The History Of The Clarinet Essay, Research Paper

The clarinet is a woodwind instrament consisting of a cylindrical wood, metal, or ebonite pipe with a bell-shaped opening at one end and a mouthpiece at the other end, to which a thin reed is attached. The clarinet has five different sections, the mouthpiece, the barrel, the upper section, the lower section, and the bell. The length of the entire instrument is 60 cm long. The mouthpiece section consists of a slotted cylinder, to which a reed is attached by a metal clamp called a ligature. The mouthpiece plugs into the next section which is a barrel. The barrel is simply a connecting cylinder to which the mouthpiece and the upper section plugs into. The upper section is a cylindrical pipe consisting of 4 holes and 9 keys placed in different locations along the pipe. On the back of the pipe there is a hole and a key that is used by the thumb. The lower section plugs into the upper section and is also connected via a special bridge key. This piece consists of 3 holes and 8 keys. On the inward facing side of the pipe, there is a protruding piece of metal called a thumb rest, which supports the entire clarinet. The bell plugs into the lower section. It consists of a cylinder that flares out into a bell shape and ends the clarinet.

Clarinets are mainly made of African blackwood, metal, or a special hard plastic called ebonite. The keys on the clarinet are made of metal. The mouthpiece is mainly made of ebonite. The ligature is made of metal. The reed is made of cane.

The clarinet was created in and around the eighteenth century. By the mid eighteenth century, the five key clarinet became standard. In 1844, the clarinet was further revised into what we know of it today.

Around the beginning of the eighteenth century, a German instrument maker, Johann Christoff Denner invented the clarinet by improving the chalumeau. He did this by doubling the length of the chalumeau and adding two keys. The clarinet slowly acquired more keys during the eighteenth century. By 1750 the five key clarinet was the standard. In 1844, two french musicians, Louis-Augustine Buffet and Hyacinthe Klos made the most significant improvement in the instruments history. They applied the Boehm flute key system to the clarinet. This was done by placing each hole in different places so that each note would have the same tone quality. Then, they devised a key system that would cover all the holes. The improvements were a success, and the newly revised instrument became popular all over the world.

The clarinet produces sound when air passes over the reed. The reed then vibrates, causing the flowing air to vibrate, thus producing sound. The air then exits the nearest opening. The farther the air travels before exiting, the deeper and lower the note will be. To produce a wide variety of notes, the clarinet has many keys and holes. Pressing different combinations of keys will result in different notes.

Since the clarinet is a very versatile instrument, it can play almost any music. Today they play in bands, orchestras, dance bands, jazz bands, and woodwind ensembles. It is also often featured as a solo instrument.

The clarinet has a beautiful liquid sound that becomes warm and dark when playing low notes, but bright and piercing when playing high notes.

The clarinet has a range of 3 octaves and can play all semitones between an E three ledger lines below the staff, to a D two ledger lines above the staff.