

Gestural Tendencies in Composing Pieces for Solo Clarinet in *Sequenza IX for Clarinet, Garisan, and Klibat*

Tendências Gestuais na Composição de Peças para Clarinete Solo na Sequência IX para Clarinete, Garisan e Klibat



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Abstract: Gesture in a broader sense is more than a physical movement but, can also be modes of expression representing specific meanings. Movements with meaning embodies gesture and gesture exists in various artforms like music because of its capacity to express. Its capability to transform through time and space makes it akin to energy and it is parallel with the art of composing music. Musical gesture however, are being studied at different levels so as to classify and to relate different functions of gestures. This article intends to demonstrate the use of musical gestures into composing music for a solo wind instrument. Three solo pieces for clarinet were written by three different composers approaching musical composition through gestural writing. To realize the imagined sound and movements of the clarinet, the composers' composing process concentrated more on the gestural movements and tone colours of the selected wind instrument. The musical gesture in these three solo pieces is actually capturing the movement and sense of movement through music, and its essence

lies in the subconscious lines connected to create direction and motion in both pieces. This compositional approach also gives the composers more compositional freedom and enriches their compositional process.

Keywords: music composition; musical gesture; solo pieces for clarinet; contemporary music.

Resumo: O gesto em sentido amplo é mais do que um movimento físico, mas também pode ser um modo de expressão que representa significados específicos. Movimentos com significado incorporam gestos e gestos existem em várias formas de arte como a música por causa de sua capacidade de expressão. Sua capacidade de se transformar no tempo e no espaço o torna semelhante à energia e é paralelo à arte de compor música. O gesto musical, no entanto, está sendo estudado em diferentes níveis para classificar e relacionar diferentes funções dos gestos. Este artigo pretende demonstrar o uso de gestos musicais na composição de música para um instrumento de sopro solo. Três peças solo para clarinete foram escritas por três compositores diferentes abordando a composição musical através da escrita gestual. Para realizar o som e os movimentos imaginados do clarinete, o processo de composição dos compositores concentrou-se mais nos movimentos gestuais e nas cores do tom do instrumento de sopro selecionado. O gesto musical nessas três peças solo é, na verdade, capturar o movimento e a sensação de movimento através da música, e sua essência está nas linhas subconscientes conectadas para criar direção e movimento em ambas as peças. Essa abordagem composicional também dá aos compositores mais liberdade composicional e enriquece seu processo composicional.

Palavras-chave: composição musical; gesto musical; peças solo para clarinete; música contemporânea.

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Introduction

Solo instrumental pieces are meant for a single performer. A solo instrumental piece or sometimes called solo piece originates back into the Western music history of the Baroque and Classical eras. In Baroque music, a group of soloists were the feature in a concerto grosso, and then, in the Classical age, the concerto genre was established where an unaccompanied virtuoso solo passage named as cadenza, typically in the middle or ending of the concerto, serves as the highlight of the orchestral work. The late Classical period up to the Romantic era also feature many solo instrumental pieces requiring different levels of playing techniques from the performer, ranging from simple studies to more extensive and complex etudes. These more well-known late 18th and early 19th century solo instrumental pieces were composed namely by Scarlatti, Bach, Clementi, and later by Chopin, and Liszt.

Since the Baroque period, woodwind instruments in particular have grown in terms of variety and also established its credibility in the orchestra and also as a stable and prominent solo instrument. Woodwind instruments are musical instruments producing sounds through blowing into them. Wind vibrations moving inside the instruments' columns and vibration of reeds are the cause of sounds. They are single voiced instruments, unable to form chords, however, when combined they can produce multiple voices as do the human voice. Woodwind instruments in particular has the closest connection with the human voice with the shared inability to play chords but, both are similarly expressive and characteristically personal (Connor, 2001). Through melodic movements, like the voice, wind instruments are able to shape music temporally relating in time. Due to personal characteristics and personality of each woodwind instrument, it has attracted and challenged composers up to this day in continuously contributing new, innovative, and creative pieces for the solo woodwind repertoire.

The development and establishment of musical instruments since the 19th century and 20th century musical movements saw

several composers such as Debussy, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Bartok starting to experiment ideas and venturing into far-reaching ways music could be written and performed, which led to exploration of compositional techniques which were beyond musical boundaries of the 19th century styles. Innovations in compositions include use of atonality, modality, dissonances, twelve-tone technique, complex time signatures and so forth.

Solo instrumental pieces are sometimes bizarre, unusual, curious, or exhilarating with virtuosic notes and vast octave ranges. To a performer, solo instrumental pieces demand sharp and quick abilities to execute technical passages at fast speeds, sometimes with unconventional musical notations. Meanwhile, a composer writes a solo instrumental piece as an extreme creative challenge to delve into composition. Either way, solo instrumental pieces demand a very skilled performer and composer who fully recognizes the capacities and characteristics of an instrument.

Music share the same elements as compositional elements which, are form, melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, dynamics, and articulation. Composers organize the sounds and arrange the elements of melody, harmony, and rhythm into a significant course, shape and pattern (Martineau, 2021). Usually, to approach music composition is firstly, either through its harmonic or melodic directions and form.

Nevertheless, this article shall discuss certain musical representation of woodwind instruments into new musical thoughts and expressions through the solo instrumental works of three composers from the 20th and 21st centuries. These three highlighted works are composed for woodwind, the clarinet, in particular. Shedding a new light into the approaches of composing, these three composers have shown in their pieces another way of attempting music composition which, is by beginning with gestures as the main idea of concern to determining the written piece. In these pieces, musical gestures shall play a primary role in their outcome, and, other musical elements have become consequential.

Gesture and Musical Gesture

The closest definition of gesture is stated as 'energetic shaping through time' with the idea of gesture as a dynamic field of energy and natural impulses. What is the definite definition of gesture is too wide to venture. However, there is a summarising definition by electroacoustic composer, Denis Smally who mentions in Richard Causton's book saying, gesture has to do with energetic profiling or dynamic patterning (Causton, 1995).

When speaking about attempting to compose through gestures, perceptual visualisations of lines, movement, speed and velocity becomes primary, voluntarily, and immediate. The fundamental nature of gesture is with reference to depicting movement or sensations of movement via music, through connections of subconscious lines to create flow and direction. In actual fact, the gestural energy of a melody is more essential than the sequence of pitches of a melody. Gesture lies in the continuous path of motion with pitches or sounds as landmarks. To clearly describe the definition of gesture here, it can be seen as melodic energy shaping in between tones, whilst sweeping and flowing through as potential energy.

Musical gestures as a whole are combinations of physical actions with human expressive movements. On a musical level, musical gestures are further impacted by and interposed with musical elements of dynamics, tempo and pacing, metrical placement, timbre, articulation, and phrase structure. These elements and gestures are compelled to bind, creating waves of large and small gestures within the whole score but even so, maintaining each musical gesture's purpose and shape, structure and appearance from the beginning, traveling along to the end. On a canvas, an artist's gesture is through their brushstrokes, while in music, sound and its passage through time is an audible gesture on an instrument. As Iazetta (2000) states, gesture is a moment of expression that is tangible through chronological and sequential spatial changes. In short, gestures can express and represent meanings. Gesture is not merely physical movements but, rather meaningful movements.

In music sense, Hatten (2004) has defined gestures into different types. Intentional or unintentional gestures are called as musical gestures, technical movements by a performer are artistic gestures, foreground and subsequent developments are thematic gestures, and rhetorical gesture is disruption of flow in the musical discourse.

All four of these specific gestures are present in the three solo clarinet pieces. As for musical and artistic gestures, they are both immediately present. The expressive tone and character of the solo clarinet is captured by the design of the thematic gesture of these pieces, while the thematic gesture is expressed by articulation, dynamics and temporal character of the motive. Rhetorical gestures include the break or disruption of the flow of its musical discourse.

Sources and purpose of gesture

Hatten (2012) describes musical agents such as gravity, inertia, and momentum as sources of gestural energy (Example 1). Gravity (G) of down and up is conceived in the pitch space giving a spatial perception for the listener. Inertia (I) is the tendency feeling of continuity even when pitches are not active in movement and pitch activity. And momentum (M) is the natural continuity from the beginning.

Figure 1: Arrows indicate the directional forces of gravity (G), inertia (I), and momentum (M)



Source: Hatten, 2012.

Delalande (1998) mentions gesture as a meeting point between actions and mental images, and these may be studied

at different levels called as effective gesture, accompanying gesture, and figurative gesture. He describes effective gesture as a sound-producing gesture, accompanying gesture for movements supporting effective gesture, and figurative gesture is a mental image not related to any physicality. To clearly show the distinct purpose of gestures, Delalande has categorized gestural types into various levels. Firstly, an action pattern producing music. Secondly, gesture encoded in music, and thirdly, physical gesture made in response to music.

A listener swaying and nodding to music is a form of gesture involving physical movement in response to music. A performer playing an instrument is making physical and figurative gestures reacting to the written score. The outcome of a performance depends in many different ways on performer's physical gestures, such as, pressing the piano keys or sliding a bow, which are all movements holding a meaning in themselves.

Composing and musical gestures

Music is a natural outlet of communication, and a combination of human text and music is the most direct form of communication (Razali & Salleh, 2018). Meanwhile, in the absence of words, music in context and composing music in particular, involves subtle influences of gestures. It is a cyclic relationship. At the beginning of this cycle of gesture is the Composer, who has decided from the beginning, the gestures demanded from the piece by using notation, articulation, dynamic curve, beat and tempo, form, direction and shape. Composers determine the technique and manner in which sounds are created, its characteristics, and plan ways in which sounds connect and anticipate. At the same time, they outline a path to further expansions of sounds. In this cycle of gesture, the composer is at the start of the gesture cycle, the listener at the end, and the performer in the middle, involved with every type listed above.

Previous examples of gesture could be seen and heard in scores such as in the third movement of Op. 130, a string quartet

by Beethoven, there is a feeling of decline as the energy begins to wind down. The third measure of the example, the chromatic step sequence suggests a winding down of energy (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Third movement of Beethoven's Op. 130

The image shows a musical score for the third movement of Beethoven's Op. 130, starting at measure 67. The score is in 3/4 time and features a chromatic step sequence in the third measure. Dynamics include *p*, *pp*, and *sempre pp*. Performance instructions include *arco*, *pizz.*, and triplets.

Source: Hatten, 2012.

Furthermore, in the introduction of Brahms First Symphony, there is a sense of friction and conflict between the pedal point and the emerging rising voices. Further tension is created by contrary motion (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Brahms First Symphony, opening

The image shows the opening of Brahms First Symphony, starting at measure 1. The score is in 3/4 time and features a pedal point in the contrabass and rising voices in the violins and violas. Dynamics include *f*, *f esp. e legato*, and *f pesante*. Performance instructions include *Un poco sostenuto*, *div.*, and *legato*.

Source: Hatten, 2012.

Semi-Aleatoric Notation and Musical Gesture

Alternate approaches to composition have in fact resulted in composers developing new, creative, and innovative ways of score writing, regarding music notation in particular. This happens because the compositional output and compositional ideas needed could sometimes only be achieved through unconventional notations. Unconventional notations facilitate the creative and innovative creation of sound worlds of composers. In combination with musical gestures, new notations result in new sound possibilities and contemporary compositional ideas and techniques. As in these three discussed pieces of this article, all composers have implemented in some ways unconventional music notations. Nevertheless, all three pieces are individualistic in terms of their soundscape and style.

What is discovered in these three pieces is the employment of a type of unconventional notation called, semi-aleatoric. The element of gesture in music is appropriate to apply semi-aleatoric notation in scores as semi-aleatoric is freedom-based context. Witold Lutoslawski is the pioneer of limited-aleatoricism in the 1960s. Limited aleatoricism in an ensemble or orchestral work calls for exact notations of individual instrumental parts, but their precise co-ordination instead is organized using controlled elements of chance (Bodman Rae, 1994). Where Lutoslawski uses limited aleatoricism writing for more than one instrument, Luciano Berio has applied this technique for his collection of solo pieces, *Sequenza*, and named the technique as semi-aleatoric.

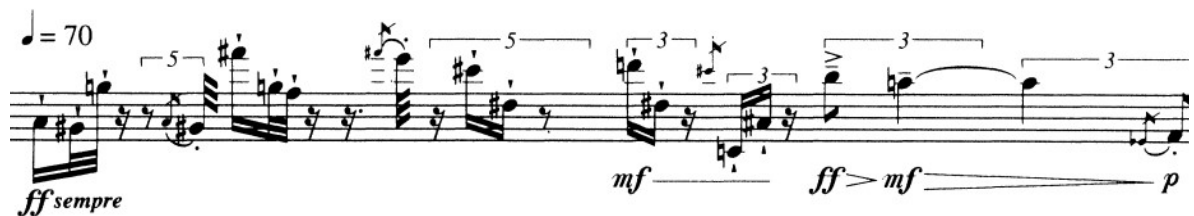
Solo Pieces for Wind Instruments: *Sequenza IX for Clarinet, Garisan, and Klibat*

Gestural Writing in Luciano Berio's *Sequenza IX for clarinet*

Berio's *Sequenzas* were written for various instruments, with all distinctively displaying and allowing a certain performer freedom.

For instance, Berio's *Sequenza I for flute* (1958) (Figure 4) shows very precise rhythmic notation and specific durations without the use of metre and bar lines; *Sequenza IX* for clarinet's rhythm notation is combined with quasi-proportional spacing (1980) (Figure 5); and *Sequenza IXb* for alto saxophone (1980) (Figure 7) displays an interesting tension between flexibility and precision in playing.

Figure 4: Excerpt of Berio's *Sequenza for Flute*, showing very precise rhythmic notation and specific durations without the use of metre and barlines



Source: Universal Edition, Milan, 1958.

Figure 5: Excerpt of Berio's *Sequenza for Clarinet*, rhythm notation is combined with quasi-proportional spacing

The image shows a multi-staff musical score for Clarinet in B-flat. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 60, with the instruction 'ma sempre un poco instabile'. The notation includes various note values, rests, and dynamic markings such as *pp*, *p*, *mf > pp*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, *mf*, *pp*, *sf-f*, *pp*, *sf-f*, *pp*, *mf*, and *p*. There are also some numerical annotations above the notes, such as '10"', '8"', and '8"', which likely refer to specific durations or fingerings. The notation is precise and lacks traditional bar lines.

Source: Universal Edition, Milan, 1980.

Figure 6: Excerpt of Berio's *Sequenza for Oboe*, showing strict organization of pulse and tempo

The image shows a musical score excerpt for Oboe from Berio's *Sequenza IX*. It consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The music is marked with various dynamics including *fff*, *pp*, *mf*, *sfz*, and *ppp*. There are also performance instructions like *tenuto sino alla fine ** and *sfz-pp*. Above the staves, there are four circled time markers: 3", 27", 2", and 2". The score includes various rhythmic values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some fingerings indicated by numbers in circles.

Source: Universal Edition, Milan, 1971.

Figure 7: Excerpt of Berio's *Sequenza for Alto Saxophone*, showing an interesting tension between flexibility and precision in playing

The image shows a musical score excerpt for Alto Saxophone from Berio's *Sequenza IX*. It consists of three staves. The top staff starts with a circled '1' and is marked *ff*. It includes performance instructions like *accel.* and *rall.* with tempo markings of $\text{♩} = 72$ and $\text{♩} = 60$. The middle and bottom staves continue the piece with various rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes. The score includes various dynamics and performance markings.

Source: Milan, Universal Edition, 1980.

Emancipation of pulse and tempo in Berio's *Sequenza IX*

There is an emancipation of pulse and tempo in these pieces, which contributes enormously to their impression of 'openness'. In speaking of this idea, Berio (2008) states, openness here means the performer is obliged to work creatively together with the composer in creating music. However, it has to be with realisation that in this collaboration of *Sequenza for Clarinet* (1980), only the composer and performer are aware of this relationship, and the listener is without any point of reference, with nothing to judge,

understand or evaluate. Therefore, the feeling and impact of openness is present from the listener as well.

Sequenza IX for clarinet begins hesitantly, as if repeatedly starting again and again and then held on a single pitch for 10 seconds, then 8, then 6 seconds. It eventually gains momentum with the sustained pitches slowly dissipating away. It can be discussed here that, those physical descriptions of pitch movements in *Sequenza IX* demonstrates the application of gestures. The hesitancy of notes in between pitch distance creates spatial perception, along with the expectancy of gravity by the anticipation of either the next movement or pitch stop which, then continues into the sustained pitches of between six and ten seconds. These sustained, inactive notes produce inertia and sense of continuity. Momentum gradually built up from the beginning eventually increases and expands within the piece.

Solo woodwind pieces have no additional textural support of either vertical harmony and density, and therefore rely solely on the construction and movement of pitches (melody). The lines of movement, or musical gesture in this sense are created through the combination of other compositional elements besides texture and harmony which, are articulation, dynamics, rhythms and durations. For instance, what's essential in *Sequenza IX* is, its timing and pacing of gestures thus, its musical time is in relation to the instrumentalist's actions, as described by Albera (1983), in his essay in *Edition Contrechamps*,

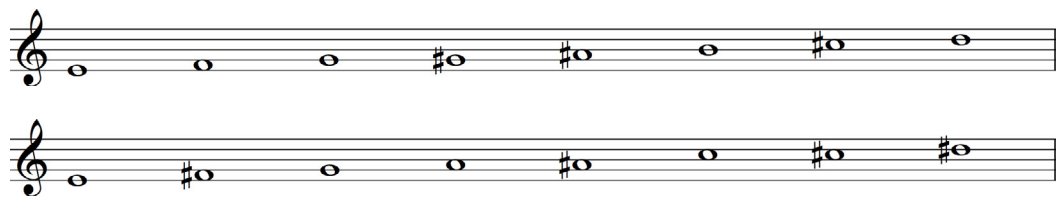
it is only perceived as a succession of moments, where each element assumes an immediate, precise [temporal] value. Form does not determine particular events, according to some norm, but rather it builds itself during the time of performance through the playing of different notes as well as repeated ones.

Gestural Writing in Marzelan Salleh's *Garisan*

In *Garisan*, Marzelan Salleh structurally shapes the piece from pitch relations emerging from an octatonic-referential base.

This octatonic-referential base serves to provide a theoretical point of reference for the pitches in the music (Figure 8). The octatonic scale is an alternation between whole and half steps, or half and whole steps. Therefore, octatonic scale is a combination of principles of the whole tone and chromatic scale. However, Marzelan is not directly using all the notes in the octatonic scale in the strictest sense. Instead, semitone and tritone relations are occasionally used and emphasized within a fundamentally octatonic context. In this manner, continuity and variety are created through references to octatonicism without being confined to its limitations (Koozin, 1991). Also, there are no aural cues of the tonic in the use of octatonic scale here which, makes the octatonic scale tonally ambiguous.

Figure 8: E octatonic scale used in *Garisan*



Source: Salleh, 2012.

The sense of musical direction is an equally important component in musical writing besides structure. Figure 9 demonstrates how the gradual unfolding and completion of an octatonic collection can work along with other related musical factors such as rhythm, dynamics and registral placement to generate motion in a musical phrase.

Figure 9: Rhythm, dynamics and registral placement



Source: Salleh, 2012.

Combinations of pitch selections are the crucial key factors in *Garisan's* structure and direction. A large part of *Garisan's* pitch structuring is based upon its movement of pitches from the octatonic base towards total chromatic saturation especially at moments of density and drama. Different contrasting colours emerge from the clarinet through the dashes of notes coming from different referential bases. With the combination of octatonic and chromaticism, complete chromatic saturation is achieved at the climax of the passage through a piling up of materials of which are clearly from the octatonic scale. To further enhance the colours and sonority of this piece, extended passages displaying octatonicism and interesting octatonic relations can be found inserted within dense chromatic textures (Figure 10). Although octatonic is not always forcedly thrown at the musical surface in *Garisan*, Marzelan moves away from the purely octatonic through a consistent and logical process of building semitone and tritone relations within a fundamentally octatonic context and its limitations.

Figure 10: Octatonic approach + chromatic inflection

The figure shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff, labeled with measure 12, contains a melodic line with a dynamic marking of *mp* and a *mf* marking. The second staff, labeled with measure 13, contains a more complex texture with dynamic markings of *f*, *p*, and *mp*, including a triplet and a fermata.

Source: Salleh, 2012.

This piece starts with the player playing the lower E note which is the lowest register of this instrument and this note can be considered as a tonal centre as it moves freely by using chromatic notes. The long fermata occurs four times, at bars 20, 27, 40, 47, and 53, and all these fermatas determine the changing tonal centres which are F, B, E, A, E, respectively.

This piece stays coherent and unified by having repeated pitch-class groupings and focal pitch classes within an octatonic

framework. Emphasized focal pitch classes in *Garisan* frequently appear in groupings of fourths, the most prominent of these being {F B} {B E} and {E A}.

Freedom of range and duration in Marzelan Salleh's *Garisan*

Garisan's musical character is sustained with purely octatonic sonorities in the lower and middle registers and more fully chromatic writing in the higher registers. *Garisan* uses the octatonic mode, and sometimes instead, all the other notes. Octatonic scale is different from the chromatic scale as octatonic can be conceived as a combination of two interlocking diminished seventh chords. Its construction, colour and approach is also emphasized by its unique intervallic sequence. On the other hand, chromatic scale is fully derived from semitones from either direction and its intervallic sequence is consistent. To allow for better connections and relativity in *Garisan*, its octatonic source is more intuitive rather than a logical or strictly systematical approach towards its composition.

Marzelan Salleh's *Garisan* is also influenced by Toru Takemitsu's *For Away*, solo piano work. Takemitsu's music is rich in mystery and ambiguity. The well-known influence of Messiaen, and Debussy into Takemitsu's music is the reason to his octatonic, whole-tone and other referential collections (Koozin, 1993). Takemitsu's piano work, *For Away*, is an interpretation and influence of the octatonic use and derivation in Marzelan Salleh's *Garisan*.

Therefore, to achieve the ability to transform external influences into a highly personal expression, and then to create a powerful and original expression through unity of obvious contradicting materials; *Garisan's* tone structures are floating in between the sound worlds of octatonic references and total chromatic saturation. By moving toward total chromatic saturation from a referential base, a subtle and original pitch structure is produced, which is more free, but yet clearly defined and logical as delicate textures of decaying sound dissolve the boundaries between sound and silence.

Luciano Berio composed fourteen virtuoso solo instrumental (or voice) pieces, called *Sequenza*. Berio started writing *Sequenza* in the mid-1950s. The first, *Sequenza for Flute* (1958) and the last, *Sequenza for Cello* (2002). These works often includes extended techniques, exploring the full capabilities of each instrument and also of the performer. Occasional use of unconventional notations paired with extended techniques, seems to be a compositional repertoire to open up a new kind of sound world through virtuosic styles, extreme density and dynamics and with sudden explosions through the music's surface.

Berio's *Sequenza* is the main reference for *Garisan* and like *Sequenza's* drama, *Garisan* utilizes corresponding gestures equivalent to its extremity. Following this, *Garisan* explores gestures in music. The idea behind this piece is to highlight the importance of gestures in music in moving the pitch and sound. At the same time, the overall concept of this piece is about giving space to stretching musical sounds and expressing emotions in music through manipulating gestures. Shaping and moving music is actually capturing the movement or feelings of movement through gestures. It is all about subconscious lines that are connected to create direction and motion. These senses of direction and motion felt by listeners are achieved through the choice of articulation and dynamics. In composing *Garisan*, choosing the right rhythms are equally important to make this piece more interesting as it helps the gestures to move by manipulating the rhythmic variety. The movement gets even more vigorous by combining these elements (Figure 11).

Figure 11: Combination of elements to determine gesture in music



Source: Salleh, 2012.

Figure 12 shows how different combinations of articulation gives contrast in the musical gestures and how gestures move from active to non-active rhythms. These change of rhythms are then combined also with a *decrescendo* with the music finishing in low E (the same pitch class in the beginning).

Figure 12: Different articulation, rhythms and gestures

The image shows two staves of musical notation. The first staff is in 5/4 time and features a series of eighth notes with various articulations (accents, slurs) and a dynamic marking of *f*. The second staff is in 4/4 time and features a series of eighth notes with various articulations (accents, slurs) and a dynamic marking of *f*. Below the second staff, there is a dynamic marking of *f* followed by a long horizontal line that tapers to the right, ending with *mp* and *p < f*.

Source: Salleh, 2012.

In terms of technicality there are some playing techniques required such as slap tongue, flutter tonguing and *molto vibrato*. These tonguing and articulation gestures are creating the gestural movements of the piece, contributing towards its momentum. In bar 16, box notation requires the player to play 4 demisemiquaver notes as fast as possible in 4 seconds (Figure 13). This intentional rhythmic gesture then affects the flow and gravity of this piece.

Figure 13: Performance techniques in clarinet

The image shows a musical score for a clarinet. It features a single staff in 4/4 time. The first measure is marked with a dynamic of *f* and contains four demisemiquaver notes. Above these notes is a box with the text "As fast as possible" and a "4''" symbol. An arrow points from the box to the notes. The second measure is marked with a dynamic of *sf* and contains a single note with a "flutter tongue" symbol above it.

Source: Salleh, 2012.

These 'extra-musical ideas' add flavour, colour, and movement to the music, and as most importantly discussed, contribute to

the gestural movements and musical gestures intended for the piece which is very much an important element of music, as much as rhythmic gestures, phrasing and pitch, especially in the solo repertoire of contemporary music.

Gestural writing in Camellia Razali's *Klibat*

Klibat, suggests images of the clarinet's sound by combining contrasts of *legato* lines and short *staccatissimo* bursts, and between loud short notes and soft high long notes. This music moves in and out of pauses and silences with a series of dynamic range to enhance the meaning of *Klibat*, which means hidden glimpses or brief glances. These are the sketches or imagination of movements the composer had in mind before writing *Klibat*.

To realize the imagined sound and movements of this solo clarinet piece, the composer approached differently and turned to gestural writing. To actually shape this work for solo clarinet, the composing process concentrated more on obvious elements of music; gesture and tone colour. Gesture, as explained earlier, is actually capturing the movement or feelings of movement through music. Therefore, *Klibat's* essence is about subconscious lines that are connected to create direction and motion.

To adjust to the conceptual idea of *Klibat's* compositional style, the composer chooses angular movements in the writing for *Klibat's* music. In this work, these senses of angular direction and motion felt by listeners are achieved through choices of articulation, tone colours and dynamics. The composer utilises contrasting tone colours of the clarinet. The clarinet is a very flexible and versatile character, with a wide array of sound qualities possible. It can be smooth and lyrical and sharp and aggressive in all its registers of low, middle and high.

The very last thing or element that was determined in *Klibat* was to assign pitches to the shapes composed. In short, the composer was not concentrating first on pitch when starting composing this piece. Instead, the piece is implementing different gestures. By

approaching musical composition through gestural writing, *Klibat's* music is more effective, directed and whole.

Klibat begins with a slur quaver leap upward of minor 6th apart, with a flow between different intervals before a downward leap of Major 7th below. The opening phrase oscillates smoothly in dynamics, before the punctuation of two pitched slap tongues. This early section and rehearsal mark A is characterized mainly by longer note values such as quavers, crotchets and minims compared to the rest of the piece. Accelerating / decelerating semiquaver groups create uncertainty and tension. There are also quintuplet groups combining small-interval steps with large leaps. Rehearsal mark A then ends with a *fluttertongue* to a fast *appoggiatura* leading to trills in high B flat to high B natural, punctuated twice in *marcato*. The pitch centre for the introduction and rehearsal mark A is on pitch-classes F# and D. These two pitches are the first two pitches that appear in the beginning (Figure 14).

Figure 14: Beginning of *Klibat*



Source: Razali, 2013.

Rehearsal mark B is also active with fast semiquaver rhythms in quintuplets, sextuplets and septuplets. These septuplets move chromatically, before slowing down to *ritardando* and fading away *pianississimo*. Rehearsal mark B is a fairly quiet section containing playing techniques such as *vibratos* and key trills. The pitch centre for rehearsal mark B is E, even though it ends in D#. Therefore, as an audience, there is a feeling of anticipation, which is the same for the music, as the character is in suspense of being found (Figure 15).

Figure 15: Anticipation and suspense

Source: Razali, 2013.

Rehearsal marks C and D are loudest compared to the earlier movements. Section C begins with the pitch E following the D# from the end of section B. Section C has many gaps and rests that are filled in with sporadic slap tongue quavers and a lip bend (Figure 16). The lower range of the clarinet is explored here through groups of semiquavers in *pianisissimo* (Figure 17).

Figure 16: Slap tongue and lip bend

Source: Razali, 2013.

Figure 17: Clarinet in low range semiquavers

Source: Razali, 2013.

Rehearsal mark D is filled with running semiquavers and staccato semiquavers in *pianissimo* (Figure 18), followed by

repeated G natural and ending in a succession of 5 slaptongues, followed by a high rolling E, a major 3rd above the last note of middle C. Section D has a faster momentum than the rest of the piece until the end, as it feels like the character is found at last, unable to hide any longer (Figure 19).

Figure 18: Running semiquavers in *staccato*



Source: Razali, 2013.

Figure 19: Faster momentum in rehearsal mark D



Source: Razali, 2013.

Ambiguous sense of time in Camellia Razali's *Klibat*

Where Berio employs the compositional technique of aleatoricism or semi-aleatoricism in his *Sequenzas* to achieve freedom in duration, *Klibat* has a stricter temporal notation. *Klibat* substitutes aleatoricism for writing out actual notes on how it is exactly wanted to be performed, but nevertheless having the same final result audibly (Figure 20). Lutoslawski for his *Jeux Venitiens* piece, talked about his usage of aleatoric techniques whereby loosening the temporal relations between

sounds, he enriches the rhythmic aspect of the composition thus, allowing free, individualize play on the instrument (Gieraczyński & Lutoslawski, 1989). The passages in *Klibat* look rather freely played on the page with the absence of bar lines and also the absence of obvious rhythmic groupings, however, they aren't actually as free as they might appear, because they are actually dictated by the written speed. Without any rhythmic patterns and groupings, *Klibat* has an ambiguous sense of time and no sense of pulse. Instead, gestural changes in the pace of its notes through written notes' duration, speed of notes, and rests, contribute to the ambiguity of time in *Klibat*.

Figure 20: Excerpt of *Klibat*, showing ambiguous time and duration

Klibat
Glimpse
Camellia Mohamed Razali

Score in C
*Bar lines serve as a means of orientation; there is no metrical pulsation.

♩=60 Mischievous

Clarinet in B \flat slap tongue

$p < mf > p-mf > p > pp > ppp p$

cl. lip bend

$p < mf > p < mf > p > pp$

Source: Razali, 2013.

There is no perceivable musical difference between the free and the controlled notational systems here, because this time the medium is for a solo instrument, thus freedom in time can be achieved through both notations. The performer is able to make the diminuendos as long as the performer needs to, stretching and expressing passages within the pacing of phrases. The written notes and gestures of this solo piece bring out just the right responses from the clarinet, showing different characteristics of the instrument.

Conclusion

In Berio's *Sequenza for Clarinet*, the composite pitch and rhythmic structures can be complex. The performer is allowed to play with expressive freedom. Instead of being controlled by the score, rhythm is contributed by performer. Pitch structures, however, are strictly prescribed by the composer, resulting into emancipation of pulse and tempo.

In terms of form, the structural form of Marzelan Salleh's *Garisan* is determined by pitch relations. Therefore, through-composed form is used in this piece and the idea of using this form is to create non-repetitive music that is constantly evolving and not distracted by musical conversation, or music that is composed in linear order. When mentioning about its tonality, its harmonic language would be described as freely non-tonal. Form and tonality is the compositional outer structure and therefore Marzelan Salleh's determined gestures in his rhythms and articulations corresponds with the intended freedom of range and duration of his piece, *Garisan*.

Camellia Razali's *Klibat* for solo clarinet is articulate and precise in its execution of syncopated accents, slap-tongues and trills to articulate its primary concern with musical gesture. *Klibat* demands the clarinet's wide range, from the low *ppp* semiquavers right up to *fff* accented high notes of F#. *Klibat's* music is a momentum moving from moments of activity dissolving into silence. *Klibat* achieves its ambiguity in time through the absence of clear groupings of rhythms which, are instead replaced by gestural changes in pacing of notes.

Gestures in music when performed shall easily reveal intentions, emotions and actions or the 'musical truth' thus, requiring more from the performers a feat of technical rigour and finesse. Elaborate lines contrasting with more sustained lines, or sporadic interjections from the instrument with an overlay of powerful gestures, and added with some timbral mixtures, there

is both a tranquillity and obsessiveness in *Sequenza for Clarinet*, *Garisan*, and *Klibat*.

These three solo instrumental compositions have become representations of woodwind instrument, the clarinet. A combination of ideas into different mediums is the key behind these three solo pieces, and musical gesture has become the motivation for the development of these three compositions. Performances of *Sequenza for Clarinet*, *Garisan*, and *Klibat* do not necessarily require an extroverted, theatrical performance. However, the woodwind's expressive abilities and idiomatic virtuosity are still on display.

The different layers of gestural functions deepen our musical experiences. Although there isn't a clear precise definition on gesture nor its concept to some extent, most authors and scholars do agree on gesture as a mean for human musical communication involving body movements with meaning. In music, as composers in particular, it is necessary to understand the different levels and purpose of gestures, in its different meanings and affects, and its delivery by its more physical nature to the more subjective and metaphorical.

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