

The Chalumeau: A New Sound in Music

MUSIC LITERATURE 1 (MUS 301)

Ryan Terry

Dr. Nadine Luke

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Introduction

Imagine it is the beginning of the eighteenth century, during the bustle and excitement of the Baroque era. Artists and musicians alike have united in furthering the pursuit of artistic perfection, and amidst the undertaking of a commissioned piece, the rumor of a new instrument is brought to the public's attention. How does a composer go about writing for an instrument that's never before been written for? Surely this must have been the shared feeling of composers at this time when the invention of the clarinet came about in the early 1700s. But what new sounds and possibilities did the invention of the early clarinet (also known as the chalumeau) bring to early Baroque music and beyond? Drawing on analysis of Georg Philipp Telemann's "Concerto for Two Chalumeau", the invention of the clarinet not only brought a new sound to the music of the Baroque time, but has also had a lasting effect on the development of clarinet music to this day.

Brief History of the Clarinet

It is important to note that chalumeau dates back long before the Baroque era. Author and professional librarian F. Geofferey Rendall states that "such instruments may have had their origin in Egypt... during the fourth dynasty (3rd millennium B.C.)"¹ (Renall 1957, p. 3). Although many changes had been made to the chalumeau and many other instruments since then, it wasn't until the early eighteenth century when Johann Denner, a German maker of musical instruments, "...invented a new sort of pipe, the so-called clarinette, to the great satisfaction of music-lovers... and finally produced chalumeaux in an improved form."² (Kireilis 1964, p. 10).

¹ F. Geofferey Rendall, *The Clarinet* (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1957).

² Kireilis, Ramon. "A History of the Clarinet and its Music from 1600 to 1800", DMA thesis, August 1964; Denton, Texas. (<https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc935803/>), University of North Texas Libraries, UNT Digital Library, <https://digital.library.unt.edu/> .

One such innovation that Denner contributed in 1707 was the addition of a speaker key. Although his original intent was to add one additional note to the top of the chalumeau's range, the key instead served as a register key and added the clarion register, over-blowing at the interval of a twelfth. Such discoveries and innovations allowed for more possibilities on the instrument, increasing its overall versatility. And with a newfound range of sounds that the chalumeau could produce, they would now be able to better contribute to the sound of orchestral, solo, and other instrumental works that were rising into popularity at the time.



Examples of Early Music

Early Clarinet Music

In order to gain insight as to how music was first written for the chalumeau, we must look at some examples of early clarinet music, such as Georg Philipp Telemann's "Concerto for Two Chalumeau".

[How did composers of the time write for this new instrument? Include many examples of the music from the Telemann work you have selected to support these ideas.](#)

Was this style of music written for the chalumeau any different than the music that was being written for similar instruments of this era? Comparing early clarinet music with that of the early oboe and flute (similar instruments of the woodwind family) will help to identify similarities and differences in how composers for the chalumeau.

Comparisons with the Early Oboe

The early oboe...

Comparisons with the Early Flute

The early flute...

Compare it to similar instruments such as flutes and oboes in order to see if there are any differences presented in how clarinet parts were written. (What flute and oboe music will you compare it to? You could provide a few more details here.)

Comparisons with the Music of Today

How does the clarinet music of today compare to the music written for the same instrument around 300 years ago?

Conclusion

The clarinet...

Finish with a conclusion that should sum up all the major points of the paper and remind the reader of the paper's focus, the research question, and the results and findings. Include implications to suggest that further research is needed by possibly posing a question for future research. I might revisit a question asked earlier in the paper.

(Lawson 2000, p.)³

(Lawson 1995, p.)⁴

³ Colin James Lawson, *The Early Clarinet: A Practical Guide* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2000).

⁴ Colin Lawson, *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1995).

Bibliography

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