

Preface

Music has always been an important element in defining and maintaining a culture while creating bonds among its peoples. As Canada continues to be plagued by an identity crisis, where the issue of national unity remains a challenge, the use of Canadian music may be one of the crucial "ties that bind." Canadians are still in search of what it is that makes them unique and distinct. The music of Canada aids in that search as it reflects the variety and breadth of our society. The aspects of this music reveal many influences which come from folk traditions of immigrants, various periods of Western classical music, particular classical styles adopted from other countries and contemporary genres of musical composition. The rich nature of Canadian music, therefore, renders it valuable as a cultural experience and as a musical resource. Thus it is a prudent time to encourage the understanding, use and development of this wealth of excellent material.

One important way of achieving this is to expand the inclusion of Canadian repertoire in music education. As clarinet player and teacher, I was interested in locating solo pieces by Canadian composers, written for the B flat clarinet. I analyzed repertoire for students from the beginner level through to the intermediate level. While doing this work, I discovered that very little suitable Canadian clarinet repertoire existed for junior and intermediate level students. The works that I judged to be suitable, however, exhibit a variety of musical and expressive features as well as technical challenges. Therefore, these works would be valuable additions to the clarinet curriculum and to students as solo performers.

Since the B flat clarinet is a common instrument taught in schools and privately, Canadian composers should be encouraged to write more pieces of good quality, displaying a variety of styles, for student use. The efforts of composers in creating such repertoire could benefit teachers and students alike. Teachers would be able to supplement their existing music curriculum with valuable Canadian works. Students would have the opportunity to further develop as musicians while becoming more aware of their own identity and heritage as Canadians through playing Canadian music.

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Explanatory Notes

This publication is designed to assist teachers in selecting and teaching Canadian clarinet music. Preparation of this *Guide* began with the identification and location of published and unpublished Canadian compositions for B flat clarinet. Detailed guidelines for assessing level of difficulty were developed. Ten compositions assessed as being of a suitable level of difficulty for student clarinet players were analysed in detail, using standardized frameworks for appraising technical challenges, musical features, and pedagogical value. Included in this *Guide* are descriptions of selected compositions judged to be pedagogically valuable for junior and intermediate level players (up to Grade 9 Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto level). Information on each composition includes instrumentation, duration, publisher (or location of

unpublished composition), range, date, recording (were available), and level of difficulty. The terms *Very Easy (VE)*, *Easy (E)*, *Medium Easy (ME)*, *Medium Difficult (MD)*, and *Difficult (D)* are used as general descriptions of the technical challenges in order to judge the suitability of specific compositions for individual students. Teachers and performers interested in locating other Canadian compositions for B flat clarinet are encouraged to explore the holdings of the national and regional libraries of the Canadian Music Centre.