

FOUR OR MORE	WITH VOICE	ALBUMS
Beethoven—Quintet op 16, Sextet, Septet, Octet. Mozart—Quintet w/ str 4, Quintet for ww & p, sextet, octet. B H Crusell—Quartet cl-vn-va-cel Mozart—Quartet w/ 3 Str.	Mozart—Two arias from Titus (one w/ b hn)	Bonade —16 Grands Solos de Concert: Paris Con and Weber Concertino. Christmas —Baroque Music for the Cl. Solos for the Clarinet Player The Clarinet Recital Cl Classics —I Concerti: Mozart Spohr 1-2 Weber II Quintets: Brahms Mozart Weber III Miscellaneous E Simon —Masterworks for Cl & Piano: Brahms Mendelssohn Schumann Weber. Stubbins —Recital Lit for Clar., 5 Vol: I II & IV mostly Paris Con; III has Mozart and 2 Weber Con; V Miscellaneous.
Quintets for Cl & Str 4: Brahms Reger Weber.	Gaveaux—Polacca fr. Le Trompeur trompe Meyerbeer—Shepherd Song Schubert—Shepherd on the Rock; Totus in Corde; Romanze. Spohr—6 German Songs	
Poulenc—Sextet for ww & p		CLARINET ALONE J Bovicchi—Sonata #1 G Bucht—Cl Study 59 C Deak—Sonatina P Dubois—Sonata Breve B Hummel—Suite R Jettel—5 Grotesques S Karg-Elert—Sonata E Krenek—Monolog S Kurtz—Fantasy I Lang—Monodia D Martino—A Set for Cl. J Mayer—Raga Music O Messiaen—Abime des Oiseaux W Osborne—Rhapsody J Rivier—Le Trois 5 M Rozsa—Sonatina W O Smith—5 Pieces I Stravinsky—3 Pieces H Sutermeister—Capriccio G Tailleferre—Sonata E Wellesz—Suite
Cl and Str 4: Arthur Bliss S. Coleridge-Taylor Paul Hindemith Gordon Jacob Cl-Str 4 & Piano: N. Berezowsky A. Copland R. Harris S. Prokofiev Carlos Surinach—Ritmo Jondo for cl-trpt-3 perc-3 HC	D. Argento—To Be Sung on Water A. Bliss—Nursery Rhymes A. Cooke—3 Songs of Innocence Hovhaness—Saturn G Jacob—3 Songs J McCabe—3 Folk Songs N. Rorem—Ariel R. Vaughan-Williams Vocalises	Von Kech - Monolog III Webster - 5 Pieces Cahuzac - Arlequin Bennett - Sonatina Jacob - 5 Pieces Bassett - Soliloquies

FRANCE SUPERIEURE

VANDOREN

You'll hear the extra time we take.

Vandoren

PARIS

CLARINET COMMENTS

Quality, not quantity, is primary in developing clarinet finger technique

by Tom Ridenour
Manager, Woodwind Company

In my last column, I shared a few thoughts on teaching the clarinet inspired by an article from an issue of *Woodwinds* magazine dated 1948. At the close of that column, I mentioned a second article in the same magazine, in which clarinetist Augustin Duques discussed the French approach to finger-technique development. The Duques article will serve as a point of departure for this present column.

To begin, we need to understand that some of us enter the world with greater gifts than others and that we each have strengths and weaknesses. Further, some of us develop our gifts later than others, as so-called "late bloomers." This is not fatalism, but reality.

Fortunately, it is only one part of reality. The balancing aspect is the existence of human freedom. In practical terms, we are in fact able to self-actualize to a certain degree. Although we cannot create more talent than we have been given, we can improve and refine the gifts we do have. Musicians usually do this by an activity commonly known as . . . practicing.

Often, an individual's ultimate development is as much a matter of heart as it is a matter of talent. When I was in school, I saw some students who had more natural musical talent than others, but for various reasons, they did not develop it. Consequently, their performance skills were eventually surpassed by others with less talent but with the drive, desire and discipline to work harder and smarter.

It is important to note that working both hard and smart is necessary for truly fine results. Practice does not necessarily make perfect—only perfect practice makes perfect. Time spent with the horn and even strenuous efforts mean little in themselves. Only time and effort that is directed and dis-

ciplined by a clear methodology will yield the desired result most quickly.

Most every product we know of has two aspects to it: quantity and quality. Who cares if the quality is great when there is too little of it? Conversely, who cares if the quantity is abundant when the quality is poor?

Since our technique is also a "product" (though an intangible one, it is the product of our efforts), technique must be subject to the same standards of evaluation to which any other product is held. We must concern ourselves with both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of technique. Who cares how elegant and refined our technique is if we can't play the music up to tempo? Who cares how fast we can play

Some of us enter the world with greater gifts than others. Although we cannot create more talent than we have been given, we can improve and refine the gifts we do have. Musicians usually do this by an activity commonly known as practicing.

if everything is sloppy and uneven?

Quality of technique must always be given the higher priority, but quality does not happen accidentally—it only comes about when we know *what* needs to be done and *how* best to do it. Ultimately, the quantitative and qualitative aspects of technique are profoundly interrelated. If we neglect the qualitative, it can limit the quantitative.

The mistake many of us make, especially when we are young and less experienced, is to stress the quantitative first. Often we are encouraged to do so by people who ought to know better. We want to play the fast, difficult material to prove our skills and perhaps impress others.

At this early stage of the game, we are usually unaware that there is even a qualitative dimension to technique. Who cares if our fingers are out of position and wasting motion? Who cares if we are slapping and popping

the keys and tone holes when we play and if our fingers, hands, arms and shoulders are full of tension? We are getting the notes, aren't we? The true artist knows that it is not enough for passage to "be there" nonetheless—the passage must also be beautiful.

Many professionals have affirmed this truth. The history of music is filled with instances of fine players who understood that they had failed to develop certain qualitative aspects of the technique and concluded that their playing would always be limited unless they took the time to solve the problems. For many, this meant doing something so radical as declining to perform for a period of time so that they might work out the bad habits. But working in the good—enabling them to reach artistic heights of technical mastery and expressive freedom.

The article penned by Monsieur Duques reminds me of the traditional French approach to technique, which is qualitative from beginning to end. The French have traditionally concentrated on the manner and style of technique, seeking to master the qualitative aspects by means of perfecting the qualitative.

This brings a whole list of considerations, suggested below, for students to ponder during practice. The student should try to practice before a mirror when considering these questions in order to see faults in finger technique that are not always felt.

1. Are all the fingers curved, and are you covering the tone holes with the "balls" or tips of the fingers? Many players try to play with the flat part of the finger. This reduces tone emission and impairs the legato connection and efficiency of intervallic connections. It also causes the fingers to tend to straighten—a sure sign of tension that will soon fatigue the player.

2. Is the finger stroke a diagonal or a vertical motion? Diagonal motion in the finger stroke usually happens when a player covers the tone holes with the flatter part of the finger and when the fingers begin to straighten out due to tension. This causes wasted motion. The proper and most efficient finger stroke is a short vertical motion, using the tips or "balls" of the fingers.

Many of the great French masters barely moved the fingers while they executed very difficult passages. Their concentration upon and mastery of the proper finger technique eventually gave them a technical command com-