

The Clarinet



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A TALE OF TWO TRIOS: Armenian Music for Clarinet

Also in this issue...

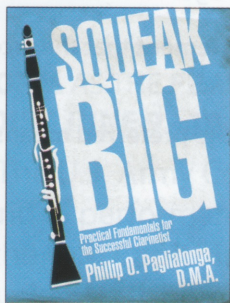
ClarinetFest® 2015 Report

A Guide to Sacred Music
Performance for Clarinetists

Reviews

BOOKS

Phillip O. Paglialonga. *Squeak BIG: Practical Fundamentals for the Successful Clarinetist*. Imagine Music, 2015. 109 pp. \$32.00



At first glance, one may assume that *Squeak BIG: Practical Fundamentals for the Successful Clarinetist* is yet another instructional book written by a clarinet professional. Indeed, we clarinetists love to write about our instruments, and our market offers a wealth of fascinating writings, making us the envy of other instruments. Here is the thing: author Phillip O. Paglialonga is also a phenomenal musician. His sound is pure gold and his musicianship is everything you would want it to be, as demonstrated on his exquisite website SqueakBig.com.

Paglialonga is assistant professor at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, VA. He is a founding member of the PEN Trio (oboe, clarinet, bassoon), which regularly tours throughout the U.S. and abroad;

teaches at the Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp (Michigan); and serves as the editor for the I.C.A. e-newsletter. He studied at DePaul University with Larry Combs and at the University of Michigan with Fred Ormand and Daniel Gilbert.

I spent some time with the author and quickly realized we had something in common: we are both serious clarinet geeks. However, I will have to give him the prize because he admitted to having read every single issue of *The Clarinet* cover to cover in high school, as well as the older publications *Woodwind World* and *Symphony Magazine*, and most standard clarinet pedagogy books. Back then, Paglialonga noticed that many books were either largely theoretical or only included exercises. His desire to mix both resulted in his new book, which allows readers to work on applying each described concept to the spot in an easy and practical way.

Squeak BIG is a compilation of the successful pedagogical essays he shares with students and colleagues. The ratio of pedagogical concepts to practical exercises is about one to one. His “Pedagogy” section addresses embouchure, beauty of tone, evenness and resonance, relaxation, altissimo register, building technique, phrasing, legato, articulation and reeds. Other highlights include a great essay on Boehm-system fingering principles, discussion of practice techniques and many pages of helpful daily exercises, including practice tips on orchestral

excerpts such as Ravel’s *Daphnis et Chloé*. There are plenty of photos, several illustrations, and the text is super clear and well done. In fact, while reading I could imagine that I was one of his (lucky) students because he incorporates his views and personal experience to give readers the impression they are learning from him right in his teaching studio.

Paglialonga loves talking about and playing the clarinet, and most of all he wants his readers to go out there and just play – and not be afraid to “squeak big.” This book is undoubtedly the tip of the iceberg. Mark my words, Phil Paglialonga is our next prodigious clarinet performer and pedagogue star.

– Michele Gingras

MUSIC

Agnieszka Maria Bialek. *Cadenza for Solo Clarinet*. Doblinger, Vienna. €9.95

Since individual performers always put their own imprint on the music, Bialek has tried to give the clarinetist as much freedom as possible. The work is intended to reflect the character of an improvised cadenza and the notes and score indications should be approached with flexibility to ensure a personal interpretation.

This is a work of moderate length; despite the eight pages in the publication, only three contain music. It is necessary to photocopy the first page for performance ease. The *quasi improvisando* nature of the work requires the use of varying tempi, wide dynamics, varied rhythms and articulations, and extended techniques. Altissimo playing requires a high G-sharp in one pattern. Dynamics, including crescendos and decrescendos, are extreme, often with quick changes during very short notes. Numerous scalar passages and leaping patterns – slurred or articulated –