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*The Spectrum of Performance Techniques and Expressive Possibilities of the
Clarinet in Selected Works by XXI Century Ukrainian Composers*

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Supervisor's statement on the doctoral dissertation/artistic doctoral work

I hereby declare that this doctoral dissertation was prepared under my supervision and I confirm that it meets the requirements for submission in the procedure for awarding the academic degree.

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INTRODUCTION

The starting point for this study was my many years of performance experience and a continuous search for repertoire that would allow the clarinet to be viewed not only as an instrument rooted in a well-established tradition, but also as a medium open to new forms of artistic expression.

Throughout my concert career, I have frequently encountered the works of contemporary Ukrainian composers whose music, despite its originality and considerable artistic value, remains relatively underrepresented within the international musical community. My interest in this repertoire also stems from a personal connection to Ukrainian culture and a desire to introduce it to a broader audience. Furthermore, Ivan Olenchyk and Dmytro Kyryliv—two of the three composers whose works constitute the foundation of the present research—lived in my hometown of Ternopil and, like myself, graduated from the Solomiya Krushelnytska Ternopil Professional College of Arts.

My direct collaboration with composers, participation in the creative process of new works, and the confrontation of the written score with performance practice became a catalyst for a deeper reflection on the contemporary performance potential of the clarinet. Of particular significance was the question of how techniques developed throughout the twentieth century function in present-day musical practice—whether they continue to serve primarily as means of sonic experimentation or have become an integral and natural component of the musical language employed by contemporary composers.

The present study seeks to address this question through an analysis and interpretation of selected works by Ivan Olenchyk, Volodymyr Runchak, and Dmytro Kyryliv.

Each of these composers presents a distinct vision of the clarinet and its role within a musical work: from a virtuoso instrument deeply rooted in the European tradition, through performative and postmodern approaches, to intermedial concepts in which music coexists with other artistic media, including visual imagery.

The diversity of these approaches makes it possible to demonstrate a broad spectrum of contemporary performance techniques, as well as the evolving relationship between composer and performer, whose perspective occupies a central place in the present study. The analyses are based not only on a detailed examination of the scores but also on interpretative insights gained through the preparation and realization of both audio and audiovisual recordings.

The process of working on these compositions revealed that contemporary instrumental techniques increasingly extend beyond traditional modes of performance, incorporating elements of

theatricality, stage gesture, and extra-musical meaning. In this context, the clarinet emerges as a multidimensional medium of artistic communication, capable of transcending the boundaries of conventional instrumental practice.

An important objective of this study is also to draw attention to the works of Ukrainian composers as a significant, yet still insufficiently recognized, component of contemporary musical culture. It is my hope that the analyses and interpretations presented herein will contribute to a broader interest in this repertoire and encourage performers to incorporate these works into their artistic practice. Moreover, the compositions discussed in this study possess considerable educational value, offering performers valuable opportunities for the development of both technical proficiency and interpretative awareness.

The structure of this dissertation has been designed in accordance with its research objectives. The first chapter discusses the development of contemporary clarinet performance techniques within the broader context of the transformations that shaped twentieth-century music. The second chapter is devoted to the biographies and creative aesthetics of the composers whose works are examined in this study. The third chapter, which constitutes the core of the dissertation, presents an analysis and interpretation of selected compositions from the perspective of contemporary performance techniques. The study concludes with a bibliography. An appendix to the artistic project description includes the scores of the works recorded as part of the artistic component of the doctoral project.

This dissertation is therefore not only an analysis of the selected works from the perspective of contemporary performance techniques and a reflection of my personal artistic experience gained through the preparation and realization of the recordings, but also a testimony to the dialogue between the performer, the composer, and the language of contemporary music. Its aim is to present the clarinet as an instrument capable of continually redefining its expressive and technical potential while actively participating in the dynamic transformations of twenty-first-century musical practice.

CHAPTER I

Characteristics of Contemporary Clarinet Performance Techniques Based on XX Century Clarinet Literature (Historical Context)

1.1. Western European Perspective

In the second half of the twentieth century, the clarinet repertoire underwent a significant expansion, closely associated with the development of new performance techniques and innovative compositional approaches. In the chapter *Contemporary Clarinet*, included in *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, Roger Heaton identifies a number of works composed up to the mid-1990s that played a crucial role in shaping the contemporary sonic language of the clarinet. These compositions combine advanced articulatory and sonoristic techniques with an experimental approach to musical notation.

Since the 1960s, an important factor in the development of new clarinet performance techniques has been the effort to systematize and codify them. Bruno Bartolozzi compiled catalogues of multiphonics, microtonal fingerings, and timbral¹ trills similar to those described by Witold Szalonek. In the 1970s, this line of research was continued by Giuseppe Garbarino, who developed more precise compilations of alternative fingerings. These efforts enabled composers to employ new sonic resources in a conscious and consistent manner and also contributed to the development of appropriate systems of musical notation.

Multiphonics — one of the key elements of contemporary clarinet technique—can be produced in two principal ways: through embouchure modification, involving changes in the configuration of the playing apparatus and air pressure, or through the use of specific fingering combinations, often based on the fingering charts developed by Bartolozzi and Garbarino, which make it possible to produce relatively stable multiple-tone sonorities.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the clarinet became a vehicle for intensive explorations of sonority and articulation. In *Variants* (1963) for solo clarinet — composed under the influence of Luciano Berio's *Sequenza I* — William O. Smith created a distinctive catalogue of new sounds² organized into six sections. Although the composer does not define these effects explicitly, an

¹ B. Bartolozzi, *New Sounds for Woodwind Instruments*, in: "RES FACTA No. 8", PWM, Kraków 1977.

² Original text: "Variants (UE) for solo clarinet – a veritable catalogue of new sounds in six short movements"; in: R. Heaton, *Contemporary Clarinet*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet*, ed. Colin Lawson, Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995, p. 166.

analysis of the score³ allows for the identification of such techniques as key clicking, muted tones, quarter-tone vibrato, distinctive repetitive articulations, and microtonal glissandi.

Another important example is *Collage* (1973) by Bruno Bartolozzi, which represents a further stage in the compositional application of multiphonic combinations developed by the composer himself.

Among the most significant works of this period is *Domaines* (1961–66) by Pierre Boulez. The composition is based on the concept of a mobile form, in which individual segments are performed in a variable order. Boulez employs alternative fingerings to achieve subtle timbral differentiation and treats ornamentation as an autonomous articulatory and colouristic parameter, independent of any tonal function. In the case of trills, the sonic effect is of primary importance rather than the precise pitch content⁴.

Beginning in the 1970s, particular importance was assumed by composers who developed extended techniques⁵ in a systematic and comprehensive manner.

In *Dal niente* (1970) for solo clarinet, as well as in the later compositions *Accanto* (1980) and *Allegro sostenuto* (1988), Helmut Lachenmann employs a wide range of extended performance techniques, including slap tongue, key clicking, and sound production achieved through direct contact between the teeth and the reed. *Dal niente* is regarded as one of the seminal examples of instrumental *musique concrète*. Lachenmann treats the instrument as a source of physical sound phenomena rather than merely a vehicle for pitch production⁶. In the performance notes accompanying the score, he provides detailed instructions concerning articulation, including extreme pianissimo dynamics, controlled inhalation and exhalation, and quasi-vocal effects⁷. Although the work does not involve preparation in the Cagean sense⁸, it incorporates what may be described as “preparation without external objects”, achieved through the manipulation of the instrument’s resonance, airflow, and key mechanism.

³ Score of *Variants* by William O. Smith, Universal Edition <https://www.scribd.com/document/467984942/Variations-William-O-Smith>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

⁴ J. Goldman, *The Musical Language of Pierre Boulez: Writings and Compositions*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014, p. 171.

⁵ S. Acevedo, T. W. Rush, *Music Theory 21c*, “Composers sometimes ask performers to use instruments in unconventional ways in order to obtain different timbres or sound effects. These are called extended techniques and vary depending on the instrument,” own translation from English, <https://tobyrrush.com/book/text/twc/twc03.html>, accessed: 03.05.2026.

⁶ H. Lachenmann, *Musik als existentielle Erfahrung*, Breitkopf & Härtel, Leipzig 1996.

⁷ Score of Helmut Lachenmann’s *Dal Niente* – performance instructions, Hans Gerig, Cologne 1974 / Breitkopf & Härtel 1980 <https://www.scribd.com/document/407842364/kupdf-net-lachenmann-dal-niente-pdf>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

⁸ Understood as a form of preparation directly interfering with the structure of the instrument, as in the prepared piano for which John Cage wrote sonatas.

A particularly radical approach to the sonic possibilities of the clarinet is represented by Vinko Globokar. In *Voix Instrumentalisée* (1973) for solo bass clarinet without a mouthpiece, sound is produced by blowing directly into the neck of the instrument, allowing for the generation of a wide variety of unconventional timbral effects. In *Discours IV* (1974), Globokar employs disassembled instrument components and unconventional methods of performance, introducing an extremely experimental approach to sound production. Examples include using only the upper joint of the clarinet fitted with an English horn reed, immersing the lower end of a bass clarinet (without its bell) in water, and playing the contrabass clarinet without a mouthpiece by employing a trombone-like embouchure technique.

One of the most important works in the twentieth-century clarinet repertoire remains *Sequenza IX* (1980) by Luciano Berio. The composition is built upon extended phrases requiring advanced breath control, pronounced contrasts of register and dynamics, and the use of microtonality, timbral trills, and multiphonics. In his commentary to the score, the composer points to the persistence of a selected group of pitches (seven in total)⁹ whose timbral characteristics continually change, thereby creating an impression of apparent stability. Multiphonics and unconventional fingerings serve a structural function within the work, contributing to the control of harmonic tension rather than merely producing colouristic effects.

A similar aesthetic orientation can be observed in the work of Denis Smalley. In *Clarinet Threads* (1985) for clarinet and tape, the composer employs multiphonics, percussive effects, and high harmonics, while a central feature of the composition is the integration of the instrumental part with the electroacoustic layer.

In the subsequent phase of development, microtonality and textural complexity assumed particular importance. In *La chute d'Icare* (1987), Brian Ferneyhough combines microtonal pitch inflections with extremely complex rhythmic structures and multilayered textures, exemplifying what Richard Toop has described as the “New Complexity”¹⁰. At the same time, composers such as Karlheinz Stockhausen, James Dillon, and Horațiu Rădulescu further developed extended techniques, treating them not as isolated sound effects but as integral components of their musical language.

⁹ Centro Studi Luciano Berio (official website) <https://www.lucianoberio.org/nota-di-programma-op/sequenza-ix-authors-note/>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

¹⁰ R. Toop, *Four Facets of the “New Complexity”*, “Contact,” vol. 32, 1988, pp. 4–8.

The tendencies described above are also reflected in various aesthetic currents of the late twentieth century. In *Charisma* (1971), Iannis Xenakis conceives sound as a sonic mass governed by sonoristic principles¹¹. In *Clair* (1980), Franco Donatoni emphasizes pitch instability through the use of multiphonics and microtonality¹², while in *Let me die before I wake* (1982), Salvatore Sciarrino develops an aesthetic of “threshold sound,” characterized by fragility and extreme dynamic nuances¹³. Within the realm of spectral music, Gérard Grisey, in *Anubis et Nout* (1983), employs microtonality as a consequence of spectral sound analysis, making it a fundamental principle in the organization of musical material¹⁴.

As a result, the processes described above led to a lasting transformation in the paradigm of thinking about the clarinet — from an instrument primarily intended for the production of pitch to a medium for the exploration of complex sonic phenomena. Many of these techniques were subsequently adopted and further developed by Ukrainian composers, whose works constitute the subject of the analyses presented in the following chapters of this dissertation.

1.2. Polish Perspective

Witold Szalonek’s article *On the Unexploited Sonoristic Qualities of Woodwind Instruments*¹⁵ (1968) constitutes one of the most important studies in the context of the development of contemporary performance techniques for woodwind instruments in Poland. The composer draws attention to sound phenomena that had previously been regarded as accidental, undesirable, or merely incidental by-products of performance, treating them instead as a point of departure for conscious sonoristic exploration.

The fundamental questions posed by the author concern three key issues:

1. How can these sound effects be produced consciously rather than accidentally?
2. To what extent do these phenomena depend on the characteristics of a particular instrument?
3. How can a simple and unambiguous system for their notation be developed?

¹¹ I. Xenakis, *Formalized Music*, Pendragon Press, Hillsdale 1992; score edition: Musique Contemporaine, Paris 1971.

¹² B. Bartolozzi, *op. cit.*

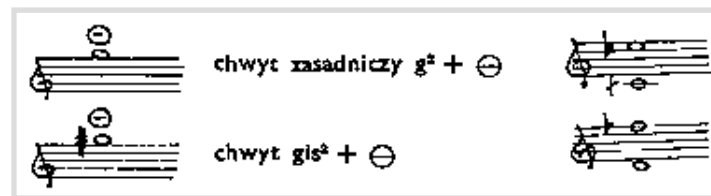
¹³ Score of the work, Ricordi, Milan 1982.

¹⁴ Score of the work, Ricordi, Milan 1990; Gerard Grisey, *Did You Say Spectral?*, “Contemporary Music Review,” vol. 19, part I, 2000, pp. 1–3; Joshua Finberg, *Spectral Music*, “Contemporary Music Review,” vol. 19, part II, 2000, pp. 1–5.

¹⁵ W. Szalonek, *On the Untapped Sonoristic Potential of Woodwind Instruments*, “RES FACTA,” no. 7, PWM, Kraków 1973.

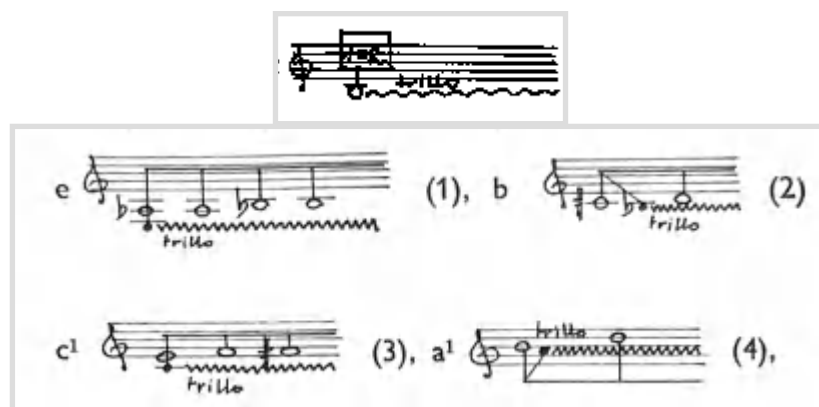
Szalonek introduces his own term for these novel sound effects, referring to them as *combined sounds* (*dźwięki kombinowane*). These sounds may be produced in a variety of ways, including through modifications of the embouchure—such as changes in air pressure or the configuration of the oral cavity — through unconventional, often asymmetrical combinations of key and tone-hole fingerings, or through a combination of both methods in order to achieve more complex sonic results.

Although the article addresses the entire family of woodwind instruments, the clarinet occupies a particularly prominent position within it. Szalonek describes its sonic possibilities using terms that refer to specific sound qualities, such as “babbling”, gentle undulation, sharpness, and the “percussive pulsation of air”. Among the most significant phenomena, he identifies multiphonics, whose sonic character, in the composer’s view, bears a close resemblance to electronic sounds¹⁶:



Example 1. Notation of Combined Sounds

Another important area of investigation discussed in the article concerns *combined trill forms*, which involve the alternation of different fingering configurations that produce the same nominal pitch. This results in timbral instability and sound fragmentation, giving rise to pulsating effects that may at times resemble percussive articulation:

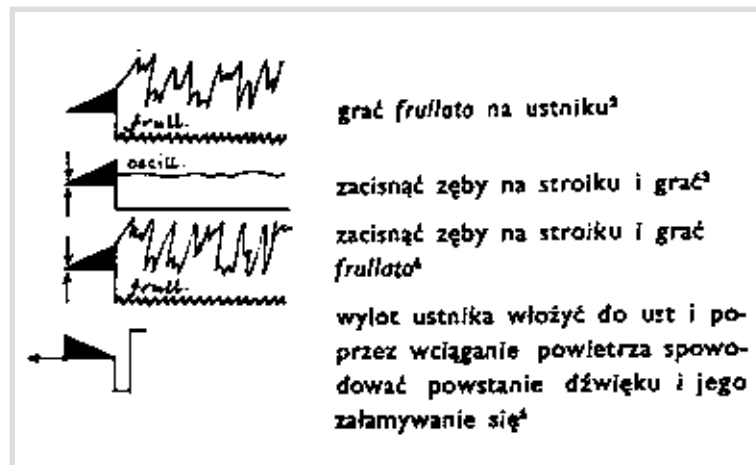


Example 2. Notation of Combined Trills

¹⁶ All graphic examples in this subsection are taken from the article discussed above.

Szalonek demonstrates the practical application of the techniques under discussion by referring, among other examples, to his own composition *Aarhus Music* (1970) for brass quintet, in which he employs the concept of combined sounds, adapting it from the performance practice of woodwind instruments.

Another important area of exploration concerns the performance possibilities of the clarinet mouthpiece alone. The composer describes techniques involving the production of single pitches, glissandi, and various articulatory effects, which were later developed further in his compositional output. He also draws attention to different forms of flutter-tonguing and to the technique of direct contact between the teeth and the reed, which — when combined with conventional articulation — give rise to new timbral qualities. Among the more unconventional solutions is the inhalation of air through the mouthpiece, producing a characteristic breaking or collapsing of the sound:



Example 3. Notation of a Broken Sound

Both in its theoretical and practical dimensions, Szalonek's article opened new perspectives for composers and performers, revealing a sonoristic potential of woodwind instruments that had not previously been fully recognized. His concepts played a significant role in the development of contemporary compositional and performance techniques, contributing to a broader redefinition of the expressive possibilities of wind instruments in twentieth-century music.

An important complement to these theoretical considerations can be found in the works of contemporary Polish composers presented at festivals of contemporary music, in which the clarinet plays a significant role as a vehicle for new performance techniques and sonoristic means of expression.

In the works of Maciej Jabłoński¹⁷, one can observe a broad spectrum of applications of the clarinet, particularly within sonoristic and intermedial contexts. *V Concerto grosso* for contrabass clarinet, marimba, and chamber orchestra (2019), presented, among other venues, at the Festival of World Premieres in Katowice, highlights the instrument's rich timbral palette and the use of unconventional performance techniques. In turn, *A Night in a Bedroom* for bass clarinet and video, as well as *Klaaarr!!!* (2022) for clarinet and fixed media, demonstrate the integration of the instrumental part with visual and electroacoustic layers, requiring the performer to employ extended articulatory techniques and maintain precise synchronization. In *Panta rhei* (2019), the composer places particular emphasis on unconventional textures and the timbral qualities of the instrument.

The oeuvre of Marcel Chyrzyński¹⁸ encompasses both chamber and solo works in which the clarinet functions as an instrument of considerable expressive potential. Compositions such as *In C* (1996), *Quasi Kwazi III* (1998), *Dance of Death* (2013), and *Death in Venice* (2017) demonstrate diverse approaches to articulation and the shaping of musical material. Of particular importance is *Concerto 2000* for clarinet and orchestra, which may be regarded as a synthesis of the composer's earlier explorations of clarinet performance techniques.

In *They Can't See You Like I Can* (2018), Paweł Malinowski combines bass clarinet with electronics and a visual component. Such an approach aligns with the intermedial trend in contemporary music, in which the instrument is treated as an element of a broader audiovisual structure¹⁹.

Composers associated with the International Festival of Contemporary Music *Warsaw Autumn* have also played a significant role in the development of contemporary performance techniques. In the works of Michał Górczyński, the contrabass clarinet emerges as an autonomous solo instrument, while the techniques employed include multiphonics, preparation, amplification, and the artistic use of breath sounds and noise-based sonorities²⁰.

Krzysztof Knittel, in turn, develops the relationship between the instrument and electronics, employing amplification, performative elements, and sonoristic techniques. A similar approach is represented by Cezary Duchnowski, whose interactive works are based on the collaboration

¹⁷ M. Kosińska i W. Antonczyk, *Macieju Jabłoński* <https://polmic.pl/pl/encyklopedia/osobowe/j/jablonski-maciej>, accessed: 22.04.2026;

¹⁸ Description of the CD Marcel Chyrzyński – Chamber Works, DUX, Warsaw 2024 <https://www.dux.pl/marcel-chyrzynski-utwory-kameralne.pdf>, accessed: 22.04.2026;

¹⁹ Concert programme of "Sound Gallery" within the 33rd Musica Polonica Nova https://www.nfm.wroclaw.pl/images/Sezon_2021_2022/MPN/33_MPN_Sound_Gallery.pdf, accessed: 22.04.2026;

²⁰ Biography of Michał Górczyński from the official website of the Warsaw Autumn Festival <https://warszawska-jesien.art.pl/2021/program/wykonawcy/gorczynski-michal>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

between the performer and an electronic system, treating the microphone as an integral component of the instrument itself (for example, in the *ElettroVoce* projects created in cooperation with the opera singer Agata Zubeł²¹).

In the context of the most recent compositional output, it is also worth highlighting works created within the framework of festival projects, including *Pasja (Passion)* for violin, clarinets, percussion, and piano (2022) by Mateusz Ryzek and *być/nie być (To Be or Not to Be)* for violin, clarinet, percussion, and piano (2022) by Magdalena Gorwa, both featured in the concert programme *Pasja*, organized as part of the *Musica Polonica Nova* festival²². In these works, the clarinet functions within chamber ensembles of varied instrumentation. The incorporation of percussion, electroacoustic elements, and unconventional performance gestures points to the presence of contemporary performance techniques and an expanded understanding of the instrument's role.

1.3. Eastern European Perspective

The development of contemporary performance techniques in the clarinet music of Eastern Europe is associated both with the aesthetic transformations of the second half of the twentieth century and with the strong connection of this repertoire to cultural and national traditions. In contrast to the Western European approach, which often treats sonic experimentation as an end in itself, Eastern European composers more frequently employ new techniques as a means of enhancing emotional expression, musical meaning, and dramatic structure.

As Valerii Hromchenko²³ observes (author's translation):

One of the important challenges of contemporary musicology is defining the boundaries of musical genre. Contemporary music increasingly combines diverse styles and forms, leading to the emergence of new types of compositions. In this context, the manner in which expressive means are employed assumes particular significance, as these means largely determine the character and identity of a musical work.²⁴

A particularly important role is played by music for solo instrument. Although for a long time it received comparatively less scholarly attention, it has now become a significant area of both

²¹ Note on the *ElettroVoce* duo on Agata Zubeł's official website <https://zubeł.pl/zespoly/elettrovoce>, accessed: 22.05.2026;

²² Programme of the 33rd *Musica Polonica Nova* Festival 2022 https://doba.pl/media/files/wroclaw/2022/PROGRAM_Musica%20Polonica%20Nova_2022_21.02.pdf, accessed: 22.04.2026;

²³ W. Gromczenko, "Specific Features of the Use of Expressive Means in Solo Instrumental Works (on the example of V. Martyniuk's *Interview on a Given Topic* for solo clarinet)," *Culture and Modernity*, no. 2, 2014, pp. 83–88;

²⁴ W. Gromczenko, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

research and performance practice. The solo instrument, including the clarinet, is increasingly regarded as an autonomous medium capable of generating complex sonic and dramatic structures.

In this context, it is worth referring to *Interview on a Given Topic* (2014) for solo clarinet by Valentyna Martyniuk. Based on a melody derived from Ukrainian folk song, the work demonstrates a strong connection to national musical tradition. At the same time, it incorporates contemporary performance techniques, including the combination of trills with flutter-tonguing, multiphonics, and performative elements such as the use of the voice and stage gestures. Of particular importance is the role of articulation. Various methods of connecting and separating sounds (legato, staccato, marcato) serve not merely a technical function but significantly influence the character of the music and contribute to the shaping of its dramaturgy. The simultaneous use of the voice and instrumental performance further enables the creation of effects resembling polyphony, despite the fundamentally monophonic nature of the clarinet.

A similar approach can be observed in the works of Volodymyr Runchak (discussed in greater detail in Chapters Two and Three), who treats the clarinet as an instrument endowed with expanded expressive capabilities. His compositions incorporate multiphonics, breath effects, unconventional articulations, and theatrical elements. As a result, performance extends beyond the realization of the sonic layer alone, becoming the creation of a stage work in which musical and performative dimensions are inseparably intertwined.

Within the broader context of Eastern European music, it is also important to mention composers such as Sofia Gubaidulina, Edison Denisov, and Alfred Schnittke. In their works, the clarinet is frequently employed as an instrument of exceptional expressive potential. Techniques such as the use of extreme registers, unstable intonation, microtonality, and subtle timbral transformations are characteristic features of their musical language. These devices are not employed merely for their sonic effect; rather, they serve as important means of constructing meaning and shaping the expressive content of the composition.

Also worthy of attention is the strong relationship between performance techniques and the interpretative process. As Oleksandr Sionchuk observes (author's translation):

The performer's activity is based on a complex process of musical thinking that encompasses both emotional and intellectual components. The interpretation of a musical work does not consist merely in the realization of the notated score; rather, it involves the active processing of sonic material, the

construction of musical meaning, and the development of an individual performance concept, at times including modifications to the score undertaken in consultation with the composer.²⁵

This process encompasses, among other aspects, the analysis of a work's structure, the recognition of relationships between its constituent elements, and the development of an individual interpretative concept. In the case of the clarinet, a particularly important role is played by the integration of auditory imagination with the physical realization of sound. This requires not only a high level of technical proficiency but also a conscious and deliberate approach to the shaping of tone and timbre.

From this perspective, contemporary performance techniques should not be regarded merely as additional effects; rather, they constitute an integral element of the interpretative process. Their application enables a more accurate and convincing articulation of a work's character, expressive intent, and underlying artistic meaning.

In conclusion, the Eastern European perspective presents the development of contemporary performance techniques as the result of a complex interaction between tradition and modernity, between national idioms and the universal language of contemporary music. The clarinet, as an instrument of exceptional timbral flexibility, plays a particularly important role in this process, enabling the realization of both subtle expressive nuances and sophisticated dramaturgical concepts. Extended techniques are no longer regarded as incidental effects or experimental additions; rather, they have become fully integrated components of the musical language of contemporary Eastern European composers.

²⁵ O. Sionczuk, *Musical Thinking as the Basis of Artistic and Performance Skills of Wind Musicians*, "History of the Formation and Prospects for the Development of Wind Music in the Context of National Culture of Ukraine and Abroad," vol. 8, 2016, p. 127.

CHAPTER II

Composers and Their Works: Ivan Olenchyk, Volodymyr Runchak, and Dmytro Kyryliv

2.1. Ivan Olenchik

Ivan Olenchyk (born 22 May 1952 in Kacperivtsi, Ternopil Oblast, Ukraine) is regarded as one of the most distinguished representatives of the Eastern European clarinet school of the second half of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century. His artistic activity encompasses an extensive career as a performer, educator, and composer, making him a particularly significant figure in the development of contemporary clarinet literature.

He began his musical education in Ternopil and subsequently continued his studies at the Antonina Nezhdanova Odesa State Conservatory, where he studied under Kostiantyn Mülberg. The influence of this performance tradition is evident in his approach to sound production, particularly in his emphasis on tonal quality, articulatory precision, and mastery of the playing apparatus. He later pursued postgraduate studies at the Gnesin Institute in Moscow, where he further developed his interpretative and technical expertise.

At an early stage of his career, Olenchyk achieved a number of competition successes that helped establish his position within the international musical community. Prize-winning performances in Kyiv (1976), Minsk (1979), and at the *Prague Spring* Competition (1981) testified to the exceptional level of his performance artistry and his mature interpretative approach.

An important aspect of Olenchyk's artistic activity is his contribution to the development of the clarinet repertoire. As a composer, he has written both pedagogical and concert works, including caprices, études, and miniatures that explore the technical possibilities of the instrument. His compositional style reveals a tendency to combine traditional performance practices with elements of contemporary musical language. Particular emphasis is placed on the development of articulatory possibilities, breath control, and the refinement of timbral differentiation.

Although Olenchyk's compositions cannot be regarded as among the most radical examples of avant-garde music, they nevertheless constitute an important contribution to the development of clarinet performance technique. His works introduce performers to a heightened awareness of sound and timbre, laying the groundwork for more advanced solutions employed in contemporary music.

In this sense, his oeuvre functions as a bridge between traditional and modern schools of clarinet performance.

In the context of the present study, Olenchuk's artistic activity is of particular importance as an example of the systematic development of the clarinet idiom in Eastern Europe, providing an important point of reference for the more experimental tendencies that emerged in subsequent generations of composers.

2.2. Volodymyr Runchak

Volodymyr Runchak (born in 1960 in Lutsk) is one of the key figures of contemporary Ukrainian music, whose artistic output is closely associated with the search for new means of expression and the redefinition of the performer's role. As a composer, conductor, and instrumentalist, he represents the model of a multifaceted artist who combines creative activity with organizational and performance practice.

His musical education included studies in Lutsk and Kyiv, as well as participation in international courses devoted to contemporary music, such as the Brandenburg Colloquium for New Music in Berlin during the 1990s, where he attended masterclasses led by P. Dietrich, K. Huber, D. Schnebel, and other distinguished figures²⁶. These experiences significantly influenced the formation of his compositional language, which combines elements of the European avant-garde with an individual and often provocative approach to form and musical expression.

Runchak's oeuvre is characterized by considerable stylistic diversity and a consistent search for new sonic and formal solutions. The composer employs a wide range of contemporary techniques, including sonorism, aleatoricism, cluster structures, microtonality, and extended performance techniques. Of particular importance in his music is the performative dimension: performers are frequently engaged in activities that extend beyond conventional instrumental playing, encompassing gesture, stage movement, and theatrical elements²⁷.

In his works involving the clarinet, Volodymyr Runchak consistently explores the instrument's potential as a medium possessing a broad spectrum of sonic possibilities. His musical language makes extensive use of techniques such as multiphonics, double and triple staccato, circular breathing, and unconventional methods of performance, including the simultaneous use of

²⁶ A. Mukha, *Composers of Ukraine and the Ukrainian Diaspora* [in:] *Directory*, M. T. Rylsky Institute of Art History, Folklore and Ethnology, Kyiv: Muzychna Ukraina, 2004, p. 352.

²⁷ Volodymyr Runchak, composer and conductor, official website <https://vrunchak.wixsite.com/runchak/blank-bxf6h>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

two separate parts of the instrument (a detailed discussion of this technique is provided in Chapter Three). As a result, the clarinet ceases to function merely as a source of sound and instead becomes a medium of expression with a distinctly performative character²⁸.

At the same time, many of his compositions incorporate references to folklore and neo-folkloristic elements, which are transformed and reinterpreted within the framework of a contemporary musical language. The synthesis of these two tendencies — the avant-garde and the traditional — constitutes one of the most distinctive features of Runchak's compositional style²⁹.

A significant aspect of the composer's activity is his contribution to the organizational and institutional development of contemporary music. The ensemble *New Music in Ukraine*, founded by Runchak, together with the concert series of the same name, has become an important platform for the presentation of contemporary music, facilitating numerous world premieres and fostering the integration of the Ukrainian musical community with the broader European cultural landscape³⁰.

In the context of the present study, Runchak's oeuvre serves as an example of a radical expansion of the clarinet's performance possibilities, in which instrumental techniques are combined with performative actions to create a new artistic quality³¹.

2.3. Dmytro Kyryliv

Dmytro Kyryliv (born 12 May 2002 in Ternopil) represents the youngest generation of Ukrainian composers whose artistic activity develops at the intersection of contemporary music, digital technologies, and audiovisual culture. As a clarinetist, composer, and sound designer, he combines a traditional musical education with a modern approach to sound and its function across various media.

He began his musical education in Ternopil, where he studied both composition and clarinet performance. He subsequently continued his studies in Vienna and is currently pursuing further specialization in music technology in Canada. This multicultural educational trajectory is reflected in his musical language, which brings together diverse traditions and aesthetic perspectives.

²⁸ Y. Czekan, Volodymyr Runchak: Music About Life, in: Moloda Ukraina, no. 13, 24.01.2004 <https://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/105/164/3199/>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

²⁹ O. Kushniruk, *New Music in Ukraine*, in: *Ukrainian Musical Encyclopedia*, vol. 4 (N–O), ed. G. Skrypyuk, Kyiv 2016, pp. 284–285.

³⁰ *Volodymyr Runchak Petrovych*, official website of the National Union of Composers of Ukraine <https://composersukraine.org/index.php?id=669>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

³¹ O. Chebotar, *Volodymyr Runchak: the antagonist composer* <https://theclaquers.com/posts/13318>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

Kyryliv's compositional output is characterized by the integration of elements of contemporary music with influences drawn from film music, electronic music, and Ukrainian folklore. In his works, the sonic dimension plays a central role and is frequently shaped through the use of digital technologies.

In the context of performance techniques, his music demonstrates the use of extended articulatory devices, breath-based techniques, timbral effects, and the integration of instrumental performance with electronics. The composer approaches the instrument in a holistic manner, taking into account both its acoustic properties and its potential for electronic sound processing.

Kyryliv's professional activity also encompasses music for films and video games, which has influenced his approach to musical structure, dramaturgy, and narrative design. His compositions frequently engage with concepts of sonic space and the gradual construction of tension, bringing them into close proximity with electroacoustic compositional practices.

In the context of the present study, Kyryliv's compositional output represents the latest tendencies in the development of clarinet literature, in which traditional performance techniques are integrated with technology and new forms of artistic expression.

CHAPTER III

Analysis and Interpretation of Selected Works by Ivan Olenchyk, Volodymyr Runchak, and Dmytro Kyryliv from the Perspective of Contemporary Performance Techniques

3.1. Ivan Olenchyk – *20 Caprices for Solo Clarinet*

The collection *20 Caprices for Solo Clarinet* by Ivan Olenchyk, published in 2004 by the Moscow publishing house *Modern Music*, constitutes a significant contribution to the development of contemporary clarinet literature. The cycle is dedicated to Ivan Mozgoenko, one of the most renowned clarinetists and pedagogues of Eastern Europe in the second half of the twentieth century.

As Razmik Maslov observes, the stylistic scope encompassed by the cycle is exceptionally broad, incorporating references to a variety of historical periods — from Baroque aesthetics and Viennese Classicism to the idiom of Russian music at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the same time, the composer employs devices characteristic of contemporary musical language, including serialism, irregular and constantly shifting metric organization, and extended techniques, among them multiphonics³².

Elements of Ukrainian melody, together with folkloric codes derived from various musical cultures, constitute the foundation of the individual pieces within the *20 Caprices* cycle, which is regarded as one of the most important achievements of contemporary Eastern European clarinet literature. The cycle has received considerable critical acclaim, with commentators interpreting its constituent works as compositions of substantial artistic value and rich metaphorical significance, while at the same time preserving a clear educational dimension. This reflects a significant transformation in the role of wind instruments throughout the twentieth century — from an accompanying function to that of a fully autonomous solo medium. In this process, a decisive role was played by composer-performers and composers closely associated with wind instruments, whose creative output elevated solo genres to a position of particular artistic importance³³.

³² R. Maslov, commentary on the cycle *20 Caprices for Solo Clarinet* [score], Modern Music Publishers, Moscow 2004, p. 2, own translation from English.

³³ V. Hromchenko, *Specific Features of Interaction between Composer and Performer in the Genre of Solo Instrument Music (on the Example of Wind Performance Art)*, “Culture and Modernity,” no. 1, 2014, pp. 104–110.

Against this background, Ivan Olenchuk's *20 Caprices* occupies an important place in the development of the genre. Alongside the historical legacy of Ernesto Cavallini (1807–1874)³⁴ — the Italian virtuoso often referred to as the “Paganini of the clarinet” — Olenchuk's caprices represent a significant contribution to the evolution of clarinet literature. As Valerii Hromchenko observes (author's translation):

These works are characterized by emotional contrast, a clearly defined melodic structure, and a rich palette of timbral and dynamic nuances, which allow them to emerge as complete artistic statements, distinguished by a highly developed, multidimensional sonic fabric and a clearly articulated, vividly expressive musical vision³⁵.

An important point of reference, and a possible source of inspiration for Olenchuk's cycle, may be the collection of clarinet miniatures *Hommages* by Béla Kovács. These works were published in 1994, although some sources indicate that several of them had already been composed during the 1970s³⁶. The cycle was conceived primarily for pedagogical purposes and functions as a collection of concert études in which numerous fundamental technical challenges of clarinet performance are addressed.

Particularly noteworthy is the fact that *Hommages* is one of the few cycles of its kind in the twentieth-century clarinet repertoire to encompass the majority of issues related to both the technique and artistry of clarinet performance. An additional strength of the collection lies in its stylistic diversity, resulting from inspirations drawn from the music of composers such as Johann Sebastian Bach, Niccolò Paganini, and Claude Debussy. The cycle has secured a permanent place within the European clarinet repertoire, as evidenced by its frequent concert performances and numerous commercial recordings.

For this reason, it may be assumed that *Hommages* served as a direct source of inspiration for Olenchuk, both in terms of the overall technical demands of the cycle and with regard to the illustrative and programmatic dimension present in several of the caprices. As in Kovács's collection, references to the legacy of distinguished composers can also be identified in Olenchuk's works; however, in his case these allusions are directed primarily toward composers of Eastern Europe, such as Alexander Borodin, Alexander Dargomyzhsky, and Sergei Prokofiev.

³⁴ Charles Neidich, *30 Caprices for Clarinet by Ernesto Cavallini* (introductory item), Lauren Keiser, Maryland 2007, p. 72.

³⁵ V. Hromchenko, *Dukhove solo v yevropeiskii akademichnii kompozytorskii ta vykonavskii tvorchosti XX – pochatku XXI st. (tendentsii rozvytku, spetsyfika, systematyka): Monograph*, Kyiv 2020, p. 304.

³⁶ Rachel Yoder, *The Kovacs Hommages and the New Clarinet Standards*, “The Clarinet,” vol. 52, no. 2, ICA, March 2025, p. 5 <https://clarinet.insightful.design/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/VOL52N2-MARCH2025.pdf>, accessed: 22.04.2026.

From a broader perspective, the musical language of *20 Caprices* reveals notable similarities to Kovács's cycle, particularly in its emphasis on virtuosity and in the manner in which the sonic and technical possibilities of the clarinet are showcased. Olenchyk, however, consistently incorporates a wide range of modern expressive resources, synthesizing traditional musical means — such as dynamics, timbre, and articulation — with contemporary techniques, including circular breathing, multiphonics, double and triple staccato, and microintervals.

Of particular interest to me were Caprices Nos. 4, 5, and 18, owing to their incorporation of a wide range of contemporary performance techniques and distinctive interpretative challenges, which extend significantly beyond the framework of the traditionally conceived concert étude.

The presence of these elements — combining contemporary performance techniques with a clearly defined dramaturgical conception — formed the basis for the selection of these particular caprices for analysis and interpretation in the present study, as well as for their inclusion in the artistic component of the doctoral project.

Caprices Nos. 5 and 18 were originally composed for solo clarinet. During the course of my research, and through direct communication with the composer, Professor Ivan Olenchyk, as well as Professor Evgeny Petrov — one of the most renowned clarinetists and pedagogues of Eastern Europe in the twenty-first century — I learned that piano accompaniments had also been created for these works. I was furthermore granted permission to use these unpublished materials in the artistic component of my doctoral project, despite the fact that they have never been officially published.

3.1.1. *Caprice no 4 „Quarrell”*

Caprice No. 4 provides an example of a work in which the technical and expressive layers are closely interconnected, and the performance techniques employed have a direct impact on the dramaturgy of the form. An analysis of the score reveals the deliberate use of contemporary clarinet techniques, including microtonality, glissando, varied articulation, and extreme contrasts of dynamics and register.

The work is based on a clear opposition between two musical motifs. The first of these, presented in the low register, is repetitive in character and consists of rapid chromatic thirty-second-note figures marked *ff* (*veloce, poco a poco accel.*). The performance of this passage requires the use of double staccato as well as advanced control of the breathing apparatus. Particular challenges

include maintaining stable intonation in the low register under increased air pressure and achieving clear, selective articulation at a rapid tempo³⁷:



Example 4. *Caprice No. 4 "Quarrel"*, mm. 1–2

The second motif, appearing in the *lento* sections, is markedly different in character. It features expressive indications such as *doloroso*, *dolce*, and *molto vibrato*, as well as microintervals (quarter-tones). Its performance requires the use of alternative fingerings and a flexible embouchure, enabling smooth transitions between pitches. Here, microtonality is not treated as an isolated phenomenon; rather, it should be realized as a continuous motion of sound, either ascending or descending:



Example 5. *Caprice No. 4 "Quarrel"*, mm. 7–8

In reference to the title of the work (*Quarrel*), these motifs initially appear in alternation, creating a dialogic structure with clearly defined proportions:

Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
mm. 1-6	7-10	11-14	15-18	19-21	22-24	25-26	27-30	31-32

Table 1. Dialogic Structure in the Initial Phase of *Caprice No. 4 "Quarrel"*

Beginning in measure 33, these proportions become disrupted: the second motif is extended and transformed, leading to a gradual destabilization of the previously established formal order.

Glissando techniques, appearing notably from measure 39 onward, play a significant role in this section. In the context of the notation and performance indications, they may be interpreted as an imitation of laughter, an interpretation further supported by the composer's annotation: "*Performer's stroke 'laughter'. Very short 'glissando' down.*"³⁸. This effect is achieved through

³⁷ Publisher: Modern Music Publishers, Moscow 2004; all graphic examples in the subsections concerning Olenchik's caprices are taken from the above-mentioned edition.

³⁸ All quoted terms in this study are taken from the score, Modern Music Publishers, Moscow 2004.

a combination of coordinated finger movement and flexible embouchure control, while maintaining a degree of rhythmic freedom (*rubato*):



Example 6. *Caprice No. 4 "Quarrel"*, mm. 39–40

In measures 47–72, the musical material undergoes a marked intensification through the introduction of wide intervallic leaps, frequently exceeding the span of an octave, executed at a rapid tempo and within a constantly changing dynamic framework.

This passage is particularly demanding from a technical standpoint, as it requires precise breath control, coordinated finger technique, accurate articulation, and flexible use of the so-called *internal embouchure*. These skills enable seamless register changes without compromising tonal quality, while preserving a smooth legato line. The symbolic “victory in the quarrel” ultimately belongs to the high register, culminating in a fermata, a glissando combined with vibrato, and an *fff* dynamic marking (m. 72):



Example 7. *Caprice No. 4 "Quarrel"*, mm. 47 and 71

The subsequent sections (mm. 73–100) further develop the musical material through passagework-based phrases and continued diversification of articulation and dynamics. Of particular importance is the maintenance of phrase continuity despite the considerable variability of the texture.

The conclusion of the work (mm. 101–113) introduces a striking timbral contrast: soft, low-register trills are juxtaposed with a loud, high-register *flutter-tongue* (*frullato*). This technique, based on the vibration of the tongue, enriches the sound with a noise-based component and serves as a climactic element within the overall form. The abrupt changes of articulation, dynamics, and register require the performer to maintain complete control of the playing apparatus and a high degree of technical precision:



Example 8. *Caprice No. 4 "Quarrel"*, mm. 102–108

From a broader perspective, *Caprice No. 4* may be interpreted as a process of gradual disintegration of the musical material: from the clearly articulated dialogue between two contrasting motifs, through their transformation and superimposition, to the climactic intensification of performance techniques. In this work, contemporary clarinet techniques serve not merely a sonoristic function; rather, they constitute the primary means of shaping both the formal structure and the expressive content of the composition.

3.1.2. *Caprice no 5 „Pictures of Gucul Life”*

Caprice No. 5, Pictures of Hutsul Life (Pictures from Hutsulshchyna), constitutes one of the most vivid examples of folkloristic stylization within Ivan Olenchuk's cycle *20 Caprices*. The title refers directly to the Hutsuls, an ethnic group inhabiting the border regions of Ukraine and Romania, while the musical layer reflects elements characteristic of their cultural and musical tradition.

On the macrostructural level, this is expressed, among other features, through the use of the Gypsy scale, particularly its minor variant containing two augmented seconds (between scale degrees III–IV and VII–VIII), as well as through the tripartite structure *Thinking – Weeping – Joy*, which may be interpreted as a reference to the form of the *doina* — a Romanian folk song genre closely related to the Ukrainian *duma* and *dumka* traditions.

This work may be interpreted as an example of the translation of a folkloristic idiom into the language of contemporary music. Its dramaturgy is based on the juxtaposition of three contrasting emotional states, requiring from the performer not only a high degree of technical proficiency but also the ability to shape a wide range of timbral nuances and expressive qualities of sound.

The first section, *Thinking*, takes the form of a free cadenza (*cadenza rubato*) and is notated across eighteen systems without bar divisions. Its structure may be divided into three developmental phases (systems 1–6, 7–13, and 13–18); however, the musical discourse remains continuous and evolutionary in character. The material is based primarily on undulating, virtuosic scalar and

arpeggiated passages. The tonal center is difficult to define unequivocally, which further enhances the impression of improvisatory freedom:



Example 9. *Caprice No. 5 Pictures of Hutsul Life, “Thinking”, m. 1*

From a performance perspective, the manner of sound production is of crucial importance in this section. The interpretation should aim to imitate traditional folk wind instruments such as the *floyara* and the *sopilka*. The attack of each note should be soft and achieved without a pronounced use of the tongue, thereby creating the impression of sound emerging naturally from silence.

The second section, *Weeping*, constitutes the emotional and semantic core of the composition. Its formal design approximates an ABA₁ structure, a feature that may be understood as an allusion to traditional song forms:

A				B (rubato)		A1		
a	b	c	d	e	e1	a1	a2	d1
mm. 1-5	6-10	11-13	14-19	20-26	27-33	34-36	37-46	47-53

Table 2. Formal Structure of the Section “*Weeping*”

The musical material is characterized by changing meter, the frequent use of fermatas, and a high degree of rhythmic diversity.

A crucial role is played here by microtonal glissandi and vibrato, which together create the effect of “weeping.” As noted by Valerii Hromchenko³⁹, the synthesis of microchromatic inflections and vibrato constitutes a fundamental expressive element of this section:



Example 10. *Caprice No. 5 Pictures of Hutsul Life, “Weeping”, mm. 1–4*

³⁹ V. Hromchenko, *Dukhove solo v yevropeiskii akademichnii kompozytorskii ta vykonavskii tvorchosti XX – pochatku XXI st. (tendentsii rozvytku, spetsyfika, systematyka): Monograph*, Kyiv 2020, p. 315.

Particularly noteworthy is the passage featuring an unconventional notation of mordents. Rather than being executed mechanically, these ornaments should gradually accelerate, creating the impression of increasing tension and expressive intensification:



Example 11. *Caprice No. 5 Pictures of Hutsul Life, "Weeping"*, m. 33

In section B (in the version for solo clarinet), a distinctive performance instruction appears, requiring the continuous use of the H1 key (with the exception of the note D). This produces a deliberately “out-of-tune” sonority, imitating the tuning characteristics of traditional folk instruments:



Example 12. *Caprice No. 5 Pictures of Hutsul Life, "Weeping"*, mm. 20–24 (solo clarinet version)

In the version with piano accompaniment, the composer notates the melody in octaves, which presents a considerable technical challenge in terms of finger coordination and execution. Particular attention must be paid to intonation, while at the same time maintaining an exceptionally smooth and continuous phrasing:

Example 13. *Caprice No. 5 Pictures of Hutsul Life, "Weeping"*, mm. 39–41 (version for clarinet and piano)

The octave passages in the solo part, set against the piano's chordal texture and sustained pedal resonance, further intensify the effect of imitating traditional folk instruments, as discussed in Example 17.

In the subsequent course of the section, an aleatoric element is introduced in the form of an unspecified number of repetitions of a designated passage. The composer's instruction, "*Number of repeats – to one's desire*," adds a further improvisatory dimension and reinforces the highly expressive character of this section:



Example 14. *Caprice No. 5 Pictures of Hutsul Life, "Weeping"*, mm. 59–62

From a performance perspective, a crucial objective in the *Weeping* section is the achievement of a controlled "intonational instability." This effect is realized through subtle manipulation of the embouchure, flexible lip control, and the gradual opening of tone holes during glissandi involving quarter-tone inflections.

The final section, *Joy*, provides a striking contrast to the preceding movement. Its character is dynamic, dance-like, and energetic, closely resembling the traditional *kolomyika*.

The music is set in a fast tempo (*allegro con brio*) and employs constantly changing meters (including 2/4, 5/16, 9/16, and 11/16). Its texture is based on an almost continuous flow of sixteenth-note motion, frequently chromatic and extending in multiple directions. Although the material is highly varied, it exhibits recurring patterns within its formal units (a, b, c), which justifies their analytical differentiation:

a	b	b	c	c	a	b	b	coda
mm. 1-6	7-12	13-18	19-22	23-26	27-32	33-38	39-44	45-50

Table 3. Formal Structure of the Section "*Joy*"

From a performance perspective, this section is particularly demanding. The limited number of available breathing points, combined with the rapid tempo, may require the use of circular breathing technique.

Additional difficulties include changing meter and the resulting complex accentuation, the presence of grace notes at a fast tempo, frequent dynamic shifts, and the requirement for precise articulation.

The articulatory layer plays a crucial role here, as the clarinet imitates the sharp accents characteristic of folk instruments such as the violin or percussion instruments. This requires excellent coordination between finger technique and articulation.

3.1.3. *Caprice no 18 „Spanish Sketches”*

The formal structure of Caprice No. 18 is primarily determined by changes in tempo, which organize the course of the work into clearly differentiated phases. The opening section (m. 1), notated without meter as *cadenza rubato con energico*, has an improvisatory character and includes extended scalar passages and thirty-second-note figurations, interrupted by fermatas. From the outset, an essential feature of the work becomes apparent: pronounced registral contrasts and significant rhythmic fragmentation:



Example 15. *Caprice No. 18 Spanish Sketches*, m. 1

Measures 7–12 (*adagio*) are based on ascending sixteenth-note scalar passages organized in sextuplet groupings. They require a smooth shaping of the phrase while simultaneously maintaining a clear projection of the melody indicated by accents:



Example 16. *Caprice No. 18 Spanish Sketches*, mm. 7–8

In the *adagietto* section (mm. 8–15), tempo fluctuations (*ritenuto*, *a tempo*) and a quasi-two-voice texture appear. This texture is based on the alternation between an upper sustained tone and a lower, highly active chromatic line in sixty-fourth-note values:



Example 17. *Caprice No. 18 Spanish Sketches*, mm. 13–14

From a performance perspective, this passage represents one of the key challenges of the work. The illusion of a two-voice texture can only be achieved through extremely rapid register changes and precise dynamic differentiation between the melodic layer (*mf*) and the accompanying line (*pp*). The acoustics of the performance space also play an important role, as an appropriate resonance of the upper tone helps to maintain the continuity of the melodic line despite its interruption by the lower voice.

In the *sostenuto* section (mm. 29–46), a clear rhythmic intensification takes place. From a performance perspective, an important objective here is the imitation of a guitar-like idiom as well as percussive elements. Articulation in this passage acquires a more assertive, at times almost percussive character, evoking the sound of castanets or the rhythm of *zapateado*. This requires from the performer a strong initial attack, precise staccato execution, and an increased sonic density, while simultaneously maintaining a sense of lightness in the phrasing:

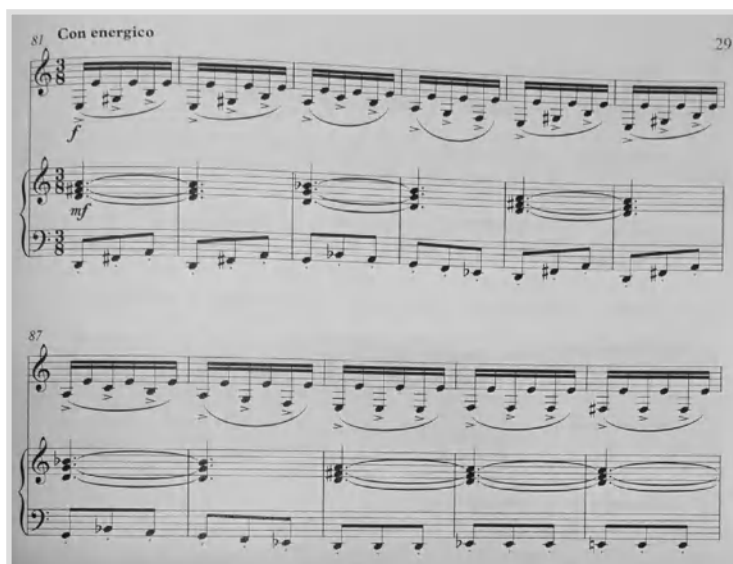


Example 18. *Caprice No. 18 Spanish Sketches*, mm. 29–31

The *lento, rubato* section (mm. 42–57) brings a relaxation of the texture, while in the *allegretto non troppo* section (mm. 63–80) the musical material becomes increasingly dense and gradually accelerates, showing a clear affinity with the earlier *sostenuto*.

The culmination occurs in measures 81–135 (*con energico*), where an uninterrupted passagework motion appears at a rapid tempo, without clearly defined breathing points.

The final section requires the performer to employ circular breathing, as over the span of 54 measures there are no natural points that would allow for replenishing the breath without disrupting the continuity of the phrase:



Example 19. *Caprice No. 18 Spanish Sketches*, mm. 81–91

In summary, the stylistic layer of the work clearly references the idiom of Spanish music. The “Spanish character” of the caprice is realized through distinctive harmonic devices, including juxtapositions of minor and major chords in second-based relationships, as well as rhythmic elements. Of particular importance is the use of triplet rhythms and compound meters (e.g., 6/8), evoking forms such as the fandango or bolero. Conversely, the **lento, rubato** passages (2/4) may suggest associations with the habanera.

At the same time, numerous passages and figuration patterns suggest an inspiration drawn from guitar technique, which entails the need for even sound production while maintaining clarity of articulation.

From a comparative perspective with *Caprice No. 5 (Pictures of Hutsul Life)*, a different approach to folkloric material becomes evident. Whereas the “Hutsul” caprice is dominated by a linear treatment of melody, associated with traditions of vocal and pastoral instrumental music, *Caprice No. 18* places greater emphasis on rhythmic and textural aspects. The articulation undergoes a clear transformation—from a more flexible, cantabile approach to a more motoric and accentuated one.

The comparison of both works highlights the clarinet’s broad imitative potential and its capacity to adapt diverse cultural idioms. In this context, the instrument functions both as a carrier of wind-instrument traditions (within the Ukrainian context) and as a substitute for plucked and percussion instruments (within the Spanish idiom).

In conclusion, Ivan Olenchuk's *Caprices* constitute the first significant cycle of works for solo clarinet in the composer's output. They emerge from an established tradition (*Hommages*), while simultaneously expanding it through elements of contemporary musical language such as advanced non-functional chromaticism, microintervals (quarter-tones), and the use of multiphonics.

The use of these techniques is not yet as fully developed as in the later compositions discussed in the present study; however, it clearly indicates the direction of subsequent artistic evolution. In later works, these devices appear more frequently and in a more advanced form, which allows Olenchuk's *Caprices* to be regarded as a kind of catalyst for the development of contemporary compositional techniques in Ukrainian music.

3.2. Volodymyr Runchak - *Anti-sonatas no 28, 29 and 53, Folk Concerto no 3*

3.2.1. *Anti-sonatas no 28, 29 and 53*

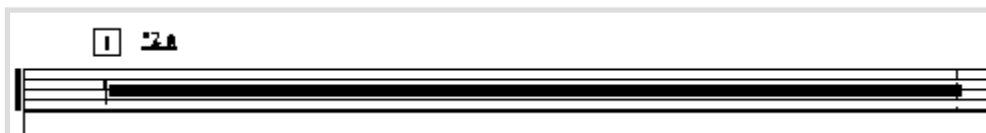
The composition *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29, and 53* for clarinet and piano (2003) is one of Volodymyr Runchak's most characteristic works and a representative example of a contemporary approach to musical form and performance practice.

Although the title suggests that the work consists of three separate movements, in reality it forms a single coherent structure. Both the title and the numbering are ironic in character and convey an element of protest: the composer deliberately employs them arbitrarily, presenting specific numbers of three "anti-sonatas" against the implied absence of the remaining fifty, which introduces an absurdist dimension. Runchak explicitly states that one should not seek any conventional sonata-form principles here⁴⁰. On the contrary, the music unfolds in a manner that consciously departs from traditional structural models.

In this sense, the term "anti-sonata" does not signify a complete rejection of form in its traditional meaning, but rather a re-reading of the genre. Runchak treats genre as a flexible construct that can be transformed, commented upon, and even subverted.

According to Oleksandra Chebotar, the *Anti-sonatas* are essentially an experiment with the technical capabilities of instruments, ostensibly aimed at testing the "endurance of performers" in response to the work's unconventional narrative design⁴¹.

The composition opens with a piano introduction featuring rhythmic clusters, supplemented by percussive sounds produced on the body of the instrument. The clarinetist then enters, moving slowly across the stage in a manner reminiscent of a march or procession (marked as *2a). This moment demonstrates that the work extends beyond the traditional understanding of a concert setting and introduces a theatrical dimension:



Example 20. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, opening of No. 1, clarinet part

⁴⁰ Original text from the score of the work provided by the composer: "The music and formative logic of this piece mocks classical forms and their numbering. Even the numbering sequence in the name of the composition does not have any meaning [...]. Do not look for analogies with any classical models. The development of this piece follows a logic opposite to the classical sonata model."

⁴¹ O. Chebotar, *op. cit.*

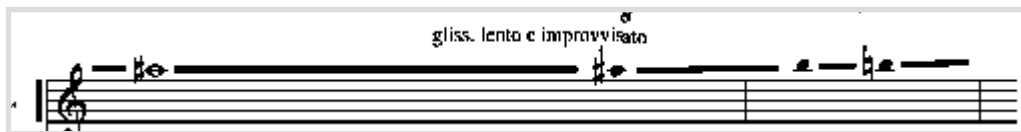
In the score legend, Runchak provides for the possibility of adding an optional percussion part (*ad libitum*). This device further emphasizes the march-like character, particularly at the beginning of the work.

One of the most important aspects observable in the score is the departure from regular meter. Passages marked *senza metro improvvisato* require a high degree of freedom in phrasing from the clarinetist. This entails the necessity of independently shaping musical time and responding to the pianist, rather than relying on a fixed pulse:



Example 21. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, opening of No. 3, clarinet part

Section No. 9 (p. 13) requires the use of circular breathing in order to maintain the continuity of the phrase. It spans as many as 21 measures and includes quarter-tone glissandi in the upper register of the instrument, representing a combination of two highly demanding performance techniques:



Example 22. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, middle section of No. 9, clarinet part

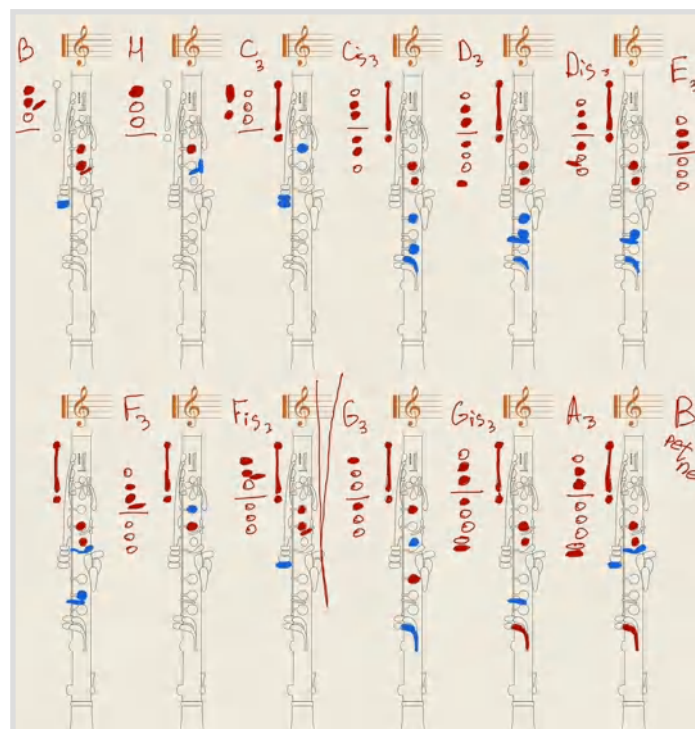
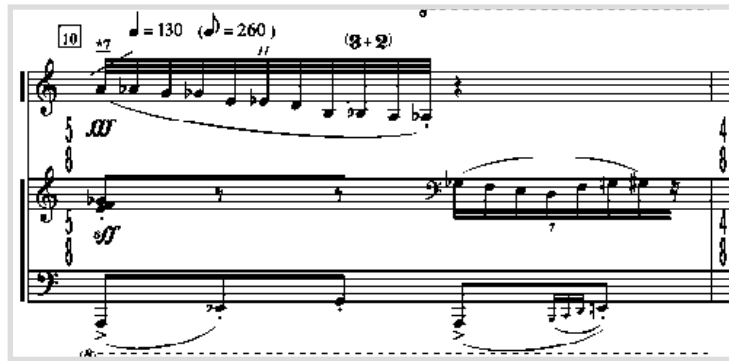


Figure 1. Author's own compilation of selected fingerings used during the recording of the work (own illustration)

In No. 10, Runchak indicates that the clarinet part should be performed at a very fast tempo, in coordination with the left-hand piano part. The difficulty arises from the use of irregular rhythmic groupings — for instance, eleven thirty-second notes instead of twelve. Their alignment with three even eighth notes is not intuitive, making this passage particularly demanding in terms of rhythmic precision and ensemble coordination between the performers:



Example 23. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, opening of No. 9

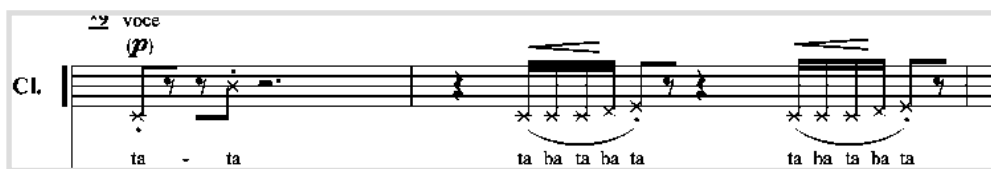
In Nos. 13 and 14, changing meter and irregular accentuation are introduced. The phrases extend over several measures, and the main difficulty lies in aligning with irregular time signatures (e.g., 15/8, 13/8, 7/8, or 5/8) and their internal groupings. An additional challenge is posed by the sparse piano part, based on single, punctuated harmonic accents, which makes rhythmic orientation more difficult:



Example 24. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, second measure of No. 13, clarinet part

The expansion of the performer's role is also evident in No. 19. The clarinetist and pianist abandon instrumental playing in favour of singing, whose character evokes associations with the Expressionist *Sprechgesang* technique, as used, among others, in Arnold Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, Op. 21.

In Runchak's work, the performance style is also specified — jazz or pop — introducing elements of lightness, irony, and pastiche. The composer expects performers not only to possess advanced technical and instrumental skills, but also to demonstrate musical flexibility, familiarity with popular stylistic idioms, and an openness to improvisation:



Example 25. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, opening of No. 19, clarinet part

The climactic moment of the work involves the use of an unconventional technique consisting of simultaneous performance on two parts of the clarinet. An additional pre-prepared mouthpiece with a reed is inserted into the lower section of the instrument, as shown in the photograph below:

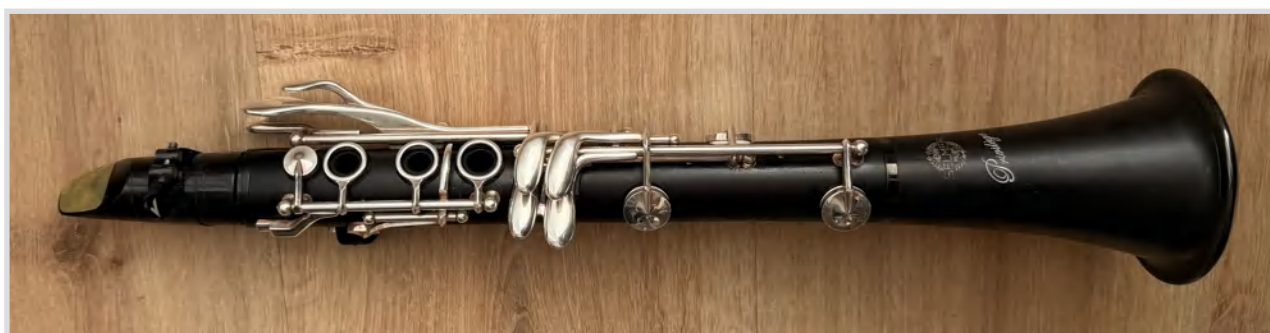
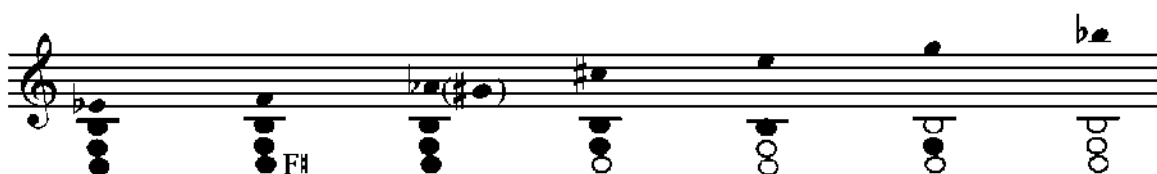


Photo 1. Appearance of the lower part of the clarinet with an attached (pre-prepared) additional mouthpiece and reed

The composer provides a very detailed description of the new fingerings for the lower part of the clarinet. These are entirely unconventional and atypical, and smooth transitions between pitches — while maintaining legato — pose a significant challenge for the clarinetist:

For # 23 – # 28:
the bottom part of the instrument.



Example 26. Fingerings for the lower part of the clarinet from the score legend

The upper section retains standard fingering, with the composer's indication (*24) that, for ease of execution, support with the left-hand little finger is required:



Photo 2. Method of holding the lower and upper parts of the clarinet with support provided by the left-hand little finger

The described technique presents a considerable challenge for the clarinetist, as it requires precise finger coordination and simultaneous control of two independent voices, often with different rhythmic patterns. An additional difficulty lies in producing sound using two mouthpieces simultaneously. This passage is also highly demanding in terms of breath control: due to air leakage between the mouthpieces, part of the air stream is lost, which complicates breath management and, in practice, prevents the use of circular breathing:



Example 27. *Anti-sonatas* Nos. 28, 29 and 53, third measure of No. 23, clarinet part

From a sonic perspective, this technique produces a polyphonic effect, while on a symbolic level it undermines the unity of the instrument, aligning with a broader strategy of deconstruction. It generates an aesthetic that is light, entertaining, and at times even comic (though devoid of kitsch). It is precisely this element that appears to be the most recognizable feature of the entire work.

In No. 28, performers are given a choice regarding the number of repetitions, which combines performative and aleatoric elements:

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Clarinet (Cl.) and Piano (P-no). The score is for a piece numbered 28. Above the first staff, there are performance instructions: '+2, 3, 4, x' and 'ord. frull.'. The first staff has a box with the number '28' and a sequence of numbers '+2, 3, 4, x'. The piano part has a 'molto' marking. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are also sections labeled 'improvvisato ad lib.' for both instruments.

Example 28. *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53*, No. 23

The work concludes with an ostentatious exit of the performers from the stage. The clarinetist's dance-like movements and improvisation on two parts of the instrument are accompanied by the pianist's rhythmic clapping, while the entire passage — together with the percussionist's improvisation — is maintained in a jazz-style idiom.

From a performance perspective, *Anti-sonatas Nos. 28, 29 and 53* present the clarinetist with numerous challenges that extend beyond traditional approaches to instrumental playing. These include not only advanced instrumental techniques but also performative, improvisatory, and interpretative elements. A key requirement is the ability to integrate all these aspects into a coherent performance concept consistent with the idea of an “anti-genre.”

In conclusion, this work demonstrates the extent to which the performance possibilities of the clarinet can be expanded. The instrument ceases to function merely as a source of sound and becomes a medium for expressing movement, gesture, and meaning. In this sense, *Anti-sonatas* align with a trend in contemporary music in which the boundaries between performance, interpretation, and performative action become increasingly blurred, and the role of the performer is significantly expanded.

3.2.2. *Folk Concerto no 3*

The work was composed in 2024 for clarinet, percussion, and piano, and was written specifically for me⁴², continuing an ongoing collaboration with the composer. It consists of three movements, each of which refers to a distinct genre of Ukrainian folklore — *Arkan*, *Duma*, and *Hopak*. The concerto is situated within the broader current of neo-folkloristic works in the composer's output, clearly demonstrating the relationship between his musical language, tradition, and collective musical culture. It is also worth mentioning earlier compositions such as *Four Arrangements of Volhynian Folk Songs* for unaccompanied choir (1983), *Variations on a Folk Theme* for piano (1983), *Suite No. 2 "Ukrainian"* (1980–87) for accordion, and *Three Folk Pieces* for bayan (2003), among others. Within this series, three "folk concertos" stand out in particular: No. 1 *Songs and Chants* for soprano, baritone, selected strings and wind instruments (1989); No. 2 *How the Cossacks Wrote a Letter to the Sultan* for narrator and percussion quartet; and No. 3 for clarinet, percussion, and piano, which became the foundation of Runchak's "ethnic modernism"⁴³. In this context, his "modernized projection of compositional perception [...] is not only a combination of folk archaism with musical avant-garde, but also a perspective reflecting an intense reflection on the eternal questions of the spiritual existence of contemporary man"⁴⁴.

The ethnic titles of the movements carry particular significance in the concerto, primarily due to their stable generic associations. The outer movements correspond to ritual male dances — "Arkan" and "Hopak" — while the central movement is of a lyrical, song-like character — "Duma."

In *Folk Concerto No. 3*, Volodymyr Runchak employs characteristic rhythmic patterns, tempo accelerations with metric changes, and aleatoric juxtapositions of modal-altered structures (the core of which is a recurring chromatic-quarter-tone formula at the beginning of the work), integrating folk intonation with contemporary musical language.

⁴² This is indicated by the dedication included in the score.

⁴³ D. Kuzelew, *The Works of Ukrainian Composers of the Second Half of the 20th – Early 21st Century: Monograph*, SPLOM, Lviv 2023, p. 258.

⁴⁴ D. Kuzelew, *op. cit.*

I *Arkan*

In the first movement of *Folk Concerto No. 3*, Volodymyr Runchak draws on the stylistic features of the *Arkan* genre. The *Arkan* belongs to the archaic ritual dances of the Hutsul tradition in the Carpathians and represents a sacralized form of male initiation. The underlying choreographic model is based on a closed circular movement, which is perceived as a symbol of collective unity and as a personification of solar energy. Within traditional culture, participation in the performance of the *Arkan* had the character of a ritual rite of passage: through this dance, a young man was incorporated into the community of adult men, thereby gaining the right to carry ethnic military attributes. The rhythmic organization of the dance is shaped by changing meters (2/4, 2/8, 1/4), which contribute to a gradual increase in tempo. This dynamic fosters a specific psycho-physical state close to ritual trance, while simultaneously serving as a demonstration of endurance, strength, and collective cohesion of male identity⁴⁵. In Ukrainian music, the *Arkan* genre has been used in a number of well-known works, including Myroslav Skoryk's *Hutsul Triptych* based on the music for the film *Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors*, Anatolii Kos-Anatolsky's ballet *Oleshchuk's Kerchief*, Hanna Havrylets's choral opera *The Golden Stone Will Bring the Sun*, and Volodymyr Zubytskyi's *Hutsul Suite* for bayan.

Against the background of a piano ostinato (pitch b), maintained in a characteristic syncopated and dotted rhythm, two extended clarinet melodic lines emerge, performed using one of the most advanced clarinet techniques, involving simultaneous playing and singing of two independent melodic voices. Each of them has a distinct rhythmic structure and pitch organization (with a particular emphasis on the timbral qualities of the Hutsul scale), which significantly complicates the performance process. The realization of such a texture requires the clarinetist to maintain precise control of the respiratory apparatus, especially careful management of embouchure and air flow, while an additional difficulty lies in balancing the dynamic levels of both voices so as to preserve their clarity and sonic equilibrium⁴⁶:

⁴⁵ “[...] The participants of the ritual began to sway slowly and heavily: right–left, right–left. Eventually, the circle ‘broke away’ from the ground and started to rotate. The dance itself was born. The movements within the circle required synchronisation and a sense of mutual existence. Were they the same as those we see in contemporary *arkans*? But evidently they carried a certain meaning, being a language understandable to the Sun, Fire, Earth, and Wind. The circle was spinning, the movements became increasingly passionate, the stamping of feet seemed to move towards the mountains, the vibrations reaching as if the depths of the Earth. Faster, faster, faster, more, more... It is a pity that none of the researchers indicate which gesture, which moment was the point of ecstasy that allowed the energy to finally erupt, after which the circle subsided, dispersed, ‘calmed down’. Apparently only the dancers themselves could precisely sense the moment of unity with the gods,” own translation from Ukrainian, *Arkan. Contemporary Dictionaries* <https://wiki.kubg.edu.ua/%D0%90%D1%80%D0%BA%D0%B0%D0%BD>, accessed: 30.04.2026.

⁴⁶ All graphic examples in this subsection are taken from the score provided and supplied by the composer himself.

Example 29. *Folk Concerto No. 3, I. Arkan*, mm. 1–8, clarinet part

Gradually, the sound “gains momentum” symbolizing the rotation of the *Arkan* circle. The percussion part also acquires increasing significance. The composer includes instructions to strike the tambourine against the floor, perform while kneeling, hit the floor with clenched fists, and jump from kneeling to standing, all of which emphasize the highly performative character of the entire work.

The clarinet part also acquires a quasi-percussive character, in which the previously described ostinato figure is initially present, followed by an active development of the opening theme through complex intonations, modal transformations, and registral shifts, accompanied by an expansion of range and textural thickening. The clarinet thus assumes the role of an active carrier of dramatic energy, shaping the character and direction of musical development and establishing the expressive foundation for thematic evolution based on folk dance intonations typical of the traditional *Arkan*, through the use of accented rhythmic formulas, contrasting phrasing, and wide registral leaps characteristic of the Hutsul dance idiom. At the same time, the timbral palette of the instrument spans a broad spectrum—from transparent, lyrical melodic lines to rich, at times rough sonorities, creating sharp contrasts and emphasizing the “folk” character of the composition. Thanks to this range, the instrument functions not only as a solo voice but also as an intonational catalyst of dramaturgy, structuring the unfolding of the work.

Measures 18–26 feature an alternation between *voiced* and *ordinario* articulation at very short temporal intervals. Such rapid switching between traditional clarinet tone production and pitch-specific singing requires exceptional precision from the performer, as well as immediate muscular response.

The particular difficulty of this passage also arises from the need to seamlessly integrate two fundamentally different modes of sound production. Instrumental playing relies on a stable embouchure and precise control of the air stream, whereas singing engages the vocal apparatus and a different mechanism for pitch production. Rapid alternation between these two techniques requires not only technical proficiency but also a well-developed coordination between breath and articulation.

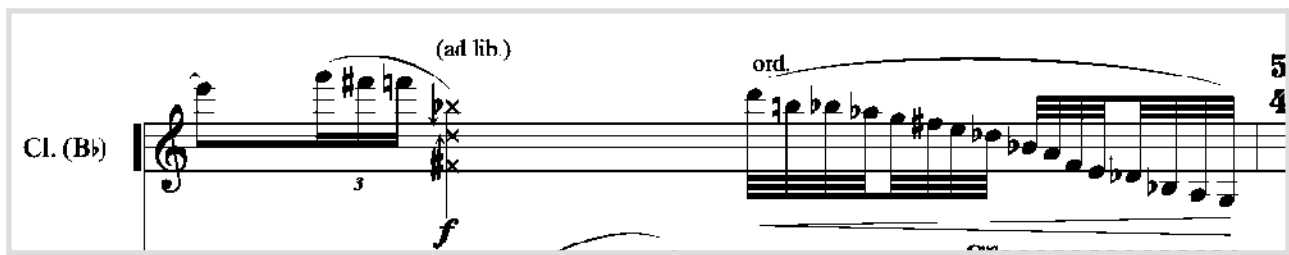
An additional challenge is maintaining intonational coherence and phrase continuity despite frequent changes in the mode of sound production. In performance practice, this requires the prior establishment of transition points between both techniques, so that these shifts do not disrupt the musical flow but instead function as an integral expressive component:

Example 30. *Folk Concerto No. 3, I. Arkan*, mm. 19–20, clarinet part

In measure 48, the composer introduces multiphonics, followed by an abrupt, rapid descent marked *ad libitum rapido quasi glissando*. This passage exemplifies the accumulation of diverse performance techniques within a very short temporal span. From a performance perspective, a particular difficulty arises from the need to smoothly transition between different modes of articulation and sound organization:

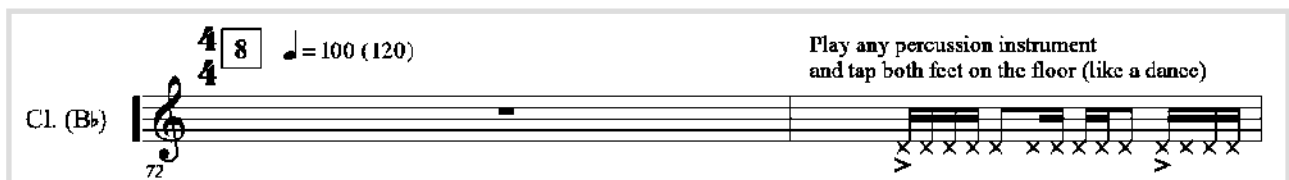
Example 31. *Folk Concerto No. 3, I. Arkan*, m. 48, clarinet part

In measure 55, there is a very rapid transition from the high register to a multiphonic, followed by a return to *ordinario* playing:



Example 32. *Folk Concerto No. 3, I. Arkan*, m. 55, clarinet part

In measures 73–89, the clarinetist performs on a pre-prepared percussion instrument (chosen at the performer’s discretion), while simultaneously striking the floor with the feet in a dance-like rhythm, introducing a performative dimension in which not only sound but also stage movement becomes essential. In this case, a cajón was used, allowing the performer to sit and thereby facilitating coordination of movements and rhythmic execution:



Example 33. *Folk Concerto No. 3, I. Arkan*, mm. 72–73, part



Photo 3. From the recording of the work (excerpt from Example 33)

In measures 63–71 and analogously in the section 155–167, the clarinetist moves close to the piano while playing with the bell of the instrument directed toward the strings. At the same time, the pianist must depress and sustain the right pedal throughout the passage. This configuration produces a distinctive resonant effect: the vibration of the piano strings amplifies and transforms the sound of the clarinet, enhancing its upper partials.

The resulting effect can be compared to well-known textural solutions, as exemplified by the third movement of Camille Saint-Saëns' Clarinet Sonata in E-flat major, Op. 167, in which the resonance of the keyboard instrument may be understood as an element that expands the timbral spectrum of the clarinet. In the passage under analysis, however, Runchak aims at a more specific sonic quality, closer to folk instruments characterized by a soft, vibrating timbre (such as the duduk or related instruments).

This effect is achieved through the combination of several elements: vibrato, the resonance of the piano strings, and a melodic formula repeated four times, each time transposed downward by a quarter tone. As a result, a complex and slightly unstable sonic structure is created, in which both pitch content and spectral projection play a significant role.

The stage gesture itself — the clarinetist's approach to the piano and the orientation of the instrument toward the strings—also carries a performative dimension. This action extends beyond traditional performance conventions and influences the perception of the work, becoming an integral component of its expressive content in the context of concert performance:

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Clarinet in B-flat (Cl. (Bb)) and Piano (P-no). The Clarinet part is in the treble clef, and the Piano part is in the bass clef. The time signature is 2/4. The score includes various musical notations such as accidentals, dynamics (f), and performance instructions. The Clarinet part features a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes, followed by a series of quarter notes and half notes, some with vibrato markings. The Piano part features a series of chords, some with a 'Red. sempre' marking. The score includes various musical notations such as accidentals, dynamics (f), and performance instructions.

Example 34. *Folk Concerto No. 3, I. Arkan*, mm. 59–62



Photo 4. From the recording of the work (playing with the bell of the clarinet directed toward the piano strings)

II *Duma*

Before the beginning of the section, the pianist is instructed to place small objects such as pens and pencils on the piano strings. During performance, these objects produce a characteristic, slightly percussive resonance reminiscent of the sound of the *tsymbaly*, one of the traditional Ukrainian folk instruments.

The work opens with a lyrical clarinet melody, whose character can be associated with the idiom of the *duma*, which is reflected in the title of the movement. In Ukrainian culture, the *duma* is a distinct genre of heroic folk epic, often of a lyrical-epic nature, which developed within the oral tradition of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries and was performed by itinerant singer-musicians — *kobzari*, *bandurists*, and *lirnyky* — in the form of an extended recitative with instrumental accompaniment. A characteristic feature of the *duma* is its free, non-strophic versification, marked by a considerable degree of improvisation. In Ukrainian art music, the genre is widely represented, from the works of Mykola Lysenko to those of contemporary composers, functioning as a national marker of dramatic expression in which recitative is combined with expressionistically sharpened intonation, dissonant harmony, and intensified narrative development.

In the Concerto, the principle of the *duma* is interpreted within a postmodern aesthetic framework: its recitative-narrative character and epic intonational foundation interact with performative practices, sonoristic thinking, and processes of genre deconstruction. In this context, the *duma* does not appear as a stable genre form but rather as a semiotic construct open to ironic, expressive, and conceptual transformations. The melodic line in the clarinet part unfolds against an initially sparse texture of sustained tones in the accompanying parts, later evolving into thematic echoes and layered textures; in a generalized conceptual sense, it reflects the intonational and thematic essence of the *duma* — improvisatory freedom, recitative quality, rhythmic flexibility, sharpened intonation, and melismatic richness, among others. The clarinet part thus emerges as an extended instrumental monologue, requiring from the performer particular attention to breath control, phrasing, and intonational flexibility. The absence of a strict metric framework necessitates an individualized organization of tempo and rhythm, akin to the declamatory character of the recitative *duma*. Alternating sharpened intonation and elaborate melismatic writing, technically demanding passages, and a three-note multiphonic melodic line at the climax require precise control of fingering, embouchure stability, and a refined sensitivity to microdynamic gradation. Of particular importance are transitions between registers, which demand a seamless blending of timbral colors and the avoidance of abrupt changes that could disrupt the monologic integrity of the musical discourse. From a performance perspective, the clarinet thus assumes a specific ethnically inflected expressive and semantic function, operating as an instrumental analogue of the kobzar's voice adapted to the conditions of the contemporary academic stage.

In the subsequent course of the piece, the texture becomes denser and transforms into a two-voice structure (simultaneous playing and singing), recalling solutions employed at the beginning of the first movement. In contrast to the earlier passage, its realization is significantly more demanding. This results from the limited number of pure intervals between the simultaneous voices, the presence of numerous grace notes, and the use of triplet rhythm:

Example 35. *Folk Concerto No. 3, II. Duma*, mm. 17–18

In No. 19, the composer introduces a new technical element in the clarinet part — triple staccato articulation. This passage is among the most demanding in the entire movement, both technically and coordinatively. The performance difficulty stems primarily from the melodic writing in the upper register of the instrument, where the precise execution of double and triple staccato is particularly challenging:

The image shows two staves of music for Clarinet in B-flat. The top staff is labeled '19' and '♩ = 60'. It features a melodic line with triple staccato articulation, marked 'sempre'. The bottom staff is labeled '36' and 'mf'. It features a melodic line with triple staccato articulation, marked 'più'.

Example 36. *Folk Concerto No. 3, II. Duma*, No. 19, mm. 33 and 36

In measures 38–40, the composer reintroduces multiphonics, which no longer function as a “special effect” but instead form the very sonic material from which the entire melodic line is constructed. In combination with the rather complex rhythmic structure, this passage requires exceptional technical precision from the performer. Of key importance here are fingering stability and breath control, which allow for the maintenance of a coherent multiphonic sonority:

The image shows a staff of music for Clarinet in B-flat. The staff is labeled '20' and '♩ = 50'. It features a melodic line with multiphonics, marked 'ff'. The staff is labeled 'Cl. (Bb)'.

Example 37. *Folk Concerto No. 3, II. Duma*, m. 38

From measure 41 onward, the clarinetist once again — similarly to the first movement — directs the bell of the instrument toward the piano strings, while the pianist simultaneously employs the right pedal. In the realization of this passage, a crucial role is played by a sense of timing and a conscious engagement with reverberation, both of which depend on the acoustic conditions of the performance space. The performer should adjust the duration and intensity of the sound to the resonant response of the piano strings.

Additionally, following consultation with the composer, a performance solution not indicated in the score was introduced, involving the percussionist using a bow on the gong. This approach enhances the resonant effect and broadens the timbral spectrum, creating a more expansive sonic space:

Example 38. *Folk Concerto No. 3, II. Duma*, mm. 40–42

In measure 58, the composer employs a color trill (combined), referred to as *color fingerings* (indicated as *7). This technique consists of modifying the timbre of the sound by adding one or more side keys in the upper part of the instrument — either simultaneously or in alternation. Unlike a traditional trill, this effect does not serve to alter pitch, but rather to transform timbre. As a result, subtle and often unstable sonic fluctuations are produced, which are consistent with the sonoristic language of the work:

Example 39. *Folk Concerto No. 3, II. Duma*, mm. 58–59

III *Hopak*

In the final movement of *Folk Concerto No. 3*, Runchak returns to the generic element of the Ukrainian national dance tradition. Whereas the *Arkan* represents the Carpathian region, the *Hopak* is a Dnieper-region dance of heroic and everyday character, distinguished by pronounced dynamism, improvisation, and competitiveness. Originating from the dances of pagan priests, the *Hopak* in the Cossack era became a hallmark of Ukraine as a whole, symbolizing collective energy, martial deeds, and national temperament, while combining heroic, playful, and festive elements. The choreographic vocabulary of this genre is based on jumps and squats, abrupt changes of body position, sudden stops, and contrasts, which are reflected in the music through means such as fast tempo, predominantly duple meter (2/4), accented rhythm, and a clearly articulated pulse, gradual intensification of tempo-rhythmic tension, and active use of repetition, generating an energetic and expressive motion. As with the *duma*, the *Hopak* has been widely interpreted by Ukrainian art music composers from Mykola Lysenko to the present day.

In measures 1–5, the material is based on recurring quarter-tone motifs performed at a very fast tempo. The use of microintervals entails the necessity of employing non-standard fingerings, which are often less stable in terms of intonation than traditional ones. In combination with the rapid tempo, this requires a very high degree of manual precision from the performer as well as well-developed muscle memory:

Allegro ♩ = 120

*26

22

*1

repeat

Clarinet (in B $\flat$)

*1

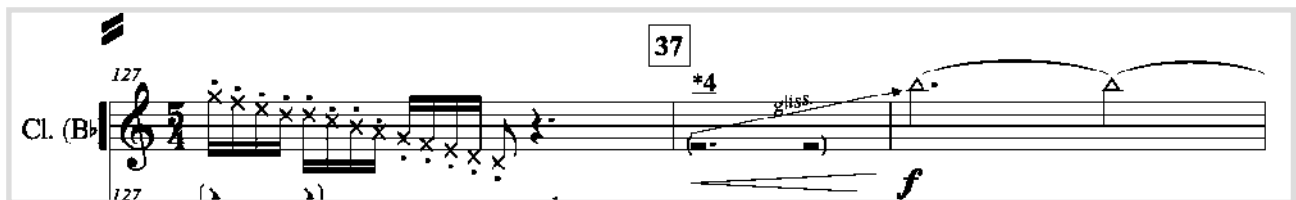
repeat

Example 40. *Folk Concerto No. 3, III. Hopak*, mm. 1–2

From measure 34, a particularly demanding passage for the clarinet part begins. This section is characterized by technically challenging figurations performed in changing meter and with irregular accentuation. An additional difficulty arises from the use of double staccato and circular breathing. The passage unfolds over 32 measures, gradually building in dynamics. The climax consists of a rapid chromatic scale spanning nearly the full range of the instrument, executed with flutter-tongue (*frullato*), which further intensifies the timbral and expressive impact of the entire section.

In the subsequent course of the work, the clarinetist is required to prepare the instrument in a very short time by attaching a second, pre-prepared mouthpiece to the lower part of the clarinet (analogous to the solution used in *Anti-sonatas*). From No. 33 onward, an improvised section begins in which the performer executes two voices simultaneously. This technique extends the traditionally monophonic nature of the instrument, introducing a two-voice texture.

In measures 120–138, the composer introduces a technique of both sonoristic and performative character—playing on the clarinet mouthpiece alone, with precisely notated rhythms and approximate pitch indications. It should be noted, however, that the exact realization of these pitches is practically limited; therefore, priority is given to the overall sonic and expressive effect rather than absolute intonational precision. This technique is further enriched by the combination with flutter-tongue (*frullato*) and glissandi, resulting in a complex and unstable sound structure. Due to the rapid tempo of the passage, the use of double staccato becomes necessary in order to maintain rhythmic clarity. At the same time, the wide pitch range, exceeding an octave, requires the performer to consciously control the embouchure, particularly the throat and tongue position (so-called internal embouchure), enabling a relatively faithful realization of the notated pitch relations despite the inherent limitations of this technique:



Example 41. *Folk Concerto No. 3, III. Hopak*, mm. 127–129

From measure 130 onward, the performer is required to use an additional pre-prepared mouthpiece with reed (*4) and play both simultaneously. The execution of this technique requires precise positioning of the mouthpieces within the embouchure in order to minimize excessive air leakage between them. It is also recommended to employ a different reed setup on each mouthpiece, which allows for a clearly differentiated timbre of the two voices—thereby enhancing the perceptibility of the two-voice texture. An additional difficulty arises from the need to apply double staccato while simultaneously performing on both mouthpieces:



Photo 5. Method of holding two mouthpieces in the mouth

From No. 40 onward, a further significant section with a pronounced performative character begins. The percussionist, seated on a previously prepared chair to the left of the pianist, assumes the role of co-performer in the piano part and begins to realize precisely notated clusters indicated in the score. At the same time, the clarinetist prepares for a change in performance role — remounting the mouthpiece, placing the instrument on a stand, and moving toward the piano, where he takes a position to the right of the pianist. The process of movement and onstage reconfiguration itself becomes an integral element of the dramaturgy. From No. 42, the clarinetist joins in the realization of the piano part, performing — like the percussionist — clusters with specified rhythm and pitch content. As a result, all performers share a single instrument, creating a unified and integrated sonic space:

The image shows a musical score for three instruments: Clarinet in B-flat (Piano), Piano, and Percussion (Piano). The score is for measures 185 to 186 of the third movement, 'Hopak', from Folk Concerto No. 3. The Clarinet part is in the treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The Piano part is in the treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The Percussion part is in the bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mf' and 'f'. A dashed line is present at the bottom of the Percussion staff.

Example 42. *Folk Concerto No. 3, III. Hopak*, mm. 185–186

From No. 44, the score introduces singing with deliberately unspecified intonation (*10), defined by Runchak as *usual street singing*. This technique exemplifies a fusion of classical musical idioms with elements of popular performance practice. As in *Anti-sonatas*, the composer incorporates an idiom drawn from outside the traditional framework of classical music. *Usual street singing* refers to a free, informal vocal practice in which pitch precision is not of primary importance, while greater emphasis is placed on expressive character and spontaneity of performance. The resulting effect may be compared to vocal scatting known from jazz music, in which the voice is treated as an instrument operating through syllables and sound gestures with loosely defined pitch organization:

189 ta-ga ta-ga ta ta ta ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta

Cl. (B $\flat$)

189 ta ta ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta

P-no

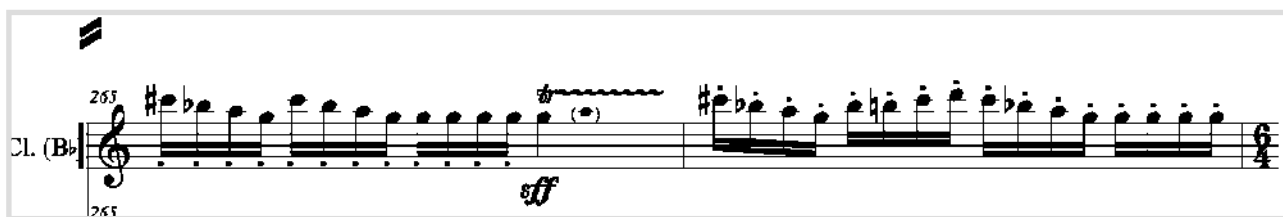
189 ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta ta ta ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta-ga ta

Perc.

Example 43. *Folk Concerto No. 3, III. Hopak*, mm. 189–190

The performative culmination of the work is a passage in which all performers — the pianist, clarinetist, and percussionist — engage in actions that extend beyond the traditional framework of instrumental performance. Runchak introduces a series of precisely notated gestures, including clapping (*14), shouting combined with striking the thighs with the hands (*15 and *16), tongue clicking and finger snapping with both hands (*21 and *22), as well as audible inhalations and exhalations (*23). The combination of these elements results in a complex structure in which the sonic layer is integrated with movement and gesture. As a result, this passage takes the form of a quasi-theatrical stage event, in which both visual and acoustic aspects play an essential role.

From No. 49 onward, there is a return to traditional instrumental performance; however, until the end of the work, the clarinet part remains highly demanding from a technical perspective. The performance difficulties arise primarily from awkward, rapidly executed figurations at very fast tempi. An additional challenge is the requirement to use double staccato, often in the upper register of the instrument. A significant feature of this section is also the combination of multiphonic playing, realized within complex rhythmic structures, with a simultaneous rhythmic part performed through foot-stamping on the floor:



Example 44. *Folk Concerto No. 3, III. Hopak*, mm. 265–266

Example 45. *Folk Concerto No. 3, III. Hopak*, m. 257

The work concludes with a clearly articulated and highly theatrical performative gesture. All performers simultaneously produce a loud shout combined with foot-stamping on the floor (*16 and *19). This ending functions as a strong dramatic accent that brings the entire composition to a close. At the same time, it underscores the theatrical dimension of the work, in which bodily actions and stage gestures constitute an integral component of the musical discourse.

From a performance perspective, *Folk Concerto No. 3* places particular emphasis on collaboration between performers, continuing solutions already present in the discussed *Anti-sonatas*. This concerns primarily a range of performative aspects that require from the instrumentalists not only advanced technical proficiency, but also general musical intuition and familiarity with stylistic idioms extending beyond broadly defined art music. The use of multiphonics, quarter tones, flutter-tongue, slow glissandi, and playing on mouthpieces alone (either single or double) is combined with shouting, clapping, foot-stomping, tongue clicking, and “street” singing. As a result, the work appears highly original, while at the same time being—more so than the *Anti-sonatas* — firmly rooted in the tradition of the concerto genre (the three-movement structure being a formal model established since the eighteenth century). The apparent absence of a conventional orchestra is compensated for by a multitude of percussion instruments (e.g. snare drum, hi-hat, cowbells, vibraphone, tubular bells, triangles, bongos), while the piano functions as a timbral connective layer. In *Folk Concerto No. 3*, Runchak places a significant range of demands on the clarinetist — both strictly technical and performative.

In the aforementioned contexts, the clarinet part functions as a central performative and expressive element, combining melodic, timbral, and percussive roles. The performer employs a wide range of techniques: quarter-tone fingerings ensure sharpened intonation, while playing on two parts of the clarinet simultaneously with two mouthpieces expands the timbral spectrum. Contrasting register-based sonorities are created, ranging from transparent to highly saturated sounds. The melodic line is constructed through improvisatory-rhythmic variations, melismatic passages, and registral leaps, which reproduce the folk intonation of the aforementioned traditional dances and intensify dynamic tension. Such an approach requires from the performer precise control of embouchure, coordination of breath and articulation, as well as the ability to maintain an internal pulse and the dramatic structure of the part.

Particular attention should be given to the simultaneous performance on two parts of the clarinet. Within the neofolkloristic context of the work, this technique is interpreted as a metaphor for a tradition that is both split and internally cohesive, in which the folk source is not reproduced literally but reinterpreted through contemporary musical language. The combination of traditional sound production with noise, air, and resonant effects generated by the second part of the instrument brings the musical process closer to a ritual act, in which not only the acoustic result is important but also the act of performance itself. The resulting two-voice effect may be understood either as an overlap of different intonational layers or as a dialogue between “voices” that become independent participants in a theatrical action. The technique of simultaneous playing on two parts of the clarinet thus constitutes an element of the work’s performative essence, combining sonoristic experimentation with archetypal notions of polyphony, ritual, and the sacred nature of music-making. Within the neofolklore paradigm, this technique is not an experiment in itself but rather a deep understanding of the folkloric source, which appears as an intonational and semantic impulse integrated into an individual authorial system characterized by a high degree of conceptual musical thinking.

The composition represents a contemporary approach to the clarinet in which traditional stylistic references — including folkloric elements — are juxtaposed with a modern performance language. The work presupposes the use of a broad spectrum of articulatory and timbral resources, encompassing both conventional techniques and extended techniques characteristic of twenty-first-century music.

The premiere performance thus fulfills not only a presentational function but also a research-oriented one. The process of preparing the work, including collaboration with the composer, score

analysis, and the search for appropriate performance solutions, enables the verification of the practical aspects of the techniques discussed. Of particular importance is the direct engagement with the sonic material and the necessity of interpretatively shaping new or unconventional performance resources.

Within the context of the present study, the premiere of *Folk Concerto No. 3* thus constitutes an integral component of research into the contemporary possibilities of the clarinet. It enables not only the analysis of the techniques employed, but also their practical verification in a concert setting.

3.3. Dmytro Kyryliv – *Extraordinary*

The work *Extraordinary* by Dmytro Kyryliv constitutes one of the most characteristic examples of a contemporary approach to the clarinet as an instrument with expanded performance possibilities. The composition is written for bass clarinet and E-flat clarinet solo, accompanied by an electronic layer and percussion elements performed by the clarinetist himself (heel shaker, foot tambourine type cajón). The very performance apparatus already indicates a departure from the traditional monoinstrumental model in favor of a conception of the clarinet as a multifunctional sonic medium, combining melodic, rhythmic, sonoric, and performative functions.

An important principle of the composer's approach is interpretative openness. As indicated in the score, the musical notation is intended only as a proposal for realizing the underlying idea, and the performer is granted the freedom to creatively modify it, resulting in the emergence of unique versions of the work. This approach aligns with a broader trend in contemporary music in which the performer assumes the role of a co-creator of the composition.

A particularly important role in *Extraordinary* is played by the electronic layer, accessible via a QR code included in the score (p. 2). This layer does not function as accompaniment in the traditional sense but instead creates an autonomous sonic environment in which the clarinet part is embedded. Its character evolves throughout the work — from ambient, static sound planes to more rhythmic structures inspired by popular music.

The composition *Extraordinary* has a cyclical structure and consists of several contrasting sections performed **attacca**, which reveal different aspects of contemporary clarinet expression. Each section highlights distinct performance techniques as well as different relationships between sound, gesture, and sonic space.

Choral

The first section of the work functions as an introduction and establishes its overall aesthetic. It is dominated by long note values, a slow tempo, and an extremely subtle dynamic range. The opening indications (*dolce, ppp*) already point to the necessity of achieving a soft, rounded sound.

A particularly important performance element is the use of a very wide vibrato in the low register of the bass clarinet (ca. 0:16), which gives the sound a sense of instability and internal pulsation. In combination with long sustained tones, this produces a quasi-meditative effect characteristic of ambient aesthetics.

The score also contains an improvisational element (*“Improvisation over the melody”*), indicating that the performer should treat the notation as a framework rather than a strict structure. The key aspect here is the ability to shape timbre and tension within a single tone, rather than to develop melodic material in the traditional sense:

Example 46. Own arrangement of improvisation

Monologue nr 1

The second section presents a clear contrast to the static character of *Choral*. The clarinet is transformed here into an instrument with an expanded articulatory and sonoristic spectrum. Numerous extended techniques appear, significantly redefining the mode of sound production. The most important among them include random key clicks (1:35), a didgeridoo effect (1:55), harmonics and lip slurs (2:02–2:06), bisbigliando and flutter-tongue (2:28–2:45), multiphonics (indicated as M1–M4), as well as irregular rhythmic structures.

An important aspect of this section is the simultaneous performance of a rhythmic part on the heel shaker. This rhythm is sometimes notated as free (*“random rhythm”*), introducing an aleatoric element. Consequently, the performer must combine two independent layers — the sonic and the rhythmic — which significantly increases the level of performance difficulty:

Example 47. *Extraordinary, Part 2. Monologue No. 1*, 1st and 2nd system

Example 48. *Extraordinary, Part 2. Monologue No. 1*, 4th system

In the final section, a fingernail tapping effect on the reed appears (ca. 4:00), shifting the listener's attention from pitch to the percussive and material aspects of sound. The clarinet thus functions not only as a melodic instrument but also as a source of diverse sonic qualities:

4:00

Knock with your nail on the reed
 (try to be unrhythmically)

To E♭ Cl.

Example 49. *Extraordinary, Part 2. Monologue No. 1*, 8th system

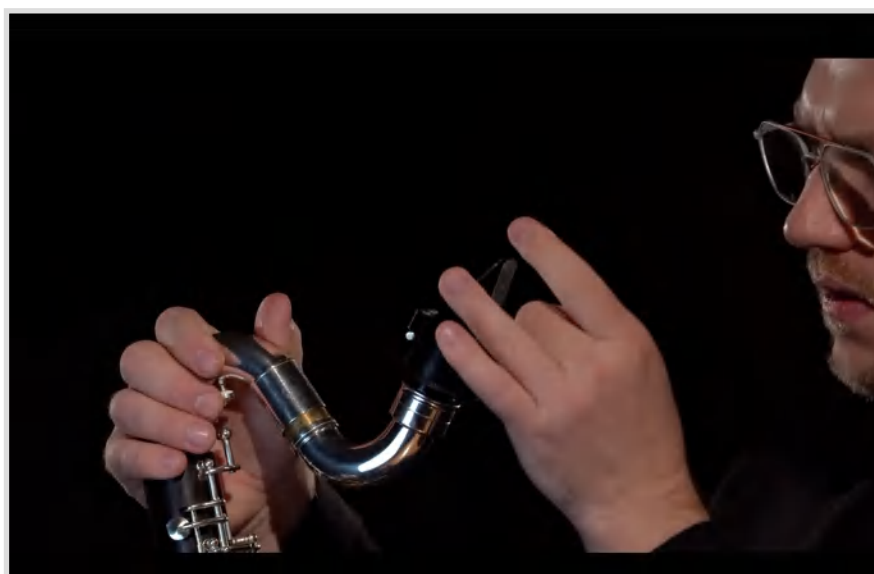


Photo 6. From the performance of the work (striking the reed with the fingernail)

Interlude

The interlude functions as a transition between two contrasting sonic zones of the work. From a sonic perspective, it is a static passage; however, from a performance standpoint, it carries significant importance. During this time, the clarinetist switches instruments from bass clarinet to E-flat clarinet, prepares the instrument by inserting pieces of paper (*paper mute*), and changes the percussion setup (from heel shaker to foot tambourine).

These actions are performative in nature — the preparation of the instruments takes place in full view of the audience and becomes part of the work's narrative. In this way, the boundary between technical and artistic activity is blurred:



Photo 7. From the performance of the work (application of the foot tambourine)



Photo 8. From the performance of the work (application of a paper mute)

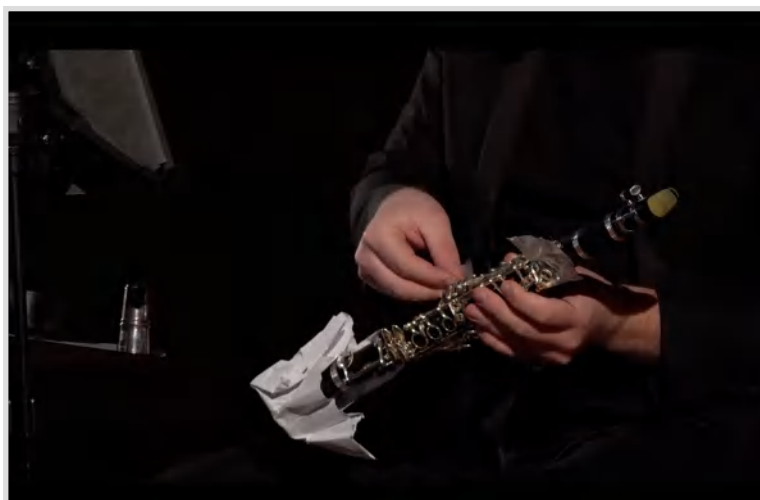


Photo 9. From the performance of the work (preparation of keys using paper)

Groaral

The *Groaral* section develops an aesthetics of restraint, while introducing a new timbral quality resulting from instrument preparation. The E-flat clarinet, fitted with a paper mute, produces a muted, slightly distorted sound rich in noise components. This preparation shifts the focus of expression toward timbre as the primary expressive carrier. At the end of the section, the performer removes the paper from the instrument, which may be realized as a stage action, emphasizing the performative character of the work.

Monologue nr 2

In this section, there is a renewed intensification of the texture and an increase in rhythmic activity. The E-flat clarinet interacts with the foot tambourine (left foot) and floor stomping (right foot), creating a two-layer structure: melodic and rhythmic. In contrast to earlier passages, the percussion rhythm is here more precise and often set in counterpoint to the clarinet part. This requires a high degree of coordinative independence from the performer, rhythmic stability, and the ability to simultaneously control two performance layers. The clarinet part, although less technically complex than in *Monologue No. 1*, gains significance through its relation to the rhythmic layer — an additional percussive dimension is introduced into the instrumental playing, as the clarinetist articulates rhythm through foot-stamping.



Photo 10. Simultaneous performance on foot tambourine and clarinet



Photo 11. Simultaneous performance on foot tambourine and clarinet

Last Word...

The clarinetist is required to quickly switch from the E-flat clarinet back to the bass clarinet. In this section, the main theme from the first movement, *Choral*, returns, and from an interpretative perspective this is a particularly significant moment — expression reaches its maximum through a reduction of means. The clarinet ceases to function as a narrative voice and instead becomes an element of stage presence.

In conclusion, the analysis of the individual sections of *Extraordinary* reveals a consistent expansion of the clarinet's performance language — from traditional cantabile sound, through extended techniques and performative actions, to a reduction of sonic material to the threshold of silence. Each section of the work highlights different aspects of clarinet performance:

- control of timbre and dynamics (*Choral*);
- extended techniques (*Monologue No. 1*);
- performative actions (*Interlude*);
- sonorism and instrument preparation (*Groaral*);
- rhythmic coordination (*Monologue No. 2*);
- minimalism and stage presence (*Last Word...*).

As a result, Kyryliv's work represents a comprehensive example of contemporary thinking about the clarinet as an instrument with multidimensional performance potential.

Conclusion

The aim of this dissertation was to present the range of performance possibilities of the clarinet in selected works by Ukrainian composers of the twenty-first century, and to attempt to define the role of contemporary instrumental techniques in shaping musical language and interpretation. The analyses conducted, based both on score study and performance experience, made it possible to formulate several important conclusions.

First of all, it should be emphasized that contemporary performance techniques—intensively developed in the music of the second half of the twentieth century — no longer function solely as a timbral experiment. In the works of the analysed composers, they become a natural and integral part of musical language, subordinated to specific artistic objectives. Multiphonics, microtonality (quarter-tone and other divisions), vibrato, flutter-tongue, glissando, combining playing with singing, noise-based effects, and the use of circular breathing are no longer merely a means of expanding the instrument's performance possibilities, but a fully-fledged expressive component of compositional language. The division of the instrument into two parts, discussed in Chapter Three, reveals a new and specific timbral quality of the clarinet and simultaneously enables polyphony on a single instrument, which is characteristic of performative and sonoristic approaches. It will be interesting to observe how this technique develops in the future, as it may also become a significant area of interest for other composers and performers.

Although in all of the discussed compositions the clarinet plays a central role, its function varies depending on the individual compositional language. Ivan Olenchik treats the instrument in a manner close to the virtuoso tradition, albeit incorporating selected twentieth-century techniques; Volodymyr Runchak combines conventional playing with performative elements, while Dmytro Kyryliv focuses on intertextual and intermedial relations. This diversity reflects the considerable aesthetic freedom of contemporary composers and their openness to combining different artistic concepts.

Another important conclusion arising from this study is the changing role of the performer. Contemporary performance practice places demands on the clarinetist that go beyond traditionally understood instrumental virtuosity. The development of musical language in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has led to a significant expansion of performance means, in which instrumental technique becomes an integral element in shaping the form and expression of a work. The contemporary clarinetist thus functions not only as a performer and interpreter of the musical

score, but also as a co-creator of sound and a designer of performative identity, often through improvisation. In many cases, the performer's decisions determine the final shape of the realization of a given work. At present, a gradual redefinition of the relationship between composer and performer is taking place.

The analyses and interpretations conducted confirm that contemporary instrumental techniques increasingly extend beyond the purely sonic sphere. The incorporation of gesture, stage movement, and extra-musical contexts transforms the clarinet into a medium of multidimensional artistic expression, while the performance process itself acquires an interdisciplinary character.

Against the background of the issues presented, the work of Ukrainian composers becomes particularly significant, which — as mentioned in the introduction — remains insufficiently present in the repertoire of international musical events, despite its originality and high artistic value. This dissertation therefore represents an attempt to partially address the described situation and to indicate the potential of the discussed repertoire both in concert practice and in further scholarly research.

The issues addressed in this study do not exhaust the subject of contemporary performance possibilities of the clarinet, but rather indicate directions for further research — both in the field of performance practice and theoretical reflection. Particularly important appear to be further studies on the relationship between sound and extra-musical elements, as well as on the role of the performer as an active participant in the creative process.

This dissertation has both a research and an artistic character. It constitutes a summary of a particular stage of performance-based exploration and reflection on contemporary musical language. It presents the clarinet as an instrument that continuously expands its capabilities and remains an important medium for contemporary artistic expression.

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 - *Anti-sonatas No. 28, 29 and 53* (2004) – score provided electronically by the composer;
 - *Folk Concerto No. 3*, Kyiv 2024 – score provided electronically by the composer;
- Dmytro Kyryliv, *Extraordinary* (2024) – score provided electronically by the composer.

Index of artistic works

Recording dates: 22–26 February 2026

Recording venue: Krystyna Moszumańska-Nazar Concert Hall at the Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Kraków

List of recorded works:

1. Ivan Olenchik – *Caprice No. 4 “Quarrel”* from the collection *20 caprices for solo clarinet* – **6’ 13”**
2. Ivan Olenchik – *Caprice No. 5 “Pictures from Hutsul Life” (Thinking, Weeping, Joy)* from the collection *20 caprices for solo clarinet* (transcription for clarinet and piano by Ivan Olenchik) – **9’ 49”**
3. Ivan Olenchik – *Caprice no 18 „Spanish sketches”* from the collection *20 capricies for solo clarinet* (transcription for clarinet and piano by Evgeny Petrov) – **6’ 26”**
4. Volodymyr Runchak – „*Anti-sonatas no 28, 29 and 53*” for clarinet and piano (+ percussion ad lib.) – **14’ 45”**
5. Volodymyr Runchak – „*Folk Concerto no 3*” for clarinet, percussion and piano (Arcan – 10’ 45”, Duma – 6’ 48”, Hopak – 8’ 46”) – **26’ 19”**
6. Dmytro Kyryliv – „*Extraordinary*” for bass/E ♭ clarinet solo with heel shaker, foot cajón tambourine and electronics – **10’ 41”**

Total duration:

74’ 13”

Role of the candidate: Oleh Malovichko – project initiator, soloist (clarinet), co-creator of the performance concept; coordinator of the performing ensemble.

Performers: Oleh Malovichko – clarinet, Wioletta Fluda-Tkaczyk – piano, Michał Żymelka – percussion

Audio engineer: Marcin Guz

Video producer: Grzegorz Klimczak / B&B Records

Form of recording and delivery: USB flash drive

Supervisor: Prof. dr hab. Piotr Lato
The Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music in Krakow