

GLICK, SRUL IRVING

SUITE HÉBRAIQUE

Instrumentation: Clarinet and Piano (Originally for clarinet and orchestra)

Publisher: Boosey and Hawkes

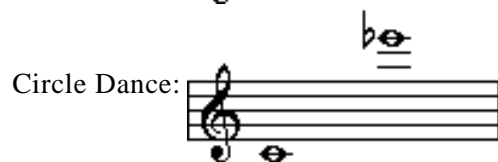
Date: 1968 (published)

Recording: *New for Now* Vol. 2 Clarinet - Dominion S-69004 (Avrahm Galper)

Musical Source: Original

Duration: 8:35


Ranges:



Level: Difficult

Musical Features of the Repertoire

The six movements which make up this suite, are musically characterized by features of Jewish folk and religious music. The minor tonalities, as well as the use of mordants and turns in the melodic lines, help to create the Jewish feel. The short movements can be grouped in two categories. There are the dances (*Chasidic Dance*, *Hora* and *Circle Dance*) which feature

lively rhythms based on  figures. *Chasidic Dance* has a lilting quality while the others are more accented and driving in nature. The three other movements of the suite (*Cantorial Chant*, *Lullaby*, and *Dialogue*) contrast with the dances. They are slower in tempo with a more sustained and legato quality. The suite ranges in mood from the opening meditative and rhapsodic chant to the joyous middle dances. The calmer and more static movements which follow, lead to the bright and exciting final dance.

The main keys employed for the movements of the suite include E minor, A minor, G minor, B flat minor, D minor and C minor. The melodies all have specific features which distinguish and yet connect them. *Cantorial Chant* uses triadic lines with a repeated note figure in flowing, irregular phrases. *Chasidic Dance*, although similar in melodic character, has shorter phrases with a more structured feel. *Hora* features an ascending fourth in short rhythmic phrases. The fourth is also characteristic of *Lullaby*, which has repeated notes in short, two-bar phrases. The main motif of *Dialogue* uses a fourth and a third interval while *Circle Dance* displays the interval of a second with repeated notes. Both have short phrases. Three of the movements use mixed metres: *Hora* uses $\frac{4}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{7}{8}$; *Dialogue* employs $\frac{5}{4}$ and $\frac{6}{4}$ while *Circle Dance* combines $\frac{6}{8}$, $\frac{2}{4}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ and $\frac{5}{8}$. The piano accompaniment supports the clarinet with either linear and sparse textures, as in the first two movements, or with heavier, fuller chords as in the third and fourth movements. The piano matches the variety of clarinet styles in all of the movements, except for *Dialogue*, where it becomes the musically agitated partner. The accompaniment of the last movement combines many of these ideas while introducing an ostinato feature to accent the dance. In all six movements of the suite, the piano has an important melodic role and enhances the overall effect of the work.

Technical Challenges of the Clarinet Part

The suite requires a range of articulation styles. In the first and fourth movements, legato tonguing is extremely important to the style. This technique challenges the player's control. This is particularly difficult in the chant because of the many repetitions on one note. In the third and sixth movements, a more staccato articulation is demanded, becoming especially difficult in the clarion and altissimo registers. *Circle Dance* also requires accented tonguing and uses complicated articulation patterns throughout, although there are basic patterns which repeat.



There are particular breathing challenges in most of the movements of this suite. The opening chant is demanding because of its long phrases. Good air support is needed in the first and fourth movements in order to sustain the legato style. This is important throughout *Lullaby*, because it centres around the throat notes and the lower break area. Passages in this same range need attention in the *Cantorial Chant*. Both of these movements have an extremely long phrase at their conclusion, demanding good breath control. In the third and sixth movements, full air support is required in order to play in the staccato style. The air stream must keep moving for the passages surrounding the lower and higher breaks. *Circle Dance* requires quick breaths which can be taxing on the player.

The dance movements call for a brighter tone quality which needs attention in the clarion and altissimo registers so that the sound does not become too shrill or piercing. The other three movements demand a mellower tone. In *Dialogue*, the passages in the clarion register need focus in order to maintain the mellow tone colour. The F sharp minor tonality found in *Cantorial Chant* creates difficulties for tone control and fingering. Passages involving turn figures, as six or three notes in the time of one, use the keys around the lower break, causing problems for intonation. There is also one section of passage work which is difficult because of the D sharp and the necessity of using the entire right hand for finger motion.



The dances are more difficult for fingering because of the faster tempos. This creates problems for the player in those passages involving wider leaps around the breaks. *Hora* concludes by shifting the same phrase through the three registers, making it a challenge for finger co-ordination. *Cantorial Chant* and *Dialogue* also contain some register shifts resulting in intricate fingerings. The suite concludes with an exciting transfer from the clarion to the altissimo register. This procedure must be controlled in order to finish well. The brief modulations occurring in most of the movements create sections with awkward fingerings. In *Circle Dance* the sections in the chalumeau register may require some attention to projection because the accompaniment is very heavy and repetitious. The louder dynamic range used in the last movement is demanding due to the air support needed and the necessary control of the tone colour. In the first, second and fifth movements, a quieter dynamic range is explored. This is difficult when playing passages in the throat tones and in the higher clarion register while maintaining proper intonation. An effective use of sub-tone may be achieved in the final pattern of *Hora*. In *Circle Dance* and *Hora*, attention should be given to intonation in passages using the higher clarion and altissimo registers because of the dynamic levels. Endurance is needed for playing the movements of this suite because they require such a variety of techniques.

Use of the Musical Qualities of the Clarinet

Suite Hébraïque exploits several different qualities of the clarinet. Lilted mordants and flourishing turn figures enhance the style. There are moments of lyricism and sonorous melodic lines. Fluid, legato sections contrast with punctuated, rhythmic passages. The interest of this piece centres around the manner in which the many musical aspects display the instrument's versatility.

Benefits to the Students

This work can provide opportunities to explore Jewish music. Listening to a live or recorded performance of this suite will help the student to absorb the musical flavour of this style. The suite provides an opportunity for the clarinet player to work as a partner with the piano accompanist to create the music. Switching between styles of playing stretches the student's ability as a performer. The hard work needed to learn to play the complete suite is a worthwhile musical endeavour.

SIMEONOV, BLAGO

MONODY

Instrumentation: Clarinet with optional Piano

Publisher: Waterloo Music Co. Ltd.

Date: 1973 (published)

Recording: CMC-T, cassette 960

Musical Source: Original

Duration: 4:00



Level: Medium Difficult

Musical Features of the Repertoire

As the title suggests, this piece has many features reminiscent of the style of recitativo secco from Baroque opera. The clarinet line is a free melody written in an improvisatory form. There is no time signature and no feeling of strict metre. There are patterns of unstemmed notes, leaving the player free to improvise the rhythm. The tempo is slow and the markings of *accelerando* and *ritenuto* add to the expressiveness. The piano supports the clarinet line with sustained chords that create a bagpipe-like drone and with punctuations of the dynamics. The piano has free improvisatory sections. The piece would be effective, though, as an unaccompanied solo. The atonal harmony centres around a three-note motif in the melody.



Intervals of thirds and fourths are important to the shape of the melody. Phrases are long and based on slurring. This helps to create the rhapsodic, dreamy mood.

Technical Challenges of the Clarinet Part

The nature of this piece presents some difficulties to the performer. The long unmetred phrases require full air capacity in order to sustain the free legato style. Melodic motifs, particularly at clarinet entrances, often use the throat notes. These pose some problems for intonation especially at a *piano* dynamic which occurs frequently. There is a passage in the middle of the piece which features register shifts from the clarion to the chalumeau register. These shifts result in awkward fingerings and are more challenging because the notes are slurred. There is a great temptation to change the shape of the embouchure in this type of figure. This piece frequently employs the altissimo register. Some passages involve the grouping of notes and a *forte* dynamic which creates a playable approach. There are some consecutive phrases, however, which begin on and descend from an individual note in the altissimo register. The challenge here involves securing a clean, clear start to the sound. The player is assisted by the *forte* dynamic and the length of the note. Endurance is a definite factor to consider in performing this piece. The breath control, and the few rests which allow the embouchure to be relaxed, are taxing on the player's stamina. This problem would be augmented if this piece was performed unaccompanied.

Use of the Musical Qualities of the Clarinet

This piece is reminiscent, in tone and nature, of the impressionistic style of Poulenc's *Sonata for Clarinet and Piano*. There are opportunities for lyrical singing in the altissimo and chalumeau registers. The variety of dynamics is an important expressive element in the music. The sections where the dynamics build gradually are effective. There is smooth fluid movement over the full clarinet range. Grace notes are used to embellish the melody and some passages are shaped by an unusual idea -- *accelerando* is used to descend into the chalumeau range and *ritenuto* is employed when moving back into

the altissimo range.

Benefits to the Student

While this piece requires imagination and a sense of liberty, it also demands that the player be confident and take charge of the music-making. Although it might appear difficult at the beginning of the learning process, the pauses and the non-restrictive style make the piece playable. Once learned, the piece should be a pleasing musical experience.

WUENSCH, GERHARD

VARIATIONS (Op. 52)

Instrumentation: Clarinet and Piano

Publisher: E.C. Kerby Ltd.

Date: 1985 (published)

Recording: None

Musical Source: Original

Duration: 4:30



Level: Medium Difficult

Musical Features of the Repertoire

The folk-like melody, characterized by the raised third and natural seventh of the minor tonality, undergoes several styles of variation. There are rhythmic, playful variations which contrast with the slower melodic ones. The tempo fluctuates between slow and lively speeds which are directed by metronome markings. Interest is also created through harmonic modulations and the interplay between the clarinet and the piano. The role of the accompaniment varies as it provides a chordal support or a more intricate moving line which fills out the clarinet part. At times the piano part provides a contrast in speed and articulation as it executes the important transitions into new sections. This piece, which is classical in style, returns to its opening, plaintive theme as it comes to a conclusion.

Technical Challenges of the Clarinet Part

The overall challenge in this piece is playing in a variety of styles. Staccato tonguing is required as well as quick finger movements for the more rhythmic variations. The articulation patterns can become intricate and therefore need practice.



Some of the rhythmic sections contain leaps that are greater than a fifth. These are demanding due to the faster tempi. Note patterns using the altissimo register are often quicker and need careful attention to maintain a focussed tone. Some of the modulations result in the use of sharpened accidentals causing the clarinet tone colour to brighten. These sections need more concentration in order to maintain a mellow tone colour. Moving away from the A minor tonality necessitates the use of many keys on the instrument, creating more awkward fingerings. Intonation could be problematic in the passages using the throat tones and moving over the lower break.



The variety of dynamics is a challenge to a player for there is constant activity. The levels range from *sf* to the use of sub-tone in *diminuendos*. Control of the tone takes effort particularly when *sf* is demanded around the throat tones or in the altissimo register.

Use of the Musical Qualities of the Clarinet

In this piece the versatility and the personality of the clarinet are shown through slower, legato melodies and accented rhythmic patterns. This contrast is enhanced by the use of the full dynamic range of the instrument. The folk-like nature of the main theme is enhanced by an unaccompanied clarinet presentation of the theme at the beginning of the piece.

Benefits to the Student

A variety of playing and musical styles expand musical knowledge and challenge the student to learn the flexibility required in the mastery of this piece. The opening solo line sets the tone and demands that the student take responsibility for a strong and controlled beginning. The clarinet line blends well with the piano, requiring a strong partnership between the two performers. The study of these variations provides a musically enriching experience.