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Research Proposal
MH 715

An Analysis of Géza Frid's Concerto for Clarinets, Op. 82 (1972):
Newly discovered repertoire by a Hungarian, Jewish, Dutch composer
A Proposal

Géza Frid (1904-1989) was a significant Hungarian-born Dutch composer and pianist of Jewish descent. His compositional style was highly regarded in the Dutch musical scene of the 20th century; his music has been programmed on multiple occasions by the Concertgebouw Orchestra and in 1949 and 1954 won the City of Amsterdam Music Award. Major influences on Frid's musical development started in his native Hungary where he studied with Béla Bartók and Zoltán Kodály before his move to the Netherlands. In 1972, he composed an unusually lovely concerto for B-flat, A, E-flat and bass clarinets (Op. 82) and dedicated it to George Pieterse, principle clarinet with the Concertgebouw Orchestra.

Scholarly discussions of Géza Frid's clarinet music are not to be found in either the US based International Clarinet Society's *The Clarinet*, or in the Dutch based *De Klarinet*. Intensive World Cat library searches have yielded no recordings of this piece, and currently there is not even one recording of Frid's Concerto for Clarinets on YouTube or in the Naxos Music Library. The Concerto for Clarinets is a significant addition to the standard clarinet repertoire and needs to be introduced to the world wide clarinet community. Furthermore, save for some short selections on the Géza Frid website set up by his son, Arthur Frid and a Wikipedia article, no translations exist of Géza Frid's autobiographical material. His life story was exceedingly interesting, having been a Jewish composer during the World War II years who was not allowed to perform or compose for years during the German occupation of the Netherlands. Luckily he survived the war years by going into hiding; he managed as part of the musician's resistance to find ways to perform and work illegally giving clandestine concerts and falsifying documents. These were exceedingly dangerous risks, yet ones Géza Frid and his fellow musicians were willing to take because of their music. Frid published two autobiographical books and numerous articles for the Dutch music magazine *Mens en Melodie*, (People and Melody) revealing his deep musical insights; especially those relating to the music of the Concerto need to be summarized and translated to English from Dutch.

This paper will provide a general overview of the historical aspects of Géza Frid's life, his WWII experiences, and his position as one of many persecuted Jewish musicians at the time. Géza Frid's autobiographical information relating to his personal friendships with Bartók and Kodály is of interest when considering his music. Summaries and some translations will be made of his two Dutch language autobiographical books, *In 80 Jaar de Wereld Rond (Around the World in 80 Years)* and *Oog in Oog Met... (Eye to Eye With...)*. A basic analysis of Frid's Concerto for Clarinets will be given regarding form, the various instrument appearances, and a special feature invented by George Pieterse called the 'tremolo special'. Since this concerto was specifically composed for the Reformed Boehm system clarinets which George Pieterse used, a discussion of the differences between the French, German and Reformed Boehm clarinet systems will be included. The performance portion of this project will be a historically informed performance of this piece on the specific models of clarinets for which it was written.

George Pieterse passed on in April of this year and this project would be a fitting tribute of his teaching to a generation of professional clarinetists in the Netherlands including the author. I hope to have portions of this paper published in *De Klarinet*, the Dutch version of *the Clarinet Magazine* published by the International Clarinet Society.

Resources:

Brokken, Jan, Carine Alders, and Eleonore Pameijer. *Vervolgde Componisten in Nederland: Verboden Muziek in De Tweede Wereldoorlog*. Amsterdam: AUP, 2015. Print.

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Brymer, Jack. *Yehudi Menuhin Music Guides: Clarinet*. London: MacDonald and Jane's, 1979. Print.

Cuypers, Tanya. *Clarinet Music by Belgian Composers, 1830-2000: A History and a List of Works*. Arizona: Arizona State University, 2002. (DMA dissertation)

Frid, Arthur (son). Correspondence 9/30/16.

Frid, Géza. *Concert voor clarinetten en strijkorkest, opus 82*. Amsterdam: Donemus, 1973. (license to perform issued to Karen Luttk)

Frid, Géza. *In Tachtig Jaar de Wereld Rond*. Amsterdam: Strengholt, 1984.

Frid, Géza. *Oog in Oog met...: Ontmoetingen met 7 grootheden*. Amsterdam: Heuff, 1976.

Frid, Géza. *Letter to the Dutch Society of Composers, September 20, 1974*. Den Haag: Nederlands muziekinstituut archives. (accessed May 2016)

Frid, Géza Scrapbook newspaper clippings.

Frid, Géza. *Dutch Concert rostrum: Podium Neerlandes concert en Hollande*. Recording of premier. Record jacket.

Géza.com website

Grove Music online.

<http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.ezproxy.bu.edu/subscriber/article/grove/music/10250?q=geza+Frid&search=quick&pos=1&start=1#firsthit>

Hoepfich, Eric. *The Clarinet: The Yale Musical Instrument Series*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007. Print.

MacDonald, Martha Frances. *The Clarinet in Twentieth-Century Dutch Chamber Music*. Austin: University of Texas, 1986. (DMA dissertation)