Interpretation of *Monolog for*bass clarinet by Isang Yun considering the influences of the Korean Traditions

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I. STORY OF MY RESEARCH

When I came to Rotterdam in September of 2014 to do my Masters in bass clarinet with Henri Bok, I really didn't know what I was going to find in this school and which kind of education I was going to receive. I had a new subject called Artistic Research and I did not know what I was supposed to do. In these lessons I had to think of a topic for my Artistic Resarch and how I would like to develop it. After these two year I have to say that I am really happy about the coaches we have in Codarts because they help opening the students' mind with a really big range of possibilities and ideas. The first assignment was to think about something I really wanted to improve in my playing. Due to me not being a theorist, I decided that I wanted to focus my research in the contemporary music for bass clarinet, given that this is something very new for me. After that decision I had to focus my topic, as contemporary music is a topic too wide to fit into a Research which lead me to one piece: Monolog for Bass Clarinet by the Korean composer Isang Yun. I chose this piece because it is one of the most technically difficult and musically acclaimed pieces in the bass clarinet repertory and I wanted to be able to play it at the end of my masters. The first idea for my research was to focus in the learning process of such a piece because when I started my masters I felt that my technical level was not high enough to play this piece and the moment when I could play it seemed to be very far. After a hard first year with Henri Bok I grew really fast in my playing and then I realized that the piece was still difficult but not as difficult as I thought, and then the process of learning became something not too different from the normal practice of any difficult piece. It was at this point that I decided to change the focus of my research from "How to practice this piece?" to something that would help me develop the piece, interpretation wise. To do this I decided to explore the influences and background of the piece: Korean traditional music.

The question on which my AR is centered is: "How I can develop my own interpretation of Monolog for bass clarinet by Isang Yun considering the influences of the Korean Traditions which form the background of this piece?

The main goal I wanted to achieve with this research was to be able to play the piece considering all these influeces that the composer had from his own Korean culture. A second goal, but not less important, was to learn how to work this deeply on a piece and how this work can help me in the future with other pieces of the repertory of my intrument.

After finishing the Artistic Research I have found a lot of great answers, not only for this topic, but also for my own process as musician. One of the best discoveries I did was how important the work preceding the study of a piece is, which is something that I had never done. When I was studing my bachelor, I had a lot of work practicing a big repertory during all the years and this activity does not allow you to go deep in each piece and "get all the juice". The analysis of the piece, the interviews of experts (these interviews don't need to be of formal character, a conversation with a knowledgeable peer can give a lot of insight), the analysis of recordings and/or the research of literature makes you grow twice as fast in your practice and interpretation and all the decisions made have a really deep sense.

In reference to the piece, when I heard it for the first time, I have to say that it was not very special for me. I felt it very difficult but I did not see anything interesting inside. When reading about the composer's life and what influenced him during his career and works, a new world unravels and it changes completely the way one looks at *Monolog*. It is when this conection appears that one starts to enjoy spending time in the details to give your best. I did not know how many influences there were in this music, but it later became apparent that there is a whole culture of music and ideas inside the piece and this is a really interesting thing to discover.

I also want to emphasize the importance of the conection with people. It is really good to look for information in books, articles and recordings, but the real conection with people also sheds a lot of light on the matter. Through one's network it is possible to meet a lot of interesting people who can change your mind with new and fresh ideas.

After all these discoveries, I have improved a lot my performance of the piece because I am trying different things and approaches that, after listening to several recordings and performances I can say, have not yet been done. This piece is very difficult technically and not all bass clarinetists decide to perform it. After deciding to play this piece I wanted to not only play the notes and make whatever phrasing my teacher recommended or I heard in recordings. I wanted to create my own interpretation in which behind each musical decision there was deep reasoning. In my oppinion these details can make a good version even better, because they will make the story behind this composition very clear to the listener.

THE PROCESS

I started my research focusing on the piece itself and what I wanted was to learn basic things about the piece before practicing it, because I didn't feel ready to play it. It is for that reason that I studied the piece theoretically and I did some different analysis with the help of Hans Koolmes: structure, graphics of dynmics and a graphic of the density of the music. This work revealed a lot of things about the piece which made me understand it much better. At this time I was still unsure of how to study the piece because I had never faced this kind of music before, so I decided to make two general interviews, one to bass clarinetists who had played the piece and the other to bass clarinetists who did not. The idea of these interviews was to analyse the way they focus their practice of the piece and try to apply it to my own not to waste my time.

After these two steps I wanted to go a little bit into the artistic part of the piece and I decided to analyse some recordings of the piece. I chose three different versions (two from the same player) and I analysed what they did in the performance. I get such a good idea about where the really big problems were and also I could compare my analysis with the interpretations.

It was only after I started practicing that I decided to dig into the piece and discover the influences of the Korean traditions in the music of Yun. I searched information on internet and I found some interesting thesis about this theme. One of them was about the Haupttone technique in *Duo for Violoncello and Harp* and other one about the Korean Tradition in *Monolog for Bassoon*. This could seem very similar to my research but in those thesis there was not application to the interpretation. I also was in contact with Henrice Vonk who put me in touch with Keith Howard. Keith is an expert in Korean Music and he has a lot of articles and essays written on this subject. My first idea was to interview him but he suggested I read three articles of his where I might find the answers to my questions. These articles are about the Korean Tradition in the style of Yun, the piece *Piri* by Isang Yun and also about his *Clarinet Quintet*.

After reading and analysing all the information I got from this literature on top of the recordings of traditional Korean Music I listened to, I decided to apply some of the elements to my playing in order to convey a performance closer to these influences. These elements are the vibrato and the articulation found in traditional Korean Music. Another element about which I learned was the tempo but - as is explained in the 2nd intervention cycle - contrary to the other two, I should not decide exactly what to do with this element, as the tempo of some passages should be ad libitum and even improvised.

Presentation of the results

The main result of my research is an interpretation of the piece *Monolog* by Isang Yun based the influecences of Korean musical traditions. The most important parameters that I decided to incorporate in my interpretations were the vibrato, played really exaggerated articulations, the freedom of tempo and the big contrast in the music. All these results come from a deep research of the Korean musical tradition and also from the relation between that tradition and the composer, which were translated to the context and the character of the piece.

To show the final results I created an annotated score¹ where I marked with different colours the decisions I took for my interpretation. In the score you can find notations about the use of the vibrato, the different kinds of artculation and marks about the contrasting parts of the piece. The explanation of the symbols is the following:

- The blue horizontal lines mark the notes on which I decided to use vibrato.
- The red circles mark the notes with strong accents.
- The green circles mark the notes without accent where due to the context I have to be carefull not play with accent.
- The red vertical lines make a separation between the contrasting parts.

In addition to this annotated score, there is a final recording² in which all this information was translated into an interpretation. I decided to make this recording only from the beginning until bar 62 (2 pages of the piece) because all the interpretation parameters appear in this fragment and are applicable to the rest of piece in the same way. The recording was made in Codarts on 30th March 2016.

All the results are clear and demonstrable, based in an investigation and experiments, and can be applied for any bass clarinet player who wants to play this piece considering it's roots. Of course this is not the real truth about the piece and any other interpretation is also valid.

Conclusions

At this point I am not only glad that I was able to finish this journey, but above all I am really happy to have enjoyed it and to have learned so much from my AR. At the beginning of my masters I was really lost and I had no idea how I was going to face this Artistic Research, but being consistent and with the help of coaches and teachers it started to take shape. Sometimes it was difficult to take some decisions about what way I wanted to follow but all this obstacles are an important part of the work.

Before starting my research I did not think that I was going to work in a piece as deep as I did with *Monolog* and it was a really great experience which I will repeat and I advise to every musician who really wants to acheive something more than playing the notes correctly. This work is also useful for any people who want to learn about this piece and also for anyone who want to do a similar research in other pieces.

This artistic research has made me grow as a clarinetist and above all as a musician.

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¹ Go to page 51

² Video n°10 in USB Stick. URL to YouTube: https://youtu.be/4lQDl8R6bkQ

II. THE INTERVENTION CYCLES

1. 1ST INTERVENTION CYCLE

1.1. Reference Recording

Zero Recording. The first intervention cycle of my research stared with a reference recording made on 21/11/2014 in Codarts. In this recording I played some fragments of the piece *Monolog* by Isang Yun.³ In this first recording I only could play some little excerpts of the piece due to the high level needed to play it. I sent this recording to two teachers with who I had lesson in Spain during my bacherlor: David Calvo Carmona and Camilo Irizo. Both were teachers in the Conservatory of Seville and they usually play clarinet and bass clarinet in contemporary music ensembles and orchestras.

1.2. Feedback from the recording

I think the most important thing of these recordings is of course the feedback which you receive from the experts but also the feedback that you can give to yourself. It is really important to listen to your own recordings and try to listen what is happening and find your own solutions. What I can hear is that I have to work a lot in the legato and the sound because it is not fluid and it is cut easily. This recording is not a good recording to analyse the piece because I only play few spots but I need to work a lot to get good results.

From the feedback I received I can summarize in two big groups: technique and information prior to the practice.

In the feedback about technique they wrote about the importance of the rythm, articulation, dynamics and sound. Everything is important in this piece because there is a big spectrum in each part, the dinamics go from pppp to ffff, there are notes with a huge legato and also with a really marcatto articulation. It is really important to investigate these points deeply to see what is going on and try to play everything really faithful to the score.

The second group is the background information. Both experts explain that it is really important to know the composer, his life and his style of composition. Also they mention the importance of analyzing some recordings of the piece, and knowing other similar works from the composer to be aware of his style. The complete interviews are in the appendix.

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³ Video n°1 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/q3wklghJxZO

1.3. Data collection

After an analysis of the feedback I decided to do some research before starting with practicing the piece. At this point, my plan was to analyze the structure of the piece as well as interviewing bass clarinetists to know how they focus the learning process of a new piece and in particular when they studied this piece. After these two steps, I also wanted to compare recordings of the piece to listen how different bass clarinetists play the piece and try to recognize the difficult parts.

1.3.1 Analysis of the piece

A) Structural analysis

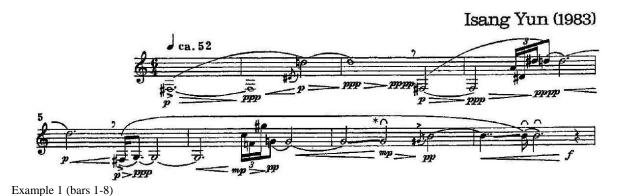
To make a more efficient analysis of this piece I contacted Hans Koolmes, teacher in Codarts' composition department. Although I have the basic knowledge to make an analysis of a piece, I tought it would be better to be guided by an expert because he could give me different points of view. After meeting, through combining my previous knowledge and his inputs we arrived at the following structure:

$$A - B - A' - B - A'' - C - A - B + C - A + B$$

The structure of *Monolog* is delimited by the different themes and the technical aspects that appear in the piece and how they are organized. The explanation of the analysis is the following:

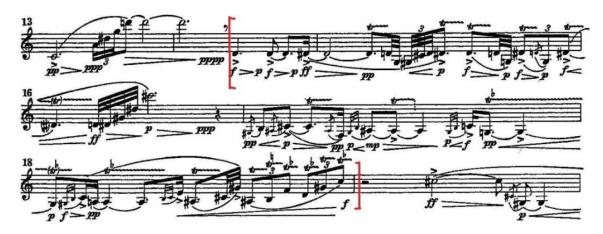
A (Bars 1-13)

Here we can see the first theme. Two long notes in different registers connected by *grace notes* or fast notes but always in a quiet and relaxed atmosphere with the dynamics mostly between *p-pppp*.



B (b.13-18)

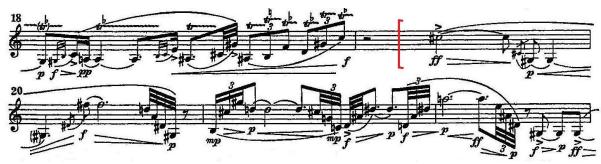
In bar 13 starts a very contrasting part. Here the music starts to move and the dynamic changes are faster between ff and ppp. The trills appear as new resource. In contrast with the first part, here the music doesn't have big jumps and the pitch is in the medium-low register.



Example 2 (bars 13-19)

A' (b.19-26)

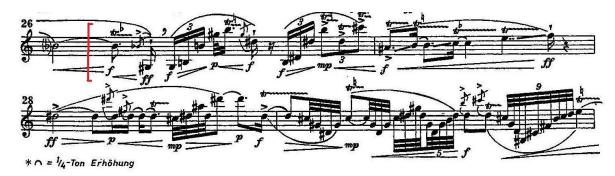
In bar 19 starts the same theme as in the beginning, but here it is slightly changed. Now the jumps between notes are in the opposite direction, the first note is higher than the second. The dynamics growth in intensity but the changes are slow again.



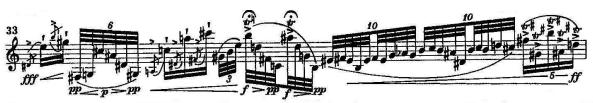
Example 3 (bars 18-22)

B (b.26-33)

Again the music starts to move with the reappearance of the trills. This part is quite long and starts to develop the music and the amount of notes per bar increases until the last bar, which is the most developed.



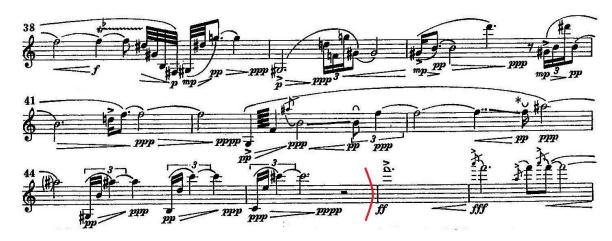
Example 4 (bars 26-29)



Example 5 (bars 33)

A'' (b.34-45)

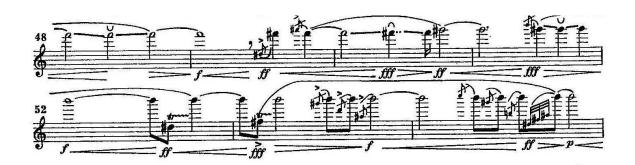
Like the first time this theme is presented, calmness is it's the main characteristic. Now with little differences - the dynamics are again in the pianissimo area but the pitch is going up.



Example 6 (bars 38-47)

C (b.45-68)

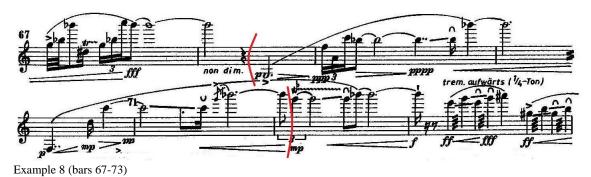
In bar 45 starts theme C. Here is the first time that the music arrives to the *altissimo* register and the micro intervals (element that was only used once until now) form an important part of this section. This part is developed in the highest register of the bass clarinet with dynamics between f and fff.



Example 7 (bars 48-54)

A (b.68-71)

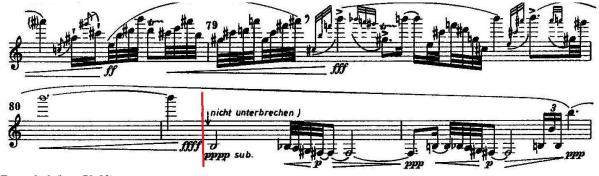
After C, theme A appears again only during four bars. After which a new part begins with trills and micro intervals, this part is B+C.



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B+C (b.71-80)

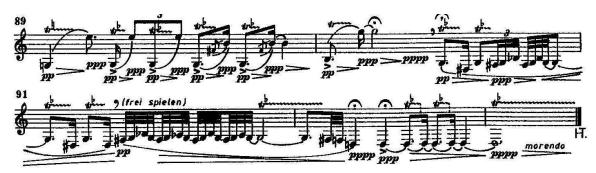
This section, using the trills and micro intervals, develops the music in the high register until bar 80, where it climaxes in the highest note (B) in *fffff* dynamic – this is the only time that this dynamic appears. After this climax there is a big jump in both the dynamic (*fffff* -> *pppp*) and the pitch (three octaves lower). It is at this point that we arrive to the last section of the piece.



Example 9 (bars 79-82)

A+B (b.80-93)

This last section is called A+B because the theme is A but the composer uses elements from B, namely trills and pitch jumps. From here on, the music is getting calmer and calmer until the last bar (*morendo*).

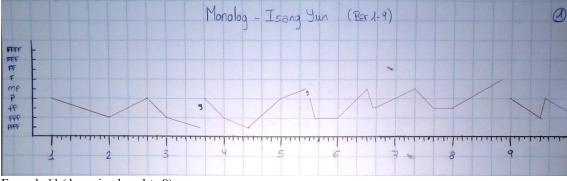


Example 10 (bars 89-93)

B) Analysis of dynamics

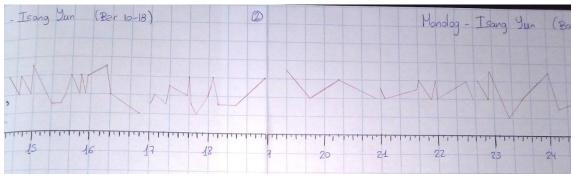
After the meeting with Hans Koolmes he made me think about the analysis of the piece. Of course it is important to know the structure of the piece but, is this the only analysis I can do? After thinking about that I decided to make a different kind of analysis. Due to the characteristic of the background of the piece - traditional Korean music - the use of the dynamics is really special. The importance of the dynamics in Korean music comes from the influences of the Taoism and the philosihpy of the yin and yang. These two forces which are present in all things are represented in the music through the use of big contrasts of dynamics and articulations. For this reason I decided to analyse this parameter, making a graphic of the dynamics' development along the piece.

In the piece there is a wide range of dynamics, ranging from *pppp* until *ffff*, but this alone is not as interesting as the sudden changes themselves. The piece is written in 6/4 and it starts in the dynamic of *piano*, changing slowly to *ppp* in the next bar. This is the general dynamic of the first section. However in B we can see how the dynamics start changing really fast in the tempo and more extremely. This graphic helps me to have a visual overview of the whole piece which in it's turn helps me make the bigger lines clearer. In addition to this I can compare the development of dynamics, giving me deeper understanding of the piece.

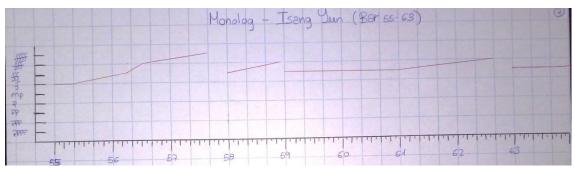


Example 11 (dynamics, bars 1 to 9)

⁴ Description of the influences of the piece in 2nd intervention cycle.



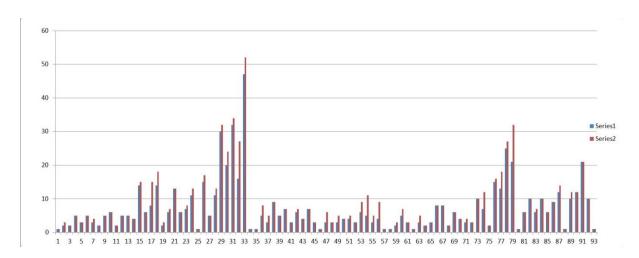
Example 12 (dynamics, bars 15 to 24)



Example 13 (dynamics, bar 55 to 63)

C) Analysis of the musical density

In addition to the structure I thought that there is another interesting aspect to analyse in this piece. This is the development of the musical density, in other words, how the amount of notes per bar increases. I compiled this information in the following graphic and the result is very peculiar.



Example 14 (Graphic musical density)

In this graphic, the *series 1* (blue) means the amount of real notes and the *series 2* (red) is adding the *grace notes*. As we can see, this development is really interesting and using it we can image a different structure of

the piece in three parts. The first part between bars 1 and 33, second part between bars 34-81 and the last part in bar 81 until the end. This is another piece of insight that could be kept in mind at the time of organizing the practice, but in my opinion, it is more helpful to think of this when deciding on interpretation because the lines will become longer and it can help for a good musical speech.

The use of this graphic was not very helpful at the beginning of the practice because it divide the piece in very big sections. The practice of this piece has to be really meticulous and my idea was to practice it in small sections, considering the structural analysis. When you already have the notes and you start to study the musicality of the piece, this analysis gains importance because give a different direction to the piece. In this case, instead of playing the piece thinking in smalls sections, which will most often make the music lose direction and become dull, bigger sections can be taken into consideration and then the idea of "never ending" music acquires more sense.⁵

1.3.2. Interviewing experts

The principal objective of these interviews was to get an idea of how profesional bass clarinet player focused their practice in this piece. Some of the players who I interviewed had already played the piece but for others this interview was the first contact. The questions were focused in all the thechnical difficulties and also the preparation for practicing. These interviews were given by email.

I have interviewed bass clarinetist from different countries and levels. The list of experts is the following:

- **Harry Sparnaay**: One of the most important bass clarinet players in the world, was a teacher in Conservatory Van Amsterdam and the piece *Monolog* was written for him.
- **Laura Carmaichel:** clarinet and bass clarinet player from USA, she came to The Netherlands to learn bass clarinet with Sparnaay. She has colaborated with very important comtemporary ensembles and orchestras.
- Ian Michael: bass clarinet player from UK.
- Caroline Wüst: clarinet and bass clarinet player from Austria, I contacted with her because I listened a really good recording of the piece in Youtube.
- Camilo Irizo: Clarinet teacher in the Superior Conservatory of Sevilla (Spain) and member of the Contemprary Music Ensamble "Taller Sonoro".
- **David Calvo**: Clarinet teacher in the Superior Conservatory of Jaén (Spain) and Solo Clarinet of the Orquesta Ciudad de Almería, OCAL (Spain).
- **Thiago Tavares**: Bass clarinet player from Brazil, he studied Master in Codarts. He did his research about the high register of the bass clarinet and he studied this piece.
- Igor Urruchi: bass clarinet player from Spain, he studied with Henri Bok in Codarts.
- Eduardo Raimundo: Principal Bass clarinet of the Orquesta Nacional de España.

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⁵ Idea from the Korean music, explained in 2nd intervention cycle.

What most caught my attention was one difference between both groups. The musicians who have not played the piece thinks that the first step should be to analyse the piece and look for information about the composer's style and life, while first step taken by the clarinetist who have played the piece was to find the most difficult parts. Some of them think that it would have been interesting and helpful having analysed the piece before practice. These answers only confirmed what was already my opinion - at this point I had already analysed the piece. Regarding practice organisation, almost all of them answered that they would or did star in the begining of the piece, except for Camilo Irizo, who said he always starts the practice of a piece in the most difficult part and go little by little to the easiest⁶. Another interesting answer I get about the practicing of *Monolog* was from Harry Sparnaay and he said "ignore people who are telling you that you HAVE to study 5 hours a day (or even more). When you really study intensively our music, your concentration will be after 1 hour tired. [...] when you go on without stopping and relaxing you are only playing, not studying anymore."

In addition, almost all the people who have played the piece wrote in the interview that the connection of this piece with the cultural music of South Korea is really important. All of them have advised me to listen this music and try to read something about it because it can help me very much with the interpretation.

Through doing these interviews I got to know people that can be very interesting to keep in contact with, thus widening my network. One of them of course is Harry Sparnaay because the piece was written for him and he was in contact with Isang Yun. Another interesting person is Laura Carmichael. She is a clarinetist from United States and she started to play bass clarinet when she listened the bassoon version of *Monolog* and she came to The Netherlands to study with Sparnaay. She has a big emotional relation with this piece and she has the knowledge of Sparnaay and her own. In addition she did a research about Isang Yun and Hosokawa clarinet music. She also spoke about 'silent practice' and this is something which I would like to know more about. Eduardo Raimundo, also mentioned something related with this practice in the interview: "I worked on them slowly without bass clarinet, looking for the most confortable combination of fingerings to play it and after this, when you have it clear in your mind then you start with [making] sound". I found this really interesting because we musicians, as professional athletes, have physical limitations in our practice and we become tired, and the silent practice is a great technique as it allows you to practice when the body has reached it's limit.

1.3.3. Analysis of recordings

As a last step before the interpretation of the piece I decided to analyze some recordings of *Monolog* paying attention to both the positive and the negative aspects of each one, and be aware of them at the moment of my practice. Paying attention to other people's mistakes is speacially fruitful, as you will know beforehand the points where they occur easily, even if these are not difficult passages.

Realizing that I was not an expert in this piece, I decided to simply compare all the recordings with the score. The parameters taken into account in this analysis were tempo, articulation, dinamycs and sound. Funny enough, I would later realize their importance for this particular piece, and revolve a good part of my research around them.

The recordings I chose were 2 from *Youtube* and 1 from *Spotify*. The first recording, I found it on Youtube and it was made by Caroline Wüst. The other two recordings were made by the same artist, Xocas Meijide, who was bass clarinet student in Codarts with Henri Bok and now is bass clarinet player in the Banda

⁶ Interview with Camilo Irizo 03/04/2015.

⁷ Interview with Harry Sparnaay 26/03/2015.

⁸ Interview with Laura Carmichael 03/04/2015.

⁹ Interview with Eduardo Raimundo 08/04/2015.

Municipal de A Coruña in Spain. One of the recordings was a live concert on 7th June 2012 and the other is a track in his album Doubles.

Caroline Wüst's recording was uploaded to Youtube on 14/04/2014 but there is no reference of when it was recorded. The quality of the recording is really good and also her playing. In parameters of technique there is nothing to point out, the quality of the sound, the tempo and the articulation, everything in the right place. From the beginning to the end she keeps the tempo really stable and the variations of dynamics and pitch in the glissandi are perfectly done. In the high register the intonation is quite good, only some of the grace notes are not prefect, but for me it is almost imposible to play it without any little mistake.

The recordings from Xocas Meijide are quite different. Of course a live recording is not the same as a studio recording, but the quality of performance should be the same. About the live recording (Youtube 7th June 2012) I could not give a positive feedback, because it isn't, in my opinion, a good performance. The tempo is not stable and the fast parts are not clear. I only listen a lot of notes without rhythm sense, and the long tones in the high register are sometimes almos half their length. I think that maybe due to the nervousness that comes from performing to a live audience or to a less than perfect preparation, this performance was not good.

On the other hand I have to say that the recording of the piece in his Album is quite good. The sound and the tempo are more relaxed, even in the fast parts. In general it seems a more preapred performance because everything is in the right place, good sound and articulation. I only miss a little bit of energy in the part of the high register, but this is something personal.

1.4. Intervention

After all this theoretical work done on Monolog, what I found really interesting was that I got a lot of ideas for the continuation of my research. In general, I was not used to analyzing the structure of the pieces before playing them because in the "classical clarinet repertoire", except some special pieces, all of them have the same kind of structure: sonata, lied, rondo or theme with variations. One listens to all these standard forms for a lifetime and they become easily recognizable when we have to play them in our instrument. With this I don't want to say that the analysis of the classical repertoire is not important, because a good analysis of the piece before or during your practice helps a lot to understand the piece for a good final performance. But when we are students, we use to leave this work to our instintic and we are able to play the piece with a good sense of the structure. In the contemporary music this doesn't work at all. The techniques that the composers use to create their pieces don't usually follow this "classical" style and because we are not used to listening and studying contemporary pieces (at least where I come from) we are missing a lot of information needed for playing this music. When you analyse a piece you get all the information about how it is structured and this gives you a clue of how to organize both the practice and the interpretation of the piece.

When I listened and looked at the piece for the first time I did not understand how its different parts were organized. It was after doing the structural analysis of Monolog that I really discovered the different themes and characteristic of the piece. With all the information gathered from the graphics I made and the help of Hans Koolmes, I could identify the characteristics of each theme or part and how they developed during the piece. This is really important because I can decide how I want to play each theme and apply it when it appears during the piece, making a really efficient use of the time. I could have done my practice from beginning to end as I was used to do before, but I dediced to practice the fragments with the same elements and same character together. For example, the fragment in bars 1 to 14 is theme A, which appear again clearly in bars 19 to 22 and 34 to 45. 11

¹ Complete analysis of the piece in page 32.

¹⁰ When I write "classical repertoire" I do not want to make reference only to the classic period, I mean the pieces which are part of the standard repertory for the students and profesional clarinet players.

The next part of the intervention cycle was the interviews to the experts. In these interviews I tried to get an idea of how they focus their practice and try to find some clues for the practice of Monolog. For this, I sent the questionnair to musicians who had played the piece and others who had not. I tried to contact around 15 experts, but only 9 of them replied. As I explained, I wanted to get ideas for an efficient practice of the piece and I discovered great things. First, I could see that my idea to make an analysis of the piece was, according to the experts, a good starting point for the practice. Regarding the actual learning process, all of them said that they first read the piece without playing and then tried to play it once through to check the difficulties and the possible technical issues. After that, they started practicing (or said they would) from the begginig, with the exception of Camilo Irizo, who always begins with the difficult passages. I can not say which method is more efficient, but for me, given my level at this moment, it was not possible to start with the difficult parts. Although I started from the beginning, as I moved forward with the analysis of the piece, I came to the conclusion that I should practice it by themes, as is explained in the previous paragraph. When I practiced a fragment of the piece taking care of the character which I wanted to implement in the music, I jumped to the same theme along the piece to practice in the same way. For me this allowed for a faster practice of the musicality of the piece because I did not have to prepare my mind each time for a new fragment, I went with the same idea directly to the point where I wanted to apply it. Of course I needed time to practice the notes but I already implement the musicality directly to the practice. When I focus my practice in one idea it's easier to obtain good results than when I'm changing it continuously.

Other ideas and advices I got from the interviews was the importance of the dynamics and articulation in this music, as I decided to research in the second intervention cycle. I had to work really hard and slow to obtain a perfect result with these parameters (as perfect as possible). In pieces like *Monolog*, where there are a lot of written details, is very easy to skip some of them inadvertently. There are a lot of articulations, which are really difficult to play faithfully. In the case of the accents, for example, is very important to play each accent separately, as a invidivual note, and try to play all of them with the same character and get the feeling. The slow practice is something that all the experts mentioned as essencial, and playing fast is only a waste of time because you can not focus in the details. A new idea I was introduced to by some of the experts was the "silent practice" which besides allowing you to keep practicing when you are tired. It is also a good way to save time practicing, not only because you can practice when you are in places where you can not play but also because by not having your instrument it is impossible to "just play". The idea is to take the score and practice with your fingers (with or without the instrument) the differents difficult passages moving the fingers really slow. In this way you can get the muscle memory in your fingers and then when you practice the same part later, you already have the fingerings in your mind.

The last part of this intervention cycle was the analysis of some recordings of *Monolog*. My purpose with these analysis was to really listen to how the players perform this piece and how they manage the difficult parts. Listenting carefully I really can hear what they play well and what they do wrong and try do not make the same mistakes when I am playing. Of course in the same interpretation you can hear things that you like and things that you don't, but basically you are being critical and deciding what you do not like and what do you want to consider for your own interpretation. I don't ususally do this analysis but after doing it once I can say that it is a really nice work because it is a way to create your own version or a part of it. The problem of this kind of analysis comes when you only can find one recording or you just listen to one version, then you are limited by that version and you can make the "mistake" of doing an imitation. The parameters I decided to take care at the moment of the practice considering this analysis were:

- Tempo and rhythm: Play the rhythm as it is written in the difficult parts without rushing and try to play the complete length of the long tones.
- Contrast between parts: keep the music really quiet at the beginning to be able to make a big difference in the contrasting parts, otherwise the piece becomes very static.

- Sound flexibility: try to play with a sound which allows me to be flexible in the registers.

After all this fantastic work on *Monolog*, my idea for the next intervention cycle was to start practicing the piece and look for information about the influences of the Korean music in this music, to make an interpretation considering the background of the piece. I tried to find this information from books and articles and also did some interviews to experts in this piece.

As final recording for this first IC, I decided to record some fragments of the piece as result of the analysis. I think it is really important to know the different parts of the piece and how they appear along the music, because when I am going to practice, I have to try that all these excerpts will be in the same atmosphere. I played some fragment attending to the main themes (A, B and C) which appears along the piece in different places and not always with the same shape:

- Theme A: I played three fragments in bars 1 to 8, 19 to 22 and 39 to 45. In this fragments the idea is that the music has to be really quiet, as a meditation, and the changes of dynamics should sound progressively without to much disturbing.
- Theme B: In this part I decided to play two fragments form bars 14 to 18 and 26 to 27. In this theme the principal characteristic is the use of the trills, accents and fast changes of dinamics.
- Theme C: From bar 46 to 51. Here is very important the use of the high register of the clarinet with long and forte notes with the use of graces notes as interruptions
- At the end I played the bars 81 to 84 where the composer uses material from theme A and B mixing the melodics lines with the use of the trills.

The recording was made at my home on 6 April 2015. 12

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¹² Video n°2 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/IN81kwnRFrk

2. 2ND INTERVENTION CYCLE

2.1. Reference Recording

The reference recording for the second intervention cycle was made in Codarts on 4-11-2015.¹³ In this recording I played the piece from the beginning ultil bar 27 (first page of the piece) because that is the part I had studied until that moment and what I was looking for in the feedback was to get more ideas about the interpretation of the piece. I know that this piece has a strong relation with the Korean traditional music and I wanted reflect this relation in my interpretation. I sent the recording to Carlos Tarancón. He is a spanish bassoon player and student of Sergio Azzolini (who worked directly with Yun in the *Monolog* for bassoon). I also had a lesson with Fie Schouten where I play the same fragment of the piece. She is one of the new bass clarinet teachers in Codarts and she was student of Harry Sparnaay for whom the piece was dedicated. She specializes in contemporary music and is very active in the Dutch musical scene.

2.2. Feedback from the recording

Listening to my own recording I can say that can be improved on a technical level, the legato in the ornaments could be better as well as the sound should not disapear when playing in *pianississimo* (*ppp*). In bar 14 (minute 2), I think I was playing very strict and not moving the music, the articulations (accents, legato) are not clear and the dynamics could be more contrasting.

As I said before I sent this video to Carlos Tarancon, who was a student of Azzolini and worked with him in this piece. He made some remarks about two important things to work on - the same things Azzolini told him in his first lesson: Sound and Timing. Regarding the sound he made reference to the Korean traditional music, where the instruments "are characterized by a sound that is somewhat nasal, very defined articulation (sometimes excessively so) and big use of fast vibrato" and he said is something interesting to find in the isntrument.

The second thing is the timing, this music is not built upon a harmonic base, like western music, but there is a harmonic relation created by the ornaments and the main notes. He advised me to play the chords of the beginning in the piano and try to understand the relations between the main notes and the ornaments. The rests also have a harmonic relevance as they are used by the composer to create tension between two notes that are clearly connected harmonicly. He gave me a concrete example: "One example is the pause between bars 18-19, it is too long for me because harmonically the melody finishes with an A# which we can say belongs to a seventh chord F# A# C# E and it is resolved in bar 19 in B (B and F#)". These notes are the real pitch.

After this answer I asked him about the tempo, because that is something I had in mind but I was not sure about how to manage it. He thinks the tempo should be freer and he made reference to his teacher Azzolini, who told him that the figures of the beginning should not be stric, it is only a way to write what the composer had in mind. The last advice was to measure the piece in a 3/2 bar instead of the written 6/4 bar. This organizes the bar in 3 parts like a dance, where each beat has a different meaning.

¹³ Video n°3 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/-w9FWgxoOJU

¹⁴ Answer from Carlos Tarancon about the reference recording.

¹⁵ Ibid: example of timming in pauses in his feedback.

The other feedback I received was from Fie Schouten who studied with Harry Sparnaay and played the piece in her final exam. I didn't send her the recording because she is one of my new teachers in Codarts and I played to her in a lesson. After playing through the part I had prepared she told me: "you play really good but everything is too measured" Then one of the things I thought was more important now it is not. The tempo is relevant but it shouldn't be strict. She also mentioned that the written length of the notes in the beginning is only a reference and it is not neccesary to play their complete value. The last important thing about interpretation was the dynamics. In her opinion the contrasts between the different dynamics are much more important than their consistency, because that is one of the main characteristics of this music.

2.3. Data Collection

In this second intervention cycle I wanted to focus in the relation between the piece with the Korean traditional music to be able to apply this knowledge in my preparation and interpretation of the piece. It is for that reason that I made a data collection in different ways. Firstly I wanted to find literature about Korean traditional music to find its principal ideas and how it influences the music of Isang Yun. After that, with the information obtained from this literature, the idea was to interview some experts to get a stronger idea about the interpretation of *Monolog* and after that try to make some experiments to apply all the collected information in my final performance.

2.3.1. Literature

I was looking for information related specifically to *Monolog* on the internet and I could only find some biographies about Insag Yun and the preface which appears in the edition of the piece. After some time looking for that information, I finally found an artistic research for a Doctorate Degree of Musical Arts by Laura Hauser. The title of this research is "*A performer's analysis of Isang Yun's Monolog for Bassoon an emphasis on the role of traditional korean influences*". This work was very helpful for me because what I was looking for was the influence of the Korean traditions in the piece. The difference between this research and my own lies in the fact that I want to apply the knowledge of these influences in my playing to create an informed performance based in the root of this piece.

Even being a great discovery, one work or book is not enough to base an idea on. It is for that reason that I contacted Henrice Vonk¹⁷ trying to find an expert in Korean music, and she gave me the name of Keith Howard. Keith Howard is an ethnomusicologist with regional interests primarily in Korea, but also Siberia, Nepal, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan and Zimbabwe. His disciplinary/sub-disciplinary interests are ethnomusicology, anthropology, studies of religion, composition, education, shamanism, early keyboard instruments, players and restorers. He is a qualified state teacher with BA and MA degrees in musicology, a PhD in anthropology, and a Licentiate from Trinity College of Music.¹⁸ I thought of interviewing him but when I emailed him, he advised me to read some of the articles he wrote on the *Ssi-ol. Almanach der Internationalen Isang Yun Gesellschaft*. The articles are the following:

¹⁷ Henrice Vonk is the head of the Artistic Research Department in Codarts and she is expert in ethnical and traditional music

¹⁶ Feedback from Fie Schouten.

¹⁸ SOAS University of London website: http://www.soas.ac.uk/staff/staff31135.php

- Korean Tradition in Isang Yun's Composition Style (Howards, 1999)
- *Piri/P'iri*: Isang Yun's composition and the Korean oboe (Howards, 2009)
- Perspectives on Isang Yun's Second Clarinet Quintet (Howards, 1994)

After I read these articles, I wanted to find more information about the Haupttone technique which Yun used in his compositions and I found a new reseach about the use of this technique in the 2nd movement of the Duo for Violoncello and Harp by Isang Yun. This work was made for Sinae Kin in the University of Ottawa, Canadá, in 2012.

Reading all this information I learned a lot about how the music and style of Yun is influenced by Eastern music and in particular, traditional Korean music. The principal idea which Yun had during his compositional stage was his desire to connect the music from his culture and country with the language of the Western music. He tried to translate the sound of the Korean folk music to the european system of musical notation.

One of the principal influences that Yun had during his life was the religion. The Asian culture in general and specifically the Korean life has a big relation with the religions. The Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism are some of the most important and most extended religions in the continent. As Laura Hauser wrote in her paper about the Monolog for bassoon, Isang Yun incorporated a vast variety of traditional Korean musical elements in his music, some of which stem directly from Buddhism and Taoism. Buddhist and Taoist elements are embedded in Yun's compositional style and provide his music with a meditative quality that permeates throughout his complete compositional output. 19 To understand the Taoism we have to focus in the idea of the yin and yang. This concept is the idea of two forces which are everywhere and they are opposite and complementary. Yin embodies more feminine characteristics such as passive, weak, dark, negative, and static, while yang represents masculine behaviors of active, strong, bright, positive, and dynamic.²⁰

To develop this concept of the yin and yang into the music Yun created a new compositional technique which he labeled Haupttone. He named this term in German because that is where he lived after being exiled from his country. The meaning of this technique is "main-tone" and it is based in long sounds which have ornaments and embellishment around them. The long notes represent the yang and the ornaments the yin. "The main tone is ever present in the long-sustained tone as yang, yet at the same time the elements of yang are surrounded by yin: perpetual fluctuations in dynamics, the microtonal modifications of the main tone, melismas, other types of embellishments. In other words, the two opposite elements, yin and yang are alive, vet in harmony."21

Another reflect of the religion in the style of Yun is the lack of metric pulse. This comes from the influence of Buddhism, where the chants of the ceremonies and rituals use this kind of melodies where there is no rhythmic pattern. Howard suggests that Yun's last work composed in 1994, Engel in Flammen – Epilog, represents the culmination of Yun's journey toward Buddhism. Not only does Yun portray the struggles of society, but his own personal struggles are represented as well.²²

¹⁹ HAUSER, Laura, 2009. A performer's analysis of Isang Yun's Monolog for bassoon with an emphasis on the role of traditional Korean influences. Graduate Faculty of the Louisiana State University. Pag. 20.

²⁰ HOWARD, Keith, "Korean Tradition in Isang Yun's Composition Style." Ssi-ol: Almanach der Internationalen Isang Yun Gesellsschaft (1998/99), pag 86.

²¹ Jeongmee Kim, "Musical Syncretism in Isang Yun's Gasa," in Locating East Asia in Western Art Music, ed. Yayoi Uno Everett and Frederick Lau (Middletown, Conn: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 185-186. Quoted in HAUSER, *A performer's analysis*, 21 Howard, "Korean Tradition," 96

The music of Isang Yun is not only influenced by the Buddhism and Taoism. He was also greatly influenced by the traditions from Korea, present day South Korea. He was not always influenced under this tradition. It was when he came to Europe that he started to use this tradition in his compositions as he explains: "When I was in Korea, I enjoyed and listened to our rich Korean musical traditions for entertainment. But I realized the hidden treasures of Korean traditional music for the first time only after I came to Europe." This influence also can be explained trought the Haupttone technique. The music from the Eastern countries is totally different to our music and also the concept of melody and harmony. The Eastern music uses the idea of a central tone with a big variety of ornaments and the idea of melodies "without ending". In an interview with Bruce Duffie, Yun explained this idea: "My music doesn't have a beginning or an end. You could combine elements from one piece into another piece very well.... Music flows in the cosmos and I have an antenna which is able to cut out a piece of the stream. The part which I've cut out is organized and formed through my own thought and body processes, and I commit it to paper. That's why my music is always continuous - like the clouds that are always the same but are never alike one to another."²⁴

The concept of the long tones with ornaments in the Korean music is not only due to philosophy or abstract thoughts, there is also a physical influence due to the musical intruments. Each instrument is different but all of them are very flexible in the pitch. This is related to the musical idea of changing the sound and embellishing it. There are a lot of important intruments but in this case, the one which is more related with the reed wind intruments like bass clarinet or basson is the *Piri*. This instrument is a double-reed intrument similar to the Western oboe, made of wood with eight open holes. Due to the size of the reed, which is quite big, the *piri* is extremely flexible in the pitch which is easily changed with the adjustment of the embochure.

The influences of the music of Yun comes from different sources as religion or musical tradition, but all these influence converge in one idea: the *Haupttone*. This is the musical base of the Korean music explained in Western terms. From the Korean music I learned that it is built by important long tones which are embellished with different kinds of ornametrs and these tones are alive. About this Yun said: "For us in the East, the tone already lives in itself. Every tone in East Asian music is exposed to transformations from the initial stages of action to the dying away. It is furnished with ornamentation, appoggiatura, oscillations, glissandi, and dynamic variations. Above all the natural vibration of every tone is consciously set up as the means of expression."²⁵

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²³ Isang Yun, "Debussy and I," in *Yun Isang u i U mak Segye*, trans. and ed. So ngman Choi and Eunmi Hong (Seoul: Hangil Sa, 1991), 67, quoted in Hauser, *A performer's analysis*, 27.

²⁴ Bruce Duffie, "Composer Isang Yun: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie," http://www.bruceduffie.com/yun.html

Jiyeon Byeon, "The Wounded Dragon: An Annotated Translation of Der verwundete Drache, the Biography of Composer Isang Yun, by Luise Rinser and Isang Yun" (PhD diss., Kent State University, 2003) 135, quoted in Hauser, A performer's analysis, 31.

2.3.2 Recordings of Korean Music

To get an idea about how all these elements sound in a practical context, I decided to listen to some recordings of Korean Music but related with the wind instruments in concrete the Piri. I found in YouTube several recordings of this Korean instrument playing solo pieces. It is quite curious that in most videos the players of this instrument were women. I do not know if this is related with the culture of this country or it has simply been a coincidence.

The first piece I listen was *Sangyeongsan* for Solo Piri, played by Jiha Park on 11th Novembre of 2010 at St. George's Hall in Liverpool.²⁶ Since the beginning of the piece it is easily recognizable all the characteristics of the Korean Music: long tones ornamented by fast notes, change of pitch and change of dynamics. Listening carefully to the long tones, I could hear that they are never static, the performer always does something to make this notes alives like progressive changes of dinamycs or sometimes a kind of shaped curve to the sound.

The second recording is a piece called *Sanjo 2* for Piri Solo by the Korean-American composer Paul Yeon Lee. This recording was the World Premiere of the piece, on May 7th of 2015 in The Korea Society, New York.²⁷ As I could read in the explanation of this video, the idea of the composer was not the imitation of the Korean Music. As Isang Yun, Paul Yeon Lee wanted to evoke the spirit of the Korean Sanjo in contemporary Western music. In this piece, as in the previous one, I could find this element of the main tones. In this piece I could noticed the use of strong accents at the beginning of the notes and the use of the vibrato which had a particularly big range.

2.3.3. Interview about the interpretation of *Monolog* to experts.

To make an interpretation using the characteristic of the Korean influences first I have to decide which characteristic I want to apply in my interpretation. Before going deeply in the practical application I wanted to ask directly to the experts who really know the piece and worked directly hand to hand with Isang Yun in *Monolog*. These were Harry Sparnaay²⁸ for whom the piece was written and also Sergio Azzolini²⁹. In that interview I asked them concrete questions about the influence of the yin and yang in the piece, the vibrato, the application of the Haupttone in the interpretation and the tempo. I sent the questionary to the two musicians and both answered me, but I have to say that Azzolini took it more seriously than Sparnaay.

The first question I asked them was about the meaning of the piece, if Yun told them something about it or the influences he captured in the piece. Both answered negatively to this question but Sergio explained me a lot of things about the general influences. He mentioned the importance of the vibrato, and how it should imitate the sound of the Piri, the importance of the accents and the need of strong cantabile. All these elements were asked by Yun directly when they worked together. Going deeply in these elements I asked them about the use of the vibrato in the piece and I got very interesting answers. When Harry Sparnaay

²⁶ Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDHwdnCausQ

²⁷ Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UI96DoY_QwI

²⁸ One of the most important bass clarinet players was one of those who develop the bass clarinet as a soloist instrument. More than 500 pieces have been written for him and he recorded more than 40 albums. Actually he does not play bass clarinet.

²⁹ He is one of the most influentials bassoon players in the world. He worked in the version for bassoon of *Monolog* with Isang Yun.

³⁰ From the interview with Sergio Azzolini.

played the first time for Yun, he did a little bit of vibrato in the high register and Yun was happy with this, but Azzolini mentioned a really interesting idea what Yun said to him: "music without vibrato doesn't exist"31. He also mentioned that the vibrato is an element of Yun's music and the reminiscense to Piri has to be present in this piece³². This, together with the idea of Yun that all the longs notes should be alive, made me think that the use of the vibrato in the long notes is really important.

Another point I felt was important for the interpretation of Monolog was the sense of tempo, and that was my next question: should the tempo of the piece in general be strict or should there be a sense of freedom? The result of this question was that the piece is a kind of raphsody, where the tempo is not the most important part but I have to keep more or less the established tempo. Sparnaay said that in the very loud frases the dynamics are more important than the length of the notes, so they could be a bit shorter³³ for obvious practical reasons.

The last important idea I got from these interviews was the importance of making a good cantabile in the slow parts and trying to integrate the breathings into the context as a musical element. The contrasts are very important in this piece that is why there must be big differences between the slow and cantabile part against the more dramatic part which is full of articulations and movement.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Interview with Harry Sparnaay.

2.3.4. Experiment about interpretation

The idea of experimentation is to try some ideas which I got from the interviews and the literature reasecrh and apply them to my playing. It is interesting to make recordings and listen to them before deciding because it is easier to hear the details from outside of the performance.

The elements I have decided to integrate in my playing are the use of vibrato and the articulations (really clear differences between strong accents, "soft" accents and no accents).

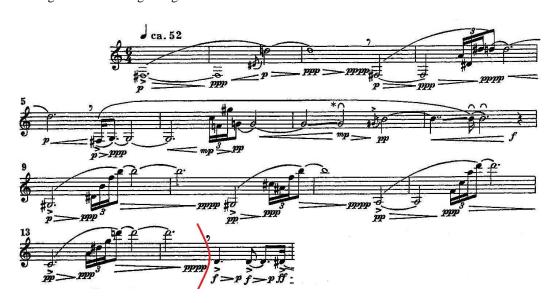
A) Vibrato

In the clarinet technique, in general, the vibrarto is not often used as an expressive resource. I think it is the only wind instrument that does not use the vibrato as a natural way of playing. Nowadays the new generation of clarinet players are starting to use it in some repertoires but always in concrete expressive points of the pieces, not as a basic technique of interpretation. The same applies to the bass clarinet, we do not use the vibrato frequently but there are some pieces in which it is inevitable to use it for a better interpretation. In the case of *Monolog*, I know from the literature and also from the comporser that the vibrato is very important. As I explained before, in the interview with Azzolini, he mentioned the thoughts of Yun about the vibrato: "Yun said that music without vibrato doesn't exist. I was quite surprised about this sentence, but we have to understand this as an element of expression in his music".³⁴

Knowing that this element is an essential part of the music of Isang Yun, I have to decide how to integrate the vibrato in this piece. I know from all the research that the places where vibrating the notes would add to the interpretation is in the long notes, because in Korean traditional music the long notes have to be alive. In the fast passages there is no place to do it because there are other elements more important as accents, trills and dynamics changes.

I chose two excerps of the piece where the long notes are the main theme:

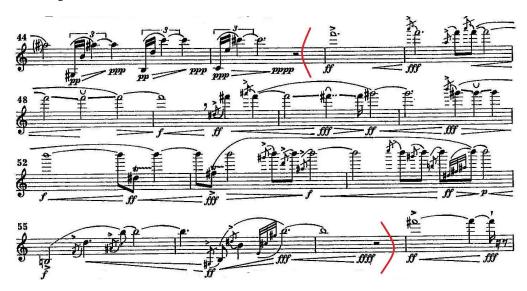
1st Passage is from the beginning until bar 14.



Example 15. Bars 1-14

³⁴ Interview with Sergio Azzolini

2nd Passage from bar 46 to 57.



Example 16. Bars 47 to 58.

These two fragmens are an example of the long notes. Of course there are more fragments but it is not necessary to repeat the same experiment in all the parts because they are very similar, and the result can be applicable on them. I have chosen these fragments because they are a clear example of two different sections of the piece. The first fragment is the beginning of the piece really stable and cantabile and the second is one part of the piece when the music goes really high and extremely loud.

In the first fragment I thought three different options for the vibrato. I could vibrate all the long notes, only the important notes (if I follow the idea of the Haupttone technique) or not vibrate any of them. I recorded three videos with the different options.

Option 1: fragment without vibrato³⁵

Option 2: the entire fragment using vibrato³⁶

Option 3: using vibrato in the main notes of the fragment.³⁷

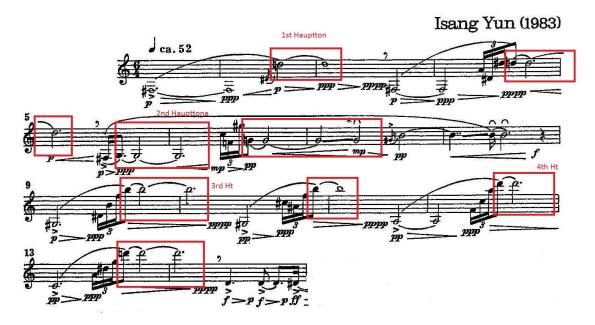
To clarify the last option of the vibrato I have done a notated score of the fragment where I marked inside a red square the main notes of the passage. There is not a rule for this selection or this notes, I chose the notes because I felt they were the most important for the melodic line. The hauopttones of the fragments are:

D-G-B-D

³⁵ Watch video n°4 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/bFmYBUjbzVg

³⁶ Watch video n°5 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/bI0-iDORHLY

³⁷ Watch video n°6 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/KlziojWK3FI

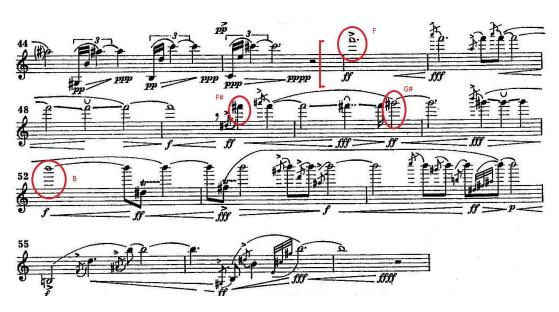


Example 17. Bars 1-14 (Haupttones)

As we can see each note has its own harmonic sense due to the ornaments, but in the big line of the melody they are conected between them as a chord: G/B/D. This conection between the long notes makes a big melody which creates the feeling of never ending music, as in Korean traditional music.

In the second fragment, the idea of the vibrato is different. It is a really high part and very intense, and the vibrato can make this part even more painfull. Harry Sparnaay explained in the interview that he played this part with vibrato and Yun liked it. In this passage the melody is ascending and all the long notes are part of it. In this case the melodic progression of the haupttones is:

F - F# - G# - B



Example 18. Haupttone bars 46 to 57.

Here I recorded 2 videos: one with vibrato and other one without vibrato to see how it works better for the interpretation. The music here is really screaming and intense in the high register of the bass clarinet and to make this part much more intense I think it is necessary to add the vibrato, but in this case I think the vibrato must be faster than in the beginning of the piece.

Option 1: without vibrato³⁸

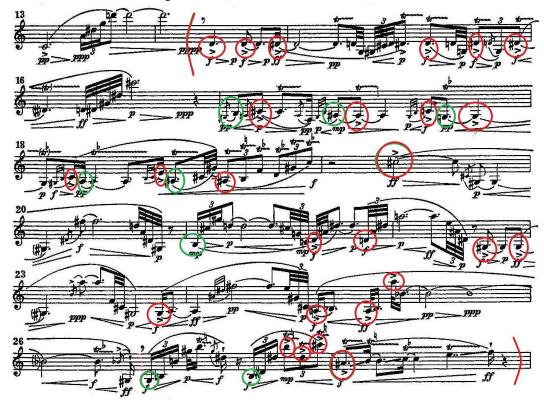
Option 2: with fast vibrato³⁹

B) Accents and articulation

The second parameter to try new things is the articulation. As Azzolini mentioned in the interview, Yun always asked him to play stronger accents when he was playing. Also one of the characteristics of Korean traditional music is the big variety of articulations, for this reason I decided to try to improve this element.

The fragment of the piece where the articulation and the accents are more relevant and have to be clearer is in the middle section between bars 14 and 33. In this kind of experiment there is nothing new to add to the score, the goal is simply trying to be really strict with the articulation and the rhythm and even exaggerate these articulations and dynamics.

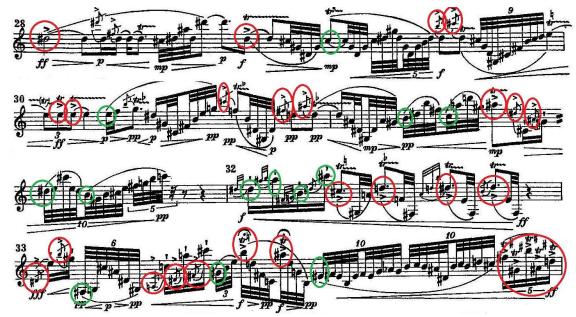
To get a better result I divided the whole fragment into two parts because when the fragments are shorter it is easier to focus on the details. The first fragment is from bar 14 to 27 and the second from 28 to 33. I did an anotated score where I marked the notes with accents (red circle) and the notes of the beggining of slurs which don't start with accent (green circle).



Example 19. Bars 14-27 (articulation)

³⁸ Watch video n°7 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/Z 7 GGMEtUY

³⁹ Watch video n°8 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/-BkQ2RnqBsI



Example 20. Bars 28-33 (articulation)

- Fragment 1: bars 13-27.40

- Fragment 2: bars 28-33⁴¹

C) Results of the experiment.

The principal idea for these experiments was the application of the characteristics of the Korean music. In this case I chose two parameters to apply to my playing: the vibrato and the articulation. The reason to choose these two elements was because, although there are many more, these are the more easily applicable and ones that transmit the roots of the piece more effectively.

The vibrato is something I wanted to apply in my interpretation because after all the research I learned that it is one of the more characteristic elements of this music and it perfectly personifies the ideas of the composer about music. The vibrato is really important for Yun but the problem comes when I have to decide how to use it. The piece has different sections with different atmospheres, and of course the vibrato should not be the same in all of them. I chose two seccions with longs notes, where the vibrato can be easily heard and after the experiment I was sure that the option of non vibrato is not right for this interpretation. In the high notes the fast vibrato makes this section even more painful. At the beginning of the piece, I think the best option is to vibrate only the main notes, because that makes the phrasing more interesting. The option of playing everything with vibrato makes this part much less interesting and very static musically.

Regarding articulation, the experiment I did was of a different kind because in this case I knew the result, as the issue was very clear after the research: clear articulations and strong accents. This video is the result of a work on the score finding all the details and after that translated to the instrument. The result was really much better comparing with the reference recording of this intervention cycle. One of the things I realized in the recording of this passage was the instability of tempo. Although I worked with metronome to keep a stable tempo, sometimes it is not very clear so this is something I can improve for the final recording.

⁴⁰ Watch video n°9 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/fBe-420DUc8

⁴¹ Watch video n°10 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/F_oiPXUVy1U

If these parts are played with all these details I will be able to make the big differences between the themes and bring out that inner philosophy of the yin and yang that the piece has.

2.4. Application to my interpretation.

After all this internvention cycle I have absorved a lot of information about the influences that Isang Yun had when he composed. He wanted to make a combination of Korean music and style but using the Western techniques of composition and the instruments. As we know and I could verify, the Eastern culture is completely based in the religion and it has a really important philosophic base. It is very interesting to know how these influences affect the music of the composer, but these influences are really difficult to apply to the playing because it is something very difficult to measure in musical parameters. In addition to these abstracts influences there are other influences that come from the musical tradition of Korea, where Isang Yun was born. From my research I could discover that the most important characteristics of this music are the use of the vibrato, the microtonality and also the strong articulation. And I chose these parameters to apply them on my interpretation.

With the vibrato and articulation as main characteristic of this music I did some experiments and I decided to apply the results to my final interpretation. To show this intertpretation using the result of my research I have done an annotate $score^{42}$ where I have marked all the ideas I got from the intervention cycle about the Korean influences to help me in my practice and interpretation. These ideas are the use of the vibrato, which is not a common resource of interpretation on the bass clarinet or at least not in this way, and the awareness of the articulations trying to do them as clear as possible. Playing this parameter in the right way also I developed a third part of the interpretation which is the big contrast of the piece.

Another parameter which I read about and I received information was the tempo. In this case I was told that the tempo in this piece has to be free as a kind of musical rapshody. It is very difficult to decide how freely I should play. When I play this piece I don't think that the aspect of freedom should be reflected in the speed of the tempo because Yun is clear in the rhythm and he wrote a tempo mark (52 bpm aprox.). In the interpretation of this piece you can go forward or backward with the tempo but never going too far from the tempo given by the composer. The idea of free tempo in my opinion is focused in the long notes and the phrasing. All the long notes are very long and the counting of them is contrary to the idea of meditation of this piece. Of course it is very important to play what is written, but following the advices of the experts, the music is of greater importance than the perfect tempo, and if in some moments I feel that I have to play some notes shorter I am free to do so as well as the opposite. In other hand, these changes can proceed from technical issues as the breathing, where sometimes the performer will need to finish a phrase or a note before or after to do a necessary or a musical breathing. In conclusion, I will not make a firm decision about tempo because for my thoughts and feelings there isn't a standart for this parameter in this music, it is all about the musical feeling of the moment.

To show this result I made a final recording of *Monolog* where I play a big fragment, from bar 1 to bar 62⁴³. In this recording I played the piece adding the different elements of the Korean traditional music, the vibrato and being really strictic and even exaggerating the articulation.

⁴² See attachments

⁴³ Watch video n°11 in USB Stick. URL: https://youtu.be/41QD18R6bkQ

III. APPENDICES

1. NETWORK

- Camilo Irizo: Clarinet teacher in the Sueprior Conservatory of Sevilla (Spain) and member of the Contemprary Music Ensamble "Taller Sonoro". He gave me the first feedback and also he answered an interview.
- Carlos Taracón: Spanish bassoon player, student of Sergio Azzolini. He gave me feedback from the reference recording of the 2° Intervention Cycle and also the contact with Azzolini.
- Caroline Wüst: clarinet and bass clarinet player from Austria, I contacted with her because I listened a really good recording of the piece in Youtube and I did an interview to her.
- **David Calvo**, Clarinet teacher in the Superior Conservatory of Jaén (Spain) and Solo clarinet of the Orchesta City of Almería, OCAL (Spain). He gave me the first feedback and also he answered an interview.
- Eduardo Raimundo: Bass Clarinet of the National Orchestra of Spain. He was part of my first interview.
- **Federico Mosquera:** New artistic research coach in Codarts. He helped me a lot at the end of my research when attend his domaings meetings.
- Fie Schouten: New bass clarinet teacher in Codarts, specialized in contemporary music.
- Hans Koolmes: Composition teacher in Codars. He helped me when I wanted to analyse the piece.
- **Harry Sparnaay:** Together with Henri Bok, one of the most important bass clarinet players. The piece was written for him and he worked with the composer. He was esenitial part of my second intervention cycle.
- **Henri Bok:** Ex-Bass clarinet teacher in Codarts and one of the most importat bass clarinet players in the world. He was my bass clarinet teacher in the first year and he helped me in the piece and also expanding my network.
- Ian Michael: bass clarinet player from UK. He was part of my first interview.
- **Igor Urruchi:** bass clarinet player from Spain, he was studied with Henri Bok in Codarts. He was part of my first interview.
- **Job Ter Haar:** Artistic Research Coach in Codarts. He has been my coach from the beginning of the master and always has tried to help me with good advices.
- **Keith Howards**: Expert in Korean Music, he sent to me his articles about Isang Yun and the traditional Korean music.
- Laura Carmichael: clarinet and bass clarinet player from USA, she came to The Netherlands to learn bass clarinet with Sparnaay. She has very important works with comtemporary ensembles and orchestras. He was part of my first interview.
- **Sergio Azzolini:** One of the most important bassoonist in the world, he worked directly with Isang Yun and he answered me an interview.

2. REFERENCE LIST

- Boosey & Hawkes. "Isang Yun." http://www.boosey.com/cr/composer/Isang+Yun.
- Boosey & Hawkes. "Monolog for bass clarinet." http://www.boosey.com/cr/music/Isang-Yun-Monolog/1643
- Duffie, Bruce. "Composer Isang Yun: A Conversation with Bruce Duffie." http://www.bruceduffie.com/yun.html
- Hauser, Laura (2009). A performer's analysis of Isang Yun's Monolog for bassoon with an emphasis on the role of traditional Korean influences. *Thesis*
- Howard, Keith, "Korean Tradition in Isang Yun's Composition Style." *Ssi-ol: Almanach der Internationalen Isang Yun Gesellsschaft* (1998/99).
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- International Isang Yun Society. "Isang Yun Biography." http://www.yungesellschaft.de/e/nio.htm
- Kim, Sinae, 2012 "Isang Yun and the *Hauptton* Technique: An Analytical Study of the Second Movement from *Duo für Violoncello und Harfe*". *Thesis*.

3. VIDEOS

- Video 1 Zero Recording: https://youtu.be/q3wklghJxZQ
- Video 2 1° Intevention Cycle final recording https://youtu.be/IN81kwnRFrk
- Video 3 2º Intervention Cycle reference recording: https://youtu.be/-w9FWgxoOJU
- 2° Intervention Cycle experiments:
 - Vibrato: Video 4 (fragment 1 without vibrato): https://youtu.be/bFmYBUjbzVg

Video 5 (fragment 1 with vibrato in Haupttones): https://youtu.be/bI0-iDORHLY

Video 6 (fragment 1 the entire fragment): https://youtu.be/KlziojWK3FI

Video 7 (fragment 2 without vibrato): https://youtu.be/Z_7_GGMEtUY

Video 8 (fragment 2 with vibrato): https://youtu.be/-BkQ2RnqBsI

- Articulation: Video 9 (fragment 1): https://youtu.be/fBe-420DUc8

Video 10 (fragment 2): https://youtu.be/F_oiPXUVy1U

- Final recording: https://youtu.be/4lQDl8R6bkQ

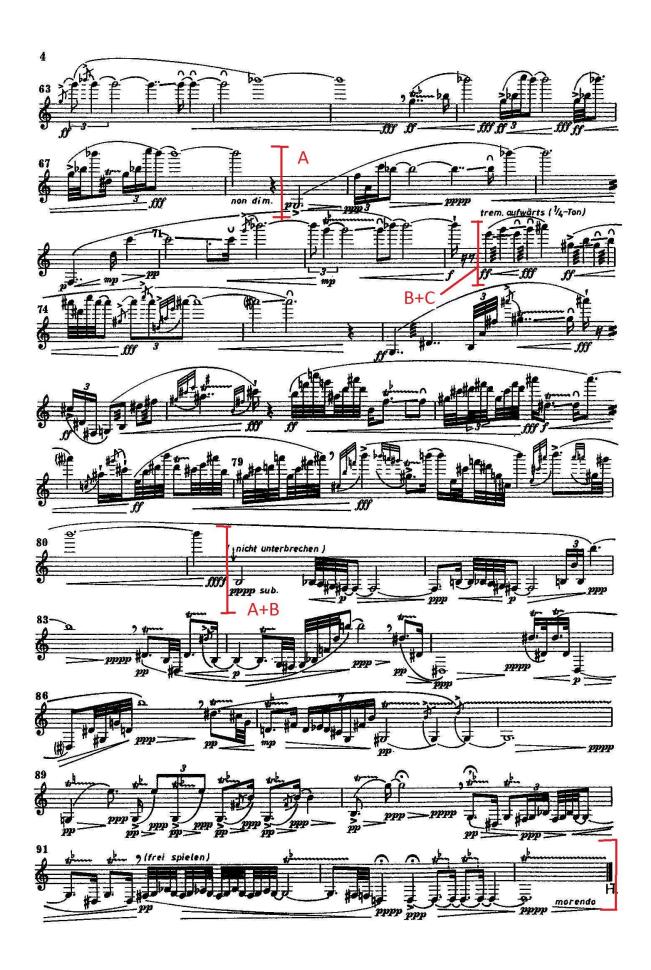
Harry Sparnaay gewidmet

MONOLOG für Baß-Klarinette in B

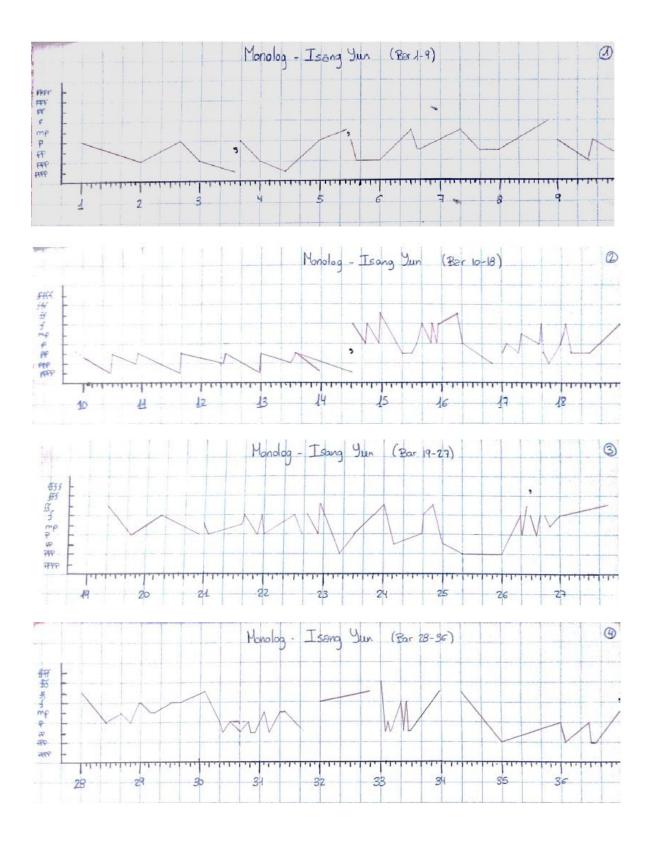


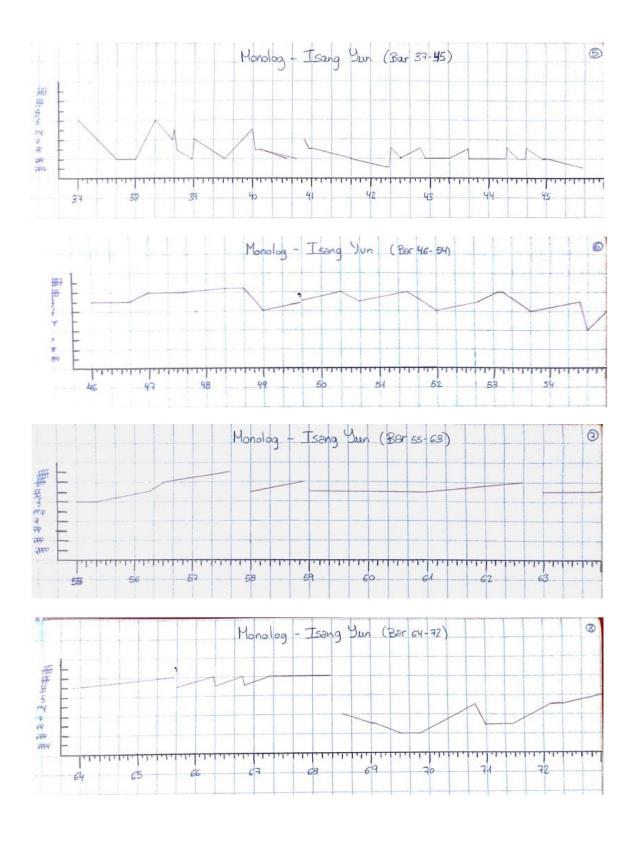
Uraufführung: 9. April 1983 Melbourne, Victorian College of the Arts (Harry Sparnaay). Spieldauer circa 11 Minuten.

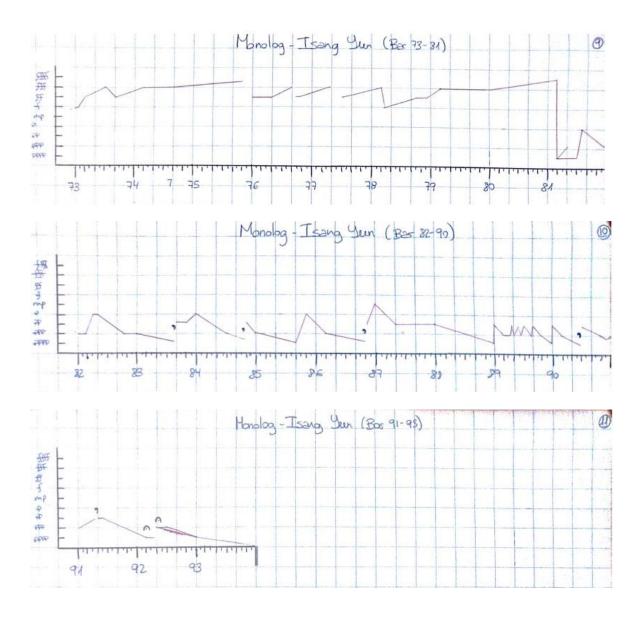




Graphic of dynamics







INTERVIEWS 1°IC

INTERVIEW: CAMILO IRIZO

-When you are going to learn a new contemporary piece, which is usually your first step? Would you use the same approach with this piece?

It depends on many factors, but generally the approach to a contemporary piece is no different approaching to the traditional repertoire. The first would be to analyze, at least an overview, the piece. See what its main elements are. It is also productive research about the composer, his work and his production referred to the clarinet. In what school or current is he inserted can help a lot also to understand the kind of music that we will play.

-Watching the score, how do you organize your practice?

The first thing I like to do is to identify the elements of the score, such as tempo and dynamic indications, and any other written information on the score. Even search for the meaning of the tittle. From there, I usually do a general reading of the work, identifying at an early stage the problems that I will see later with a detailed study. When are already localized the conflict zones, either by reading, difficulty in extended resources, etc., outline guidelines for focus from the most complex to the simplest, and without forgetting the expressive face of the piece. Especially when there is little time to study, it is essential to study with an idea close to how you will interpret it.

- When you find some technical problems with extend techniques in bass clarinet, how do you solve it?

Generally extended techniques on clarinet pose difficulties that in the rest of the family. What problems are arising from the particular features of the instrument and the limitations in practice instrumentalist, depending on whether or not they have been close to new resources. Like everything, there is nothing difficult if long enough to beat practiced. Reference books (Bok and Spaarnay) are quite useful, especially for high register (an important aspect) and detailed theoretical level on resources and how to address them explanations. The rest is practice

-How important do you think is the work before the practice (looking for information about the composer, analyse the piece, listen recordings)?

This preliminary work is very important, as long as know how to interpret a contemporary piece depends not only master a catalogue of resources, but, and most importantly, to know how to interpret within an expressive context comes from the style or current, at general level (time) or a particular level (by inherent characteristics of the composer). Generally the pieces must look at them from the eyes of tradition and understand the evolution from there. Except particular cases, the works often have the same constituent elements than a traditional piece, climatic points and rest, with harmony, with repetitive elements, etc. Ultimately locate the inner meaning of the work from the structural point of view. Then the help of recordings, comments and other performers, especially if you can, direct contact with the composer, open a direct knowledge and understanding of the works. This includes the premiere interpreter who can provide first-hand information about the true intentions of the composer regarding his work.

- Have you ever been in contact with the composer of a piece when you were studying it? Did it help in your preparation?

Due my job as a musician assembly, the contact with composers is usual. It is one of the advantages of modern music, which also lets you grow as a musician and as an instrumentalist, since the flow of direct information allows a crossroads of ideas. As instrumentalists should aspire to find the ultimate meaning of

the work and apart from the tools we have as musicians (historiography, aesthetics, musicology, etc) direct contact with the composer allows access to inside information about the piece, usually full and sometimes discovers new meanings to the speech.

One of the questions most passionate about is the direct relationship between composer and performer, because in the search for new paths, occurs frequently co-creation (as in traditional music: Mozart-Stadler, Weber-Baermann, etc.).

INTERVIEW: LAURA CARMAICHEL

-The first time you were in contact with this piece, was to play it in a concert or for your own learning? Did you take some recording or live performance by reference?

The first time I heard the piece was a live performance of the bassoon version. I was very moved by it, and it was actually one of the main reasons I was inspired to learn bass clarinet. I wanted to play *this* piece! At the time (early 1990s) I was interested in Yun's music in general, and was looking at several of his works with clarinet. I did not have a recording at the time. Years later, after studying bass clarinet for a while, I took up the piece, certainly with the intention of performing it. To learn the performance practice I studied with Harry Sparnaay. Around that time there were also a few recordings of the piece, which I listened to for reference. But somehow I had a very strong idea of what I wanted to do with the piece, from a very internal place. It was always somehow very close to me.

- When you studied this piece at the first time, did you by yourself or did you get help from someone: teachers, friends, experts...?

Both, all. After looking at the score, I realized that at the time there were certain things I didn't know how to do (best way to get bends, fingerings for high notes, some microtones, how to get the effect). Studying the piece with Sparnaay, and even after performing it several times, I also studied it with Ernesto Molinari, more to refine ideas because by then I knew the piece technically. Also important for me was working with Japanese musicians who could inform me more on the aesthetics. I also listened to some recordings of Korean music, which informed Yun's vocabulary.

- Did you look for information about the piece or the composer before your practice? Do you remember where did you find it?

Yes, I knew Yun's music before playing this piece. I knew it from conductors, live concerts, from program notes, CD liner notes, library—this was all pre-internet!! I used to go to the library a lot, and do research the old fashioned way.

- When you sat in front of the music, Was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

I think I mostly answered this in the first question of this section. Though I can also say with Yun, there were a few phrases I really wanted to try to play right away! I wanted to get into the sound. But Yun is pretty transparent; the notation is conventional enough that I could start to hear the sound in my head right away. It's also obvious the spots I would have to solve technically, and those I would take time to break down and be patient.

I stick with what you say as "First" step—to study the score a lot before playing. That said, I think it is essential to play a lot, and repeat a lot, to get things in my system on an automatic level. I go back to "silent

practice" quite regularly as I study, but no amount of thinking is a substitute for physical experience. Playing bass clarinet is very physical! But to bring the mental intentions, imagination, and emotional longing into the physicality is for me the goal. Without the instrument as a "barrier" (or to manipulate the imagined sound), I feel I can shape my ideal sound in my imagination.

- This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone? Did you create it for this piece or do you usually use the same method in contemporary music?

You mean the method of study? My method is an assimilation of many things I've learned from many people. I have had the benefit of having studied and worked with many great teachers (not only clarinettists, but also other instrumentalists, singers, conductors, martial arts teachers, Alexander technique teachers, meditation teachers—all of this informs my method of study). The art of practicing is an ongoing process. I feel I still constantly learn new things about how to learn. While with Yun I largely followed advice from Sparnaay and Molinari on technical solutions, I feel a lot of the rest of my study came from my own assimilation of other ideas. I also wanted to realize my own idea of the piece.

I also don't think music (or contemporary music) exists in a bubble. It's a communal process. For example, when I was first studying this piece I was a student at the conservatory, and listening to my co-students also study the piece informed me a lot (at the time Ikuko Suzuki, Carlos Galvez and Fie Schouten were also studying; I learned a lot from listening to their lessons and performances).

I recorded the piece some years ago, and if I recorded it again now it would sound different. Relationships with a (rich, quality) piece continue to evolve.

Is the method the same as for other contemporary pieces? I guess that depends on the vocabulary of the piece. Some pieces, like Julio Estrada's music or Stockhausen or Lachenmann require very different performance practice and thus different study techniques than Yun requires. In the overall approach I can say there is some similarity, but in the details not. In the overall scale, the "contemporary techniques" in Yun are not a radical departure from conventional notation. It's more about understanding the musical references from traditional Korean music, and an "eastern" way of thinking that is integrated with his Western technique.

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult parts of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

Thankfully I didn't have to figure this out by myself! When I first tried, it was very daunting. It's one of the reasons I came to study in Holland. There wasn't anyone who knew how to do it where I was. Sparnaay told me it took him six months to figure out fingerings for the passages on the last page of the piece. He could tell me those fingerings for high notes and the fast passages in one lesson, then I could just practice that without having to find all the solution myself first. What a gift. So then I could learn it in a few weeks time. The practicing of the big jumps applies to playing big jumps in general—for this there are some independent exercises. These I could adapt to this piece. For dynamics I had a really good training already, and could apply to this piece. When I came to study Yun, I already had some years of professional experience and advanced musical training, so these aspects like voicing, inner hearing, and dynamics (producing extreme volume changes while staying in tune when desired, for example) were things I was already experienced with and could apply in this case. But what I would say one has to search for more in this piece is the color and articulation within these parameters. This is very detailed and specific in Yun's music. The variety of ways one can color or articulate one note is very important to the performance practice, because it is referencing non-western music (Korean music). I think this is impossible to completely capture in notation. You need an aural reference (like a lot of music). If you never listened to traditional Korean music, I think you miss a big part of what Monologue is about. Furthermore, Yun's personal story and biography also informs my ideas about the piece, especially on an emotional level.

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and why and how did you to solve it?

For me personally, it's the fast and high note passages on the last page. Getting it consistent is a challenge. It's just standard "fast note" practice, combined with getting really solid with altissimo playing on bass clarinet. I found playing the passage transposed up a step and down a step (under tempo is fine) one of the most useful practice techniques, because then I really internalized the intervals. I got this practice technique from Ernesto Molinari. I also want to play the loud parts very intensely sometimes, on the edge of cracking. So sometimes it cracks. Finding that edge is another kind of challenge.

How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Noticing the pitch centers in the piece and how tension and release creates the long lines can offer a take on the structure. But I find this quite transparent in this piece, and almost intuitive to understand. Still, looking at how a piece is put together is almost always informative, and gives ideas. It's important to find the gesture in the music, and for this you have to make sense of how the pitches are organized (it's like knowing what an arpeggio is in classical music, rather than just playing note by note; there is a larger order and this gives you a sense of the gesture and phrasing). And in Monologue, there are some long notes that also need direction, given by color and a sense of the energy accumulating. Because the composer is very good, that layer of structure and strategy is there. So why not use that. Also interesting is to go back to looking at a piece this way again after you know it, or have studied it awhile.

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

How to play the instrument already is necessary. I think I already answered this in other points.

In general, I think what is necessary is the same as for any piece—some idea of the context and performance practice is always part of your job in preparation. But this is the same for Mozart as for Donatoni as for Yun. On the other hand, you can always dive in, and see what you find. I learned a lot of "contemporary techniques" when I had to because I was studying a piece that demanded it. If I wanted to learn and perform that piece, I had to learn new techniques. I always found learning technique through repertoire a satisfying approach. But I think it's important not to be naïve, know then that you don't know yet, and know what you need to learn.

Have you been in contact with the composer or with some one that had some relation with him? Did that some changes in your idea of the piece?

Yes. I think I already answered this above as well. I did not ever meet Yun myself, but studied with people who worked with him (the piece was written for Harry Sparnaay, my teacher). Also working with the composer Hosokawa who studied with Yun gave me additional information. I did a short research project on the two of them and their clarinet music, and this gave me a comparative context also for the Monologue.

Looking at several works by the same composer, and composers closely related to him/her, helps me build a clear idea of the vocabulary and what is meant with the notation. In the case of the Monologue, it is taken from the slow movement of the clarinet concerto, written a couple of years prior. Yun uses clarinet in a lot of chamber music, also listening to his music for other wind instruments can be informative. Working with a composer almost always changes my idea of a piece.

INTERVIEW: CAROLINE WÜST

-The first time you were in contact with this piece, was to play it in a concert or for your own learning? Did you take some recording or live performance by reference?

I came in contact with this piece for my own learning, and decided to record and after that, to analyse it. Perhaps not the best idea, better to do the analysis first ;-) Afterwards I would have changed some things.

I didn't take someone else as reference.

- When you studied this piece at the first time, did you by yourself or did you get help from someone: teachers, friends, experts...?

I had help from my dear friends Heinz-Peter and Petra Stump-Linshalm.

- Did you look for information about the piece or the composer before your practice? Do you remember where did you find it?

I used:

Heister, Hanns-Wernder und Sparrer, Walter-Wolfgang (Hg.) : Der Komponist Isang Yun. Zweite erw. Aufl. München 1997

Bergmeier, Hinrich (Hg.): Isang Yun-Festschrift zum 75. Geburtstag 1992. Bote&Bock Berlin 1992

- When you sat in front of the music. Was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

As always I organize my practising to safe time. I start at the beginning, and take small parts at once. First decide the fingerings of this part, then start practise and repeat slowly and often. For difficult passages I use different technical variations, always starting from very slow to fast. Finally decide where to breathe and if phrasing is like I think it should, or if I should change something again. Then move to the next part. I always repeat the already learned parts before I practise the new ones.

- This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone? Did you create it for this piece or do you usually use the same method in contemporary music?

I use the same. Of course its flexible with different pieces.

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult parts of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

As practising is always a creative process, I used not only known exercises, but also created new ones.

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and why and how did you to solve it?

Ohhh there are some hard passages. The most I struggled with T77-81

-How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Best to do it parallel I think. I first practised, then recorded, then analysed. Now I wouldn't to it like that anymore.

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

It is very interesting to read about Yun and his life, bevore playing the piece! It helps a lot for a good interpretation.

- Have you been in contact with the composer or with some one that had some relation with him? Did that some changes in your idea of the piece?

I was in contact with Harry Sparnaay, which changed a little, but not a lot.

INTERVIEW: DAVID CALVO

-The first time you were in contact with this piece, was to play it in a concert or for your own learning? Did you take some recording or live performance by reference?

The first time I knew the piece was looking for pieces for a student who had a really important audition. I had played different pieces from this composer, for solo clarinet, in orchestra and also for clarinet an piano, but I didn't know this piece before. Since that moment, I get the score and I started to practice it and after that I recomend the piece as an essential piece of the repertory. When I started to practice it, I looked for recording, there was not too much but they were easy to find.

- When you studied this piece at the first time, did you by yourself or did you get help from someone: teachers, friends, experts...?

When I started to practice it I did by myself, with the help of the obtained notations and with the experience of the lesson I received when I played pieces by this composer.

- Did you look for information about the piece or the composer before your practice? Do you remember where did you find it?

As usually I do, I looked for infromation about the piece and I refresh what I already knew about the composer. About the piece I found enought information but about the version for bassoon.

- When you sat in front of the music, Was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

Allways I face to a new piece, I try to do a general lectura and after that organize the practice. With the first lectura I try to see the difficulties.

- This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone? Did you create it for this piece or do you usually use the same method in contemporary music?

This system of course was not made for me, it is what I learned from my teachers, but adapted to my study.

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult parts of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

A mix of both. For some passages I have used exercises that I knew and for other I adapted different exercises to the necesities.

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and why and how did you to solve it?

Mainly the high register part, quarter of tone and some trills. The solution I think is a good choice of fingerings. For he rhythm only to organize the fragments and the fingerings.

How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Always is esential to do an analysis of the pieces we are playing, not only in the classic-romantic repertoire or only in the contemporary. This analysis shouldn't be exhaustive but at least some notations about structure and harmony.

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

Is esential to know all the resources which we will have to use and which are common in the interpretation of this kind of music. Is true that in this piece is not necessary to do special effects, but I think is essential for this piece to have a good fingerings for the high register.

- Have you been in contact with the composer or with some one that had some relation with him? Did that some changes in your idea of the piece?

No, no with the composer because he died in 1995. I hope to have the opportunity to meet someone who had worked with him the piece to have a near vision about her.

INTERVIEW: EDUARDO RAIMUNDO

-The first time you were in contact with this piece, was to play it in a concert or for your own learning? Did you take some recording or live performance by reference?

The first time I was in contact with this piece was because I heard a lot of things about it, I knew it was very difficult and I wanted to play it. I was like a challenge, so I studied it for my own learning. I did not listen anything before. When I face a new score I prefer do not listen any version. I like to discover the piece and think about the possibilities it can offer me. Is like a game to see how many things I can discover without help or influences from other people.

- When you studied this piece at the first time, did you by yourself or did you get help from someone: teachers, friends, experts...?

The first time I studied by myself, without any teacher. Over the years I meet Harry Sparnaay and I worked with him when I had prepared the piece.

- Did you look for information about the piece or the composer before your practice? Do you remember where did you find it?

The first time I did not anything like this, I took it and I started practice. Over the time I can understand that is more productive to do this work. Now I always look for information about the composer and I listen his music. Thereby you related with his personality and It can give you ideas to work the piece. Is highly recommended to listen his music, in this way you are getting close to the style without having the bass clarinet piece as a reference.

- When you sat in front of the music, Was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

I always organize my practice. I like to structure the part os the piece and study it with my eyes. After that I try to play one through nor requiring me too much, without the right tempo and not exigencies in the sound, only to check that the difficulties are where I thought and not be surprised for other parts which looked easy in my first seeing.

- This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone? Did you create it for this piece or do you usually use the same method in contemporary music?

I have done this method by myself, taking care of the opinion of all the teachers who have helped me during my studies. Of course it will be very similar to the method that other people use, because at the end all seek the best result using less time possible.

I use this method for all the music and styles. The differences between styles come with the exercises used to obtain the result in the passage, not in the approach to the piece. All the styles are music and we want to play the music

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult part of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

I always like to create specific exercises for each passage. We can say we have our own manual of general exercises for the flexibility, staccato, sound, but after that due to the piece you can prepare specific exercises for the parts. Besides, over the time you even can improve to get more profitability.

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and why and how did you to solve it?

This question leads us to find the most difficult part other the piece. Evidently for each one is different, but actually all of them are very difficult if we want to play them in the highest level. The last page, for example, is extremely complicated, especially in staffs 5 and 6. I worked on them slowly without bass clarinet, looking for the most confortable combination of fingerings to play it and after this, when you have it clear in your mind then you start with the sound. Then it is matter of patient and start working slowly. What looks impossible to achieve at the end, with a good work, appears without realizing. I also did specific exercises for the flexibility which help me to get the best preparation for my lips in the most difficult jumps. This is personal and everyone should have the fantasy to create their own exercises.

-How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Although is not completely necessary to play it I think if we understand the structure we will have a better vision of what we want to do

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

The more details you know about the work, more criterion will have our interpretation. In our world is possible to play one piece without having any information about it, and you can do a good performance. But I think in this piece you will stay so far of a good interpretation without knowledge. In my opinion we must know all we can about the pieces. Is a very long way and each time we discover new things. This is the most beautiful part of the music, you never stop maturing a piece.

- Have you been in contact with the composer or with some one that had some relation with him? Did that some changes in your idea of the piece?

For the piece *Monolog* I was not in contact with the composer, but all the piece were composer for my I always have a close relation with the composer. A lot of times you find a lot of notation that don't match what they want to listen and their participation helps you to understand the essence of the piece.

INTERVIEW: IAN MICHAEL

-The first time you were in contact with this piece, was to play it in a concert or for your own learning? Did you take some recording or live performance by reference?

I programmed it in a concert of music from the Pacific Rim

- When you studied this piece at the first time, did you by yourself or did you get help from someone: teachers, friends, experts...?

Worked on it on my own

- Did you look for information about the piece or the composer before your practice? Do you remember where did you find it?

Web sites, publisher, Grove dictionary etc.

- When you sat in front of the music, was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

Played through very roughly to get a sense of the piece

- This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone? Did you create it for this piece or do you usually use the same method in contemporary music?

This is my usual procedure for any music

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult parts of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

I just worked on the piece, no special exercises. There is plenty in it to work on.

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and why and how did you to solve it?

High fast passages – practised slowly finding suitable fingerings, and gradually speeded them up.

-How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Certainly important to know that Korean folk music influenced the composer, particularly the decorative flourishes and the long melodies were absorbed into his style. I did not actually analyse the work.

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

See above re. The influences of Korean folk music.

- Have you been in contact with the composer or with some one that had some relation with him? Did that some changes in your idea of the piece?

No. he was dead before I learned the piece, and I did not search out anyone who knew him, though his biography was important (who, he studied with, etc)

INTERVIEW: IGOR URRUCHI

-When you are going to learn a new contemporary piece, which is usually your first step? Would you use the same approach with this piece?

Always I try to analyse the piece and see where the technical problems are and try to fix it, so in this score I will do the same.

-Watching the score, how do you organize your practice?

Usually I play the piece front the top to the end and then start with the hard moments of the piece.

When you find some technical problems with extend techniques in bass clarinet, how do you solve it?

Trying to find the easy and best way to do this extended techniques

-How important do you think is the work before the practice (looking for information about the composer, analyze the piece, listen recordings)?

For me is the first step, and the correct way for start a piece, because in this way you can understand the piece or at least start to do it.

- Have you ever been in contact with the composer of a piece when you were studying it? Did it help in your preparation?

I f it's possible I try to do it because if I have a problem the best way to find a solution is asking directly to the composer.

INTERVIEW: HARRY SPARNAAY

-Before the practice of the piece, did you work with the composer to elaborate the piece or he wrote the piece without your collaboration?

Already a long time before he wrote his piece for me I asked him to write a piece for me because I love his music. But he wasn't sure about the possibilities, so when I saw him somewhere in the world during a festival I always asked him: Mr. Yun did you already start writing the piece? And then he always had questions like: But can you also play high and soft? Or can you slur all the registers..etc. And I always demonstrated him the things and then about 6 years later he phoned me on a Sunday morning at 9.30 and said: Harry, your piece is ready!!!!

- When you sat in front of the music, was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

I always sit down and looking the score first before practising. So in that way you immediately find the real problems in the piece.

- Did you create this method of practice for this piece or do you usually use the same when you want to learn a new contemporary piece? This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone?

I did this for all the new pieces I had to practice and it was my idea. In that time, there wasn't anybody to tell/help me. I had to found out the things myself.

- You were in contact with the composer and I think he gave you ideas about how to play it. Did these ideas help you in your practice?

Because I really had immediately contact with the piece and I had the feeling that I knew what he was saying, he didn't say or correct a lot. About the FFF in the high register he wanted to have it as loud as possible and that wasn't a big problem to include! It is interesting to listen once to the Korean Folk music. Especially the very big differences in dynamics!!!!!

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult parts of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

I did create myself exercises. Again there were no bass cl. Studies. So I made my own exercises with notes or parts of the piece, parts of phrases. I always did. Always slow and sometimes very slow, and with different rhythmical divisions. NEVER start playing fast in the beginning, that's a waste of time and energy!!!

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and how did you to solve it?

The 3rd page is difficult. Slurring etc. is not easy so high and quite fast but also after playing the first 2 pages it is even more difficult. Because a lot of people think that the first 2 pages are quite easy (especially the first one) but they are NOT! There are phrases which have to be pppp sometimes, without air in the sound. Difficult for embouchure!!!And finding a good reed!!!!

How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Analysis I didn't do often. Looking very intensively YES! Sitting down for a (sometimes) long time and looking, looking. So before starting I knew exactly where the problems where.

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

The problem with contemporary music is that all pieces have completely different problems/difficulties. When you know how to play Time and Motions Study 1 by Ferneyhough (probably the most difficult one), that does not mean that you also can play immediately Xenakis or Berio. But when you f.e. know how to play Weber, a lot of concerts from that time you also can play (I speak about technique not about the musical aspect). So every new piece you'll get you have to find your own way to solve the problems and believe me I know what that means, because when I started there was nobody who could help me.

- Do you have any advice on how the composer wanted the piece was performed? And about the study?

To be honest no, because when I played it for him he was very happy and said that he had nothing to add. I had understood his music as he wanted. And when you study a piece (not only this piece) please also start sometimes at the end of the piece. When you always start in the beginning believe me you will be tired when you are at the end which means your concentration is less. And never start playing the whole piece in the beginning of the study. When you are at some point you know the piece more or less, play is completely without stopping (also when you play big mistakes) because you'll be shocked that first time how intense and tiring the first page is. And after that first page there are still 2 to go!!!!!

Last advice: ignore people who are telling you that you HAVE to study 5 hours a day (or even more). When you really study intensively our music, your concentration will be after 1 hour tired. Stop and drink a tea, relax, go for a walk with your dog and then.....go on. Because when you go on without stopping and relaxing you are only playing not studying anymore.

INTERVIEW: THIAGO TAVARES

-The first time you were in contact with this piece, was to play it in a concert or for your own learning? Did you take some recording or live performance by reference?

Was for my own learning. I listened some recordings on YouTube and on cd. Unfortunately, we don't have many options because of the high level of technique difficulties. And many of the recordings are too different from each other on rhythm aspects and the conception on playing the bass clarinet.

- When you studied this piece at the first time, did you by yourself or did you get help from someone: teachers, friends, experts...?

I started to read the piece without a teacher and didn't take many time to understand how difficult it will be. At this first time, almost impossible for me.

- Did you look for information about the piece or the composer before your practice? Do you remember where did you find it?

First I tried without looking about the composer or others recordings. Secondly, I heard some of others pieces by Yun. I listened another solo pieces and chamber music. I found them on Google play, music stores and YouTube.

- When you sat in front of the music, Was your first step start playing or did you organize your practicing?

Start playing. And figure out the not so difficult, the difficult passages and the unplayable ones. Then I give the specific attention according each demand. I have three basic parameters on my musical studies: rhythm, correct notes and interpretation. On Yun-Monolog, it took from me a lot of time for each parameter. The complexity of the music is too high.

For rhythm I use three ways: solfege, slow practice without the ornaments and increase the tempo as I gain confidence on how correct I am able to play.

About correct notes is interesting because according to your level you can spent most of time playing the wrong notes. Especially on the part about altissimo register. On the other hand, trying to play the correct ones took most of the time. For this purpose, to be able to play the correct high notes I use the knowledge of harmonics.

On interpretation, there is two main situations. The low register and the extreme high register. On both of them Yun wrote very long phrases. Most of them are connected with a crescendo or a decrescendo. Very difficult to not break the phrase. I started to balance the very slow tempo indication with the very long notes specially in the high register.

- This method has been created by yourself or following the advices of someone? Did you create it for this piece or do you usually use the same method in contemporary music?

On this approach I mixed my own ideas with the ideas of my bass clarinet teacher, Henri Bok.

- Did you create your own exercises for the study of the difficult parts of the piece as the highest notes, big jumps, organisation of the dynamics, etc... or did you use some exercises you already know?

I created my own exercises. Because most of the difficulties were new to me, my main goal is to break the difficulties in small parts and work separately on it.

-In your opinion, which passages of the piece were especially difficult to play and why and how did you to solve it?

The most high notes on last page because as high you play the harmonics becomes together and out of tune. Plus the ornaments as trills, extremely dynamics, appoggiaturas and, big jumps. I changed my daily practice routine to be able to play them. Also, I made a research about the connections between the high notes and the harmonic knowledge.

How interesting think could be doing an analysis of the piece before the practice?

Always help. I did an analyse about which are the difficulties of the piece and how can I deal with them.

- Which information do you think are necessary to know before the study a contemporary piece for bass clarinet and in this piece?

First, know which are the challenging about the contemporary bass clarinet repertory. On Yun, you should master the altissimo register on the bass.

- Have you been in contact with the composer or with some one that had some relation with him? Did that some changes in your idea of the piece?

Yes, I read a text by Sparnaay about how was the interactions between him and the composer. And, I played for him this piece in a master class. The most important issue is the interpretation.

FEEDBACK REFERENCE RECORDING 2° INTERVENTION CYCLE

FEEDBACK CARLOS TARANCON

Carlos Taracon is a Spanish bassoon player who studied with Sergio Azzolini, who worked directly in the piece *Monolog* with Isang Yun (in the bassoon version). I sent him the video for my second intervention cycle and this is the feedback I got.

Hi Álvaro!

The recording is very good! I also worked on the piece in sections. Technically is a piece very demanding in the dynamics and pitch and is very important to organize it well. For bassoon is very tired. Listening your recording I would work in two things (the same thighs my teacher told me in my first lesson playing *Monolog* and them changed my idea):

1° Sound: The music of the Korean intrument is characterized for a nasal sound, a definite articularion (excessive in some cases) and a lot of vibrato very fast. You can listen Korean music in Youtube to get an idea, later each one must find the way to get this effect. For my was easy because my teacher worked with Yun and he knows amply knows the bassoon technique to do this effects, so we worked together in this aspect, is a very beautiful research work in the instrument.

The 2° aspect is the 'Timing'. As you saw *Monolog* is a music of armonic relations, where the chords, depending of the intervals, express tension o relaxation. You can try play the chords in the piano, and find sonorities, relations to have in mind a structure when you play the piece. For example, the silents are going to help you a lot in this organisation, some of them bring you forward while others ask you more time. One example is the pause between bars 18-19 is too long for me because harmonically the melody finish with an A# (B# in bass clarinet written as a C) which we can say belong to a seventh chord F# A# C# E and it is resolved in bar 19 in B (B and F#): Maybe explined like that looks complicate, but with the piano is much more easier. In addition this is a work I really loved to do and it makes you to go deep into a different world of harmonic relations and tension and relaxations.

About the tempo I think about it more free. This goes in relation with the timing. I remember my teacher told when worked with Isang Yun he said that the rhythmic figures from the beginning the measure hadn't be strict. It is a way of trying to write what the composer had in mind. Is very interesting that the bar measure is a 6/4 and you can watch it as two ¾ or how I worked on it, as a 3/2. Is a bit messy pero I thought as bar with a ternary subdivision (is an idea from the old music but Isang Yun knew this music really good when he studied in Berlin) and all the ternary bar can be seen like a dance where the first part is more important than the second and the third. In this way you are going to see that each E in the beginning (F# in bass clarinet) has a diffirent rythmical meaning: The first E starts in the first beat, the second should be more light and is upbeat from the next first because is in the third. The third E (bar 5) is in mishap and has a feeling of instabilty and movement... and like this successively. This can help you for the musical gesture and the musical movement.

Is a really nice work, the next week I have top play the *Rondell*, is a piece for reed trio by Yun, written little bit before than Monolog and I am having a lot of ideas for the piece. Have a good practice and good job. Sorry for write a lot but I love Yun. Is the first time I listen the piece in bass clarinet and I would lie to listen you completely. Is a nice work which have a reward.

FEEDBACK FROM FIE SCHOUTEN

On 13th of Decembre I had a bass clarinet lesson with Fie Schouten. She studied clarinet in Amsterdam, and after that she started to study bass clarinet with Harry Sparnaay also in Amsterdam Cnsertvatory. At the moment, she will be one of the teachers who will replace Henri Bok in the conservatory of Rotterdam during this year. She is specialized in contemporary music and she is very active in the Dutch Music scene.

This lesson was one of the first I had with her, and I took the opportunity to show her the part I had prepared of Isang Yun's monolog. I was really lucky because this piece was one of the pieces she played in his final exam in Amsterdam and she worked on this piece directly with Harry Sparnaay who worked with Yun and the piece was written for him.

I play through the first page of the piece, with some little mistakes of course but in general really good. The first thing she told me was: "You played quite good, but everything is too measured". One of the things I thought I was doing well and I was more careful was the tempo and the measure of the notes, and now after two feedback from people who are really in the right way of interpretation of the piece, I have changed my mind. The writing of the length of the long notes is only a reference. You don't have to play every note in the legnth is written, is only an idea of how it should sound but has to be more free in that sense.

She also gave me the advice that in general, at least when she play a solo piece, she try to play it standing. She is sure, and me also after think on that, that if you are playing standing is more interactive with the piece and with the audicence, and you can use your body to make the piece more interesting. For all the wind instruments, in general there is no too much differences playing standing or sitting, but the bass clarinet is a long instrument and we always sustain in a pike on the floor, and standing you have to use a neck harness. This changes everything: the balance, the position of the instrument, the position of the embochure... But is interesting because even feeling this a little bit unconfortable, I realice that my sound is different in the good way and I want to explore this play of playing.

About dymamics, I have to play it more intenses and more differences. Maybe is not very important if you play sometimes Forte as a Fortissimo o Piano as Pianissimo, but the contrast the each moment has to be really big.

At the end of the lesson she told me that I had to practice more some difficult part but I had to continue reading the piece. Is not necessary to have a perfect bar to start with the next. Is nice that you prepare a part, make an plan to practice it but you also have to continue reading and preparing more plans while you are practicing hard a concrete part.

INTERVIEWS 2º INTERVENTION CYCLE

INTERVIEW SERGIO AZZOLINI

1) You worked directly with Isang Yun in the piece. Did he explain you something about the meaning of the piece? Did he explain what his influences were?

He didn't explain the piece, but he said generally, what is important for his music. It is wellknown, that his music is connected to the corean music, and expeaially influenced by the music played on "Piri", a kind of traditional oboe. The piri players always use very fast vibrato, also during the glissandi. The next important element in his music is to insist during dramatic passages; it has to be played always with accents. He always asked for strong accents. The last element was "passion". He always asked for a strong cantabile in his music. And again at this point he came to the vibrato and said: musik without vibrato doesn't exist. (I was quite surprised about this sentence). But we have to understand this as an element of expression in his music.

2) In this piece, Yun made use of the "Hauptone" technique. How did you apply this compositive technique in your interpretation or preparation?

It is obvious, that this music has a very clear harmonic structure. The microtonality is part of this structure. Yun always asked to exagerate the glissandi and the Quartertone could be also played in direction to halftone to get more movement in the sound.

3) About the tempo or timing, should be strict in general or free? In which moment there is more freedom to change the tempo or the value of the notes?

The piece is rhapsodic, and Yun told me that I can play some long notes shorter or even longer, as I like to do. We need a proportion in the piece, but we don't have to be strict in tempo. And he always remembered me to play like an improvisation. For him the tempo could be until 60.

4) Due to the influences of Taoism and Buddhism there is a symbolic reflect of the Yin-Yan in the piece. Did you think is related with the differences between the register and dynamic or between the sections with long notes and fast notes?

About this deep subject Yun never spoke to me. But he said clearly in front of the audience: you can't imagine how much I suffered in my life, you can't imagine! I think, more than Yin-Yang or Toaism and Buddhism, there is a strong element of fighting with himself in this piece.

5) The Korean typical wind instrument (P'iri) has a really nasal sound and make use of a big range of vibrato. Do you think this should be taken into account for the interpretation? How do you manage it and in which part do you thing should be more interesting to use the vibrato?

As I told you in point 1, the vibrato is an element of Yun's music and the reminiscense to P'iri has to be present in this piece. Therefore I would suggest to have a more open and bright sound.

6) For you, what is the principal idea to have in mind for the interpretation or the practicing of *Monolog*?

Good balance between singing, speeking and sometimes screaming.

7) Would you like to add any other ideas that you think is important for the interpretation or the preparation of the piece?

The breathing is very important. If you need to breath, do it naturally, take your time like the singers do, beut never stop the line. The breathing has to be integrated in the piece as a natural element. In dramatic passages the breathing has to be dramatic, too.

INTERVIEW HARRY SPARNAAY

1) You worked directly with Isang Yun in the piece. Did he explain you something about the meaning of the piece? Did he explain what were his influences?

No, he listened and was happy, but I listened often to Korean Folk music so perhaps that was the reason I felt immediately comfortable

2) In this piece, Yun made use of the "Hauptone" technique. How did you apply this compositive technique in your interpretation or preparation?

Hahaha...have no idea what that is.

3) About the tempo or timing, should be strict in general or free? In which moment there is more freedom to change the tempo or the value of the notes?

More free but not tooooo!!! F.e. in the very loud frases the dynamics are more important than the lengh of the notes. So they will be a biot shorter when you count the slow tempo

4) Due to the influences of Taoism and Buddhism there is a symbolic reflect of the Yin-Yan in the piece. Did you think is related with the differences between the register and dynamic or between the sections with long notes and fast notes?

Sorry, but the same answer as nr.2

5) The Korean typical wind instrument (P'iri) has a really nasal sound and make use of a big range of vibrato. Do you think this should be taken into account for the interpretation? How do you manage it and in which part do you thing should be more interesting to use the vibrato?

I don't think so and about vibrato he didn't say anything. I normally use a bit of vibrato but in the FFF phrases certainly not!!

6) For you, what is the principal idea to have in mind for the interpretation or the practicing of *Monolog*?

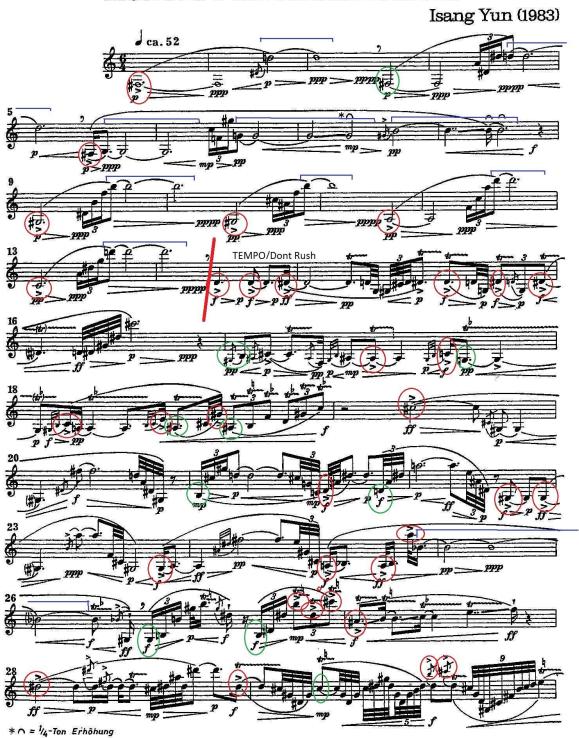
As normal, start slow especially the last page and try to sing (inside) the beginning.

7) Would you like to add any other ideas that you think is important for the interpretation or the preparation of the piece?

It took him a very long time to write the piece. He didn't know the bass clarinet and was afraid that some the things on the Bb clarinet were not possible on the bass. Like long slurs, dynamics in all the registers etc.etc

Harry Sparnaay gewidmet

MONOLOG für Baß-Klarinette in B



Uraufführung: 9. April 1983 Melbourne, Victorian College of the Arts (Harry Sparnaay). Spieldauer circa 11 Minuten.

