can be encompassing and profoundly therapeutic. Performers of *Gumboots* extend to others the opportunity for a cathartic experience, while simultaneously sharing the music’s encouraging message of resilience and triumph.

Appendix A. Full Text of *Gumboots* Program Note by David Bruce

There is a paradox in music, and indeed all art—the fact that life-enriching art has been produced, even inspired by conditions of tragedy, brutality and oppression, a famous example being Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, written while he was in a prisoner of war camp. Gumboot Dancing bears this trait—it was born out of the brutal labour conditions in South Africa under Apartheid, in which black miners were chained together and wore Gumboots (wellington boots) while they worked in the flooded gold mines, because it was cheaper for the owners to supply the boots than to drain the floodwater from the mine. Apparently slapping the boots and chains was used by the workers as a form of communication, which was otherwise banned in the mine, and this later developed into a form of dance. If the examples of Gumboot Dancing available online are anything to go by, it is characterized by a huge vitality and zest for life. So this for me is a striking example of how something beautiful and life-enhancing can come out of something far more negative. Of course, this paradox has a far simpler explanation—the resilience of the human spirit.

My 'Gumboots' is in two parts of roughly equal length, the first is tender and slow moving, at times 'yearning'; at times seemingly expressing a kind of tranquility and inner peace. The second is a complete contrast, consisting of five, ever-more-lively 'gumboot dances', often joyful and always vital.

However, although there are some African music influences in the music, I don't see the piece as being specifically 'about' the Gumboot dancers, if anything it could be seen as an abstract celebration of the rejuvenating power of dance, moving as it does from introspection through to celebration. I would like to think however, that the emotional journey of the piece, and specifically the complete contrast between the two halves will force the listener to conjecture some kind of external 'meaning' to the music—the tenderness of the first half should 'haunt' us as we enjoy the bustle of the second; that bustle itself should force us to question or reevaluate the tranquility of the first half. But to impose a meaning beyond that would be stepping on dangerous ground—the fact is you will choose your own meaning, and hear your own story, whether I want you to or not.

David Bruce, St Albans, Sept 2008

APPENDIX B. Correspondence with David Bruce

This appendix contains the majority of the content relating to *Gumboots* from my correspondence with David Bruce between August 2016 through June 2017. They do not necessarily appear in the order in which they were actually asked and answered, but are rather organized to provide the easiest flow for the reader in this format. Minimal editing has been done for spelling and grammar. Anything included in brackets is my own commentary or explanation.

1. When did you move to England?

1970—I was only tiny!

2. Can you tell me a little bit about your family? What did your parents do? Do you have any siblings?

Dad—chemical engineer. Mum—housewife. No music at home, but grandparents on both sides were quite musical—grandad on Mum’s side played piano by ear.

3. What were some of your earliest musical influences?

Apparently, I liked Elgar’s *Pomp and Circumstance* when I was about four. Demanded piano lessons when I was a little older. I [first] wrote pop songs and then started writing for school ensembles like brass band.

4. What was your first instrument? What others have you learned?

Piano. I have lots of instruments at home and find it very helpful to use them when I'm composing—I can’t play many of them very well other than piano and guitar.

5. When did you first start composing?

Pop songs around 10-12. First ‘instrumental pieces’ around 14-15.

6. Who have been the most influential composers and/or teachers for you?

Stravinsky, Debussy, Sibelius, and Janacek. Both of my teachers George Benjamin and Harrison Birtwistle. Read this post about George: <http://www.davidbruce.net/blog/post410.asp>. Check some of my other blog posts which may also be useful.

7. What made you choose the instrumentation of a clarinet/bass clarinet and string quartet?

The instrumentation for the piece was given to me by Carnegie Hall, who commissioned it, so I had no choice in that. I had previously written a piece for a composer's workshop course at Carnegie (the piece is *Piosenki*, which you can hear on my website) which was mentored by Osvaldo Golijov and Dawn Upshaw, and I think that lead to the idea for the new commission—Todd Palmer and St Lawrence Quartet who premiered *Gumboots* also had a very close connection with Golijov and *Dreams and Prayers*. I wouldn't say that piece influenced my piece, if anything I was conscious of it and was trying to steer clear of it!

8. Did you consult any clarinetists as you were composing the work?

[Yes, Todd Palmer.]

9. Why did you decide (or prefer) to have the bass clarinet play in such a high range, that could have been more easily produced by a soprano clarinet?

You asked about the high bass clarinet notes. Part of the reason for writing in the higher register is for the 'straining' effect, which you get when something is difficult to play, it's a completely different effect, of course, to something easy that fits the instrument comfortably. There is actually a similar high note in the Golijov piece, I probably was aware of it at the time, I think mine's actually one note higher if I remember correctly. I did email Todd the passage and his initial reaction was that it was unplayable, but then he emailed an hour later and said 'Actually, it's fine!' Other than that, I don't think I had very much discussion with him. I do have a clarinet at home (along with most other instruments), and although I can't play much, I can use it to test things out. For example, things like the random note trill in the last dance, I wouldn't have been able to do if I didn't have the instrument in front of me.

10. How, when, and why did you decide on the title?

I often come to what an overall piece is about quite late in the day, when much of the piece is written. I wrote the dances first, and then had a very clear sense that the finished piece would be in the form it now takes—a series of short dances, prefaced by a long slow movement that was the same length—a sort of counter-balance to the dances if you like. The piece isn't really in the business of trying to directly relate to or depict Gumboot dancing, it's more that I'm interested in finding a resonant title that will stimulate the listener. I think my music is naturally filled with 'associations'—whether they be cultural influences, or kind of 'visual images' in the music which perhaps suggest a landscape or weather, or whatever, and I like finding titles that stimulate these in a direction I feel is appropriate to the piece. I feel like the piece may well have had a very different life if it were called 'Clarinet Quintet', if you see what I mean. I suppose it's part of the packaging the piece comes in.

11. How did you most attempt to incorporate the South African gumboot dance style into *Gumboots*?

So many of the influences in the music aren't directly related to South Africa or Gumboot dancing, there are quite a lot of influences from African music in a wider sense, as I was looking at that at the time. I've long been fascinated, for example, with music of the Baku Pygmies in Cameroon, and indeed I blogged a while back about one particular piece which inspired the rhythm in the last dance of *Gumboots* (<http://www.davidbruce.net/blog/post342.asp>). But other than that I'm not sure I have specific examples I can share with you.

12. What other influences do you feel you incorporated in this work? Jazz? Klezmer?

I'm not sure there are very many direct jazz influences on the piece. The influences come far more from the world of folk music and traditional music from around the world—in this case, particularly Africa. I've also had a long relationship with klezmer music and some people hear that in the piece, although in that case I think it's reached something of a background character, that is now part of my overall sound-world, rather than a specific attempt to write in that style. I'm always interested in bringing in techniques of playing from the folk/world music worlds that are often overlooked or not known about in the classical world, and klezmer clarinet writing is full of such things.

I'm also enclosing below a link to my recent opera *Nothing* which was premiered at Glyndebourne in Feb and comes to Danish National Opera next Feb. This isn't publicly available, it's just for your interest. Especially as it has a kind of 'coda' at the very end of the opera, in which I re-used and re-worked a little of the last section of Part 1 of *Gumboots*. Perhaps that shows you again how the music and the title are used for evocation rather than being specifically related to one thing—I've used part of my African-themed piece in a piece about Danish school kids! The point is, I suppose, they're all forming part of my personal 'Brucean world' and I suppose must have covered a similar kind of expression that I was looking for (in the opera, it's a kind of coda several years after the main action takes place, so I suppose I also wanted a sense of some 'different' music at this point).

APPENDIX C. Correspondence with *Gumboots* Clarinetists

I was able to get in touch with a number of clarinetists who have performed *Gumboots* and were generous enough to answer questions about their experiences with the piece. Below is a list of these individuals and their most prominent current performance position(s) or ensemble associations. For a complete list of performers and their *Gumboots* performance history, please see Appendix F. David Bruce also maintains updated lists of both past performances and upcoming performances on his website.⁹⁷

- 1) **Alex Morris**—assistant principal, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra
- 2) **Gary Gorczyca**—Chameleon Arts Ensemble (Boston, MA)
- 3) **James T. Shields**—principal, Oregon Symphony; associate artistic director, Chatter
- 4) **John Klinghammer**—3rd/bass, Kansas City Symphony
- 5) **José Luis Estellés**—principal, Orquesta Ciudad de Granada
- 6) **Julian Bliss**—soloist, chamber musician, recording artist
- 7) **Matthew Hunt**—principal, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie (Bremen); soloist and chamber musician
- 8) **Pamela Helton**—clarinetist and artistic director, Third Millennium Ensemble
- 9) **Peter Wright**—Buffet and D’Addario artist; principal emeritus, Jacksonville Symphony Orchestra
- 10) **Ralph Skiano**—principal, Detroit Symphony Orchestra (2015 - 2017), Cincinnati Symphony (2017)
- 11) **Sarah Beaty**—Decoda Ensemble
- 12) **Todd Palmer**—soloist, chamber musician, recording artist, lecturer, arranger
- 13) **Tony Striplen**—bass clarinet, San Francisco Opera (2000 - present)

Some questions changed slightly during the research period. Responses may reflect those changes, but the question and its answers deal with the same issue. I have not excluded any responses. If there is a question without a response from an individual, then the person did not

⁹⁷ www.davidbruce.net/works/gumboots.asp

answer it. The responses have been edited slightly for grammar and spelling, but are otherwise in the individual's own words, unless enclosed in brackets. Participants' responses will be identified by last names. I have included in brackets some paraphrased sentiments from verbal conversations with Gary Gorczyca and Todd Palmer.

My initial email to all participants looked something like the below:

Quickly, please know that:

- 1) I will not release any (otherwise unreleased) recordings you provide.
- 2) I will not publish anything regarding information you've provided me without giving you the opportunity to look it over.

First, a few requests:

1) Would you be willing to provide me with a copy of a recording of one of your performances of the piece—if you have one?

2) Would you be willing to scan me a copy of your part? I'd just like to look at added markings and such in terms of evaluating performance choices, etc.

**My goal is that I may get a sense of varied interpretive decisions and performance practice choices (fingerings, bass vs. soprano, any necessary changing of articulation . . . such as a few spots which pretty much require double tonguing, etc) from different clarinetists. I'm not interested in "judging" your performances or your choices, but simply noting them in terms of options for other performers to consider as well as the amount of variance and in what particular areas.*

3) Your permission for me to utilize your responses in my writing.

Second, some questions:

**FYI: Answer the questions below to the best of your ability. You are welcome to skip any or talk about anything that I didn't ask, as well. These questions can simply be starting points for discussion. I'm happy to hear any and all of your individual thoughts on the piece!*

1) How/when did you come across the work?

Beaty: Through the now ‘Ensemble Connect’ program at Carnegie Hall. We performed it at Carnegie and at Skidmore College. It was a thrill to perform it for the first time! And terrifying.

Bliss: I was asked to play the piece as part of the West Cork Music Festival. I had never heard of the work, nor had I played any bass clarinet before. I listened to a YouTube video and thought ‘Why not!’ I like a challenge, so learning the bass clarinet certainly gave me what I was looking for!

Estellés: I listened to it on Youtube (New York performance).

Gorczyca: I first heard of it through Deborah Boldin, the director of the Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston, who programmed *Gumboots* for its 2016-2017 season.

Helton: I was searching online for contemporary clarinet quintets about 6 years ago. I found *Gumboots* on YouTube and loved it instantly.

Hunt: I knew David from a small opera he wrote, and heard about the piece in the US, and programmed it.

Klinghammer: I was asked on somewhat late notice to perform the piece with Art of Elan in San Diego, back in either 2009 or 2010. Kate Hatmaker, who directs the series, is a big fan of David Bruce's, and I think they even commissioned his trio for viola, flute, and harp—*Eye of Night*. I know Kate because I play in the Breckenridge Music Festival with her in the summers, we're pretty good friends.

Morris: I came across the piece while in my undergrad studies in Australia. I was playing in a chamber group of clarinet plus string quartet and one of the other musicians found a link to a recording of the piece through the Carnegie Hall website, I think it was ACJW. I contacted David about the music and he was kind enough to send me parts to use.

Palmer: [work was commissioned *for* him]

Shields: I originally heard of the piece from Don Michaelis, who was an active volunteer and board member for Chatter, a chamber music organization that I help direct in Albuquerque, New Mexico. I listened to the piece and was particularly taken by the music in “Part I.” Later a cello colleague, James Holland, asked me to perform the work on a series he directs called “Albuquerque Chamber Soloists,” and I jumped at the chance. Later we assembled the same group from our Albuquerque Chamber Soloists performance and performed the work a second time at Chatter’s weekly Sunday morning performance. Needless to say the piece was a huge hit both times we performed it, especially at Chatter.

Skiano: I came across it after playing *Steampunk*, and looking for something else by David. He suggested I take a listen to the Ensemble ACJW recording.

Striplen: I discovered *Gumboots* while searching online for new pieces for clarinet and strings. I heard the St. Lawrence Quartet recording with Todd Palmer.

Wright: A violist colleague in the Jacksonville Symphony heard John Klinghammer perform the piece at her summer festival (in Colorado?). She has a chamber music series separate from the orchestra and asked me to play *Gumboots* on a concert along with the Mozart *Clarinet Quintet*.

2) What was your initial reaction to the piece?

Beaty: Thrilling and terrifying! A life affirming piece, yet painstaking in its technical challenges!! Incredibly well-crafted and written in such a way that you are very motivated to work out how it fits together.

Bliss: First of all I knew it would be a challenge, not just for me but also for the strings. I was of course most focused on the bass clarinet in the beginning part since I had never played bass before, nor did I even own one! It was particularly challenging to play in the altissimo register of the bass clarinet which is slightly unusual. Once I started to practice the piece I really enjoyed it and knew the audience would love it.

Estellés: I loved it. I immediately wanted to play it . . . It was fun to practice and rehearse. I remember it was played together with another demanding piece, same combination, by Daniel Schnyder. I have a clear picture of that month, when I also performed Elliott Carter and Isang Yun quintets, plus two premieres of quintets by Spanish composers (Francisco Lara—who happened to know David Bruce very well from their time in London—and Isabel Urrutia).

Gorczyca: That it is a beautiful piece that was well written for the clarinet.

Helton: I was transfixed. The piece seemed new and exciting, yet accessible—just the type of piece we try to perform. I could tell that it must be very difficult, yet well-worth the effort.

Hunt: It is a joyful, exuberant work that sings and . . . dances. It's fun to play and I hope good to listen to.

Klinghammer: (a) I'm obviously enamored with *Gumboots*, and think it's the best piece of chamber music for clarinet written in recent memory. (b) I thought it was pretty fantastic, and I was surprised it hadn't been performed more often. I guess its newness and the challenging bass clarinet part may scare some people off, but as far as I'm concerned, outside of Brahms and Mozart the list of music for clarinet and strings gets kind of short, and this is an incredible addition to the repertoire.

Morris: I immediately liked the piece. I liked the sombre tone of the opening. I really liked the use of bass clarinet and the virtuosity of the second half was very appealing to me. I thought it would be a hit with our audiences and I wasn't wrong. I think the work has a very positive energy which is infectious when performed well.

Palmer: It was great fun to learn and premiere *Gumboots*—working with David from the inception of this now popular, substantial, and often played quintet for the clarinet and string quartet. David was very aware of Golijov's work, and having played the clarinet himself, David wrote very well for the instrument. However, it poses a variety of challenging technical difficulties for the clarinetist. I like to think of the analogy/comparison of performing this work to being an Olympic gymnast who competes in the all-around competition; you need to know all disciplines—very well.

Shields: I loved it, especially 'Part I' as I mentioned above, which I found to be incredibly moving and evocative.

Skiano: I loved it. The opening movement is one of the most haunting beautiful things I've ever played. It's very powerful. The dances were difficult but fun.

Striplen: Initial reaction: total excitement! I knew it was something I wanted to perform. This began a brief correspondence with David Bruce when I was acquiring the music. Ultimately we met in person in LA to talk about the piece.

Wright: My initial reaction was to run screaming in the opposite direction. I don't own a bass clarinet and don't play it very often.

3) Why did you choose to program/perform it?

Beaty: It was programmed by Carnegie Hall ahead of time.

Bliss: After the first performance, I decided to programme it everywhere I possibly could. It was refreshing to have something a bit different for clarinet and quartet. I found that the piece worked quite well alongside the Brahms Quintet. I normally play the Bruce at the end of the first half and then Brahms in the second half. I loved the piece so much that I decided to create what I believe was the first commercial recording of it. I wanted everyone to know about the piece and just wanted to play it as much as I could. It's a real gem and I hope more clarinetists learn it.

Estellés: I thought it was appropriate for an upcoming program, and I had the quartet who also wanted and was able to perform it.

Gorczyca: Deborah Boldin chose the piece. She is a person who is one of the great programmers of chamber music. When she chooses a piece on a subscription series, it is only of the highest caliber, and will fit in with a larger programming scheme. Her concerts, now in their

19th season, consistently sell out, and have garnered great praise. Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston has been the recipient of several National Endowment for the Arts grants, as well as many from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and others.

Helton: All of the above—fun, challenging, great ensemble work (not just a lot of clarinet solo), and entertaining for audience and performers alike.

Hunt: Because I already knew David.

Klinghammer: It was Kate's call in this instance, and I was thrilled to be asked to perform on such a successful and relatively high-profile chamber series. I liked the piece so much I've performed it on four more occasions, which I think I saw you already had a record of ... once in Breckenridge, and second time with Art of Élan (but this time with Malashock Dance), once on the Kansas City Symphony's Happy Hour series and once on the Eko Nova series in Omaha, NE. I perform it because I want people to hear it, and because it's an absolute crowd favorite. Inexperienced listeners and orchestra musicians alike all seem to respond to this piece in the same way—they come away feeling like they have really heard something special.

Morris: I thought it was a good piece, and at that point it was quite new and nobody had played it in Australia. I wanted to be the first because I was sure it would take off. I thought it would resonate well with audiences.

Palmer: [It was commissioned for TP]

Shields: [see #1]

Striplen: I chose to perform it for the satisfaction of adding new music to my personal repertoire and to bring the piece to SF Bay Area audiences.

Wright: [see #1]

3a) What did you choose to program it with (and why)?

Beaty: Brahms *Clarinet Quintet* in one concert. Golijov *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* in another!

Bliss: Mainly Brahms, sometimes Mozart if the presenter has already had the Brahms. The Quartet would always play a short piece before the Bruce, which seemed different every performance!

Estellés: I did it together with the quintet *Zoom In*, by Daniel Schnyder.

Gorczyca: I will be playing the Finzi *Five Bagatelles* on the same concert, but the other pieces on the program (of which I'm not involved) can be found on the concert flyer at

<http://chameleonarts.org/concerts/april.html>.

Helton: When we perform this piece, it is always the ‘anchor’ piece on the program. Everything else we work about *Gumboots*. Since it has a peppy ending, is long, and a crowd-please, we almost always perform it last. I looked back and our first performance was in 2010. We performed a short post-modern string quartet, light and accessible in nature, then the Ginastera *Impressions de la Puna* for flute and strings, Barber’s *Dove Beach*, a contemporary piece by Steven Antosca with tape, and then *Gumboots*.

Hunt: I’m sorry . . . I don’t remember!

Klinghammer: I can't remember all the programs, but the last one we did put it with Bartok *Contrasts* and Caroline Shaw's *Entr'acte*. The Art of Elan/Malashock program had it with *Dreams and Prayers* and Judd Greenstein's *At the End of a Really Great Day*.

Morris: [See Question #10]. In Melbourne, I programed it in a recital. From memory, I programmed it with Penderecki solo prelude, Arthur Benjamin *Tombeau de Ravel*, and *Towards the Still Point* by Peter Rankine. The third time was by itself in a chamber music competition.

Palmer: [Mozart *Quintet* at premiere.] The premiere, which was at Carnegie Hall, was the only time that particular programming was done. I’ve played *Gumboots* on tour with a group where we also played the Mozart quintet, and the strings played a quartet and I played it in Japan in a mixed chamber program. In addition to Spoleto, I’m playing it this summer at the Portland Chamber Music Festival with various string players (not a formed quartet) on a mixed chamber music program.

Shields: A young audience member from our series Chatter performed (because we like to highlight young talent when possible, no connection to the GB really).

Skiano: I think the Khachaturian piano trio.

Striplen: We based the concert around the idea of dance and rhythm. The program was titled: Rhythm & Shoes. (lol) The program in order was: 1. *Tango for Una Cabeza for Violin & Piano* by Carlos Gardel. 2. *Milonga del Angel for Clar. Cello & Pno* by Astor Piazzolla arr. by Pablo Zinger. 3. *Invitacion al Danzon for clar. cello & pno* by Paquito D’Rivera – Intermission – *Gumboots*.

Wright: [see #1]

4) What do you feel the piece is about and how did you strive to communicate this in your performance?

Beaty: A haunting and joyous story of human resilience . . . Filled with character and conviction it was hard not to be totally absorbed by the essence of where the piece came from, and by David's incredible knack for writing evocative music.

Bliss: The first part is quite eerie and yearning at times. There's no doubt that this is the dark, negative side of the piece and the story behind gumboot dancing. The dances are entirely different and are much more positive, amusing and fun. I try to only listen to the quartet whilst playing instead of counting or focusing on the technical aspects. This piece is very much about feel and getting the right 'swing,' if you like, in the dances. That's something you can only get once you know the piece back to front. I made sure I spent time looking at the string parts so I knew exactly what was happening at any given time.

Estellés: The inspirational theme of the piece is very clear and it has been outstandingly expressed by David Bruce. In this way, the music speaks very eloquently for itself when you play it trying to listen to what the music is actually asking you to do (in terms of singing, dreaming with the soft textures, or dancing, articulating with more edgy style, using a variety of tone colours. . .), getting into the flow of the music rather than interfering with a too-serious academic approach that takes away the natural freshness of the composition.

Gorcycya: It is a piece of resiliency for the Human condition.

Helton: We spoke about the origin of the name Gumboots referring to David's program notes. We borrowed heavily from his comments and gave a few short demos of the cross-rhythms in the dances.

Hunt: Really, I find the dance in the piece so strong, and want to have strong rhythmic vitality. As for what it's about, the title is fairly guiding, and I find that the piece really celebrates the human spirit's ability to overcome oppression and still live.

Klinghammer: Of course, the program notes are very interesting and worth considering as one prepares the work. That said, Bruce sums up what he was trying to get at with the music very well . . . the general sense of sadness, anguish and struggle transforming into joy and dance. I want the audience to feel the pain of the opening movement in the cries of the bass clarinet, this is such a moving moment! And then the final dance is so wild and joyful, I just want to send that energy out to the audience and have them come away humming and tapping and feeling good about the world, and about chamber music! Part of why I started the Eko Nova series in Omaha was that desire to bring music like this to an audience willing to give it a chance . . . to show people that "new" music isn't necessarily all screeching and sound effects, but can be

powerful and joyful and beautiful in a way that even the uninitiated to classical chamber music can appreciate in a real way.

Morris: For me the piece is an example of how art and cultural identity can come from the worst of circumstances. I think since gumboot dancing has such a rich story behind it, it is a great example of this. I think David captured perfectly the broad spectrum of emotions involved with such a tradition, and the audience reaction I've received each time I've performed this piece has been quite overwhelming. I even once played *Gumboots* in Tully in North Queensland, Australia. Tully has one of the highest annual rainfalls of anywhere in Australia. And I actually spoke to people after the concert who knew exactly what gumboot dancing was as they had it as a part of their annual cultural festival since gumboots are usually the shoe of choice in Tully.

Palmer: I believe David Bruce gives a preface in the score as to what this piece is about and its inspiration. It can also be found on his website.

Shields: I think the music is so well written that thinking about the extra-musical storyline wasn't necessary, and the music really drives you to strive for creating the most captivating atmosphere throughout. Of course, in Part I, getting a very intense and vocal quality on the bass clarinet is desirable—I used a fair amount of vibrato and tried not to be afraid of getting some good brightness in the sound. In the Part II with all the dances, I just made sure to try and get as much good rhythmic energy as possible, and went for a “folksy” approach (for lack of a better term, ugh . . .).

Skiano: We had a brief lecture before the concert about how music can transform suffering into all kinds of things—community, communication, peace, ultimately joy!

Striplen: For me the piece is about the need to communicate and not being afraid to do so. It's about meaningful communication that sometimes happens because of dire circumstances, but can also bring forth the inherent happiness and humor that exists in each of us. I tried to achieve this in performance by not worrying about making the performance perfect—and of course it wasn't so there is probably some measure of success to be had.

Wright: I feel this piece is about overcoming great hardship and the resilience of the human spirit. The violist read program notes and talked to the audience about what to expect in this piece. We also had a gentleman read from an African-American author (I believe Langston Hughes). The music was very well received.

5) Did you have any communication with David Bruce as you learned and performed the piece?

Beaty: A lot—he came and worked with us over a few days.

Bliss: I emailed David for a bit more information and it turns out that he only lives about 20 minutes away from me. We met up a few times and talked through the piece and the ideas behind it. David loves the clarinet because of its versatility and he also loves klezmer. There is no doubt that there are klezmer elements in the piece.

Estellés: Yes, I did. But we didn't discuss the piece, just communicated about the performance.

Gorczyca: No.

Helton: “Yes, first to get parts, then to figure out the bass clarinet part (was he serious????), some notation issues and later about various performing opportunities.

Hunt: I told him I was playing it, otherwise none.

Klinghammer: I've chatted with him a few times online . . . he even was kind enough to record a little video intro to *Eye of Night* for our first Eko Nova concert. Not much conversation about how to perform the piece, though, as far as I can remember.

Morris: No, I just got in touch with him after to let him know it went well and people really enjoyed it.

Palmer: Yes, I had communication with David Bruce on a number of occasions as he was composing this piece. He visited me at my apartment in New York City to show me how the work was progressing, as well as many phone conversations.

Shields: No.

Skiano: Not really.

Striplen: Yes, I met with David Bruce in LA a few months before my performance. I remember he stressed the idea of having fun with the concept of the piece. He mentioned that the seriousness behind the reason for the title “Gumboots” ultimately gives way to the fun in the human spirit. I'm paraphrasing his general description of the piece.

Wright: No one in our group had any contact with David Bruce personally but we all studied the YouTube videos of his interview and the remarkable performance by the young musicians from Juilliard.

6) There is a great deal of the piece written in an extremely high register on the bass clarinet, a very rare use for the instrument. How and where did you find and determine what fingerings to use to play these notes?

Beaty: I worked with my teacher Charles Neidich on them, although there is some research online about these altissimo fingerings—a lot of experimentation is necessary too!

Bliss: I have attached what I remember of my fingerings! Most of them also require some lipping up or down depending. I've experimented with all sorts of different fingerings for this part and I find these work best for me. I must credit the amazing bass clarinetist Sarah Watts for her help on everything bass related! Sarah has a very good chart of altissimo fingerings.

Estellés: There is a lot of experimenting, also with harmonics, but my friend Henri Bok's book *New Techniques for the Bass Clarinet* is always a fantastic help.

Gorczyca: No, I did not use any online fingering charts. Selmer and Buffet bass clarinets have many idiosyncrasies, as well as differing models, which changes pitch and fingerings significantly. I came up with these fingerings based upon the partials for the Selmer Model 33 bass clarinet that I use. A lot of time was spent in figuring out just what was going to work well. I've changed one fingering in the meantime. For the very highest altissimo note in measure 186, I am currently happy with thumb, register, and side throat F# (using both keys). I might end up changing it again prior to the performance.

Helton: There is a book of contemporary bass clarinet fingerings by a French clarinetist, (green and tan) not sure I can put my hands on it, but that was a starting point. I tried various combinations, altering them as needed to improve responses and intonation. My group almost ordered me not to play the altissimo range! For the first performance. It was very late in the game before the first concert until I could play it reliably. The last couple of weeks though, I was able to do it. I think on the performance I missed a note, maybe two, but not the climactic important notes, so it was not noticeable. At later concerts, there is an occasional miss but it's not common for me to miss a note.

Hunt: "I already knew some bass fingerings having played Golijov's *Dreams and Prayers*, and found some fingerings that worked for me."

Klinghammer: My starting point for most of the bass fingerings was Michael Lowenstern's website, earspasm.com. I think he still has a pretty decent list of fingerings for bass clarinet going up to double high F#. That said, as far as I know he plays on a Selmer (I play Buffet), so many of these fingers are a little off or don't quite work right on my instrument. So, there was a lot of experimentation with adding keys and venting things trying to find the right combo. It's still a work in progress, but I think my most recent set of fingerings is more consistent than what

I started with, especially in terms of intonation. There's also a site by Jason Alder jasonalder.com that has a bass clarinet quarter tone fingering chart . . . quite useful.

Morris: At the time, I wasn't much of a bass player so I played the high passages on regular clarinet as I simply couldn't make it work to my satisfaction. If I was to try it again now I might make a better attempt at it, but to be honest I feel like it is a little too high to really work. There is a similar passage in Golijov's *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* which I have performed, but I think simply the choice of notes is a little more workable, and achieves the sort of strained emotional outpouring that I think both composers were aiming for. In *Gumboots*, I couldn't make the passage work, but in the long run I don't really feel like much is lost by playing it on clarinet.

Palmer: Initially, David, who was very much still up and coming, was very influenced by Osvaldo Golijov's clarinet quintet *The Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind*, and our recording of it on EMI Classics. He therefore wrote for the clarinet in a similar, and "extreme" way. One anecdote that is worth sharing: He called from England one day to ask me how high the bass clarinet could play (knowing perfectly well that Golijov had already successfully written a very lofty altissimo part for the bass clarinet in his quintet) and I responded: "Don't write like that!" ... Then humorously, after only 5 or 6 minutes after searching for the fingerings, I called him back and said: "Ok, it's possible!" (The bass clarinet is very forgiving).

Shields: Trial and error, and I kept changing them every time I did it. I felt it was really important to get the intonation really dialed, because it's pretty tonal, and it's so intense already, it didn't need to also be heinously out of tune. The Golijov *Dreams and Prayers of Isaac the Blind* also goes up to the same high F#/G_b, and it was the same thing there—I also have performed that work twice, and both times I found myself changing the fingerings I used several times to find the right combination of sound/stability/pitch/reliability.

Skiano: I made them up! I also got a freaky bass clarinet fingering book from the library, but I can't remember the name. I asked friends too. I also watched the YouTube performance and paused to see what she did.

Striplen: I discovered fingerings for the altissimo bass clarinet notes by some trial and error based on the usual setup on my instrument. The fingerings were actually discovered about 6-7 years earlier while working on Golijov's *Dreams & Prayers of Isaac the Blind*. It has the same highest note.

Wright: I played B_b clarinet from measure 140 since the composer offers this as an alternative.

7) If you recall or have it noted in your part, could you share what fingerings you used for the high D (sounding D5) to the high F# (sounding F#6) . . . mm. 158 - 194)? It will vary from player to player and instrument to instrument which fingerings work best and I'd like to put in a fingering chart for these notes with the most optimal options.

Beaty: I'm sorry!! I worked out a lot of them and wrote down not a lot. I will be reworking the piece for next January 2018 and if you would like fingerings from me please get back in touch around then and I would gladly help out.

Bliss: [see Appendix E]

Estellés: [see Appendix E]

Gorczyca: [see Appendix E]

Hunt: I'm really sorry, but I didn't write them down . . . I've had a good search and can't find any record.

Klinghammer: [see Appendix E]

Morris: [N/A, played on B \flat clarinet]

Palmer: One has to experiment with the altissimo register, but with the bass clarinet it was actually quite easy to find the notes and fingerings for the extremes: it took me 5 to 10 minutes. There are also a number of fingering charts available online that one can easily reference if need be, but it's more fun and important to experiment on your own, I believe.

Shields: I can't remember what I used, but I do remember I kept changing and refining them as things went along.

Skiano: Geez . . . nope.

Striplen: [see Appendix E]

Wright: [N/A, played on B \flat clarinet]

8) What model of bass clarinet do you play? What mouthpiece, ligature, and reed? Did you make any adjustments to your usual setup for this piece?

Beaty: Selmar.

Bliss: I have a Selmer Paris Privilege model 67. I used a Selmer Focus mouthpiece a Légère 3.5 reed and a BG traditional ligature in gold. This setup seemed to work well for me.

Estellés: I play Selmer Privilege. By the time of the performance I used a Selmer E mouthpiece with Vandoren 3 reed. Nowadays I use Selmer Focus mouthpiece, same reeds.

Gorczyca: Selmer Model #33, Schreiber EPE JM facing, Rovner Eddie Daniels, and Vandoren V-12 3 1/2 reeds.

Helton: Yamaha bass clarinet with Bay mouthpiece and neck. Rover ligature. Reed usually Vandoren, sometimes Rico Evolution.

Hunt: Buffet Prestige, B40 mouthpiece with a blue box #3 Vandoren reed and metal ligature.

Klinghammer: Now I play a Tosca, but for most of these performances except last year's, I was playing on an older (C.1991) Buffet Prestige. My mouthpiece had been an old C*, but last year was a B40 and now is a BD5. I play a Vandoren optimum ligature, reeds have changed from 3.5 reg to 3.5V12 to 4 V12 over the years . . . now play on 4 reg Vandoren. I did not change my setup to perform the piece . . . I would have loved to use a lighter reed to create a more folksy, flexible sound, but found it too difficult to get the extreme range to speak without a firm enough reed.

Palmer: Buffet prestige bass clarinet with a [Vandoran] B40 mouthpiece. Vandoren Reeds.

Shields: Buffet Prestige, Hawkins Mouthpiece, Vandoren blue box 3 or 3.5, gold plated Bonade (inverted, I think, screws up). Not really, but I did test reeds specifically for the high-note reliability and stability, which varies a lot from reed to reed.

Skiano: I don't have a usual setup. I own a C* mouthpiece, played Légère reeds, and borrowed a Buffet Prestige bass clarinet.

Striplen: My bass clarinet is a Selmer model 33 from 1994. At the time of the performance of *Gumboots* I was using a Selmer C* mouthpiece refaced by Gregory Dufford, Bonade Inverted Nickel-Plated Ligature with Vandoren Standard Reed #3.

Wright: The bass clarinet that I borrowed is a Buffet Prestige, Richard Hawkins mouthpiece, Ishimari gold-plated ligature and Vandoren #3 reeds. Since I don't regularly play bass I didn't adjust anything.

9) What model of B₁ clarinet do you play? What mouthpiece, ligature, and reed? Did you make any adjustments to your usual setup for this piece?

Beaty: R13, B40 Lyre, #3 Vandoren. No adjustments!

Bliss: I play a Leblanc Legacy which has been customized for me. I use a BG Duo ligature in gold, a Zinner mouthpiece and a Vandoren traditional strength 5. No changes made for the piece.

Estellés: By the time of the performance I played Selmer Recital clarinet with a Viotto TH mouthpiece, SAXXAS gold-plated ligature, Vandoren 3.5 reeds (blue box). Nowadays I'm

playing with a Selmer Privilege clarinet, my new mouthpiece profile (SJ magenta), same ligature and reeds.

Gorczyca: Buffet Vintage. I have just broken in a Buffet RC Prestige which I might use to perform on—still have not decided. Luyben ligature, and homemade reeds.

Helton: B \flat Buffet R-13, Greg Smith Mouthpiece, Rover ligature, Rico Evolution reeds.

Hunt: At that time, an old Buffet R13 with a Vandoren V13 mouthpiece with V12 3.5 reed and Vandoren Masters ligature, my normal set up at that time.

Klinghammer: I play Prestiges. Also, a BD5 mouthpiece, though most of these performances were on an unmarked Wodkowski custom. Bonade ligature (now rose gold), V12 3.5 reeds. No adjustments to my set up for this piece.

Morris: When I played the piece, I was using a Buffet Prestige, Heinz Viotto mouthpiece, and Vandoren 3.5 blue box.

Palmer: I play on an RC prestige B \flat clarinet with a Black Diamond mouthpiece.

Shields: Yeah, I play a Hawkins G on clarinet and I really dig that.

Skiano: Then, I played an R13 with a mp Ramon made and V12 size 4 reeds.

Striplen: Clarinet was a Buffet R13 (purchased at RDG! in 1998) Backun MOBA mouthpiece, Rovner Eddie Daniels Ligature, Vandoren V-12 reeds #3.5.

Wright: I played the B \flat clarinet part on my Tosca Greenline. My mouthpiece is a Richard Hawkins B, ligature is Ishimari gold-plated and my reeds are D'Addario Reserve Classic 3.5+. I didn't make any adjustments for this performance.

10) Did you perform with an organized string quartet or regular ensemble members, or more of a “pickup” group?

Beaty: With Decoda Chamber Ensemble / Callino String Quartet / Ensemble Connect—all established ensembles.

Bliss: The only other group [besides the Carducci Quartet] I've performed the piece with is the Vanbrugh Quartet from Ireland. They were the first group I performed it with. We did two or so performances. I've not played it with anyone other than an established quartet, although I suspect it would be a lot easier with a group that plays together regularly than with an all new quartet.

Estellés: Although they are not a regular string quartet we might consider them a regular ensemble as they are principal chairs from my orchestra and they perform regularly together.

Gorczyca: The string ensemble members, with the exception of the violist, were all people I had worked with before in both the Chameleon Arts Ensemble, as well as through freelancing. Rafael Popper-Keiser, I worked with the longest, over the past 15 years; followed by Robyn Bollinger and Eunae Koh, for two years; and violist Matthew Lipman, whom I had just met the first day of rehearsals.

Helton: Regular ensemble but we had a sub now and again.

Hunt: In Charlottesville, it was a festival string quartet—I suppose a pickup group, but made up of fine players. In Sheffield, it was my chamber group of fixed players.

Klinghammer: Each performance was with member of a regular ensemble (BMF, Art of Elan, KC Symphony), though none of them were a working string quartet, per se. The KC group performs together as a quartet a lot, that would be the closest to that kind of dynamic. Each group had musicians I had performed with before, and often there was overlap with the same musicians from performance to performance, though none of the performances had the same lineup.

Morris: I have only played the piece with a pickup group. The first time was in my undergrad studies in 2009 (Queensland Conservatory of Music, Brisbane) and I played it with some friends for a chamber music competition, the prize of which was a tour performing that piece as well as quintets by Mozart, Brahms and an arrangement of *Aires Tropicales* by Paquito d’Rivera. I played it again a year later in a recital at the Australian national academy of music in Melbourne. The rest of the recital was solo pieces and sonatas I believe. I also played it in a chamber music competition at the academy. I played it with slightly different people each time. All were students at the same institutions I was at.

Palmer: Just so you know, I’ve played *Gumboots* numerous times with and without the St Lawrence Quartet. Some have been with ad hoc string groups. We’re actually playing it at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston on June 1st [2017] (with the St Lawrence) on a mixed chamber program.

Shields: Pick up group.

Striplen: It was really more of a pickup group formed for this particular GC [Gold Coast Chamber Players] concert. It was not any kind of regular ensemble of GC nor do/did they play as a regular quartet.

Wright: The quartet I performed with falls in the middle—organized quartet and pickup group. The strings players are members of the Jacksonville Symphony but play together five or six times a year as a string quartet for this chamber music series on which we performed *Gumboots*.

10a) Had you played with the ensemble or any of the individual players before?

Beaty: Yes! Had played a lot with all the performers in a variety of different settings and groups.

Estellés: Yes, I've been playing chamber music with all of them individually, and with this specific combination we had done C.M. von Weber and Golijov quintets before.

Helton: We learned and performed it as a group.

Hunt: Yes, all of them on both occasions.

Klinghammer: [see above]

Morris: Yes.

Palmer: Yes.

Shields: The cellist had played it before. We did the work twice with the same group at different series.

Striplen: Yes, I had worked with each of the ensemble members in various situations either in chamber music or orchestral ensembles.

Wright: Yes, I have performed the Mozart *Quintet* with this quartet before.

10b) If you've performed the piece in different circumstances, did you find it easier to put together with a regularly rehearsing quartet, or not really?

Beaty: Yes, much easier with regularly rehearsed quartet, especially the opening slow bass clarinet section. Quartets have their own intonation system setup, and are quick to find how they fit together, adding the clarinet to this is then 10 times easier. Less swimming around!

Bliss: N/A

Estellés: This was not the case, but I guess it all depends on the quality and chamber music experience of the musicians. Some regularly rehearsing quartets are not better than an on-occasion formed one.

Gorczyca: N/A

Helton: Even with a standing group "regular" rehearsals are a luxury. We had at most 6 rehearsals, usually 5, maybe 4, or fewer now.

Hunt: Not really.

Klinghammer: I did find it a little easier to put together the last time with the KC quartet, this may be partly because they work together frequently, but there were other factors too, such as

having more time for rehearsal and getting to perform the piece twice (once in KC and once in Omaha) with the same group.

Morris: I don't really think it would be any different. It might be easier if the quartet worked together as they might already have a system for working things out. I don't know.

Shields: Easier second time around, acoustics slightly easier at second venue as well.

Palmer: [approximate transcription per phone conversation] ... "I've played with various groups, but all of very high caliber ... if they have a lot of chamber music experience, then they listen at a higher level of awareness ..."

Striplen: Yes, only played it once. Maybe someday again and I would hope for a formed quartet next time.

Wright: N/A

11) How many rehearsals did you have/need before performing?

Beaty: About 3 or 4 days?

Bliss: Normally 2 rehearsals including the dress rehearsal. First rehearsal normally about 3 hours or so. For the recording, we also played it for David which was a great experience. He was very relaxed and allowed us to put our own interpretation on the piece. David stayed around and heard us record the whole piece which was also very useful. It took us a day and a half to get the whole piece down.

Estellés: Probably five.

Gorczyca: 4/19 - 2.5hr, 4/20 - 2.5hr, & 4/21 1.5hr & 1hr [total 4 rehearsals, 7.5hr].

Helton: Initially 6, I think, 8 would be more appropriate.

Hunt: I think on both occasions we had 3 rehearsals.

Klinghammer: I think for most of these performances there were four to five rehearsals.

Morris: We did quite a lot, at least 5 over a couple of weeks if I was to guess.

Palmer: I believe we had three rehearsals before the premiere. The work doesn't really pose any tough ensemble situations, and in that regard, it's fairly straightforward. The meters are not complex and the string parts are not terribly difficult. You work through whatever problems there are just like you would with any other piece: slowly, with repetition and a score, and with patience!

Shields: I think we had 3 or 4 each time.

Skiano: I think 5?

Striplen: Rehearsals—we had 3. I wanted 6. We should have had 6.

Wright: I believe we had 6 rehearsals and a trial run performance at a colleague's home a few days before the performance.

12) What were the biggest problems in terms of the ensemble? How did you work through them?

Beaty: Rhythmic interlocking—David wrote a jigsaw puzzle of interlocking rhythms which create the dance . . . This took some time to unlock as an ensemble! Intonation and how to pitch the opening section—very hard to put the bass clarinet and strings together here.

Bliss: Funnily enough, at the beginning it's quite difficult to play the same line as the viola, but intentionally not perfectly together nor with the same feel. Sometimes the dances can be tricky to put together. Dance 3 can be tricky when it comes to the 4/8 back into the 7/8. It usually only takes a couple of play-throughs to get it right though. The transition in the 3rd dance in bar 722/723. It can be tricky to make sure the downbeat of 723 is completely together. Dance 5 between 902 and EE is also difficult because if you listen too much to what's going on it can throw you off! You have to keep the rhythmic feel in your head. I think the most challenging thing about this piece is to of course keep it very rhythmic, but it has to sound very easy and almost improvised at times. After a while you just have to feel it rather than counting everything. As for some of the articulation, the only spot that changed slightly is the end of the first dance. Sometimes it's completely tongued, others it's a bit of both and even with little gliss added in between the last 2 notes. Other than that, I played what is written in the part . . . I hope!

Estellés: The biggest issues during rehearsals were finding a nice groove throughout the piece and the right sound for Part 1.

Gorczyca: Working with string quartet is a slightly different animal for me than any other chamber ensemble I have worked with. The string quartet has its own language and method for working through problems. It wasn't clear to me most times exactly what they were doing, but I did not interfere. Entrances and transitions seemed to present the most problems. Who and where to cue sections also took some time to work through.

Helton: I found that some of the dances were MUCH easier if they were re-barred or at least re-beamed or re-subdivided. Especially the 5th dance which was a killer. I would say that I didn't feel 100% comfortable on the dances till I performed it 5 times!

Hunt: Some of the dances need to be looked at slowly and need careful analysis of how the rhythms work. Otherwise, it is not so problematic.

Klinghammer: Getting a good connection with the violist at the opening is important, both for flow, pitch, and blend. But most of the ensemble issues are outside of the clarinet player's control . . . the string parts are exceptionally tricky and difficult to navigate from an ensemble point of view, and every time I performed it I found this took the bulk of rehearsal, the quartet figuring out how to find each other throughout the piece. The opening movement is especially difficult in terms of knowing where you are. The dances are all tricky in their own ways, but I think the writing is very clever . . . he gives us just enough to hold onto so that it's not as hard to stay together as it should be. In every group I played with, we just played through a lot of things very slowly and wrote in lots and lots of cues. I remember the first performance in San Diego, the 2nd violinist actually copied the whole score and shrunk it down so she could play off of it and follow along because she was so worried about getting lost.

Morris: The piece is very difficult to put together. The parts are individually very difficult. They often involve techniques and styles of playing that classical players aren't used to. The faster movements in particular have very complicated rhythms, changes, overlapping parts that often don't sound like they belong together. I found that it's not really the sort of piece you can prepare and play once. I've performed it at least 10-15 times and it was only really the last few that I felt like it was really working. It took many hours of slow practice both individually and together to get everything working. I guess if I could offer advice it is to prepare very very methodically. The energy of the piece will be even more effective if all of the rhythmic devices that are built into it work properly. You mentioned a very fast run requiring double tonguing. I think I remember this. I believe what I did was to tongue the first of every 4 very hard and short and then slur the rest. If it's the one that I'm thinking of nobody can really tell by then.

Palmer: I believe we had three rehearsals before the premiere. The work doesn't really pose any tough ensemble situations, and in that regard, it's fairly straightforward. The meters are not complex and the string parts are not terribly difficult. You work through whatever problems there are just like you would with any other piece: slowly, with repetition and a score, and with patience!

Shields: The last dance was always the hardest for us, we just had to woodshed it a lot slowly and with the metronome. We discussed various strategies for coordinating ourselves and what line to lock into just as one would for any piece. [&] The movement with all the dotted-eighth note groups was tricky, with various 2 against 3 patterns, we just had to go over a lot of those spots slowly.

Skiano: It was too long ago. I do remember people studied the recording a lot.

Striplen: Our biggest problem with ensemble and performance was the effort to achieve the sense of freedom and improvisation, made especially difficult by having so few rehearsals with an ad hoc group. While I had lived with the piece for 6 months the rest of the group had not. It was a steep learning curve for the group trying to ready a challenging new piece with only 3 rehearsals in about 5 days. We were fairly successful at achieving cohesion as an ensemble, but simply ran out of time trying to take it to the next level of pure musicality and delivering an interpretation. There was not enough time to approach an interpretation. Overall, I think our group underestimated the amount of time needed to put the piece together. As an ad hoc group, some individuals were not willing to invest more rehearsal time than ultimately proved to be necessary. This would have been a very different situation if I had chosen to work with an established string quartet that conceivably could have used their regular rehearsals to learn the piece and live with it over a longer period of time.

Wright: The biggest problems were learning each other's parts and writing cues in our parts. The rhythmic complexities of the dances were extremely challenging, especially the 5th dance. It really helped to watch and listen to the Juilliard group's YouTube performance. The woman playing clarinet is amazing.

13) Would you mind putting me in touch with someone from your string quartet? I'd like to ask them a few questions as well!

[see Appendix D for interview responses from string players]

14) What was your quintet seating arrangement? Was there any particular reason you chose it?

Beaty: I did try sitting in the middle of the group which was a quite different feeling . . . Much more immersive!

Bliss: "With the Vanbrugh I sat in the middle and with the Carducci I always sit on the end. I always go on what the quartet feel most comfortable with."

Estellés: 1st, 2nd, cello, viola, clarinet. I like to sit opposite to the first violin and the cello in the middle feels good for the balance.

Gorzycza: Seating arrangement as you are looking at the quintet from the audience. Arranged in a horseshoe from left to right: violin 1, violin 2, clarinet, cello, viola.

Helton: I sit in the middle back of the quartet. I project plenty well and like the violin to lead the ensemble by sitting on the end.

Hunt: In Sheffield, we sat in the round as it is a theatre in the round and we always play this way. In Charlottesville, we sat in a semicircle with me facing the violin.

Klinghammer: Usually I was in the middle, though there may have been one or two performances where I sat next to the viola and we put the cello in the middle because I couldn't hear the viola in the space.

Morris: I sat on the end, next to the cello. No particular reason. We stood the last time, with the cello on a box. I liked this best.

Palmer: I usually sit in the middle of the group, but there have been a few times where I have sat across from the 1st violinist. The clarinet is featured in this work so it's usually decided that I sit in the center. Most quartets will defer to the clarinetist's preference.

Shields: I sat in back, just seemed right. I sit on the side for Mozart and Weber, in the back for Brahms and most other things.

Striplen: [clarinet at the end, cello center] [For] two reasons, I felt it was important the clarinets be visible to the audience and, most importantly, so I could hear the first violin clearly.

Wright: I sat in the middle with the two violinists to my right and the violist and cellist to my left. It seemed more comfortable for everyone.

15) If you can remember, what were any individual trouble spots you had as you learned the piece—whether technical (e.g., the opening gliss of Dance 3, fast articulated sections such as the end of Dance 1 or 4, etc) or otherwise (e.g., fitting your part into the start of dance 4), and how did you resolve them?

Beaty: Technical problems: working out bass fingerings / agility in fast dances / working out the rhythms so they became effortless and dance like!

Bliss: As for difficulties. The only part that was tricky was the bass clarinet movement. I suspect this was largely due to the fact I'd never played bass before, and therefore had to get to grips with the instrument as well as the intricacies and subtleties of the piece. The altissimo section gave me the most work, since that's not an area you usually play in on the bass clarinet. In the end, it just took a bit of time and patience!

Gorczyca: The 8va section from mm. 161-178; then mm. 186-192. It took hours and hours to solve the puzzle this music presented. Second challenging spot was mm. 502-512. Getting that

up to 208 required many hours of methodical practice. Third challenging spot was ditto of the second, but from mm. 747-762.

Helton: The gliss was no problem—tricky to time and cue the group, but in and of itself, no problem. It was all about the rhythm and sometimes having to play a lot of fast notes inside a difficult rhythmic structure (I think Dance 3 and 4 were the worst for that). The first page of Dance 5 was especially wicked—we found we could still be playing it “right” but if the 16ths weren’t lined up exactly, it didn’t work. The first two dances were relatively easy. I think the third one with the triplets and seemingly unrelated string rhythm was another killer. Really didn’t totally feel good with that one for years. Notation—I would be interested to know if others re-barred. Some of the dances worked much better at the very least with re-beaming (which usually meant re-barring) for convenience. Dance 5 in particular.

Hunt: This is what I remember—there were no really tricky technical spots—nothing that a little practice couldn’t sort out. As for ensemble, I seem to remember Dance 5 needed some sorting, to make sure we were all thinking the same way rhythmically.

Palmer: [approximate transcription from phone conversation] As far as the double tonguing is concerned in Dance 4, you either can do it, or you can’t. If you can’t, you add slurs. It’s not a big deal to change the articulation to accommodate one’s best playing of a passage. A lot of young composers before they’ve really “made it” tend to write some very difficult things . . . E.g., In Dance 2, the quintuplets are annoyingly difficult and it doesn’t need to be written that way.

Shields: [re: the run at the end of Dance 1] FYI, I start out double tonguing for about the first octave and then at some point it turns into like a slurred “rip” of sorts. For one, I can only really double tongue from clarion E and lower, but it’s also basically too fast for my double tongue even after 8 notes or so, LOL.

Wright: I slurred the 16th notes at the end of the 4th dance since I don’t double tongue. The 5th dance was the most challenging movement to perform technically and rhythmically.

16) What sort(s) of responses did you get from your audience(s) post-performance? Did people come talk to you and if so, what did they say?

Beaty: Everyone loved it! Everyone found it very visceral, immediate and said it was such an uplifting finish they were dancing out of the hall . . . I have had this response many times.

Bliss: I’ve had a 100% success rate with this piece! People love it. One of the first comments is that they didn’t know the bass clarinet could play that high! Secondly, they comment at how much fun the dances are.

Estellés: It was an absolute success. Lots of people came to talk to us and expressed that they had much fun listening to it. It was beautiful and entertaining. New, fresh air. It happened only one month ago that I had a request from an aboneé in my orchestra who attended the concert, asking if the piece could be programmed again.

Gorczyca: After the first performance (Saturday night) a concertgoer said that the piece brought her to tears due to the profound subject matter, as well as the haunting opening movement. Many others on both performances were astounded ... the bass clarinet is able to play that high. & [approximate transcription from conversation in person] The second performance was the best, it just gelled. The audience was very enthusiastic. We received an immediate standing ovation . . . I would rate it as one of the top 10 performances of my career.

Helton: Audiences and ensemble alike loved the piece and were happy to perform and hear it again. It's a rare piece that is long but worth every note. The audience was interested in how the gumboots story was reflected in the piece.

Hunt: The audiences were delighted by the work on both occasions. I think their interest was got by the title of the work, and they listened with open ears and seemed to really enjoy the work. It's pretty accessible, and the audiences could really relate to the music.

Klinghammer: Responses have always been incredibly positive. Many people are blown away by the range and beauty of the bass clarinet. Some respond really well to the story of the Gumboot dancers. The most meaningful responses for me have come from fellow musicians and friends who play in better orchestras than I ever will actually telling me they were moved . . . something you rarely hear a professional tell you. Our main donor's wife at our Eko Nova concert last year literally walked away humming and dancing on the arm of her husband! Nothing better than that.

Morris: The response was much stronger than I had anticipated. Audiences loved the piece, they loved the story and found it very powerful and uplifting. They liked the fact that the piece has a very wide emotional range, is very tonally pleasing and is also very virtuosic.

Palmer: It's quite a crowd pleaser and most people thoroughly enjoy it in live performance. I'm pretty sure this is what David had in mind. I specifically told David that when he composed it that it must finish loudly with a bang. He listened! It is also very important to note that David made substantial changes after the premiere and for its subsequent publication. There were initially six dances, now there are only five. He felt the work had better flow to the climax with only five dances. The omitted dance (originally dance number five) is now renamed "Forgotten Boots." It's quite charming, actually, and I have often thought of reinserting it. There were also substantial changes in dance number three, and in parts of dance number four.

Shields: People love the piece.

Skiano: Everyone gushed about the first movement. People were mixed about the dances. Some were very touched.

Striplen: Audience response was good, although I find that audiences generally have a hard time talking about a new piece. There isn't a wrong or right way to talk about it. Our audience at this particular venue was used to fairly conservative repertoire so *Gumboots* may have been quite a stretch for the ears and mind. I was amused that someone told me after the performance they were concerned that we weren't together near the beginning of the piece.

Wright: The audience response was amazing. One non-musician said it was the best concert he had ever heard (!?!?!). It really helped to have someone speak about the piece before.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Helton: In short, we love this piece. The dances are wicked hard! (for me at least—the clarinetist). I found it was a piece that I had to live with for years before I really got it right. The dances in particular with the clarinet part sometimes being so independent from the others at times. *Gumboots* has been a staple of our repertoire ever since we found it. Audiences love it, yet it challenges us musically and intellectually, and is a blast to play.

Shields: That piece is sick. I've played it twice at this point. I feel like I need one more go of it to really get it going—it's tough! First part is still my favorite, amazing stuff.

Appendix D. Correspondence with *Gumboots* String Players

The clarinetists I spoke with helped me contact string players with whom they performed *Gumboots*. My questions were general. I am including the complete responses of all those who offered their participation. If there is no response from any individual under a particular question, they did not answer it. Only minor edits have been made for spelling and grammar.

List of Contributors:

Kate Hatmaker, violin I—*with John Klinghammer and Art of Elan*

Stephanie Nagler, violin I—*with Dawn Hamilton, UCLA Final DMA Recital*

Eunae Koh, violin II—*with Gary Gorczyca and Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston*

Elizabeth Dickenson, violin II—*with Dawn Hamilton, UCLA Final DMA Recital*

Evan Hesketh, viola—*with Dawn Hamilton, UCLA Final DMA Recital*

Pamela Freund-Striplen, viola—*with Tony Striplen & Gold Coast Chamber Players*

Susan Pardue, viola—*with Peter Wright*

My initial email framework is also included below.

Dear [_____],

I was hoping you might be able to help me out answering a couple of questions about David Bruce's piece *Gumboots*. I'm writing my dissertation about the work, and want to make sure and include some amount of perspective from the string players!

The main point being that I'd like to be able to advise any string players approaching the piece about any particular such spots and offer some assistance as to how to possibly approach them, not being to make a list of criticisms of David Bruce. :)

In truth, I don't quite know the right questions to ask, being pretty unfamiliar with string instruments. So, if you have any additional thoughts to offer, please just go for it!

[questions . . . see below]

1) What sort of ensemble issues did you experience with this piece?

Koh: In Part 1, there were two main issues. One is that when we tried to be together, the flow of music stopped. I think it has to do with giving cues. As you know, it's important to show inner feeling, yearning and long phrases. Mostly, the clarinet has the tune and strings are just drawing background but since the tune doesn't really have a strong beat, it was a little confusing to be together. So, the first violin had to give cues each bar, and it was challenging not to bother the beautiful melody of clarinet at the same time. I think the only solution is just to minimize the cues as much as possible. In general, Part 2 was tricky in terms of playing together. Especially, in Dances 3 and 5, all string players and even clarinet has different rhythmic groups so when we played together, I noticed how everyone feels the groove was slightly different, which resulted in not lining up well. To be specific, in m. 837, 2nd violin and viola have 2+3+2+2 while 1st violin has 3+2+2+2 and clarinet has 3+3+3. Also, we all have accents on the different beats that worsened this problem. So, we decided rehearse really slowly so that we could naturally feel others' rhythms and interact better. Also, to be more clear, we had to play the rhythms sharper and lighter.

Hatmaker: In Dance 3 there are times where the beat pattern for each instrument varies (some might be feeling it in 3+2+2, while others might be feeling 2+3+2 or some variation). We embraced it and simply put in beat patterns that made sense for our own parts. If everyone has a good sense of rhythm it shouldn't matter how people are feeling it individually. We all had to spend the time writing lots of cues (for other parts) into our music, especially for Part 1. It wasn't excessive or anything but it certainly helped things hang together.

2) What were any problem spots within the piece for the string players more specifically, and how did you address them?

Koh: The other issue was when strings had harmonics. For example, in measure 39 [see Figure 5.12], the second violin has harmonics in *pp*. The harmonic sounds an octave higher 'D' and the resonance remained too long to have clear open D string (the lower one). It ended up sounding almost just like harmonics instead of an alternation between the open D string and the harmonics. . . . We tried not using the open D string and played the same note on a different string. Then, since we had string crossing, it sounded more clear. However, somehow that resulted in too clear of a sound, and it didn't really have the foggy feeling we were aiming for. So,

we decided to use the open string. I assume that the composer might have wanted to be unclear in the texture.

Freund-Striplen: We had to discover what colors and effects the composer was looking for in his use of harmonics, *pizzicato* and subtle rhythmic differences. As always with a new piece, writing cues in the parts was essential.

Pardue: We had some page turns that were almost impossible, and we took care of that for each other.

3a) What were any problem spots for the violin, specifically, and how did you address them?

Koh: For me (2nd violin), the hardest part was mm. 592-607. It was also a similar problem [see response to Question #1]. I remember the 7 in mm. 593-594 quarter notes tended to be too long.

Hatmaker: To be honest, I don't recall too many places where things were confusing (there certainly weren't any places where things were impossible) but I just took out the score and can give you a few places where we made some decisions about how to better execute things: In Part 1 (the first slow movement) at letter M in the Violin 1 part, I'm pretty sure I just did the whole passage on the D string, not crossing strings like he notates.

Dickenson: Mostly discrepancies in harmonics notation:

Part 1

m. 59—Is very clear, between fingered A (1st finger on the g string) and touch 4 on the D.

m. 52—Should it have been notated the same way? I played it as such, because these two notes are a fifth apart, second fingers in the same position on G and D strings. Nearly impossible to play one string totally fingered and one just touching as a harmonic.

m. 65—Is this harmonic on the sounding pitch, (touch 4 on d string, in the middle of the string) or the octave above, playing that note on the A string as you would normally, but as a touch so it was a harmonic. Honestly, I think I played it differently every single time.

m. 74—again very specific with showing III for the D string, and II on the A. (That same D harmonic as in measure 65, but with the added string specification. Consistency of notation is helpful.)

Part 2

Dance 2, m. 446—I took note of Juilliard recording to take this septuplet of repeated notes under a slur to mean ricochet all in one bow. The correct notation of that would be to have dots above each note, under the slur.

Dance 3, O—Just, why? These thirds are just tricky in general. Shifting is a must, so you have to navigate the finger board carefully, changing positions almost every measure. I don't want to sound like I'm complaining just because it's hard, but to me I also don't see the musical purpose, especially when it is in the same range as the 1st violin (making it even harder to tune).

Nagler: Difficult on violin (as I recall there were more issues in the second violin part, but here are a few of mine):

- (a) Bar 133: the leap to this double stop is doable, though potentially dicey.
- (b) Bar 529: the leap of three octaves is once again a bit unpredictable.
- (c) Dance 3: the transitions between *pizz* and *arco* are next to impossible to accomplish, but there are a few moments that can be cut to make the switch.
- (d) There are multiple realizations possible in Bars 57-60, 88, 143-144. Just a note on whether these harmonics are at sounding pitch or placement pitch would clear this up.
- (e) Dance 4. From the beginning to T and from V to 772 we would LOVE some more details on the bow stroke!

3b) What were any problem spots for the viola, specifically, and how did you address them?

Hesketh: I actually found it to be quite playable for the viola, if a little awkward in a few places (nothing that practicing didn't solve).

Freund-Striplen: In Part 1, between Letter K and O, the viola part is repetitive and initially it was easy to get lost. Writing entrances of the other instruments helped keep my place. Measures 37-61 the harmonics didn't always speak well. Though it is marked *pp*, moving closer to the bridge helped. The opening passage of *Gumboots* became a little self-conscious as we tried to “not be perfectly together.” Our solution was to breathe together and feel the gestures as one instrument, but not try to line up in the traditional sense. I think the idea of “untogetherness”

was just to provide a sense of relaxation and independence without getting fussy. Going from *arco* to *pizz* or visa versa in Dance 1 and Dance 4 was tricky. I notated reminders to “hold bow” in some *pizz* passages which I would ordinarily play with a less “*arco*-ready” grip. In Dance 3, m.591 was a lot of fun and I enjoyed hamming up the “viola joke.”

Pardue: I mostly just needed cues written into the part. I solved that by writing them in myself, and even playing from the score at the end of the first movement. The hardest thing was knowing the whole piece and not just my part. I spent a lot of time studying.

4) Were there any spots where you were confused by the notation, and if so, how did you resolve those?

Hesketh: Dance 4, mm. 688, 690, 694. The written instruction along with the indication of which strings to play was confusing. He indicates that the F is to be played on the G string and the D to be the open D string, but why you would “deaden” the open string before it has even been played is a mystery to me. I decided to play the open D as a left-hand *pizzicato*, and played the F *pizzicato* with the right hand.

Freund-Striplen: Some of the accents were logical to bring out, indicating rhythmic grouping, and some were clearly for emphasis. However, sometimes it seemed like overkill, making Dance 3 heavy instead of spirited. An overall direction might be more helpful to the players instead of littering the page with accents. This is easy enough to overcome.

Nagler: In Dance 5, I think this applies to us all—any and all explanations on the beaming would be welcome, appreciated, and useful.

Pardue: The notation was not confusing.

Appendix E. Bass Clarinet Altissimo Fingerings by Performer⁹⁸

The fingerings shown in this appendix are specific to mm. 152-195. The purpose of this Appendix is to provide the complete fingering progression from those individuals who were able to provide the information. I am also including equipment information for each individual and their interview responses on the matter which are also included in Appendix C. Keys filled in with grey are optional. Any missing fingerings were not able to be verified. A comprehensive fingering chart, organized by pitch, will be provided in Appendix F.

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⁹⁸ Fingering images were produced with the assistance of Bret Pimentel's "Fingering Diagram Builder," which is available for free on his website: <https://bretpimentel.com> (accessed Sep 2017).

José Luis Estellés
 Selmer Privilege
 Selmer E mouthpiece
 Vandoren #3 reeds (Blue box)

m. 156

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

molto

or

m. 165

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

ff molto vibrato (lip), intense, full of yearning

m. 185

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

f

Julian Bliss

Selmer Paris Privilege model 67

Selmer Focus mouthpiece

BG traditional ligature in gold

Légère #3.5 reed

“I have attached what I remember of my fingerings! Most of them also require some lipping up or down depending. I’ve experimented with all sorts of different fingerings for this part and I find these work best for me. I must credit the amazing bass clarinetist Sarah Watts for her help on everything bass related! Sarah has a very good chart of altissimo fingerings.” - Bliss⁹⁹

m. 156

Musical notation for m. 156, Bass Clarinet in Bb. The staff shows a melodic line with a *molto* dynamic marking. Below the staff are five fingerings for the notes: 1. G4 (left hand index, right hand index), 2. A4 (left hand index, right hand index), 3. B4 (left hand index, right hand index), 4. C5 (left hand index, right hand index), 5. D5 (left hand index, right hand index).

m. 165

Musical notation for m. 165, Bass Clarinet in Bb. The staff shows a melodic line with a *ff* dynamic marking and the instruction *molto vibrato (lip), intense, full of yearning*. Below the staff are four fingerings for the notes: 1. G4 (left hand index, right hand index), 2. A4 (left hand index, right hand index), 3. B4 (left hand index, right hand index), 4. C5 (left hand index, right hand index).

m. 185

Musical notation for m. 185, Bass Clarinet in Bb. The staff shows a melodic line with a *f* dynamic marking. Below the staff are six fingerings for the notes: 1. G4 (left hand index, right hand index), 2. A4 (left hand index, right hand index), 3. B4 (left hand index, right hand index), 4. C5 (left hand index, right hand index), 5. D5 (left hand index, right hand index), 6. E5 (left hand index, right hand index).

⁹⁹From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C.

Gary Gorczyca

Selmer Model #33

Schreiber EPE mouthpiece with JM facing

Rovner Eddie Daniels ligature

Vandoren V-12 #3.5 reeds

“No, I did not use any online fingering charts. Selmer and Buffet bass clarinets have many idiosyncrasies, as well as differing models, which changes pitch and fingerings significantly. I came up with these fingerings based upon the partials for the Selmer Model 33 bass clarinet that I use. A lot of time was spent in figuring out just what was going to work well. I’ve changed one fingering in the meantime. For the very highest altissimo note in measure 186, I am currently happy with thumb, register, and side throat F# (using both keys). I might end up changing it again prior to the performance.” - Gorczyca¹⁰⁰

m. 156

* I used this F# fingering in m.158 so I could go to the harmonic D without moving to a different partial, thus avoiding any squeaking.

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

musical notation for measure 156, showing notes and fingerings. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5. Fingerings are shown below the notes. A 'molto' marking is present at the end of the measure.

m. 165

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

ff molto vibrato (lip), intense, full of yearning

musical notation for measure 165, showing notes and fingerings. The notation includes a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F#7, G7, A7, B7, C8, D8, E8, F#8, G8, A8, B8, C9, D9, E9, F#9, G9, A9, B9, C10, D10, E10, F#10, G10, A10, B10, C11, D11, E11, F#11, G11, A11, B11, C12, D12, E12, F#12, G12, A12, B12, C13, D13, E13, F#13, G13, A13, B13, C14, D14, E14, F#14, G14, A14, B14, C15, D15, E15, F#15, G15, A15, B15, C16, D16, E16, F#16, G16, A16, B16, C17, D17, E17, F#17, G17, A17, B17, C18, D18, E18, F#18, G18, A18, B18, C19, D19, E19, F#19, G19, A19, B19, C20, D20, E20, F#20, G20, A20, B20, C21, D21, E21, F#21, G21, A21, B21, C22, D22, E22, F#22, G22, A22, B22, C23, D23, E23, F#23, G23, A23, B23, C24, D24, E24, F#24, G24, A24, B24, C25, D25, E25, F#25, G25, A25, B25, C26, D26, E26, F#26, G26, A26, B26, C27, D27, E27, F#27, G27, A27, B27, C28, D28, E28, F#28, G28, A28, B28, C29, D29, E29, F#29, G29, A29, B29, C30, D30, E30, F#30, G30, A30, B30, C31, D31, E31, F#31, G31, A31, B31, C32, D32, E32, F#32, G32, A32, B32, C33, D33, E33, F#33, G33, A33, B33, C34, D34, E34, F#34, G34, A34, B34, C35, D35, E35, F#35, G35, A35, B35, C36, D36, E36, F#36, G36, A36, B36, C37, D37, E37, F#37, G37, A37, B37, C38, D38, E38, F#38, G38, A38, B38, C39, D39, E39, F#39, G39, A39, B39, C40, D40, E40, F#40, G40, A40, B40, C41, D41, E41, F#41, G41, A41, B41, C42, D42, E42, F#42, G42, A42, B42, C43, D43, E43, F#43, G43, A43, B43, C44, D44, E44, F#44, G44, A44, B44, C45, D45, E45, F#45, G45, A45, B45, C46, D46, E46, F#46, G46, A46, B46, C47, D47, E47, F#47, G47, A47, B47, C48, D48, E48, F#48, G48, A48, B48, C49, D49, E49, F#49, G49, A49, B49, C50, D50, E50, F#50, G50, A50, B50, C51, D51, E51, F#51, G51, A51, B51, C52, D52, E52, F#52, G52, A52, B52, C53, D53, E53, F#53, G53, A53, B53, C54, D54, E54, F#54, G54, A54, B54, C55, D55, E55, F#55, G55, A55, B55, C56, D56, E56, F#56, G56, A56, B56, C57, D57, E57, F#57, G57, A57, B57, C58, D58, E58, F#58, G58, A58, B58, C59, D59, E59, F#59, G59, A59, B59, C60, D60, E60, F#60, G60, A60, B60, C61, D61, E61, F#61, G61, A61, B61, C62, D62, E62, F#62, G62, A62, B62, C63, D63, E63, F#63, G63, A63, B63, C64, D64, E64, F#64, G64, A64, B64, C65, D65, E65, F#65, G65, A65, B65, C66, D66, E66, F#66, G66, A66, B66, C67, D67, E67, F#67, G67, A67, B67, C68, D68, E68, F#68, G68, A68, B68, C69, D69, E69, F#69, G69, A69, B69, C70, D70, E70, F#70, G70, A70, B70, C71, D71, E71, F#71, G71, A71, B71, C72, D72, E72, F#72, G72, A72, B72, C73, D73, E73, F#73, G73, A73, B73, C74, D74, E74, F#74, G74, A74, B74, C75, D75, E75, F#75, G75, A75, B75, C76, D76, E76, F#76, G76, A76, B76, C77, D77, E77, F#77, G77, A77, B77, C78, D78, E78, F#78, G78, A78, B78, C79, D79, E79, F#79, G79, A79, B79, C80, D80, E80, F#80, G80, A80, B80, C81, D81, E81, F#81, G81, A81, B81, C82, D82, E82, F#82, G82, A82, B82, C83, D83, E83, F#83, G83, A83, B83, C84, D84, E84, F#84, G84, A84, B84, C85, D85, E85, F#85, G85, A85, B85, C86, D86, E86, F#86, G86, A86, B86, C87, D87, E87, F#87, G87, A87, B87, C88, D88, E88, F#88, G88, A88, B88, C89, D89, E89, F#89, G89, A89, B89, C90, D90, E90, F#90, G90, A90, B90, C91, D91, E91, F#91, G91, A91, B91, C92, D92, E92, F#92, G92, A92, B92, C93, D93, E93, F#93, G93, A93, B93, C94, D94, E94, F#94, G94, A94, B94, C95, D95, E95, F#95, G95, A95, B95, C96, D96, E96, F#96, G96, A96, B96, C97, D97, E97, F#97, G97, A97, B97, C98, D98, E98, F#98, G98, A98, B98, C99, D99, E99, F#99, G99, A99, B99, C100, D100, E100, F#100, G100, A100, B100, C101, D101, E101, F#101, G101, A101, B101, C102, D102, E102, F#102, G102, A102, B102, C103, D103, E103, F#103, G103, A103, B103, C104, D104, E104, F#104, G104, A104, B104, C105, D105, E105, F#105, G105, A105, B105, C106, D106, E106, F#106, G106, A106, B106, C107, D107, E107, F#107, G107, A107, B107, C108, D108, E108, F#108, G108, A108, B108, C109, D109, E109, F#109, G109, A109, B109, C110, D110, E110, F#110, G110, A110, B110, C111, D111, E111, F#111, G111, A111, B111, C112, D112, E112, F#112, G112, A112, B112, C113, D113, E113, F#113, G113, A113, B113, C114, D114, E114, F#114, G114, A114, B114, C115, D115, E115, F#115, G115, A115, B115, C116, D116, E116, F#116, G116, A116, B116, C117, D117, E117, F#117, G117, A117, B117, C118, D118, E118, F#118, G118, A118, B118, C119, D119, E119, F#119, G119, A119, B119, C120, D120, E120, F#120, G120, A120, B120, C121, D121, E121, F#121, G121, A121, B121, C122, D122, E122, F#122, G122, A122, B122, C123, D123, E123, F#123, G123, A123, B123, C124, D124, E124, F#124, G124, A124, B124, C125, D125, E125, F#125, G125, A125, B125, C126, D126, E126, F#126, G126, A126, B126, C127, D127, E127, F#127, G127, A127, B127, C128, D128, E128, F#128, G128, A128, B128, C129, D129, E129, F#129, G129, A129, B129, C130, D130, E130, F#130, G130, A130, B130, C131, D131, E131, F#131, G131, A131, B131, C132, D132, E132, F#132, G132, A132, B132, C133, D133, E133, F#133, G133, A133, B133, C134, D134, E134, F#134, G134, A134, B134, C135, D135, E135, F#135, G135, A135, B135, C136, D136, E136, F#136, G136, A136, B136, C137, D137, E137, F#137, G137, A137, B137, C138, D138, E138, F#138, G138, A138, B138, C139, D139, E139, F#139, G139, A139, B139, C140, D140, E140, F#140, G140, A140, B140, C141, D141, E141, F#141, G141, A141, B141, C142, D142, E142, F#142, G142, A142, B142, C143, D143, E143, F#143, G143, A143, B143, C144, D144, E144, F#144, G144, A144, B144, C145, D145, E145, F#145, G145, A145, B145, C146, D146, E146, F#146, G146, A146, B146, C147, D147, E147, F#147, G147, A147, B147, C148, D148, E148, F#148, G148, A148, B148, C149, D149, E149, F#149, G149, A149, B149, C150, D150, E150, F#150, G150, A150, B150, C151, D151, E151, F#151, G151, A151, B151, C152, D152, E152, F#152, G152, A152, B152, C153, D153, E153, F#153, G153, A153, B153, C154, D154, E154, F#154, G154, A154, B154, C155, D155, E155, F#155, G155, A155, B155, C156, D156, E156, F#156, G156, A156, B156, C157, D157, E157, F#157, G157, A157, B157, C158, D158, E158, F#158, G158, A158, B158, C159, D159, E159, F#159, G159, A159, B159, C160, D160, E160, F#160, G160, A160, B160, C161, D161, E161, F#161, G161, A161, B161, C162, D162, E162, F#162, G162, A162, B162, C163, D163, E163, F#163, G163, A163, B163, C164, D164, E164, F#164, G164, A164, B164, C165, D165, E165, F#165, G165, A165, B165, C166, D166, E166, F#166, G166, A166, B166, C167, D167, E167, F#167, G167, A167, B167, C168, D168, E168, F#168, G168, A168, B168, C169, D169, E169, F#169, G169, A169, B169, C170, D170, E170, F#170, G170, A170, B170, C171, D171, E171, F#171, G171, A171, B171, C172, D172, E172, F#172, G172, A172, B172, C173, D173, E173, F#173, G173, A173, B173, C174, D174, E174, F#174, G174, A174, B174, C175, D175, E175, F#175, G175, A175, B175, C176, D176, E176, F#176, G176, A176, B176, C177, D177, E177, F#177, G177, A177, B177, C178, D178, E178, F#178, G178, A178, B178, C179, D179, E179, F#179, G179, A179, B179, C180, D180, E180, F#180, G180, A180, B180, C181, D181, E181, F#181, G181, A181, B181, C182, D182, E182, F#182, G182, A182, B182, C183, D183, E183, F#183, G183, A183, B183, C184, D184, E184, F#184, G184, A184, B184, C185, D185, E185, F#185, G185, A185, B185, C186, D186, E186, F#186, G186, A186, B186, C187, D187, E187, F#187, G187, A187, B187, C188, D188, E188, F#188, G188, A188, B188, C189, D189, E189, F#189, G189, A189, B189, C190, D190, E190, F#190, G190, A190, B190, C191, D191, E191, F#191, G191, A191, B191, C192, D192, E192, F#192, G192, A192, B192, C193, D193, E193, F#193, G193, A193, B193, C194, D194, E194, F#194, G194, A194, B194, C195, D195, E195, F#195, G195, A195, B195, C196, D196, E196, F#196, G196, A196, B196, C197, D197, E197, F#197, G197, A197, B197, C198, D198, E198, F#198, G198, A198, B198, C199, D199, E199, F#199, G199, A199, B199, C200, D200, E200, F#200, G200, A200, B200, C201, D201, E201, F#201, G201, A201, B201, C202, D202, E202, F#202, G202, A202, B202, C203, D203, E203, F#203, G203, A203, B203, C204, D204, E204, F#204, G204, A204, B204, C205, D205, E205, F#205, G205, A205, B205, C206, D206, E206, F#206, G206, A206, B206, C207, D207, E207, F#207, G207, A207, B207, C208, D208, E208, F#208, G208, A208, B208, C209, D209, E209, F#209, G209, A209, B209, C210, D210, E210, F#210, G210, A210, B210, C211, D211, E211, F#211, G211, A211, B211, C212, D212, E212, F#212, G212, A212, B212, C213, D213, E213, F#213, G213, A213, B213, C214, D214, E214, F#214, G214, A214, B214, C215, D215, E215, F#215, G215, A215, B215, C216, D216, E216, F#216, G216, A216, B216, C217, D217, E217, F#217, G217, A217, B217, C218, D218, E218, F#218, G218, A218, B218, C219, D219, E219, F#219, G219, A219, B219, C220, D220, E220, F#220, G220, A220, B220, C221, D221, E221, F#221, G221, A221, B221, C222, D222, E222, F#222, G222, A222, B222, C223, D223, E223, F#223, G223, A223, B223, C224, D224, E224, F#224, G224, A224, B224, C225, D225, E225, F#225, G225, A225, B225, C226, D226, E226, F#226, G226, A226, B226, C227, D227, E227, F#227, G227, A227, B227, C228, D228, E228, F#228, G228, A228, B228, C229, D229, E229, F#229, G229, A229, B229, C230, D230, E230, F#230, G230, A230, B230, C231, D231, E231, F#231, G231, A231, B231, C232, D232, E232, F#232, G232, A232, B232, C233, D233, E233, F#233, G233, A233, B233, C234, D234, E234, F#234, G234, A234, B234, C235, D235, E235, F#235, G235, A235, B235, C236, D236, E236, F#236, G236, A236, B236, C237, D237, E237, F#237, G237, A237, B237, C238, D238, E238, F#238, G238, A238, B238, C239, D239, E239, F#239, G239, A239, B239, C240, D240, E240, F#240, G240, A240, B240, C241, D241, E241, F#241, G241, A241, B241, C242, D242, E242, F#242, G242, A242, B242, C243, D243, E243, F#243, G243, A243, B243, C244, D244, E244, F#244, G244, A244, B244, C245, D245, E245, F#245, G245, A245, B245, C246, D246, E246, F#246, G246, A246, B246, C247, D247, E247, F#247, G247, A247, B247, C248, D248, E248, F#248, G248, A248, B248, C249, D249, E249, F#249, G249, A249, B249, C250, D250, E250, F#250, G250, A250, B250, C251, D251, E251, F#251, G251, A251, B251, C252, D252, E252, F#252, G252, A252, B252, C253, D253, E253, F#253, G253, A253, B253, C254, D254, E254, F#254, G254, A254, B254, C255, D255, E255, F#255, G255, A255, B255, C256, D256, E256, F#256, G256, A256, B256, C257, D257, E257, F#257, G257, A257, B257, C258, D258, E258, F#258, G258, A258, B258, C259, D259, E259, F#259, G259, A259, B259, C260, D260, E260, F#260, G260, A260, B260, C261, D261, E261, F#261, G261, A261, B261, C262, D262, E262, F#262, G262, A262, B262, C263, D263, E263, F#263, G263, A263, B263, C264, D264, E264, F#264, G264, A264, B264, C265, D265, E265, F#265, G265, A265, B265, C266, D266, E266, F#266, G266, A266, B266, C267, D267, E267, F#267, G267, A267, B267, C268, D268, E268, F#268, G268, A268, B268, C269, D269, E269, F#269, G269, A269, B269, C270, D270, E270, F#270, G270, A270, B270, C271, D271, E271, F#271, G271, A271, B271, C272, D272, E272, F#272, G272, A272, B272, C273, D273, E273, F#273, G273, A273, B273, C274, D274, E274, F#274, G274, A274, B274, C275, D275, E275, F#275, G275, A275, B275, C276, D276, E276, 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G299, A299, B299, C300, D300, E300, F#300, G300, A300, B300, C301, D301, E301, F#301, G301, A301, B301, C302, D302, E302, F#302, G302, A302, B302, C303, D303, E303, F#303, G303, A303, B303, C304, D304, E304, F#304, G304, A304, B304, C305, D305, E305, F#305, G305, A305, B305, C306, D306, E306, F#306, G306, A306, B306, C307, D307, E307, F#307, G307, A307, B307, C308, D308, E308, F#308, G308, A308, B308, C309, D309, E309, F#309, G309, A309, B309, C310, D310, E310, F#310, G310, A310, B310, C311, D311, E311, F#311, G311, A311, B311, C312, D312, E312, F#312, G312, A312, B312, C313, D313, E313, F#313, G313, A313, B313, C314, D314, E314, F#314, G314, A314, B314, C315, D315, E315, F#315, G315, A315, B315, C316, D316, E316, F#316, G316, A316, B316, C317, D317, E317, F#317, G317, A317, B317, C318, D318, E318, F#318, G318, A318, B318, C319, D319, E319, F#319, G319, A319, B319, C320, D320, E320, F#320, G320, A320, B320, C321, D321, E321, F#321, G321, A321, B321, C322, D322, E322, F#322, G322, A322, B322, C323, D323, E323, F#323, G323, A323, B323, C324, D324, E324, F#324, G324, A324, B324, C325, D325, E325, F#325, G325, A325, B325, C326, D326, E326, F#326, G326, A326, B326, C327, D327, E327, F#327, G327, A327, B327, C328, D328, E328, F#328, G328, A328, B328, C329, D329, E329, F#329, G329, A329, B329, C330, D330, E330, F#330, G330, A330, B330, C331, D331, E331, F#331, G331, A331, B331, C332, D332, E332, F#332, G332, A332, B332, C333, D333, E333, F#333, G333, A333, B333, C334, D334, E334, F#334, G334, A334, B334, C335, D335, E335, F#335, G335, A335, B335, C336, D336, E336, F#336, G336, A336, B336, C337, D337, E337, F#337, G337, A337, B337, C338, D338, E338, F#338, G338, A338, B338, C339, D339, E339, F#339, G339, A339, B339, C340, D340, E340, F#340, G340, A340, B340, C341, D341, E341, F#341, G341, A341, B341, C342, D342, E342, F#342, G342, A342, B342, C343, D343, E343, F#343, G343, A343, B343, C344, D344, E344, F#344, G344, A344, B

Tony Striplen

Selmer Model #33 from 1994.

Selmer C *mouthpiece refaced by Gregory Dufford

Bonade Inverted Nickel Plated Ligature

Vandoren Standard Reed #3

“I discovered fingerings for the altissimo bass clarinet notes by some trial and error based on the usual setup on my instrument. The fingerings were actually discovered about 6-7 years earlier while working on Golijov's *Dreams & Prayers of Isaac the Blind*. It has the same highest note.”

- Striplen¹⁰¹

m. 156

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

molto

m. 165

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

ff molto vibrato (lip), intense, full of yearning

m. 185

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

f

¹⁰¹ From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C.

John Klinghammer

Buffet Prestige (c. 1991) / Buffet Tosca

C* mouthpiece / Vandoren B40

Vandoren Optimum ligature

Vandoren Regular or V12 #3.5-#4

“I use a ‘fake’ fingering for the grace notes in m. 174. I trill the first finger from the C# fingering.”
- Klinghammer¹⁰²

m. 156

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

musical notation for m. 156, showing a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The staff contains six measures of music. The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note G4 with a grace note F#4. The third measure contains a quarter note A4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note B4. The fifth measure contains a quarter note C5 with a grace note B4. The sixth measure contains a quarter note D5 with a grace note C5. A dashed line above the staff indicates the 8^{va} register. A *molto* marking is present at the end of the staff.

fingering diagrams for m. 156, showing fingerings for the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, and D5. Each diagram shows the positions of the four fingers (1-4) on the keys, with open circles representing fingers not used.

m. 165

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

musical notation for m. 165, showing a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The staff contains six measures of music. The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note G4 with a grace note F#4. The third measure contains a quarter note A4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note B4. The fifth measure contains a quarter note C5 with a grace note B4. The sixth measure contains a quarter note D5 with a grace note C5. A dashed line above the staff indicates the 8^{va} register. A *ff molto vibrato (lip), intense, full of yearning* marking is present at the beginning of the staff.

fingering diagrams for m. 165, showing fingerings for the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, and D5. Each diagram shows the positions of the four fingers (1-4) on the keys, with open circles representing fingers not used.

m. 185

Bs. Cl.
in B \flat

musical notation for m. 185, showing a treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The staff contains six measures of music. The first measure is a whole rest. The second measure contains a quarter note G4 with a grace note F#4. The third measure contains a quarter note A4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note B4. The fifth measure contains a quarter note C5 with a grace note B4. The sixth measure contains a quarter note D5 with a grace note C5. A dashed line above the staff indicates the 8^{va} register. A *f* marking is present at the end of the staff.

fingering diagrams for m. 185, showing fingerings for the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, and D5. Each diagram shows the positions of the four fingers (1-4) on the keys, with open circles representing fingers not used.

¹⁰² From correspondence with the artist, see Appendix C.

Appendix F. Bass Clarinet Altissimo Fingerings by Pitch for *Gumboots*¹⁰³

This appendix provides all the fingerings I have collected organized by pitch, from sounding octave (in the key of B₁) E₅ to F₆, only for notes used in *Gumboots*. Keys filled in with grey are optional.

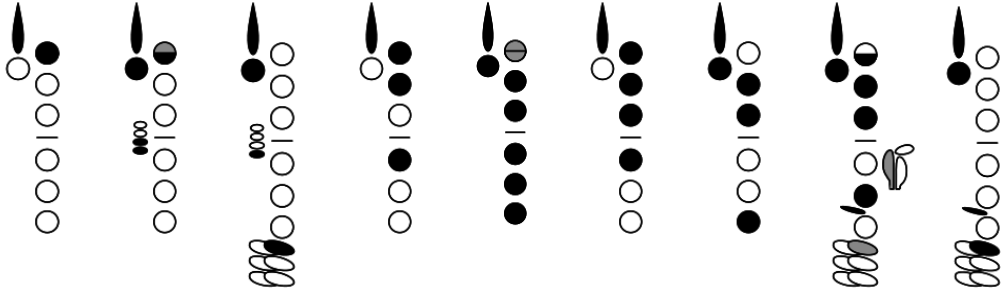
E₅

F₅

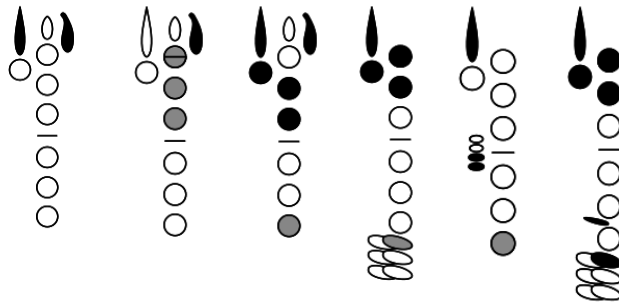
G₅

¹⁰³ Fingering images were produced with the assistance of Bret Pimentel's "Fingering Diagram Builder," which is available for free on his website: <https://bretpimentel.com> (accessed Sep 2017).

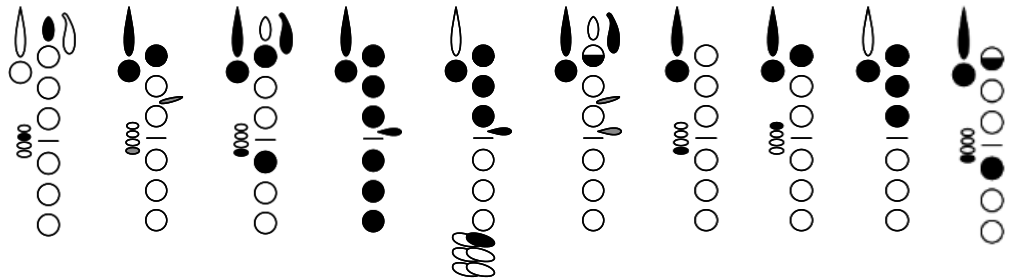
A5



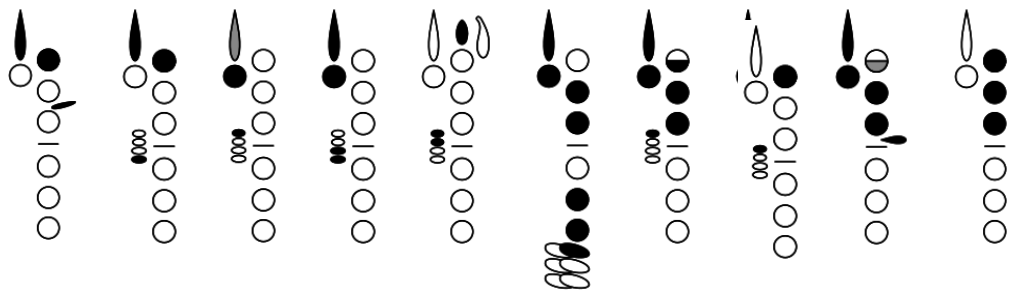
B5



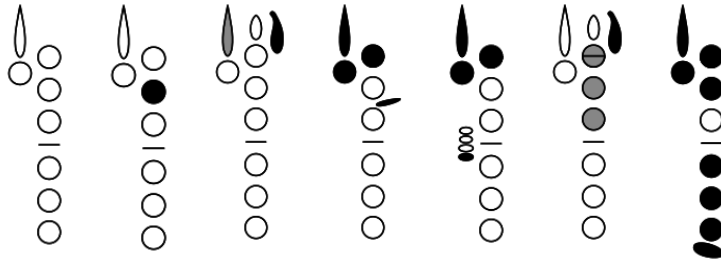
C#6



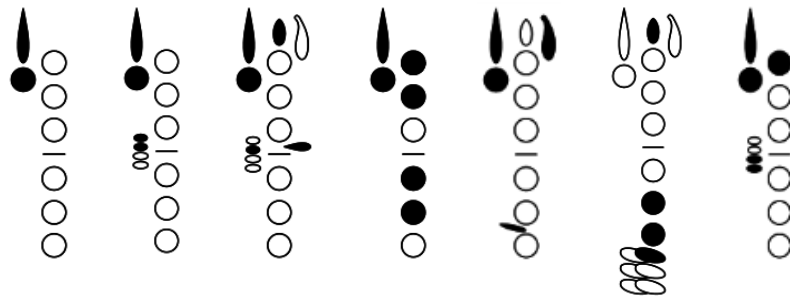
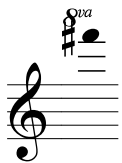
D6



E6



F#6



Appendix G. *Gumboots* Performance History

David Bruce maintains both a chronological performance history and a list of upcoming performances for *Gumboots* on his website. The following list is taken from there but is organized by clarinetist and includes additional information collected from my research that is not currently included on the website.

1. **Maria Albaladejo**

- a. Sibelius Academy (Finland)—*April 2015*

2. **Sarah Beaty**

- a. Ensemble ACJW

- i. Carnegie Hall (New York City)—*February 9, 2010*
- ii. Skidmore College (Saratoga Springs, New York)—*February 2010*
- iii. (Germany)—*June 2010*
- iv. (Spain)—*November 2010*
- v. Princeton University (Princeton, New Jersey)—*January 2012*

- b. Ikarus Chamber Players (New York City)—*May & November 2010*

- c. Callino Quartet

- i. (Ireland Tour)—*March 2012 (x5)*
- ii. RTE “The Works” Broadcast—*March 22, 2012*

- d. The Declassified¹⁰⁴ (now Decoda¹⁰⁵)

- i. (Iceland)—*June 2012*
- ii. Yale University (New Haven, Connecticut)—*June 2013*
- iii. (South Carolina)—*January 2014 (x2)*
- iv. Purcell Room (United Kingdom)—*February 2014*
- v. Music in the Round at Sheffield City Hall (Sheffield, United Kingdom)—*February 2014 (x2)*
- vi. Skidmore College (New York)—*July 2014*
- vii. Chamber Music Monterey Bay (Monterey Bay, California)—*Feb 24, 2018*

¹⁰⁴ http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/25/arts/music/the-declassified-a-new-classical-music-group-prepares-for-liftoff.html?_r=0

¹⁰⁵ <http://decodamusic.org/>

3. **Mate Bekavac**
 - a. Kronberg Academy
 - i. Stadthalle Kronberg (Kronberg, Germany)—*April 2016*
 - ii. Cankar Centre (Ljubljana, Slovenia)—*November 15, 2017*
4. **Julian Bliss**
 - a. Vanburgh Quartet
 - i. West Cork Chamber Music Festival (Cork, Ireland)—*July 2014*
 - ii. FUAIM at University College Cork Lunchtime Concert (Cork, Ireland)—*December 2014*
 - b. Carducci Quartet
 - i. World Premiere Recording (Signam Classics)—released *June 2016*
5. **Franklin Cohen**
 - a. ChamberFest Cleveland—*June 2014*
6. **Annelize de Villiers**
 - a. KwaZulu-Natal Philharmonic String Quartet
 - i. HIFA festival (Zimbabwe)—*May 2015* *African premiere
 - ii. artSPACE durban—*May 2015* *South African premiere
7. **José Luis Estellés**
 - a. Primavera Musical (Spain)— *June 2012*
8. **Jose Franch-Ballester**
 - a. Camerata Pacifica (San Marino, Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, Ventura)—*March 2018*
9. **Gary Gorczyca**
 - a. Chameleon Arts Ensemble of Boston—*April 22 & 23, 2017*
10. **Jason Gresl**
 - a. Loon Lake Live (Loon Lake, New York)—*July 2014* (x3)
11. **David Griffiths**
 - a. Ensemble Liaison (Melbourne, Australia)—*April 2015*
12. **Dawn Hamilton**
 - a. DMA Recital (University of California, Los Angeles)—*April 24, 2017*
13. **Pamela Helton**
 - a. Third Millennium Ensemble (Maryland)—*November 2010, May & December 2011*

14. Matthew Hunt

- a. Ensemble 360, (Sheffield, United Kingdom)—*April 2011*
- b. Charlottesville Chamber Music Festival (South Carolina)—*September 2011*

15. Lisa Kachouee

- a. (Tallahassee, Florida)—*February 2014*
- b. Taneycoma Festival (Branson, Missouri)—*June 2016*
- c. Oklahoma City University—*January 2017*

16. Stuart King

- a. CHROMA (UK Premiere)—*September & December 2009*

17. John Klinghammer

- a. Eko Nova
 - i. Breckenridge Music Festival (CO)—*July 2012 & May 2016*
 - ii. Kaneko (Omaha, Nebraska)—*May 2, 2016*
- b. Kansas City Symphony musicians at Helzberg Hall, Kauffman Center—*March 2016*
- c. Malashock Dance—*Apr 2014 (x3)*
- d. Art of Elan (San Diego Museum of Art)—*December 2010*

18. Michael J. Maccaferri

- a. Summer Chamber Music in Roland Park (Baltimore, Maryland)—*July 2015*

19. Jack McNeill

- a. Gildas Quartet
 - i. University of Warwick Music Centre (United Kingdom)—*December 2015*
 - ii. Barber Institute of Fine Arts (Birmingham, Alabama)—*March 2016*
 - iii. Carlisle Music Society (Carlisle, United Kingdom)—*October 2016*

20. Alex Morris

- a. Australian National Academy of Music, Melbourne—*October/November 2010*

21. David Orlowsky

- a. Northern Chords Festival (United Kingdom)—*May 2014*

22. Todd Palmer

- a. Portland Chamber Music Festival (Portland, Oregon)—*August 19, 2017*
- b. YCA artists (Tokyo, Japan)—*June 2011*
- c. St. Lawrence String Quartet
 - i. Carnegie Hall (New York City)—*October 23, 2008*

- ii. Spoleto Festival (Charleston, SC)—*March 2010 & June 2010*
 - iii. Broadcast on NPR “Performance Today”—*October 6, 2010 & June 3, 2011*
 - iv. (US Tour)—*December 2013 (x5)*
 - v. Spoleto Festival (Charleston, SC)—*June 1, 2017*
- 23. Maxime Pénard**
- a. Ensemble Artefact (Swiss premiere)—*May 2014*
- 24. James T. Shields**
- a. Albuquerque Chamber Soloists (Albuquerque, New Mexico)—*March 2015*
 - b. Chatter (Albuquerque, New Mexico)—*December 2015*
- 25. Ralph Skiano**
- a. Atlantic Chamber Ensemble (ACE) at Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, Virginia)—*January 2013*
 - b. ACE & AMARANTH Contemporary Dance at Grace Street Theater (Richmond, Virginia)—*January 18 & 19 2013*
- 26. Ferdinand Steiner**
- a. Stellenbosch International Chamber Music Festival (South Africa)—*July 2017*
- 27. Tony Striplen** (Bass clarinet, San Francisco Opera)
- a. Gold Coast Chamber Players—*March 2011 (x2)*
- 28. Ilya Shterenberg**
- a. Camerata San Antonio (Texas)—*March 2012 (x3)*
- 29. Antanas Talocka**
- a. Ciurlionis Quartet at Trakai Castle Great Hall (Lithuania)—*November 2014*
- 30. Eddy Vanoosthuys** (Principal clarinet, Brussels Philharmonic)
- a. With soloists from the Brussels Philharmonic—*March 2010*
- 31. Rowena Watts**
- a. Strelitzia Ensemble at Glebe Justice Centre (Sydney, Australia)—*June 2017*
- 32. Peter Wright** (Principal clarinet, Jacksonville Symphony)
- a. Florida Chamber Music Project (Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida)—*June 2016*

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