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**THE CLARINET AS EXTENSION OF THE  
VOICE AND EXPRESSIVE CONDUIT OF  
MUSICAL STYLES IN DIVERSE  
ENSEMBLES**

**by**

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
Key Terms.....	xv
<b>CHAPTER ONE: The Clarinet as Extension of the Voice.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Introduction.....	1
Vocal Tone.....	2
Clarinet Tone.....	9
Vocal and Clarinet Tone Comparisons.....	16
Clarinet Construction and Historical Development .....	24
Conclusion .....	32
<b>CHAPTER TWO: Case Studies of Four Clarinetists in Wellington .....</b>	<b>34</b>
Introduction.....	34
The SMP Ensemble: Andrzej Nowicki.....	36
The New Zealand Clarinet Quartet: Debbie Rawson .....	46
Blackbird Jazz Trio: Greg Rogan.....	57
The Klezmer Rebs: Urs Signer .....	67
Conclusion .....	77
<b>CHAPTER THREE: Voice and Clarinet Identity.....</b>	<b>80</b>
Introduction.....	80
Individual Identity: Bodymind Integration.....	81
Musical Identity: Voice and Clarinet .....	87
Ensemble Identity: The ‘Vocal’ Clarinetist.....	94
Conclusion .....	99
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: Clarinetists as Conduits of Musical Styles .....</b>	<b>101</b>
Introduction.....	101
Clarinetists Transcend Boundaries: Gender, Ethnicity, Ensemble .....	102
Wellington City and Musical Diversity.....	108
Conclusion .....	115

<b>CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusions .....</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Appendix A.....</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>Appendix B.....</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Appendix C.....</b>	<b>126</b>
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>129</b>

## ABSTRACT

Original research into the links between vocal and clarinet tone reveals how clarinetists act as expressive conduits of musical styles in diverse ensembles. This research is relevant to musicologists and anthropologists as well as clarinetists and composers, who wish to gain an understanding of the vocal links in clarinet playing, and how clarinetists function in socio-musical contexts. Research is mainly based on Musicology and Music Education (vocal-clarinet links), and also refers to sources in Anthropology (musical identity), and Ethnomusicology (music in ensembles) in order to find some insightful connections. Ethnographic fieldwork is based on four professional freelance clarinetists in four different ensembles in Wellington, New Zealand. Their function in western art and contemporary art music, jazz and klezmer music is explored, to discover how these clarinetists extend, mirror, partner, or replace the voice in these musical contexts. Additional work undertaken on bodymind integration is designed to complement the musical identity work in the thesis and to enhance the musicianship and physical wellbeing of clarinetists. The section on clarinet design illustrates how different combinations of instruments and mouthpieces can vary the tone quality of the clarinet and enhance individual playing styles. The research shows that due to the versatility and flexibility of the instrument, clarinetists are able to transcend gender, ethnic, and ensemble boundaries, to take on leadership roles and to act as expressive conduits of musical styles in and between diverse ensembles. The outcome of the research highlights the intersection between the physiological relationship between the voice and the clarinet and scholarship on musical identity.

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## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Vocal Subsystems: Air Pressure, Vibratory and Resonating Systems.....	3
Figure 2: Neocortex Messages to Larynx via Laryngeal Nerves .....	4
Figure 3: Larynx Cartilage and Muscles .....	5
Figure 4: Vocal Folds.....	6
Figure 5: Head and Neck Resonators and Articulators in Vocal Production.....	7
Figure 6: <i>Concertina 5b</i> by Andrzej Nowicki and Richard Robertshawe .....	38
Figure 7: The SMP Ensemble in <i>Waipoua Forest</i> by Gareth Farr .....	41
Figure 8: <i>Tango Oscuro</i> by Jonathan Berkahn .....	43
Figure 9: The Zelanian Ensemble.....	48
Figure 10: The New Zealand Clarinet Quartet .....	51
Figure 11: Tango Virtuosi .....	56
Figure 12: The Blackbird Jazz Trio .....	59
Figure 13: The Blackbird Jazz Trio at the Old Government Buildings, 2008 .....	62
Figure 14: Greg Rogan Multi-instrumentalist, 2009.....	64
Figure 15: The Klezmer Rebs.....	68
Figure 16: The Klezmer Rebs at the Palmerston North City Library, 2010 .....	71
Figure 17: Klezmorim 1910 .....	75