

Clarinet Fusion

Under the direction of Dr. Lawrence E. Anderson

ACB Annual Convention Meet and Greet Dinner Tuesday, April 2, 2013

Forest Home Farm
San Ramon, California

Clarinet Fusion (kler-ə-'net 'fyü-zh'n) *n.* 1. The process of the sound of single-reed, tubular woodwind instruments merging diverse, distinct, or separate elements into a unified whole.



• PERSONNEL •

Ed Chow	(San Ramon).....Clarinet
Dave Sandusky	(Danville).....Clarinet
David Rausch	(Martinez).....Clarinet
Danielle Napoleon	(Martinez).....Clarinet
George March	(Martinez).....Clarinet, Eb Clarinet
Tom Berkelman	(Oakland).....Clarinet, Eb Clarinet, Ab Clarinet
Mark Horne	(Brentwood).....EEb Contra Alto Clarinet, BBb Contra Bass Clarinet
Phillip Pollard	(San Jose)Bass Clarinet
Karyn Weber	(Pleasant Hill).....Alto Clarinet

Dr. Lawrence E. Anderson (Danville) is a lifelong music educator and band director. He was Director of Bands and Supervisor of Teacher Education in Music, at the University of California, Davis. He is a graduate of Acalanes High School, Lafayette, CA and the University of California, Berkeley where he was a member of the California Marching Band and the University Concert Band. He earned a B.A. at the University of California, Berkeley, an M.A. at San Francisco State University, and a Ph.D. at the University of California, Berkeley. After graduation his first job was Director of Music at Miramonte High School in Orinda, he then served as a counselor at Ygnacio Valley High School in Concord and later as Supervisor of Music Education at Sonoma State University. He is presently a Student Teacher Supervisor for Chapman University in Walnut Creek, CA.

Dr. Anderson has served on the Board of Directors for the Association of Concert Bands, representing the Western Region. His articles have been published in numerous professional journals. He also writes a monthly column, "Notes on Key," for *Alive East Bay* magazine in the San Francisco Bay Area.



He is the founding conductor of the Danville Community Band (2001,) where he now holds the distinction of Conductor-Emeritus and Artistic Director, in addition to playing clarinet.

The members of *Clarinet Fusion* collectively boast more than 350 years of clarinet-playing experience. In addition to the clarinets being played today, various members also have experience playing other instruments too such as: A and C clarinet, flute, oboe, sarrusophone, french horn, trumpet, baritone horn, tuba, electric bass, and the saxophone family: soprano, alto, Bb tenor, C melody tenor, and baritone.

These musicians also play for a number of other music and performing groups, including:

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| Danville Community Band | Livermore-Amador Symphony |
| Walnut Creek Concert Band | Brentwood Concert Band |
| Diablo Valley College Symphonic Band | West County Winds |
| Quintaire Woodwind Quintet | Star Struck Theater (Fremont) |
| Ohlone Community Band | California Repercussions Marching Band |
| Ohlone Wind Orchestra | Contra Costa Wind Symphony |
| Ohlone Clarinet Choir | Oakland Civic Orchestra |



• CLARINET •



When talking about “the clarinet” you generally mean the **Bb (soprano) Clarinet**. It is one of the younger woodwind instruments, having been invented around 1700. A German instrument maker developed it based on a very simple shepherd’s instrument, known as the chalumeau. Today we still call the lovely low register the “chalumeau.” All clarinets have a bore which is basically the same diameter along the body of the instrument. This cylindrical bore differs from the saxophone’s conical bore and gives the clarinet its characteristic tone. Vivaldi and Handel were the first of the great composers to write music for the clarinet, but Romantic Era composers like Carl Maria von Weber, Schumann, and Brahms were the ones who really showed the full potential of the clarinet as a solo instrument. It wasn’t until the start of this Romantic period, that the reed was turned around to be played with the bottom lip. Prior to 1820, the reed went on the top lip. Both in sound and playing techniques the clarinet is one of the most flexible of all instruments. It is the instrument most like the human voice. You can also play virtually all forms of articulation with a clarinet - which is one reason why the clarinet is often substituted for violins in band arrangements of orchestral works. A typical Bb soprano clarinet is 26 inches long.

The **Eb Clarinet** is the smallest of the standard clarinets and is only 19 inches long. Although the Eb is somewhat of a rarity in middle and high school bands, it is a staple instrument in college and other wind ensembles. The Eb sounds very bright - almost as bright as the piccolo flute. Originally created to replace the high trumpet, it was used in concert and military bands towards the end of the eighteenth century. The famous orchestral solo in Berlioz’s symphony fantastic was written in 1830.

The smallest clarinet is the **Ab Piccolo Clarinet** checking in at 14 inches long. It is called the Ab soprano and is the only surviving member of the piccolo group. It’s not quite an octave higher than the Bb, but is the highest pitched clarinet produced. Clarinets pitched in Ab are very rare outside of European wind bands, more used in Spain and Italy. They are called-for in the pit orchestra for several operas by Verdi, and used in Austrian military bands as it is often found in Viennese folk music.

The **Eb Alto Clarinet**, at 43 inches long, is said to be the modern form of the bassett horn. They first appeared around 1770. You find alto clarinets in wind or symphonic bands, but rarely in classical symphony orchestras, especially in light of Adolphe Sax’s technical improvements to the bass clarinet. Although Berlioz said about the alto clarinet, “it is a very beautiful instrument which ought to take its place in all well established orchestras,” he never wrote music for it. Many outstanding composers of the band repertoire, such as Grainger, Dello Joio, Copland, etc., have written significant parts for the alto clarinet.



Alto
Clarinet

• CLARINET •



Bass Clarinet

The **Bb Bass Clarinet** competed for development beginning in the mid 1700s, some 60 years after the ‘clarinet.’ A wind instrument of this size, 4.5 feet long, requires a perfect key system. It was not until the 1830s, about 10 years before the invention that bears his name, that Adolphe Sax developed a bass clarinet with significant acoustical improvements that became the basis for all bass clarinet design since. (the first saxophone was invented in 1846.) The bass clarinet’s tone range is wider than any other wind instrument. With the addition of a few keys, it can play as low as a bassoon and as high up as a soprano clarinet.

E Eb Contra Alto Clarinet development began in the first half of the nineteenth century; these were usually pitched in F and were called contra basset horns, being an octave lower than the basset horn. Today’s E Eb contra alto clarinet sounds an octave below the Eb alto, and 2 octaves below the Eb clarinet. It is used mostly in concert bands and clarinet choirs where it usually, but not always, plays the bass line of a piece of music. At 7 feet long, it is the second-largest member of the clarinet family in regular use, larger than the more common bass clarinet but not as large as the BBb contra bass clarinet.



*Contra Bass Clarinet
‘Paperclip’*

The **BBb Contra Bass Clarinet** is the largest of all clarinets in regular use - about 9 feet in length - and not very common. Composers usually only use this instrument for special effects. It’s extremely deep tone is comparable to that of a string bass, and it often plays that part in orchestral transcriptions. It is one octave lower than the bass clarinet, 2 octaves lower than the “regular” clarinet, and almost 3 octaves lower than the Ab piccolo clarinet.

Both the E Eb contra alto and BBb contra bass clarinets are built in two configurations: a ‘straight’ clarinet style, looking much like a longer version of the bass clarinet (made of wood and metal; or all metal); and an all metal version known as a “paperclip” due to its folded shape.

Two even-larger types of clarinets have been built on an experimental basis by the G. Leblanc Corporation: EEEb Octocontra Alto — An octave below the contra alto clarinet. Only three have been built; and the BBBb Octocontra Bass — An octave below the contra bass clarinet. Only one was ever built.