THE OBOE AND ITS PLACE IN MUSIC HISTORY

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For the degree of Master of Music

in Performance

By

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The oboe’s noble history dates back hundreds of years prior to many of its modern orchestral counterparts. This rich history lends a plethora of solo compositions written by prominent composers of every musical era. Such outstanding composers include Richard Strauss, Paul Hindemith, Heinrich von Herzogenberg and George Friedrich Handel. Each of these German men lived through times of great political strife, war and turmoil within their own countries and throughout Europe. All of them composed solo or chamber works for the oboe during these tumultuous times. Through the examination of the circumstances surrounding the composition of each solo oboe piece, light will be shed on each of these four composer’s decision making process in choosing to write for this particular medium. Through historical records the technical developments and origins of the oboe will be explored that also have factored into the periods of popularity in the oboe repertoire during the lifetimes of these great men.

The oboe has consistently been associated with pastoral elements so it naturally follows that music would be written for it of the same characteristic. Pastoral elements with a rustic, tranquil and quaint lifestyle are often closely associated with an escape for the conscious mind during times of hardship and stress. Many pastoral scenes include representations of the Swiss Alps, the Mediterranean coast, and country landscapes. From its origin as the medieval shawm to its transition into the French hautboy, the oboe has been the chosen representation of shepherds, geese, birds and provincial scenes by monumental composers such as Hector Berlioz and J.S. Bach. Eventually the oboe became a representation for lost desire partially through its human representation of the female voice. Although it cannot communicate through words, the oboe’s inability to convey linguistic meaning is what allows it to transcend words and communicate more directly through emotion. It is this voiceless longing that launched these composers’ subconscious emotional thoughts of escaping reality that eventually led to the ultimate composition of these pieces, today considered to be cornerstones in the solo oboe repertoire.

ABSTRACT

THE OBOE AND ITS PLACE IN MUSIC HISTORY

By

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Master of Music in Performance
The Oboe and Its Place in Music History

I. Introduction

The lights dim – the concert begins. The concertmaster walks onstage and a single note sounds from the wind section. This sound is given by the oboe. Although hidden among a tangle of string instruments and a bombastic brass section, the oboe’s noble history dates back hundreds of years prior to many of its modern orchestral counterparts. This rich history lends a plethora of solo compositions written by prominent composers of every musical era. Such outstanding composers include Richard Strauss, Paul Hindemith, Heinrich von Herzogenberg and George Friedrich Handel. Each of these German men lived through times of great political strife, war and turmoil within their own countries and throughout Europe. All of them composed solo or chamber works for the oboe during those tumultuous times. Through the examination of the circumstances surrounding the composition of each solo oboe piece, light will be shed on each of these four composer’s decision making process in choosing to write for this particular medium. Through historical records, the technical developments and origins of the oboe shall be explored that also have factored into the periods of popularity in the oboe repertoire during the lifetimes of these great men. Just as Henry David Thoreau, the quintessential transcendentalist escaped society to be one with nature, so too did these great composers seek asylum through the pastoral nature of the oboe with a listener preference in mind.

The romantic association made between the oboe and English horn with pastoral elements well before its prominence in the nineteenth century. Many of the pastoral scenes during this time were representations of the Alps which up till this point remained one of the last
untamed areas on continental Europe.¹ Born out of the medieval shawm, the oboe was the chosen representation of shepherds, geese, birds and provincial scenes by monumental composers such as Monteverdi and J.S. Bach. In the nineteenth century, the oboe became a representation for lost desire through its human portrayal of the female voice. Joseph Sellner, the notable writer of oboe etudes, remarked that “in a word, a beautiful [oboe] tone should resemble a well-modulated soprano voice which is plaintive, round and sonorous in the expression of sorrow, piquent and bright in joy and gaiety.” Although it cannot communicate through words, the oboe’s inability to convey linguistic meaning is what allows it to transcend words and communicate more directly through emotion.²

¹ Burgess, Geoffrey and Bruce Haynes, *The Oboe*, p. 216.
² Burgess, 1, 234.
II. George Friedrich Handel

A cornerstone in the Baroque oboe repertoire ever since the nineteenth century resides the pieces of George Friedrich Handel.\(^3\) Two separate accounts of Handel’s life originated in the 18\(^{th}\) century. The first was a biographical sketch by Handel’s friend Johann Mattheson in “Grundlage einer Ehren-Pforte.” The second account was written by Handel’s contemporary, John Main Waring, entitled “Memoirs of the Life of the Late George Frederic Handel.”\(^4\) The composer was born in central Germany in the city of Halle on February 23, 1685. Handel’s father was a surgeon and “valet de chambre” to the local court of the Duke of Wissenfels.\(^5\) Little is actually known about Handel’s early years other than his father was reluctant to give Handel musical training. It was only at the Duke’s recognition of George’s talent and urging that his father finally consented.\(^6\) When George was 12 years old, his father passed away and he became the sole provider of his family. He kept the possibility of a legal career open by enrolling at Halle University in 1702. However he was soon appointed organist at the Calvinist Domkirche, a cathedral church, and thus cemented his career as a musician. In 1703, Handel left for Hamburg to begin studying opera. Composing operas dominated most of his career and in later years he focused primarily on English oratorios.\(^7\)

The city of Hamburg at this time was a trading center and open to the international community which was unlike many other German city-states during this time.\(^8\) At the turn of the eighteenth century, Hamburg housed the only regular opera company in Germany that operated

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\(^3\) Early in his career, Handel used many different spellings of his name. When he became a naturalized British subject in 1727, he settled for George Frideric Handel. Despite this many German writers still use the name he was given at birth: Georg Friedrich Handel. Buelow, George J, *A History of Baroque Music*, p. 614.

\(^4\) Buelow, 3, 614.

\(^5\) Buelow, 3, 476.

\(^6\) Buelow, 3, 476.


outside the courts. Handel started with the company as a second violinist and later switched to harpsichord. He also gave private lessons for income. Handel was the first independent, self-employed composer and synthesized German, French, Italian and English musical styles into his compositions.\(^9\) It is at this time he met Johann Mattheson, the author of one of the two biographies written about Handel within his lifetime.\(^{10}\) This opera company is where Handel first learned the French form and style he employed throughout his life in overtures and dance music. His use of orchestral color was derived from German music models.\(^{11}\) When he died in London April 14, 1759, he became recognized as an English composer of German birth as he had become naturalized English citizen. After his death and up until the early twentieth century his was only widely known for a small number of orchestral works and oratorios such as *Messiah*.

During the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries the German states were heavily afflicted and involved in the War of Spanish Succession while most of continental Europe, including the Germanic states, were still recovering both economically and structurally from the Thirty-Years War. The longest and bloodiest war in modern European History, the Thirty-Years War was fought primary in the German states from 1618 - 1648 and involved at some point most of the countries of Europe. Although no single cause can be pinpointed as the catalyst for the fighting, it is distinguished largely as a religious war between Protestants and Holy Roman Empire Catholics. Throughout the war there had been extensive destruction of entire regions, most specifically in the lower German states and northern Italy, long periods of famine and disease. The war further led to bankruptcy in most of the major participating countries. Having lived and traveled through this geographic region, Handel would have seen the devastation and

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\(^9\) Buelow, 3, 476.  
\(^{10}\) Grove, 7, 748.  
hardships the wars left upon the people of the region and impacted the compositions he wrote
during this time. As Handel started his compositional career, the choice of writing for the oboe
may have been a comforting escape from the hardships of the time.

One such piece that became a standard in the oboe repertoire before the turn of the
twentieth century was Handel’s Oboe Concerto in G Minor HWV 287.\textsuperscript{12} For a long time this
piece was known only from an edition published in Leipzig in 1863 whose title page proclaimed
that it had been composed by Handel in Hamburg in 1703.\textsuperscript{13} As the original document from the
eighteenth century has not yet been recovered, there remains speculation whether or not Handel
actually composed the piece despite its style and form replicating Handel’s confirmed
compositions.\textsuperscript{14} It is possible that this piece could be the work of a forger or misattributed to a
source due to the lack of hard evidence and unwillingness of musicologists to just pass it off as
an “early work.” But a recent discovery of an early eighteenth century manuscript source from
northern Germany where Handel was supposed to be at the time of this piece’s composition has
made the attribution of these claims more plausible.\textsuperscript{15} If this concerto was indeed written in 1703
then it would be a pioneering work for its time as the earliest confirmed oboe concertos were
written well after 1710 by composers such as Marcello, Albinoni and Telemann. Other known
compositions by the young Handel at this time include arias and cantatas and his first opera,
Almira, and possibly his second, Nero, with the Hamburg opera house.\textsuperscript{16}

The music of the G Minor Concerto is not in Handel’s mature compositional style and
there is little thematic material that relates to his other compositions. As Handel is well known

\textsuperscript{12} Two remaining Oboe Concertos by Handel are in B flat major, HWV 301 and 302a, and are recorded to have been
written years later.
\textsuperscript{13} Buelow, 3, 493.
\textsuperscript{14} Burrows, 8, 198.
\textsuperscript{15} Burrows, 8, 198.
\textsuperscript{16} Burrows, Donald, \textit{The Master Musicians: Handel}, p. 382
for his trait of reusing material this makes it difficult to prove the piece’s authenticity. Additionally, much of Handel’s music is impossible to date correctly as he often drew on earlier compositions, sometimes revising them, for inclusion in later publications. He also suffered from publishers’ piracy in which a publisher would publish the music without the composers consent and pocket the profits. It was not uncommon for unethical publishers to print music labeled under a Composer’s name that did not actually write that particular piece. This is what is believed to have happened with the Haydn Oboe Concerto that was formally attributed to Joseph Haydn. Reasons such as these cloud the authenticity of Handel’s Concerto in G Minor.

Despite Handel’s lifelong fame and success, a large portion of the Composer’s instrumental works remained in manuscript and were not published until the twentieth century. The only credited known work from Handel’s Hamburg years that can be used to check compositional style is the opera score to Almira. As far as comparisons that can be made between an opera score and a wind concerto, the two works actually contain similar harmonic language and phrase-construction. Additionally there is written reference from Handel stating how he wrote most particularly for the oboe during his early years.

The concertos of Corelli also had a great influence on young Handel who seemed to adopt some of the stylistic features into his own Concerto in G Minor. Corelli’s instrumental works, like the other Baroque composers of the time, contained a multi-movement structure that often had short movements forming aggregations to become larger musical units. The major difference between other composers and Corelli (and in this case Handel) is a four movement structure instead of the traditional three. This formed a sort of sonata structure of movements.
progressing slow-fast-slow-fast that Handel used in his concerto.\textsuperscript{19} The music itself seems to embody the mixture between French and Italian styles that were characteristic of composers in Hamburg during this time. The opening movement, although not a French overture, opens with a French-style dotted rhythm that is treated antiphonally by the strings (see example 1).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example1.png}
\caption{Ex. 1 Opening melody of the solo oboe measures 6-8 in Handel's Concerto in G Minor HWV 287.}
\end{figure}

The directions given in the third movement also indicate dual stylistic influence as it is labeled Sarabande, a French-inspired slow movement, while the tempo direction is indicated by an Italian Largo. The string parts are a little less interesting than researchers have come to expect of Handel. It is as if after the first twenty bars of the first Allegro the composer gave up trying to jot down any contrapuntal interest into the bass part and simply wrote chords as a basso continuo accompaniment.\textsuperscript{20} An example of this type of block underscoring occurs in the accompaniment to the second movement starting around the middle of the movement. This gives the impression on paper that the second half of the movement is not as exciting as the first (see example 2).

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example2.png}
\caption{Ex. 2 A piano reduction of the accompaniment for the 2nd movement measures 30-32 of Handel's Concerto in G Minor HWV 287.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{19} Burrows, 8, 197-98.
\textsuperscript{20} Burrows, 8, 198-99.
The international soloist Leon Goossens further remarked that in this concerto “Handel provides no dynamics and no phrasing. The performer simply has to rely on an examination of the conventions.”

As many Baroque pieces were forgotten over the years, a major factor in determining the present legacy of this concerto came during the mid to late nineteenth century. The prominent oboe teacher at the Paris Conservatory, Georges Gillet, known as famous oboist Marcel Tabuteau’s teacher, is recorded to have performed this concerto quite frequently during his lifetime. As late in Gillet’s playing career as 1899, the Handel Concerto in G Minor was included on the Societe des Concerts du Conservatoire. These concerts served to provide enjoyable musical experiences for the audiences and performers of the Paris musical scene. Tabuteau probably never got an opportunity to hear Gillet play this concerto, but he followed his teacher’s example and since his first season with the Philadelphia Orchestra, Tabuteau gave more performances of the Handel G Minor Concerto than any other work for solo oboe. In fact the only two known solo recordings of Marcel Tabuteau include Handel’s Concerto in G Minor.

Laila Storch writes in her biography on Tabuteau that “With the plethora of music from the Baroque period now available to us, it is difficult to realize that one hundred years ago this was not the case.” For oboe students in the 1930s and 40s, the Handel oboe sonatas and concertos were almost the only Baroque oboe pieces to be found in print and were to be played with piano

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21 Goossens, Leon and Edwin Roxburgh, Oboe, p. 117.
22 Storch, Laila, Marcel Tabuteau: how do you expect to play the oboe if you can't peel a mushroom?, p. 24.
23 A rare solo recording was made of the concerto by Tabuteau with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy in 1952. Burgess, 1, 335.
24 Storch, 22, 24.
as the harpsichord was still an exotic rarity during that era.²⁵

²⁵ Storch, 22, 395.
III. From Shawm to Hautboy

The oboe is above all a melodic instrument; it has a pastoral character, full of tenderness—I might even say, of shyness.  

In order to gain a glimpse into the choice of writing for solo oboe by many of the major Baroque composers like Handel, it is necessary to expound upon the early development and musical void that the Baroque oboe filled. In the span of a generation from its debut in 1670, the French hautboy was established and familiar throughout all of Europe. When it was developed, both England and Germany were recovering from wars that had devastated their musical infrastructures. England was engulfed in civil war with the Glorious Revolution under Oliver Cromwell and Germany was still recovering from the Thirty Years war. In 1685, King Louis XIV revoked the charter of religious and civil liberties known as the Edict of Nantes. This caused many Huguenots or Protestant French to go abroad, nearly half a million intellectuals in fact, including many who played the hautboy. These players were given large incentives to go and play abroad like star athletes of the modern era and were often paid more than other orchestral musicians. Although included in pieces by court composers from 1698 - 99, hautboists did not officially join the court capelle in Vienna until 1701. By 1680 French hautboists were engaged in the German courts. Mattheson, Handel’s friend and later biographer, wrote from Hamburg in 1713: “The eloquent Hautboys are to the French and now also to us, what shawms used to be in Germany, although they are constructed somewhat differently.”

Therefore it is plausible to assess that the arrival of French hautboists at the turn of the

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27 Incidentally, in the 1600s the correct pronunciation was “obwe” rather than the modern “obwa.”
28 Burgess, 1, 40.
29 Burgess, 1, 41.
30 Burgess, 1, 42.
century and the hautboy’s notable popularity of the time influenced upcoming German composers like Handel to write for the instrument. German copies of the French hautboy were being made in Amsterdam by 1685, in Nuremberg in the 1690s and in London and Leipzig as well. Unlike the distinct national styles of harpsichords and violins, the design of the hautboy remained largely international up to the 1730s. The instrument was small, cheap and portable which allowed players to move around and take the latest models with them, thereby sharing new techniques and styles. The “French” way of playing was the most frequently taught and eventually adopted worldwide as the standard. Despite its immense popularity, fewer than 400 hautboys constructed before 1760 are known to have survived to the present day. These instruments, although similar in structure to the modern conservatoire oboe, can only be understood when viewed as an image. Due to the lack of keys and different color wood, even a modern oboist might misjudge the instrument to be a recorder (see illustration 1).

![Illus.1 A late 17th century French Hautboy.](image)

The last surviving known group of hautboys came from the Nuremburg makers. The other important German woodwind making center was Leipzig and it is among these makers that the

31 Burgess, 1, 42.
inventors of the hautbois d’amour and oboe de caccia are known to have originated. These instruments were best known for their roles in the works of German composer J.S. Bach and were used during his Leipzig years in the 1720s. Partially because no original hautboy reeds survive, it is impossible to tell at which pitches the original instruments played.

The hautboy was capable of extreme dynamic changes better than any other instrument of its time. Eighteenth century vibrato was used intermittently as an ornament and was not produced with the breath. Instead, the early vibrato was controlled with the fingers and was called the flattement or “lesser trill”. The speed and intensity of the flattement reflected the dynamics of the piece. Such ornamentation techniques would have been employed at the players’ discretion into the pieces of Handel and other Baroque composers of the age. The early eighteenth century was considered to be the Golden Age of the oboe repertoire. One of the best traditional style oboists and champion of the Baroque music of Bach and Handel was Robert Bloom. A twentieth century oboist, he was one of the first American players to pay attention to Baroque style and techniques. Throughout history, the design of the oboe has always moved slowly largely due to the amount of time it takes to master an individual instrument model. Therefore, usually small adjustments were made with “minimum possible demand on the established technique.” Often it is assumed that later model instruments embody all the best possible designs but with the hautboy this was not always the case. Instead, when one aspect of the instrument was emphasized another asset was compromised.

“The modern notion of what the oboe is, and what it is expected to do, was born in the

32 Burgess, I, 46-47.
33 Burgess, I, 56.
34 Burgess, I, 57.
35 Burgess, I, 209.
36 Burgess, I, 2.
37 “Period Style” of playing the oboe was only a marginal subject 100 or 300 years ago and was rarely thought of or discussed. Burgess, I, 4.
seventeenth century.”  

In fact this era was the most experimental time period in the history of the oboe. At the beginning of the century, the standard treble double reed instrument widely used was the shawm but by the end of the century, it was replaced by the hautboy. A shawm represented village noise while the hautboy allowed for soloistic sophistication. Changes to the shawm were quite basic during this time. Not only did the shawm’s physical form alter but also the idea of the instrument’s character and role. Its new function in the form of the hautboy became that of a soloist, a role which has remained valid up to the present day. Many musicians think of the shawm differently from the oboe because it has a separate name but really nothing in its physical design sets it apart from later forms of the oboe. For example the name shawm means its sound is boisterous, festive and impassive just as in ‘haut-bois’ or ‘loud-woodwind’. The type of music it performed emphasized equality between voices in a group and most of the music was not composed specifically for it. The hautboy, on the other hand, was created to play solos, where “its own particular character was often apart of the ‘message’ of the piece it was playing.”

The hautboy’s first solo medium was the obbligato in solo vocal arias and its parts were very instrument specific. It is the direct ancestor of all the various oboe forms that were widely used up until the present day and the oboe’s musical role has remained fairly consistent since then. It was no accident that vocal obbligatos were the hautboy’s first solo role. That was the reason it was created and the role in which the hautboy excelled. The hautboy’s purpose was “to convey the emotional force of words, and to move its listeners” and the instrument was modeled on the new singer style of monadic music that was developed by such composers as Monteverdi.

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38 Burgess, 1, 27.
39 Burgess, 1, 27.
With the monody singing style, 4 or 5 part equal vocal lines were rejected and replaced with a polarized bass with a solo voice while the music was used for the sake of expounding upon the text.

Historical facts clearly support that all first generation hautboy players must have been connected in some way with the French court as that is where the instrument was developed. As previously mentioned the hautboy was frequently used to call to mind pastoral sentiments often in idyllic form of an innocent shepherd. Flutes also shared this rustic association but theirs had an attribute of love while the hautboy’s represented peace. In this way it became known as an instrument of extreme contrasts representing simultaneously peace and the polar opposite of the shock of war. These qualities could not be plainer to the young composers who traveled through the rural country-sides that were largely affected by major battles and must have subconsciously associated it with the pastoral oboe.

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40 Burgess, 1, 28.
41 Burgess, 1, 39.
IV. Heinrich von Herzogenberg

Another important composer of Germanic oboe repertoire, albeit not particularly well known, was Heinrich von Herzogenberg. He was one of the most distinguished composers in the conservative Berlin academic world for his time. Born in Graz on June 10, 1843, he eventually became lifelong friends with a fellow student of composition under Felix Otto Dessoff, Johannes Brahms. The son of an Austrian court official, he studied law in addition to composition at the University in Vienna. Herzogenberg was also given a thorough music education by his father J.P. Rudolf, a respected music theoretician of the day and author of several textbooks. There are numerous letters between Brahms, Herzogenberg and his wife, preserved today in the Herzogenberg Correspondence, that give an insightful glimpse into the latter half of Brahms’ career as well as clues to the collaborative friendship shared between these three artists. In 1868, Herzogenberg settled in Graz as a freelance composer but soon moved to Leipzig in 1872. In 1868 Heinrich married Elizabeth, the daughter of Bodo Albrecht von Stockhausen and a diplomat of the Hanoverian Court. Elizabeth Herzogenberg came from a musical family and was a very intelligent and talented musician. She studied piano and even took a few lessons from Brahms while he was staying in Vienna in 1862. Heinrich von Herzogenberg’s early style clashed with progressives such as Wagner and his early piano works and songs cite influences of Robert Schumann.

Starting in 1885, Herzogenberg succeeded Friedrich Kiel as professor of composition at the Hochschule für Musik in Berlin. However, an absence from teaching duties led to the loss of this position in 1889 due to ill-health. During the autumn of that year, before their return to

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43 Grove, 42, 455.
44 Grove, 42, 455.
Berlin, Herzogenberg and his wife traveled to the Mediterranean for a spa stay hoping that it would relieve his rheumatic ailment. With the improvement of his health, he was once again inspired to compose and wrote his Symphony No. 2 and the Trio for Horn, Oboe and Piano op. 61 within the shortest time span he had ever composed a piece of music. Herzogenberg described the work as having “an eccentric combination of instruments.” It is believed that the Trio for Horn, Oboe and Piano written by Carl Reinecke in 1886 (the gold standard for that mixed ensemble) and premiered in Leipzig in 1887 was unknown to Heinrich when he was composing his trio.\footnote{Tobitius, Andreas, \textit{Heinrich von Herzogenberg}, 777 081-2, p.13-14.} The Trio for Oboe, Horn and Piano was first published by Rieter-Biedermann of Leipzig in 1889. Today it has been suggested by many historians that Herzogenberg tried to emulate Brahms’ every idea in most all the compositions he wrote but most prominently in his chamber pieces.

Based on the surviving letters of the \textit{Herzogenberg Correspondence}, it becomes glaringly obvious that Brahms cared very little for the output by his loyal worshiper, although he expected absolute devotion to his works at the same time. Herzogenberg blindly gave his admiration without hesitation. The reason for the dislike in his follower’s music could be because of the amount of emulation and similarity to Brahms’s own compositions. Even today Herzogenberg is referred to as Brahms’ “own musical \textit{Doppelgänger}.”\footnote{Bozarth, George S, \textit{Johannes Brahms and George Henschel: An Enduring Friendship}, p. 66.} Throughout the years Brahms became increasingly irritated with the similarity between the two composers’ works and even wrote to Herzogenberg after reviewing a stack of his music, stating that he “was quite agitated to find how vividly they recalled all sorts of efforts of my own.”\footnote{Herzogenberg, Heinrich von. \textit{Johannes Brahms: The Herzogenberg Correspondence}, p. 382.} However Brahms also wrote to Elizabeth in 1887 that her husband’s “knowledge is wider and more accurate than mine… what I do envy him is his power of teaching. We have both trodden the same steep paths with the same
There are other chamber pieces and ideas that Herzogenberg took from Brahms including the Horn Trio op. 40, composed in 1865 and published in 1868. This unique trio for horn, piano, and violin is one of the few chamber works written by the composer for wind instruments. The horn was chosen mainly by Brahms’s mostly because of his fondness for the instrument, having learned the natural horn himself as a child. Largely because of this childhood influence, he chose to write all four movements of the Trio in E-flat, expressing his desire that the piece be played on the “hand horn” (natural horn) rather than the valved horn in order to create the right timbre. The work is four movements long, consisting of an Andante, Scherzo, Adagio Mesto, and Finale-Allegro Con Brio. The piece bears many similarities to Herzogenberg’s own Trio for Horn, Oboe, and Piano, op. 61 as previously mentioned. What makes these two works similar is their overall format of four movements as well as their instrumentation. The oboe, for example, can regularly be switched out for violin and the Herzogenberg Trio was published with parts for oboe or violin as well as separate parts for horn or viola or cello to increase the chances of piece’s replayability. In terms of similarity to Brahms’ op.40, both trios are written for horn, piano, and a high pitched instrument in C-be it oboe or violin. Both trios also contain similar overall movement structure in that both contain a scherzo for the second movement and a slow third movement. The scherzos in each chamber work create a light rustic feel in binary form, with the horn playing most of the trio section of the scherzo with the piano. Also the similarity in the finales of both chamber works are rambunctious in nature as if to “…send ’em home whistling.” However it is difficult to prove such a claim that the pieces are actually exact copies of one another. Another interesting point is that the Brahms Horn Trio was also written

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48 Herzogenberg, 47, 306.
when Brahms was on a retreat to the Alps and reflects the mood and feelings of a hunt. Both composers felt compelled to compose joyfully for horn and an instrument in C, like the oboe, while on retreat in pastoral settings.

In the Herzogenberg trio, the primary theme of the first movement that initially appears in the horn and oboe has a cheerful and carefree quality. The repetition of the oboe line lends the piece a pastoral connotation that further lends references to the composer’s mood when he wrote the piece. Another point of interest is that all four movements are written mostly in major keys except for a G minor section in the third movement where a melancholy song of lament is passed between the horn and the oboe. The pastoral element that was heard in the oboe in the first movement returns even more so in the finale through the numerous appoggiaturas in the motifs of the secondary theme in the oboe line (see examples 3 and 4).

![Ex. 3 The opening oboe melody in the first movement mm. 8-16 of the Herzogenberg Trio for Horn, Oboe and Piano.](image)

![Ex. 4 This is one of the reoccurring oboe melodies from the Herzogenberg Trio for Horn, Oboe and Piano mm. 30-39.](image)

The fast sixteenth-note motion and fast tempo of the finale gives the movement a playful effect that pushes to the end of the piece. Herzogenberg himself characterized this as “an appealing piece” and it can be evaluated as a reflection of a man who recently recovered from a long illness and expresses his new joy of life as pictured in his mind.\(^5\)

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\(^5\) Tobitius, 45, 13-14.
When looking at the music of Heinrich von Herzogenberg, it is important to note the trends of chamber music in Germany and Austria at this time.

For the second half of the 19th century in these two countries, reckoned by sheer volume of works produced, chamber music titled by specific performing forces must be regarded as the most characteristic instrumental genre of the times. It was of course in many ways easier to write than symphonies or concertos; but the medium found new vigor, helped by the increase of professional artists and ensembles playing chamber music in public, as also by the increased cultivation of ‘Haus-musik.’

Because chamber music was such an influential trend in the German musical world at this time, it becomes important to consider the outside influences at the other end of the romantic musical spectrum. Leipzig was one of the few German states that remained a proponent of the absolute music of Brahms and did champion the programmatic music of Wagner. Most of Herzogenberg’s compositions were published in Leipzig during his lifetime.

Just like other German composers of absolute music, Herzogenberg was also affected by the political and musical climate that permeated out of the town of Bayreuth and the Franco-Prussian War. Wagner started championing a unified Germany early in his career and chose Bayreuth for its location in the middle of Germany while still remaining close to his patron King Ludwig II. From 1850 - 1870s, the population in Germany had increased by six million people forcing a strain on the economy. Wagner had his own ideas on how to fix the problems. “‘Now that we have saved the body of Germany’, Wagner wrote grandly to Ludwig II after the Franco-Prussian war of 1870, hinting broadly at the proposed Bayreuth project, ‘What we have to do next is fortify the German soul.’” It is clear that the “German soul” that Wagner referred to was

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52 Samson, Jim ed., The Late romantic era: from the mid-19th century to World War I, p. 65.
the rapid diversifying German nationality of the growing population.\textsuperscript{54} Herzogenberg lived and composed during all these major influential events that occurred in Germany. Although he is most closely depicted in the German abstract musical realm of Brahms, it is important to note these extreme political and national affairs that added to the long process of the unification of Germany.

\textsuperscript{54} These changing times along with Wagner’s strong anti-Semitism became the stepping stones of the Nazi propaganda that would later affect Richard Strauss and Paul Hindemith.
Artless grace, pure innocence, mellow joy, the pain of a tender soul—all of these the oboe can render admirably with its cantabile. A certain degree of excitement is also within its power; but one must guard against increasing it to a cry of passion, the stormy outburst of fury, menace or heroism; for then its small voice, sweet and somewhat tart at the same time, becomes ineffectual and completely grotesque.55

When the Romantic conception of a keyed oboe was grafted onto the late eighteenth century “small-bore” hautboy, the change coincided with the rise of the symphony orchestra as a major musical ensemble. As the solidification of the orchestra took place, this particular oboe style grafted to it at what is considered the zenith of orchestral repertoire with the tone poems of Strauss and the masterpieces of Debussy, Stravinsky, Elgar and Ravel. In essence, the modern conservatoire oboe of today is the same as its predecessors representing a snap shot of the past one hundred twenty-five years.56 There have been technical “improvements” in woodwinds over the years, but none that have any major bearing on how the instruments were played. Also the commercial distribution of cork in the eighteenth century allowed tenons to replace older thread windings.57 When fully keyed instruments were added in the late Romantic period, the characteristic sounds of individual notes and scales that could be produced with cross-fingerings were lost. But with the increase of keys more stability between pitches became possible. Since the last quarter of the nineteenth century, creative experimentation apart from minor refinements have all but ceased on the oboe’s basic design. When the industrial revolution hit in the early 1800s, mass production allowed more instruments to be made with complex key-work such as flutes and clarinets. However, the oboe still remained unpopular among amateur players possibly

55 Berlioz, 26, 164.  
56 Burgess, 1, 3.  
57 Burgess, 1, 2.
because of its notable difficulties and temperamental nature. Consequently the oboe still remained in the production of small scale specialists.\textsuperscript{58}

Most developments to the modern oboe have come in refinements since the conservatoire model was adopted in 1881. As the conservatoire model became standard, the foreman of the Triebert instrument company left the firm. This man started his own business under his name: Lorée. Although the Triebert Company advertised their traditional bore oboe until 1934, it was Lorée who carried on the tradition of the conservatoire model oboe. Paris Conservatoire teacher George Gillet endorsed Lorée and from 1881 - 1900. During that time, Lorée made 1500 oboes, a huge number considering the process was still largely done by hand. From the 1890s on, granadilla became the most popular wood used for oboes replacing boxwood. But it was not until the early decades of the twentieth century that the conservatory oboe gained widespread popularity. With the founding of a single German nation in 1871, German productivity began to outpace that of other countries. Despite its rising success the production of German oboes was still overshadowed by conservatoire oboes with only some of the French mechanical innovations adopted into the German oboe design.\textsuperscript{59} It has been documented that German oboists favored a fuller and darker sound to that of the brighter and more flexible French sound.\textsuperscript{60}

It was the remarkable ability of Georges Gillet that established the character of the modern oboe.\textsuperscript{61} As the oboe teacher at the Paris Conservatoire in the second half of the nineteenth century, he influenced generations of young oboists on at least two continents. More than anything it was Gillet’s attention to sound production that he passed on to his French

\textsuperscript{58} Burgess, 1, 126  
\textsuperscript{59} Burgess, 1, 173.  
\textsuperscript{60} Fritz Flemming (1873-1947), was the first oboist to play a French oboe in a German orchestra. He studied in Paris and went on to play principal in the Berlin Philharmonic and teach at the Berlin Hochschule. Richard Strauss would have been familiar with his playing from his time as Kapellmeister in Berlin from 1898. Burgess, 1, 175.  
\textsuperscript{61} Burgess, 1, 192.
students. He was especially known for his performance interpretations of rarely heard eighteenth century works by composers like Handel, Bach and even the Oboe Quartet by Mozart. At least fifteen pupils of Gillet took major orchestral jobs in the United States from 1890 - 1930s resulting in the formation of what later became known as the American style of playing.

The biggest distinction among different schools of oboe playing which emerged during this era is the tone quality. German oboe playing still contained a traditional “bite” or harshness to it in the early twentieth century despite its progressive disappearance in the U.S., England and France.\textsuperscript{62} For almost the entire Romantic era, oboists lived in the shadows of a lost Beethoven concerto that was started but never finished and turned instead to the works of earlier composers. Generally solo music in the nineteenth century was composed primarily for strings with works available for all the wind instruments decreasing. The oboe particularly suffered with very few chamber pieces composed for it and virtually no solo works. Compared to the flute or clarinet that could easily play in a long cantabile style, the oboe was an ugly duckling that had a temperamental nature. With the waning popularity of the woodwind concerto, the virtuosic oboist became all but extinct. The famous soloist of the twentieth century Leon Goossens later called the lack of Romantic solo oboe repertoire “an unforgivable oversight…a badge of historical injustice that oboists must wear.”\textsuperscript{63} With the turn of the twentieth century, the solo oboe repertoire was given a fresh start with the upgraded conservatoire model that provided a larger, more stable range, smoother trill fingerings, experimental techniques and a new generation of musicians.

\textsuperscript{62} Burgess, 1, 204.
\textsuperscript{63} Burgess, 1, 129.
VI. Paul Hindemith

One of the great, young German composers of the early twentieth century was Paul Hindemith. He was born near Frankfurt on November 16, 1895 where he also died on December 28, 1963. He was an accomplished performer on clarinet, piano, violin and viola (particularly known as a virtuoso violist). In 1915 during the First World War his father volunteered for military service in what was then Flanders and was killed in action. At age nineteen, Paul was now the sole supporter of his family. Hindemith was also called to military service in 1917 where he spent most of his time playing in a regiment band just three kilometers from the front lines. It was around this time that his compositions started to be taken seriously.

“When the Nazis came to power they did not immediately seek to discredit Hindemith, even though sections of the musical press had been complaining since 1930 that he was betraying his mission as a German composer”. Hindemith developed a pragmatic approach of bending a little bit towards the demands of a regime he thought would be short-lived. He was oddly unmoved by the dismissal of Jewish musicians from the Hochschule in Germany and continued working closely with Jewish musical activities while he made no secret of his anti-Nazi views to his composition class. In early 1934, a campaign was launched against Hindemith based on his involvement in an “international group of composers, the supposed immorality of his one-act operas, his “parody” in the finale of the Kammermusik No. 5 of a Bavarian military march heard at Nazi rallies, and in particular his association with Jews.” In November 1934 the Kulturgemeinde, a semi-official organization in charge of the spiritual welfare of the Nazi party, announced a boycott of performances of Hindemith’s music. Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of

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65 Grove, 63, 574.
66 Grove, 63, 575.
Propaganda, then made personal attacks on Hindemith at Nazi rallies in December 1934. In January 1935, Hindemith was given a six month “leave of absence” from the Hochschule but he was not yet expelled from the country. Still, some performances of his music did occur as the boycott was not well enforced as it was not endorsed by the Reichmusikkammer which was the official music division of the Nazi Ministry of Culture.\(^67\)

In 1937, Hindemith was allowed to return to teaching at the Hochschule but by this time it was clear he would not be able to stay. The following year he gave up his post and left Germany for Switzerland and finally reached New York in 1940.\(^68\) Hindemith came to the U.S. approximately seven months before his wife did to make sure the teaching jobs were secure and to put everything in order.\(^69\) Hindemith had been very interested in the United States ever since his first visit on tour in 1937 and after his arrival both he and his wife applied for citizenship.\(^70\) In the U.S., Hindemith worked at Yale University until 1953. Starting in 1951 he split teaching time between Yale and Zurich until he settled permanently in Switzerland in 1953. In 1946 he finally became a U.S. citizen and toured Europe for the first time since the war ended as a lecturing professor. He was offered to lecture in Germany but Hindemith declined all German offers.\(^71\)

Paul Hindemith went through three major composing periods that affected his musical output. From 1918 - 23 he explored a variety of styles that fell under the heavy influence of Brahms. It was at the tail end of this time period that \textit{Klein Kammermusik} was composed. From 1924 - 33, he reached his mature neo-Baroque or Neo-classical style. “During the latter part of

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\(^{67}\) Grove, 63, 575.  
\(^{68}\) Grove, 63, 575.  
\(^{69}\) Hindemith’s wife stayed in their home in Switzerland and was afraid to leave the country after the start of the war unless she was absolutely sure the boat transportation would be allowed to leave. Because of the war, once she left Switzerland she would not be let back into the country. In fact the first boat she was first scheduled to travel on to America never left Italy because Mussolini joined forces with Hitler on the day of its scheduled departure. (Noss, Luther, \textit{Paul Hindemith in the United States}, p. 42)  
\(^{70}\) Noss, 68, 60.  
\(^{71}\) Grove, 63, 575.
the period, his work for amateurs led to a more lyrical and euphonious mode of expression.” From 1933 - 63 Hindemith “adapted a new and explicitly tonal style to classical sonata forms and conventional genres”. This period includes the Oboe Sonata. Despite having lived through similar turmoil as contemporary composers such as Richard Strauss, Hindemith responded very differently in terms of compositional style. Strauss once said to the young Hindemith: “Why do you compose like that? You don’t need to - you have talent”. Therefore the treatment that Hindemith received in Germany under the Nazi regime must have had a major impact on his future compositions.

Before he left Germany, Hindemith was already composing pieces that related to a growing middle-class musical audience in Europe that started during the era of Herzogenberg. Since the late nineteenth century, families and friends would get together and play chamber music and discuss popular pieces of the time that were lyrical and simple to understand. In April 1930 Hindemith wrote in *Musik und Gesellschaft*: “The performing amateur who seriously concerns himself with musical matters is quite as an important a member of our musical life as the professional”.

But the Nazi regime wanted music composed in the tradition of Wagner and other past German Romantic composers that glorified the national party and added to the grandeur of their Third Reich. After Hindemith was essentially forced to flee Germany for his own safety, he shifted even more into the realm of experimental music for the performer and amateur players and started outputting chamber pieces that would provide music for the in-home performance. Considered one of his most famous works, the opera *Mathis der Maler* (Mathis the Painter) is the story of Matthias Grunewald, the famous painter who gave up his art to fight in the rebellion.

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72 Grove, 63, 575.
74 Grove, 63, 579.
against the nobles in the Peasant’s War of 1525. From his despair at their defeat, Matthias comes to realize that through abandoning his art he betrayed his gift and obligation to society which is to paint. This opera can be read as an allegory for Hindemith’s personal career and the compositional choices made during these years.⁷⁵

Paul Hindemith’s style and main audience stems from his musical philosophy. During Hindemith’s military service, he heard a performance of a Claude Debussy string quartet where the concert was interrupted with the news of Debussy’s death. Later Hindemith described his feelings:

> We realized for the first time that music is more than style, technique and the expression of personal feelings. Music stretched beyond the political boundaries, national hatreds and the horrors of war. I have never understood so clearly as then what direction music must take.⁷⁶

In fact, his music showed a determination to break away from German Provincialism and identified his compositional style with everything that was fresh in music at the time.⁷⁷ Hindemith’s music is generally exemplified as an avoidance of Romantic expressivity and focusing purely on musical procedures such as motivic development and polyphony of independent musical lines. In essence it was the exact opposite of the music of the Third Reich. All of his music is identified as neo-tonal and establishes pitch centers through reiteration of a note or complex contrapuntal voice-leading.⁷⁸

In 1918, Hindemith completed a Sonata for violin and piano that started the series of works that would become op.11. This opus was originally intended for only violin but soon it contained works for viola and cello. In later years, he widened the scope to contain almost every

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⁷⁶ Grove, 63, 576.
⁷⁷ Grove, 63, 576.
⁷⁸ Burkholder, 74, 873.
instrument that could endure a solo role including, tuba, harp and double bass. Hindemith already had some experience with the oboe by the time he came to write the solo oboe sonata. Composed in 1924, the cantata *Die Serenaden* for soprano, oboe, viola and cello showed sensitivity to the oboe’s capabilities. Next he composed the Trio for Viola and Heckelphone op. 47 in 1929 giving this rarely used member of the oboe family a chance in the spotlight. Hindemith wrote in a letter to his friend Willy Strecker:

> You must be wondering if I intend to ‘sonatize’ all the winds. I had always thought of making an entire series of these pieces. Firstly, there is nothing decent available for these instruments except the few classic examples. They may not have any commercial value at the moment but will in the long run…

By composing pieces for solo instrument repertoire in a neo-classic style, Hindemith was maintaining his German musical roots while showing his defiance to the rising political powers of the time.

During the decade from 1932 - 42 there was a large amount of uncertainty in Hindemith’s life. Performances of his music were banned in Germany. The oboe sonata was completed right before Hindemith fled Germany for Switzerland in 1938. Next Hindemith chose to settle in the scenic New England region of the United States. It seems curiously coincidental that as he fled the turmoil of Germany to the Alps Hindemith turned compositionally to the pastoral connotations and imagery of the oboe. In fact the second movement of the sonata reflects a longing for simplicity in the oboe’s slow and lyrical melody. But underneath the surface of the music, there are clashes in the piano accompaniment that show the unrest that can never be fully hidden from view (see example 5).

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79 Noss, 68, 60.
The first performance of the Sonata for Oboe and Piano was given on a BBC broadcast from London on March 28, 1938. It was performed by Leon Goossens and Harriet Cohen. During all these events, Hindemith came into his fully matured composition style that was free and full. His book on composition theory and pedagogy, The Craft of Musical Composition I was also completed at this time. With the Sonata for Oboe and Piano, Hindemith used his new harmonic method of “harmonic fluctuation” where fairly consonant chords progress in combinations containing greater tension or dissonance. The chords are resolved suddenly or by slowly moderating the tension until consonance returns. This technique is what creates the underlying unrest within the sonata that provides contrast to the angular and sometimes plaintive melodies that search for a final resolution.

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82 Burkholder, 74, 873.
VII. Richard Strauss

On the other side of the German musical spectrum from the first half of the twentieth century resides Strauss. Richard Strauss was born in Munich June 11, 1864 and died in Bavaria on September 8, 1949. He started playing piano at age 4 and then learned violin. His father was Franz Strauss, the famous principal horn for Wagner at Bayreuth, and it was clear from his and his son’s writings that Franz detested both the man and the music. From the beginning, Richard was not allowed to hear anything but the classics of the German musical world until his early teens.  

As Strauss’ long musical career was nearing its final stages, he began working with a Jewish librettist, Stefan Zweig, in 1931. When Hitler became chancellor and the National Socialist Party took power in 1933, Germany was making rapid changes. Strauss was acutely unaware of the growing danger. Having started out as a court composer and maintaining that post past the age of fifty, Strauss was at this time a German patriot nearing the age of seventy. It was too late in his life for him to simply abandon his home like other young German composers were doing and since Strauss never paid real attention to national political trends he believed that he would be unaffected by Germany’s political unrest. All he cared about was his music. In 1933, Strauss played into the Nazis hands by conducting Wagner’s *Parsifal* at Bayreuth after the famous conductor Arturo Toscanini withdrew in protest of the Nazi’s treatment of Jews. Strauss acted to save the festival because of his veneration of Wagner and because it was the fiftieth anniversary of the composer’s death. The gesture was misunderstood by Nazi opponents and Strauss was branded a supporter of Hitler.  

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83 Grove, 63, 218.
84 Grove, 63, 222.
the composer I take off my hat; to Strauss the man I put it on again”. Over time, “the Nazis realized that Strauss’s eminence was valuable to them as propaganda.” Hitler hero-worshipped Strauss as he was an avid music-lover. Perhaps this influenced the protection and overall leaving alone of the composer by the Nazis. Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda, created in November 1933 Reichsmusikkammer and proclaimed Strauss president without ever consulting him.

As president of Reichsmusikkammer, Strauss had frequent meetings with the Reich’s propaganda minister and Hitler himself. The Nazi requirement of music was mostly expressed in a negative way. Music could not be dissonant, atonal, twelve-tone, “chaotic”, intellectual, Jewish, jazz-influenced, or left-wing thereby excluding most modernist composers. They tended to focus more on politicizing performances rather than what new composers were writing so therefore no coherent Nazi style of music emerged. Strauss finally realized the severity of the situation when German theaters in the 1930s were forbidden to produce works by Jews and he was publicly denounced on the radio for working with the Jewish librettist, Zweig. At this point Zweig fled to Switzerland, a neutral country throughout the war, and stopped public work with Strauss. Desperate to protect his daughter in-law and her half-Jewish children, Strauss wrote a letter to Hitler asking for the chancellor’s support of Strauss and his entire family. In this letter, Strauss pleaded with Hitler:

My whole life belongs to German music and to a tireless effort to elevate German culture. I have never been active politically nor even expressed myself in politics. Therefore

85 Kennedy, Richard Strauss, p. 96.
86 Kennedy, 84, 280.
87 Hitler also personally oversaw the finance of Bayreuth and donated his own money to the support of Bruckner.
88 Grove, 63, 223.
89 Rees, Jasper. A Devil to Play, p. 194-195.
90 Burkholder, 74, 875.
91 Grove, 63, 223.
I believe I will find understanding from you, the great architect of German social life...I will devote the few years still granted to me only to the purest and most ideal goals...I beg you, my Fuhrer, most humbly to receive me for a personal discussion.  

He never received a reply. However, at this time in 1935, the seventy-five year old Strauss was of little interest to the Nazis so the family remained safe for a time.  

But later at Strauss’s home known as Garmisch, he refused to accept refugees into his home which led to the ostracism of Alice Strauss and her children. There was also the glaring issue with the Nazis that Strauss’ son, named Franz after his grandfather, who was married to a Jew. Strauss moved his family to Vienna where he relied on the city’s new gauleiter (mayor), Baldur von Schirach, a former Head of the Hitler Youth and admirer of Richard, for protection for his family. Alice’s extended family from Prague was not as lucky.  

One day, driving from Dresden, Strauss passed Terezin (Theresienstadt), the concentration camp in occupied Czechoslovakia in which the regime imprisoned Jewish scholars, musicians, and artists and at which it attempted to present to the International Red Cross the humane face of interment. According to Alice, Strauss “wanted to visit my grandmother. He went to the camp gate and said, ‘My name is Richard Strauss, I want to see Frau Neumann.’ The SS guards thought he was a lunatic and sent him packing. We did not discover what went on in the camps until after the war.” More than half the prisoners of Terezin ended up in Auschwitz.  

Like many unfortunate Jewish families, Alice lost twenty-six members of her extended family in the Holocaust.  

In February 1942, Strauss’ long-time collaborator Zweig and his wife took poison in Brazil. He wrote in a suicide note to his friends that he hoped they would live to witness a new  

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92 Rees, 88, 195.  
93 Grove, 63, 223.  
94 Rees, 88, 196.
dawn. “Being too impatient, I go before them”. In the same month in 1942, Strauss was summoned to appear before Goebbels in regard to some letters that he had circulated about the state of German music to other composers. In this letter, Strauss criticized the music of Lehar and his light operettas and suggested it was not for Goebbels and thereby implying the Nazi Party to interfere in such things as music and art. Goebbels read out this letter in front of Richard and its recipients and shouted at him:

Be quiet! You have no conception of who you are, or of who I am! Stop your claptrap about the importance of serious music once, once and for all. Tomorrow’s art is different from yesterday’s. You, Herr Strauss, belong to yesterday!

Despite these tragedies, Strauss described the destruction of the Munich Opera House in 1943 by Allied bombs as the “greatest catastrophe” of his life for which there could be “no consolation and, in my old age, no hope.” He went into voluntary exile with his wife after the war to Switzerland during “denazification.” Just like Hindemith, Brahms and countless others perhaps Strauss hoped to find some form of escape in the rustic Alps away from urban and contemporary civilization. In June 1948 his name was cleared through the denazification of Germany from having served in an official office during Nazi power and he was free to return to his home in Garmisch. Strauss’s heart began to fail in August and he died peacefully on September 8, 1949.

The Concerto in D Major for Oboe was part of what Strauss called his later pieces of “wrist exercises,” no doubt from his dejected view of what was left of his beloved homeland. He showed a melancholy self-assessment of himself and his contributions by stating: “I may not be a

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95 Rees, 88, 196.
96 Rees, 88, 197.
97 Steinberg, Michael, The Concerto, p. 457.
98 Grove, 63, 223.
first-rate composer, but I am a first-class second-rate composer.” In 1945, he began work on the concerto. This composing period of his life is referred to by musicologists as his “Indian Summer.” Strauss was deeply affected by his country’s musical loss during the war and this affliction came through as his music became a direct opposite to that which was composed during his youth. It was not the bold and over exaggerated fanfares of the Romantic era but instead the pastoral sounds of shepherds and hunters represented through the oboe and the horn.

Five known autograph sources of the oboe concerto exist and through these sketches the formation of the concerto can be traced. The first source is the sketch book in which Strauss jotted down his ideas. The early ideas for each of the three movements were jotted down on 124 pages in pencil and ink. There are also a short score and full score numbering twenty and forty-pages that are kept in the Garmisch archive. In his composing sketchbook for this piece, Strauss wrote the word “Schalmeiartig” which translates “like a shawm”. As previously discussed, the shawm was the medieval predecessor of the Baroque oboe that was often associated with village bands for their rustic qualities. He completed work on the concerto on October 25, 1945 and revised the ending by adding an extended coda on February 1, 1948. The first performance was given on February 26, 1946 by Marcel Saille and the Zurich Tonhalle Orchestra, Dr. Volkmar Andreae conducting. The concerto is dedicated to this orchestra and its conductor.

Among the music-loving soldiers stationed in Bavaria that were curious enough to travel to the Garmisch villa that was Strauss’ home was German-born Alfred Mann. He later became

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99 Gelles, George, *Strauss.*
100 Grove, 63, 223.
103 Steinberg, 96, 459.
known as a distinguished musicologist, teacher, and livening conductor of Baroque music. As Mann was fluent in German and a fellow refugee of the Third Reich, he was welcomed into the Strauss home and invited to return several times. On one of Mann’s visits, he brought with him John de Lancie, the famous pupil of Marcel Tabuteau. At age 21, de Lancie was drafted into the army as a bandsman but was transferred to the Office of Strategic Services. When he was drafted, de Lancie was principal oboe of the Pittsburg Symphony under Fritz Reiner and in 1954 he went on to succeed his teacher, Tabuteau, as principle of the Philadelphia Orchestra.

Years later, John de Lancie described his memorable exchange with Strauss:

I asked him if, in view of the numerous beautiful, lyric solos for oboe in almost all his works, he had ever considered writing a concerto for oboe. He answered ‘NO,’ and there was no more conversation on the subject. He later told a fellow musician friend of mine (Alfred Mann…) that the idea had taken root as a result of that remark. He subsequently, in numerous interviews and letters, spoke of this concerto in reference to my visits with him, and I have a letter from him inviting me to the first performance in Zurich…After my return to America and civilian life in 1946, I corresponded with the family. I received a letter from the editor of Boosey [& Hawkes, Strauss’s English publisher] informing of a request from Strauss that I should be offered the first performance in America…

Nearing the end of his life, the suggestion of writing for this pastorally associated double reed must have appealed to the grief stricken man who longed for the simple years of his childhood. It allowed him to reach back to a Germany before the twentieth century destroyed its beauty. Just like General George S. Patton Jr., Strauss had become a nineteenth century man living in a twentieth century world. Further proof of these legendary encounters between de Lancie and Strauss exist in the form of rare photographs taken at Strauss’ home (see illustration 2).

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104 Steinberg, 96, 460.
105 As previously discussed, Tabuteau was the famous pupil of the French Conservatoire teacher, Georges Gillet.
106 Steinberg, 96, 460-61.
William Bennett, long time principal oboist of the San Francisco Symphony, describes the difficulties of the piece:

One of the challenges of the Strauss Concerto is that the oboe voice is a constant ingredient and requires an air supply that Strauss might have imagined easily available following his experiments with the Vienna Philharmonic and the compressed-air hoses he recommends for his Alpine Symphony.\textsuperscript{107}

Strauss wrote these long phrases in the concerto with Bernhard Samuel’s aerophone (or aerophor) in mind. This device was patented in 1912 to help wind instrument players. A small bellows, worked by one foot, communicated by means of a tube within the corner of the mouth of the player, leaving him free to carry on his normal breathing process through his nose whilst his mouth is supplied with the air required for his instrument by means of the bellows.\textsuperscript{108}

While many oboists have learned how to circular breathe (the ability to breathe in continuously through the nose while blowing out through the mouth) to combat the problem of the long phrases, the requirement to puff out ones cheeks to store the air is contradictory to some

\textsuperscript{107} Steinberg, 96, 461.  
\textsuperscript{108} Steinberg, 96, 461.
embouchure styles. This leaves the oboist only breath marks and air control to make it through passages that are equal to a swimmer holding their breath underwater for two-three minutes.

Unlike Strauss’ other later work Metamorphosen, written in lament to the destruction of German culture and a memorial to the Munich Opera House it symbolized, his late concertos focus on a single mood through rhapsodical means and the connecting of the movements. This same uniformity of moods is continued in the Four Last Songs.\textsuperscript{109} The oboe concerto contains many melodic references to this work, particularly Beim Schlafengehen, which is the last piece that Strauss wrote before he died.\textsuperscript{110} There are also places in the concerto that reflect Strauss’ earlier works such as Till Eulenspiegel, Don Quixote, Symphonia Domestica and Ariadne auf Naxos. A four note figure in the cellos opens the concerto and functions as a sort of ritornello when it comes back to connect the first and second movement seamlessly together. It returns again before the oboe cadenza at the end of the second movement that immediately leads into the finale (see example 6).

\begin{example}
\begin{verbatim}
Ex. 6 A piano reduction of the end of the accompaniment to end of the first movement (4 mm. before #26) of the Strauss concerto.
\end{verbatim}
\end{example}

The horns in the second movement emphasize the autumn coloring that dominates Strauss’ later compositions. A cadenza in the middle of the finale vivace section leads, not to an expected coda, but instead into slower 6/8 Viennese waltz. Instead of ending the piece, Strauss tricks the

\textsuperscript{109} Williamson, 101.
\textsuperscript{110} Steinberg, 96, 461.
listeners into believing an entirely new movement as started but really it is an extension of the third movement (see example 7).

Finally the extended coda in the waltz brings about the exhilarating ending that contains the original ritornello from the strings in inverted form.\textsuperscript{111} In the same manner of Joseph Haydn, Strauss turns small figures of relative unimportance into major motivic material. Broken down, the main motive of the entire first movement is essentially a trill written out that is linked together in a chain and is further emphasized by the attacca movements.\textsuperscript{112}

Boosey & Hawkes published the original unrevised version of the concerto with Strauss’ shorter ending for piano accompaniment around the middle of the twentieth century. The version was withdrawn and is now nearly impossible to find. The only two known recordings of the original unrevised concerto were made in 1947 by Leon Goossens and in 1987 by John de Lancie. Leon Goossens was the first soloist to record the Strauss Concerto.\textsuperscript{113} Almost every well-known oboist has recorded the work making the piece an excellent medium to compare playing styles over the last century. John de Lancie only played the concerto once during his time with the Philadelphia Orchestra, under Eugene Ormandy in the late 1960s, and recorded it in 1987 at

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111} Freed, Richard, \textit{Strauss Lutoslawski}, p. 2-3.
\item \textsuperscript{112} Youmans, Charles ed., \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Richard Strauss}, p. 182.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Burgess, 1, 198.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
the age of sixty-six. In 1995, de Lancie wrote “from the first moment I saw the Concerto, I had concerns about the many inordinately long passages in the first, second and third movements – passages more suitable for violin than for oboe.” When he finally recorded it he sought permission from the Strauss family to modify sections of the first two movements to give the oboe more breathing space. Goossens also chose to modify the oboe part because he believed “oboe playing sounds unnatural and artificial if phrasing-through-breathing is absent from the performance.” He also compensates for air by taking the first movement at a brisk tempo with considerable rubato in the sixteenth-note runs and breaks in between the tied notes, taking quick breaths through the nose.

![Ex. 8 The opening melody starting at measure 3 in the solo oboe part of the Strauss Oboe Concerto.](image)

Despite the overtly Viennese style, the Strauss concerto was not conceived for the Viennese oboe and consequently was not recorded on a Viennese style instrument or Wiener oboe until 1997.
VIII. The Pastoral Oboe

The oboe can rattle, bleat, scream just as well as it can sing and lament nobly and innocently, or play a warble cheerfully.\textsuperscript{118}

One of the most innovative episodes in developing the conservatoire oboe happened right after World War II.\textsuperscript{119} There was a shortage of outstanding oboists at the turn of the twentieth century which led to a reduction of solo oboe music being composed. The only notable composer to write for solo oboe during that time was Camille Saint-Saëns (although Debussy apparently had plans that involved the instrument before his death). Because of this, most oboists could only make a living through orchestral playing and unless something was done soon, solo oboe music possibly would have died out altogether. Therefore the conservatoire oboe owes its primary survival into the twentieth century to the symphony orchestra.\textsuperscript{120}

Richard Strauss once reflected on the oboe models available during his lifetime:

The French instruments are of finer workmanship, their registers are more even, they respond more easily in the treble and allow softer pp on low tones. Correspondingly, the style of playing and the tone of French oboists is by far preferable to that of German players. Some German methods try to produce a tone as thick and trumpet-like as possible, which does not blend at all with the flutes and clarinets and is often unpleasantly prominent.\textsuperscript{121}

Strauss’ approval reinforced the conservatoire oboe’s quickly growing status. By 1920, almost all German oboists were playing on French style oboes.\textsuperscript{122} Since World War I, Vienna has self-consciously preserved its musical heritage despite growing international standards of playing.

Viennese oboe manufacturers worked hand in hand with the polar opposites of the absolute style.

\textsuperscript{118} Berlioz, 26, 176.
\textsuperscript{119} Burgess, 1, 3.
\textsuperscript{120} Burgess, 1, 191.
\textsuperscript{121} Burgess, 1, 175.
\textsuperscript{122} Burgess, 1, 175.
of music championed by Brahms and programmatic music of Wagner. Even the Viennese oboes
first developed over a hundred years ago still contain the “Vienna sound.” The differences
between the French and Viennese oboes as commented on by Strauss are most noticeable in the
middle and upper registers. The sound is reedier on the Viennese oboe middle register and
thinner in the upper register which is richer in harmonics than in the French models. However,
there is a slight loss of fluency in the passage work of the upper register due to the long
fingerings on the Viennese instrument but in the modern era this has become hardly
perceptible. During Strauss’ time, it must have been a major factor in his composing the Oboe
Concerto with a French model in mind. The conservatoire model would have been able to make
it through the long technical passages with greater fluidity than its German and Viennese
counterparts. Strauss, constantly expecting perfection, would never have settled for anything but
the best model instrument available to play his music (see illustration 3).

Illus. 3 A modern conservatory oboe with reed.

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123 Interestingly, the preservation of the Vienna oboe (never universally popular) was taken over by the Japanese company Yamaha around 1980.
124 Burgess, 1, 212.
IX. Conclusion

As the devastation of the two world wars took place in Europe, a desire for pastoral scenes and a rural and simpler life took hold among artistic professionals and musicians in western countries such as England. This can be seen in the symphonies of Ralph Vaughan Williams and in his oboe concerto. As the oboe has been the musical pastoral symbol for centuries, it seems only natural that composers turned an ear toward its haunting sound to escape the trials of the times they were living in. Richard Strauss longed for the beloved homeland of his youth, free from the horrors of the recent war. As fitting with a pastoral escape, Strauss moved to Switzerland where his oboe concerto was premiered at the beginning of his exile from Germany. Years earlier when Paul Hindemith was also faced with fleeing his German homeland from political persecution, he turned his thoughts inward towards a simpler rustic life as he also fled to the Alpine country of Switzerland while contemplating his oboe sonata. During his lifetime, Brahms as well traveled to the Swiss Alps, the last rural outpost in continental Europe, on a composing retreat where he composed his Horn Trio. There is no coincidence that the Trio for Horn, Oboe and Piano was joyously written by Herzogenberg while on vacation in the Mediterranean, a long time symbol of serenity. Handel also may have longed for a less complicated life as his country of many small German States went through the long process of rebuilding after the Thirty-Years War. Indeed, he most certainly would have been versed in the pastoral representation and escape that the relatively new hautboy presented. There must have been some driving force more than pure coincidence that led these German composers to write for solo oboe at pivotal points in their lifetimes and history. Some quality in the fleeting and reedy sound of this instrument allowed for each man to escape to an uncomplicated and happier way of life just as Henry David Thorough found peace on Walden Pond. When considering the
historical implications these pieces present to musical literature, it is important to keep in mind what Zweig wrote to Strauss in 1933:

Politics pass, the arts live on, hence we should strive for that which is permanent and leave propaganda to those who find it fulfilling and satisfying. History shows that it is in times of unrest when artists work with the greatest concentration; and so I am happy for every hour in which you turn words into music, which lifts you above time for the benefit and inspiration of later generations.\textsuperscript{125}

Through the concentration and passion to overcome the adversity of their times, these four men cemented a legacy for themselves not just in the oboe repertoire but also in the world of music. That legacy, at least among oboists, continues to appreciatively be remembered every time a reed is soaked and a famous tune performed.

\textsuperscript{125} Kennedy, 84, 280.
California State University, Northridge
Mike Curb College of Arts, Media and
Communication
Department of Music

Program

Concerto for Oboe in G Minor, HWV 287
George Friedrich Händel
(1685-1759)
Grave
Allegro
Sarabande
Allegro

Sonata for Oboe
Paul Hindemith
Munter
(1895-1963)
Sehr Langsam – Lebhaft – Sehr Langsam – Wieder Lebhaft
Hye Jung Shin, Piano

Intermission ?

Concerto for Oboe and Small Orchestra
Richard Strauss
Allegro moderato – Vivace – Tempo Primo
(1864-1949)
Andante
Vivace – Allegro – Tempo Primo
Hye Jung Shin, Piano

Trio for Oboe, Horn, and Piano
Heinrich von Herzogenberg
in D Major, op. 61
(1843-1900)
Allegretto
Allegro
Rachel Howerton, Horn
Hye Jung Shin, Piano

Jaclyn Howerton, Oboe
in her Master of Music Recital
A Student of Kimaree Gilad

Saturday, May 5, 2012, 7:30pm
Cypress Music Recital Hall

In partial fulfillment of a Masters of Music degree in oboe performance.
Program Notes

Believe it or not, I started planning this recital before I even finished my senior recital as a young undergraduate at UC Davis. I had only a small idea what I was going to play but I knew I was going to do something challenging. When I started discussing pieces last year with Kim, she mentioned that I should do some sort of Baroque piece. I had already played a sonata by J.S. Bach on my senior recital so she suggested I play the Concerto in G Minor HWV 287 by George Friedrich Handel. What a great suggestion! This was one of the signature pieces of the great Paris Conservatoire teacher George Gillet and his student Marcel Tabuteau, better known as the father of American oboe playing. It is believed to have been written around 1703 during Handel’s early years with the Hamburg Opera company. Like the Haydn Oboe Concerto, the authorship of this piece remains unconfirmed as no manuscripts from the early eighteenth century survive. But the French dotted rhythms in the first movement and the overall lyrical structure of the piece are unmistakable signs of Handel’s style. Short and sweet, the concerto reflects the opera arias that Handel was famous for and the simple elegance of the musical age.

When I was an innocent freshman, my undergraduate teacher constantly tried to get me to learn the Hindemith Sonata for Oboe and Piano. I thought it sounded weird and told her I didn’t like it. So why am I playing it? It took learning the history of the piece to make me realize how much I actually like the crazy rhythms and singing melodies. Paul Hindemith composed this piece as he fled Germany to the Swiss Alps. It was during this time that he began to transition away from the German Romantic tradition to a modern style in rebellion to the current Nazi regime. He once said that everything he composed he could play himself but what he didn’t realize is how good of a musician he really was. The relationship between the piano and oboe parts fit perfectly together as long as the pianist and obist count like mad and don’t get lost. Underneath the beautiful melodies lie clusters of harmonic dissonance that increase in tension and slowly move back to consonance. Many musicians dread playing Hindemith so I decided to put it on my recital. After all I had to challenge myself because that’s what makes my life so much fun.

I have always loved the Strauss Oboe Concerto. This is the one piece I knew for sure that I wanted to perform on my recital and I spent last two years telling my teacher that I was going to play it. One of the reasons also extends back to my years as an undergrad. It was there I found my musical path and where I first discovered Strauss. I spent four years listening to my undergraduate instructor tell me how she played the Strauss Concerto on her master’s recital and so I viewed it as a sort of challenge. If my old teacher could play this extremely difficult piece on her recital than of course I was going to play it on mine. So here I am, performing one of the hardest concertos in the repertoire. Composed during the last years of his life, it reflects the longing for the untroubled Germany of Strauss’ childhood. The movements flow continuously into one another providing over twenty minutes of constant beauty and playfulness. The third movement in particular extends from a fast vivace section into a slower waltz section that reflects the grandness of the Viennese musical scene before the Second World War. Some of the passages in the oboe line are equivalent to a swimmer holding their breath underwater for 2-3 minutes because there is no place to breathe. Strauss wrote these long phrases in the concerto with Bernhard Samuel’s ophion (or ophion) in mind. This device was patented in 1912 and was believed to help wind players. A small bellows was worked with the player’s feet that pumped air through a tube inserted into the corner of the player’s mouth. Thankfully this device never made it to the twenty-first century as it must have been quite ridiculous to behold.

Anyone who has ever met my sister and I knows that we do practically everything together. Were twins - best friends and worst enemies. So it was natural that one of my requests for this recital was that I get to play a piece with my sister. In the end we decided that for the finale we would play the first and last movements of the Trio for Oboe, Horn and Piano by Heinrich von Herzogenberg. Another Davis favorite, we first learned this piece in a chamber group with our best friend and many of our practice sessions often ended with getting food or watching a movie on our couch. Herzogenberg wrote this piece while on vacation in the Mediterranean to get over an illness that forced him to resign from his teaching post in Berlin. He wanted the piece to be a joyful reflection of a man who has a new positive outlook on life. Both movements are written in the key of D major just like Beethoven’s “Ode to Joy” in Symphony No. 9. -JH
About the Artist

Jaclyn Howerton started pursuing her Master of Music in Oboe Performance at CSUN in the fall of 2010 under the guidance of Kim Gilad. A native of Los Angeles, she received her Bachelor of Arts in Music from the University of California, Davis where she studied oboe with Laura Reynolds. While there, Howerton also worked closely with the musicology department and completed her degree with a double emphasis in both performance and music history. Her honors senior thesis, entitled “Ralph Vaughan Williams: Music from War” was published in the university’s undergraduate research journal, Explorations, and was an in-depth analysis on the influence of the world wars on the symphonies of Vaughan Williams. In addition, Howerton also received the UC Davis Departmental Faculty Award in Music Performance for oboe. Her Master's Thesis which is in partnership with this recital is entitled “The Oboe and Its Place in Music History” and links the pastoral influence of the oboe with the lives of these German composers and the development of the instrument during critical points in European history. Howerton is planning on pursuing a PhD in Musicology so that she can continue her dream of becoming a member of academia one day.

For the past five years Howerton has done active freelancing in both Northern and Southern California and has performed as orchestral accompaniment with such credited artists as Jorja Fleezanis, Jeffrey Thomas, Christine Brewer, and members of the San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows. She has performed in venues that include the Valley Performing Arts Center, the Robert and Margaret Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts and was a participant in the HPAF music festival in Hawaii. Howerton currently lives with her twin sister and three dogs in Los Angeles and enjoys spending her free time reading, practicing archery, and spending time with her family.

Special Thanks

It seems like only yesterday I was sitting down to write my senior recital program. Now here we are two years later and it’s time for me to present my master’s recital. Time sure does fly. First I would like to thank all of you for coming today and supporting me in my musical endeavors. Without you I would have no one to play for so I am truly grateful. I would like to thank all my friends both here and abroad that I know are cheering me on from wherever they are and to those who traveled far to make it here today. I would also like to thank my teacher, Kim. I know that I will never be able to say how much I appreciate all that she has done for me over the years. I am truly grateful and extremely honored to be her student. I also want to give a big thank you to the music department at CSUN for providing me with the opportunity to perform today and for all the valuable life lessons. I also am compelled to thank the music department at UC Davis as it was there that I gave my first solo performance and I know they will support me through anything. I would also like to thank the staff and teachers of Welby Way Elementary School for their continual support over the years. But most importantly I need to thank my family. Nothing in the world matters more to me and it is because of your love and support I was able to make to this point today. They will always be there for me no matter what path I take. I would like to dedicate this performance tonight to them. – JH

This recital is being recorded for Jaclyn’s personal archive. Please silence all cell phones and other noise making devices and remain seated during the performance. Thank you and enjoy the show.
Bibliography


Herzogenberg, Heinrich von. *Trio in D Major for Oboe or Violin, Horn or Viola or Cello and Piano, op. 61* by Heinrich von Herzogenberg. Leipzig: Reiter-Biedermann, 1889.


