

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI – KANSAS CITY
CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC AND DANCE

**THE BASSOON IN THE CAFÉ:
AN ANNOTATED LIST OF SELECTED WORKS OF
TWENTIETH-CENTURY FRENCH CHAMBER MUSIC WITH BASSOON**

A PAPER PRESENTED IN PARTIAL COMPLETION OF
THE MASTER OF ARTS IN MUSIC DEGREE

BY
MICHAEL W. HARRIS

FALL 2006

Acknowledgements

I would like to first thank my advisor, Dr. William Everett, and my bassoon teacher, Marita Abner. Their advice and direction were of immense help in the completion of this project. Also of immense help was the staff at Miller Nichols Library at the University of Missouri – Kansas City: Laura Gayle Green in the music library, the staff of the Interlibrary Loan Department, and the staff of the Circulation Department. Also, to the musicians who helped me read through some of the works, thank you for sharing your time and talent. Finally, my parents and family for constantly asking me when this thing would be done and I'd actually graduate. Well here you go, it's done, so stop asking! Thanks to all of you, without your support, it would have never gotten done.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Introduction: The Rebirth of Wind Music.....	4
Section 1: Accompanied Solos for Bassoon.....	10
Section 2: Duets for Bassoon and One Instrument.....	16
Section 3: Trios for Bassoon and Two Instruments.....	21
Section 4: Quartets for Bassoon and Three Instruments.....	26
Section 5: Woodwind Quintets.....	29
Section 6: Sextets for Bassoon and Five Instruments.....	34
Section 7: Bassoon Ensembles.....	37
Index of Works by Composer.....	39
Bibliography.....	40

Introduction: The Rebirth of Wind Music

The twentieth century has been a boon for wind music. From full wind ensembles to smaller chamber groups of brass and woodwind, music written for wind instruments has increased many times over and has put wind groups on par in level of importance with that of their string relatives. Along with this rise of wind music has been a rise of professional wind groups, both full ensembles and groups focused on chamber music performance. This increased compositional activity has led to a rise in the number of both solo and ensemble pieces that include the bassoon.

A significant phase of this interest in wind music began in French chamber music during the late nineteenth century. Through a large part of music history, winds and wind ensembles played an important part. Usually in the form of outdoor concert and festival music, *Harmoniemusik* was an important part of court musical life until the early 1800s. With Napoleon's conquering of much of Europe, though, the practice slowly died away and with it much of the music for wind ensemble due to the destruction of the many royal courts that employed them. The *Harmoniemusik* ensemble, which is traditionally made up of pairs of oboes, clarinets, bassoons, and horns, also led to the creation of the wind quintet, which was in vogue for a few decades around the turn of the nineteenth century. Music for wind quintet first peaked in the early 1800s with the composition of twenty-four wind quintets by Anton Reicha (1770-1836), but like the *Harmoniemusik*, the quintet was also largely abandoned by the middle part of the century. And this is where wind music found itself in the 1870s when the French flutist, composer, and conductor Paul Taffanel (1844-1908) took it upon himself to reestablish wind music as an important part

of the Parisian music life by leading a renaissance in wind music, wind playing, and wind chamber ensembles.

In 1871 Taffanel attended the first meeting that established the Société nationale de musique. He was an important figure in the early stages of the formation of the group, but subsequently left later in that same year. He would continue to be an active performer as he performed on many of the Society's concerts, along with playing in other societies around Paris, until the 1890s. The goals of that group, "to foster the composition and performance of French symphonic and chamber music,"¹ stayed with Taffanel as he became involved in another society in 1872, one that was a revival of an earlier group, the Société de musique classique. This new group presented chamber music for both winds and strings, and allowed Taffanel to bring long neglected works of the wind repertoire back to the public.² Despite the success this new Society was having, it disbanded after the 1875 season. Why this happened is unknown. Taffanel, though, founded a new society, Société de musique de chambre pour instruments à vent, in 1879 that was dedicated solely to wind chamber music.

In the intervening years between those two societies, Taffanel composed an important piece in the history of wind chamber music, and also the oldest piece in this survey, his *Quintet* (1876). He wrote it in response to a competition that called for pieces to be written in one of three genres: piano quartet, lyric song, or wind quintet. Taffanel's quintet won the sole gold medal in the competition.³ The quintet received very good reviews in the Parisian press, though a review from a later performance stated that since the piece, "was written for a competition; we cannot therefore blame the composer for the

¹ Edward Blakeman, *Taffanel: Genius of the Flute* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 39.

² *Ibid.*, 43.

³ *Ibid.*, 59.

unfavorable choice of the means used to realize his ideas.”⁴ The meaning was, of course, that a wind quintet was not an ideal group for which to write. These performances, in 1877, set the stage for the creation of the Société de musique de chambre pour instruments à vent.

Created in 1879 and performing a six-concert season every year until it disbanded in 1893 when Taffanel left to pursue a conducting career, the Society became a fixture in Parisian concert life. And while it was dedicated to performing and commissioning chamber works for wind instruments, it did occasionally include strings, and also used piano in the majority of their concerts. The group in its fifteen seasons performed 150 different works and gave some fifty works their first performances, either newly commissioned works or pieces by the classic masters that had never been played in Paris.⁵ This ensemble proved to be a force in the genre of wind music and led to the creation of other such groups throughout Europe and even the United States. It also was the commissioning group for such pieces as the *Petite symphonie* by Charles Gounod and the *Serenade* by Richard Strauss that have become standard wind repertoire. The importance of this group cannot be understated, and it is certain that we would have not anywhere near the number of quality works for chamber wind groups without the Society.

Another important factor in the increase of wind chamber music, specifically the genre of accompanied solos, was the annual contest held at the Paris Conservatory. The contest, or *concours* in French, was first held in 1797, and in 1898 the bassoon studio regularly began to commission new works for the annual contest. Until that year, it had been the tradition in the bassoon studio that the teacher composed works for the contest.

⁴ Quoted in Blakeman, *Taffanel*, 60.

⁵ Blakeman, *Taffanel*, 73.

The point of the *concours* was to be a graduation exam for the students of the conservatory, and was set up with a jury of teachers and other professional musicians from around Paris.⁶ After 1898, the bassoon studio commissioned new works from French composers almost every year, though some years they reused earlier commissions, and up until the 1940s they also regularly called for the Mozart and Weber concertos.⁷ Since then the *concours* have given bassoonists some of the great solo works of the twentieth century, including multiple works by Eugène Bozza, the two works of Alexandre Tansman that have become standards (the *Sonatine* and *Suite*), and Henri Dutilleux's *Sarabande et Cortège*.

Throughout the history of the *concours* certain compositional trends developed. The strong influence of the French opera tradition is evident in the two-part style of contest pieces: a lyrical section that emphasized tone and musicality is followed by a demanding technical section. This began to change with Bozza's 1935 piece *Récit, Sicilienne et Rondo* which, as the title indicates, is in a three-part form. This form is characterized by a cadenza-like introduction, followed by a lyric section, and concluding with a technical section. Along with increased difficulty and technical demands, the pieces also show a trend of moving the range upwards, reaching a high F (the top line, treble clef F) by the 1970s.⁸

As is evident from the steady increase in difficulty of the *concours* solos, the school of French wind playing was also become more accomplished. And thanks to Fernand Oubradous (1903-1986), the wind students at the Paris Conservatory were

⁶ Taffanel himself began judging the contest long before he was a teacher at the Conservatory.

⁷ Kristine Klopfenstein Fletcher, *The Paris Conservatoire and the Contest Solos for Bassoon* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 47.

⁸ Fletcher, *Contest Solos*, 100-1.

required to play in chamber ensembles. Oubradous was the bassoonist behind the creation of a significant chamber group that helped spur the composition of many new chamber works for the reed trio consisting of oboe, clarinet, and bassoon. Around 1930, Oubradous founded the Trio d'Anches de Paris with oboist Myrtil Morel and clarinetist Pierre Lefèbvre. In a career that lasted until the late 1930s or early 1940s, the group was the dedicatee of some eleven works⁹ and also recorded many trios including not only ones written for them, but also other works such as the Mozart *Divertimenti* and Oubradous's arrangement of a Bach prelude and fugue.¹⁰

While this group was active for only a short time, they left a legacy of compositions written for them and also encouraged the establishment of other groups with the same instrumentation. This in turn led to more compositions. In 2006, the reeds trio is an established part of the wind chamber music scene, with a large repertoire of compositions at its disposal.

The twentieth century has been important in the repertoire of wind musicians, thanks in large part to the efforts of French musicians such as Paul Taffanel and Fernand Oubradous, who increased not only the quantity but also the quality of music being written for wind players. The pieces contained in this survey are but a handful of those that have been written since the formation of the Société nationale de musique in 1871, and most were written after World War I. The pieces were selected through multiple means. First was the author's own knowledge of pieces for bassoon; from there other pieces were selected by looking at major composers' work lists. After that, syllabi made

⁹ James E. Gillespie, Jr., *The Reed Trio: An Annotated Bibliography of Original Published Works* (Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1971), 11.

¹⁰ It is also interesting to note that Oubradous was one of the successor's of the legacy of Taffanel as conductor and leader of a reformed Société de musique de chambre pour instruments à vent.

available on-line by bassoon professors were consulted.¹¹ Once a master list was compiled, it was pared down and a balance was struck between accompanied solo and other chamber works. The final list of fifty-five works were selected and experienced either through readings arranged by the author or recordings.

It is the hope of the author that this survey assists other bassoonists, both teachers and students, in exploring the wealth of music available during this very productive time of music composition.

¹¹ Most notable of these is Alan Leech's "An Approach to the Bassoon and Its Literature" available at the International Double Reed Society's website and published in *The Journal of the International Double Reed Society*, 16 (1988). Available on-line at: <http://idrs.colorado.edu/Publications/Journal/JNL16/JNL16.Leech.Approach.html>

Section 1: Accompanied Solos for Bassoon

Alain Bernaud (b. 1932)*Hallucinations* pour basson et piano

Written and published in 1978 by Société d'Éditions Musicales Internationales

Dedicated to Maurice Allard for the 1978 Concours

One movement

Much like other solo works in this survey, the *Hallucinations* begins with a very slow lyrical section that is recitative like before settling into a quick more rhythmical section. It includes quick runs that range almost the full scale of the instrument, difficult and complex rhythms, and unusual skips in run passages.

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)*Récit, Sicilienne et Rondo* pour basson et piano

Published in 1936 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Gustave Dhérin and written for the Concours

Three attacca movements

A challenging yet light-hearted solo work by Bozza. The opening recitative is a wonderful opportunity for a musician to demonstrate their expressiveness and creativity, and the Sicilienne, while “cheesy” in character still can show the lyricism of a player. The final Rondo finishes the work off with a flurry. There are many challenging runs in the work, not to mention the fact that Bozza, almost assuredly in an effort to allow the player to show off, throws in an octave leap up to the high E at the end of the Sicilienne and also has the performer playing in five different clefs (bass, tenor, treble, alto, and soprano).

Fantaisie pour basson et piano

Published in 1945 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Gustave Dhérin and written for the Concours

One movement with three sections

In three large sections, like many other works written for the Concours, the *Fantaisie* begins with a recitative section before moving into a slow lyric section followed by a fast virtuosic section. The piece ascends to a high E and has multiple sections written in treble clef. It has fast difficult runs with awkward leaps and fingering patterns. The work is a short but difficult and virtuosic piece.

Nocturne-Danse pour basson et piano

Published in 1967 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Aron Koza, Professor at Conservatoire National de Musique à Valenciennes

Two movements

This piece is typical of Bozza's solo works, meaning it is difficult, and like his other bassoon works, incorporates at least three clefs: bass, tenor, and treble. Many times using

treble clef when tenor clef would work just as well. The range is typical, going up to high C#, though there is an optional part that ascends to a high F#. The piece also has multiple runs that are atypical, though unlike other French works, the rhythm is not as big an issue in determining the level of difficulty.

Shiva pour basson et piano

Published in 1974 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Maurice Allard

One movement with multiple tempo sections

A difficult work that includes complex rhythms, runs with multiple skips, and a range that extends up to a high E. Like many other solo works, the piece opens with a slower lyrical section this is much like a recitative, but unlike others, it never settles into a tempo until rather late in the work, and the tempo marking of that section is 'Vif' with a recommended tempo of quarter note at 168. It is not a piece for the faint of heart.

Jacques Charpentier (b. 1933)

Grave pour basson et piano

Published in 1977 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Maurice Allard for the Concours

One movement

Although this piece is in a slow tempo, it is still very challenging. It has multiple runs in it that include rhythmic subdivisions that are not found in most common practice music. The fact that these runs are not normal scalar ones makes them challenging. The range of the work is that of typical twentieth century works, ascending up to a high C.

Pierre Max Dubois (1930-1995)

Neuf Pièce Brèves pour basson et piano

Published in 1965 by Editions Choudens

Movements: I. Pomposo (Allegretto)

II. Sicilienne

III. Vivo

IV. Tempo de Menuet

V. Pastorale (Lento)

VI. Allegretto

VII. Adagio

VIII. Giocoso

IX. Vivo

A set of nine short pieces, as the title indicates, these can be considered more character studies. For the most part the pieces are not too difficult: appropriate for an advanced high school student, or a college student in their first few years. The range and rhythms

avoid the extremes and make this a fairly easy work for advanced bassoonists or a stepping stone to more difficult work for the younger player.

Henri Dutilleux (b. 1916)

Sarabande et Cortège pour basson et piano

Published in 1942 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Gustave Dhérin and written for the Concours

One movement with two large sections

First off, this piece has a written high F. And while the piece overall does not have the runs at fast tempos that some others have, it remains difficult with runs that stretch over the bassoon's range and some very virtuosic small cadenzas. And it has a high F, though it is written so that the player can take it down an octave. The first section is a slow 'Assez lent' that sits mainly in the instrument's upper range and itself includes a high E. A work that might look easy...until you actually start playing it.

Noël Gallon (1891-1966)

Récit et Allegro pour basson et piano

Written and Published in 1938 by Éditions de L'oiseau Lyre

Dedicated to Fernand Oubradous

One movement with multiple sections

The difficulty level of this work is not as extreme as that of other works for bassoon and piano in the twentieth century, but that is not to say that the work is easy. It does ascend to a high C, and the opening section has a difficult run, but overall it is very accessible work.

Odette Gartenlaub (b. 1922)

Sonatine pour basson et piano

Written and published in 1959 by Editions Musicales Transatlantiques

Dedicated to Maurice Allard for the 1958 Concours

Three attacca sections: Allegro tranquillo, Lento, and Vivace

The work has fewer skips than other French works, and less syncopation, meaning that it is a much more accessible work for less-skilled players, though the range does limit the skill level (the piece ascends to a high D^b). The last movement will provide the most challenge since it is a quick tempo and consists mainly of running sixteenth notes, although the runs do not have the wide leaps of contemporary works.

Gabriel Grovlez (1879-1944)

Sicilienne et Allegro Giocoso pour basson et piano

Published in 1930 by Alphonse Leduc

Written for the Concours at the National Conservatory
Two attacca movements

Composed six years before to Bozza's *Récit, Sicilienne et Rondo*, this piece may have very well served as a model for Bozza. It begins with a short recitative-like passage that is much shorter than Bozza's and then flows into a Sicilian dance, followed by a fast closing section. And like Bozza's work, this piece is difficult, almost to the point of unplayability by all but the most skilled bassoonists. With fast runs and quick leaps, the piece is not for the faint of heart. The only thing that brings the piece back from the brink of insanity that is Bozza's work is the more restrained range (Grovez writes only up to a high B^b), and the use of only two clefs (as opposed to Bozza's five).

Camille Saint-Saëns (1835-1921)

Sonate, Op. 168

Written in 1921

Published in 1921 by Durand

Dedicated to Léon Letellier

Movements: I. Allegretto moderato

II. Allegro scherzando

III. Adagio – Allegro moderato

This sonata, the last written by Saint-Saëns before his death, is one of the most difficult of the frequently preformed solo works for bassoon and piano. Though most of the piece is at a moderate tempo, the second movement presents many challenges with syncopations and wide leaps. The outer movements are exercises in breath control as they present the player with long lines that ideally should be played as unbroken as possible. The range is that of the full compass of the bassoon, from the lowest B^b below the bass clef to the top space E on the treble clef at the end of the second movement.

Alexandre Tansman (1897-1986)

Sonatine pour Basson et Piano

Published in 1952 by Max Eschig

Written as commission for the Concours at the Paris Conservatory

Movements: I. Allegro con moto

II. Aria – Largo contabile

III. Scherzo – Presto

Though Polish by birth, Tansman became a French citizen in 1921. The *Sonatine* at hand is hard. It starts hard, gets harder, and gets really hard in the third movement. There are multiple fast runs, syncopated rhythms, and in the third movement, double tonguing passages (if you play it at the recommended tempo of 138). The middle aria movement, though, is a truly lovely piece that is a great way to study the lyricism that is capable on the instrument. Finally, the whole piece ends on an octave skip to the high E.

Suite pour basson

Published in 1960 by Max Eschig

Written as commission for the Concours at the Paris Conservatory

Movements: I. Introduction et Allegro

II. Sarabande

III. Scherzo

The Suite, as well as the *Sonatine* is a staple of twentieth century bassoon literature and shows the characteristics of the French bassoon music of the day: wide range, wide leaps, and fast runs in the upper tessitura of the instrument. Though the Suite's range only goes up to the B on the treble clef, and the leaps are more limited than those in other works by composers such as Bozza or Françaix, the difficulty of the work remains challenging.

Section 2: Duets for Bassoon and One Instrument

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)*Sonatine* pour Flûte et Basson

Published in 1938 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Jacques Ibert

Movements: I. Allegro

II. Andantino

III. Vif

A piece which really cooks when it gets going in the outer movements, and while the leaps in the bassoon part are not as awkward as one might find elsewhere, they do go for long periods without letting up. There are no set metronome markings given, one can assume from looking at other Bozza works that the Allegro and Vif can go exceedingly fast if one chooses. The range of the bassoon part is wide, as in other Bozza works, and treble clef appears on occasion. Also of note is that in the first movement there are two really hairy page turns that the publisher has written out on the bottom of the page, but unless you have super eyesight, you'll probably want to copy the page and attach it.

Contrastes I pour flûte et basson

Published in 1977 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Andante

II. Moderato

III. Allegretto

IV. Allegretto

V. Larghetto sostenuto

VI. Calme

VII. Allegretto

VIII. Allegro

The Bozza *Contrastes* are a series of works that while technically less challenging, provide one with excellent opportunities to learn how to play with attention to intonation and dynamics with other musicians. The range is not as wide as in other works, with the first *Contrastes* ascending to a high B. The rhythms are also less intricate than in other works, though this is not to say that the piece is easy. It still requires a very skilled high school student at the very least, if not a college student, to play it well.

Contrastes II pour hautbois et basson

Published in 1977 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Calme

II. Andante

III. Moderato

IV. Allegretto

V. Allegretto

VI. Avec indolence et mélancolie

VII. Allegro

As in the other sets of Bozza *Contrastes*, the range of the bassoon part is more limited than that in his other works. The difficulty is also less, making them excellent study pieces for advanced high school students or younger college students. The difficulty lies in the rhythms, lining the two parts up, and the attention that must be paid to the written dynamics in the parts.

Contrastes III pour Clarinette et Basson

Published in 1977 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Moderato

II. Adagio

III. Andante

IV. Allegretto

V. Allegretto mosso

VI. Larghetto sostenuto

VII. Allegretto

VIII. Allegretto

Like the other *Contrastes* studies, the range is limited, ascending only to a high A, and the piece is more concentrated as a study of playing with another instrument. One should be focusing on the interplay between the instruments.

Pierre Max Dubois (1930-1995)

Petite Suite pour flûte et basson

Published in 1964 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Prélude

II. Intermède

III. Cadence

IV. Burlesque

V. Mouvement Perpétuel

This is a work that at times is fairly straight forward and easy to read and then fairly difficult and then impossible to all but players who very skilled. The first movement is fairly easy, but then the second movement, if played at a brisk allegro can be very difficult. Note especially the wide leap in the low register, low C to G, then low C to A^b. The third movement is an extended cadenza or recitative that will be a challenge to line up between instruments, much like the closing fifth movement. The fourth movement would be as easy as the first if not for some difficult syncopations.

Jean Françaix (1912-1997)

Sept Impromptus pour flûte et basson

Published in 1978 by Schott

Dedicated to and commissioned by the ensemble Soni Ventorum

Movements: I. Allegretto con spirito

II. Grave

- III. Vivace
- IV. Grazioso
- V. Alla burlesca
- VI. Amoroso
- VII. Vivo

A very difficult piece, one that requires virtuosic players. There are multiple wide leaps, and the piece can span the entire range of the instrument within only a few bars. There are many quick passages in the instrument's upper range, which is always difficult to finger. It is a hard piece not to be taken lightly, though the slower movements are playable by less experienced players, but the nuances require skill and control.

André Jolivet (1905-1974)

Sonatine pour hautbois et basson
 Published in 1964 by Boosey & Hawkes
 Movements: I. Ouverture
 II. Récitatif
 III. Ostinato

There is little to say about this piece other than that it is hard – very hard. Technically there are multiple wide leaps throughout the piece, but beyond that the counting is very difficult. Jolivet frequently writes across the barline so that you can rarely rely on the other part for a strong downbeat, or a strong beat anywhere in the measure. The range on the bassoon is typical for the twentieth century ranging from a low Bb to a high D. This is a piece meant for only the most virtuosic oboist and bassoonist.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Sonata for clarinet and bassoon
 Composed in 1922, revised in 1945
 Published by J & W Chester, Ltd.
 Dedicated to Madame Audrey Parr
 Movements: I. Allegro
 II. Romance
 III. Final

The first movement is a brisk, jaunty work that features running eighth notes for the bassoon. It is difficult because many of the eights are leaping across the bassoon's range and the tempo of 144 doesn't make it easy. There are occasional sixteenths and triplets which add to the difficulty because they are many times in opposition to the clarinet part. There is also a nine-tuplet, though it is a scale and together with the clarinet, so it's not as difficult. The second movement also features wide leaps, but they are usually descending to a constant pedal tone in each measure with the bassoon playing its bass role to the clarinet's solo. The descending leaps aren't the easiest and many are quite wide, some over an octave and getting them as smooth and soft as required will take skill. The third

movement is fast and features many awkward time changes. Lining up the two parts in all movements of this piece will take players who are quite skilled at this type of playing. A work not to be taken lightly.

Section 3: Trios for Bassoon and Two Instruments

Georges Auric (1899-1983)*Trio pour hautbois, clarinette et basson*

Published in 1948 by Editions De L'oiseau Lyre

Movements: I. Décidé

II. Romance

III. Finale

A fairly straightforward piece, but with a few difficulties. Most older collegiate bassoonists should be able to pull this piece together. The first movement might present the most difficulties, but those should be overcome by time and practice. Each of the movements are light and enjoyable and should be able to be played by a group of advanced undergraduate or graduate players.

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)*Suite Brève en Trio pour hautbois, clarinette, et basson*

Published in 1947 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Tony Aubin

Movements: I. Allegro moderato

II. Allegro vivo

III. Adagio espressivo

IV. Final – Allegro vivo

The first and third movements of this work are very playable by an advanced student, while the second and fourth are very difficult for anyone but an advanced player. Both marked Allegro vivo, with the second movement giving us a marking of 160 to the beat, to all but the highly skilled, it is nigh impossible. But like so much French music, it seems like the tempo markings are almost taunts to the player. The second and last movements present the player with multiple wide leaps and fast runs, not to mention grace notes, and at a tempo of 160. And to the player that attempts this, double tonguing is a must. Very difficult.

Pierre Max Dubois (1930-1995)*Trio d'Anches pour hautbois, clarinette et basson*

Published in 1958 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Humoresque

II. Ritournelle

III. Aubade

This piece would be fairly readable for the average college bassoonist. The range is fairly contained, ascending up to a high B only once, and the rhythms are fairly easily read. There are a few quick runs in the third movement and some runs starting on the second sixteenths of the group in the first movement that might give some a problem in the beginning. But, all in all, nothing most college bassoonists wouldn't be able to handle.

Jean Françaix (1912-1997)*Divertissement* pour hautbois, clarinette (Si^b), et basson

Published in 1954 by Schott

Movements: I. Prélude

II. Allegretto assai

III. Elégie

IV. Scherzo

This is a difficult piece, but one that is accessible by an advanced undergraduate student, and certainly should be on the repertoire list of most graduate students. There are tricky passages and wide leaps as in most works by Françaix, but for the most part the tempi are relatively restrained. The trickiest part is the rhythm. The middle section in the first movement bears looking at as it alternates between four and five eighth notes to the half measure, and the bassoon is in opposition to the clarinet and oboe parts. This pairing of clarinet and oboe against bassoon continues throughout most of the piece and is the source of much of the difficulty of the work.

Trio pour haubois, basson, et piano

Written in 1994, Published in 1996 by Schott

Dedicated to William Waterhouse and written for the 25th Anniversary of the
International Double Reed Society

Movements: I. Adagio – Allegro moderato

II. Scherzo

III. Andante

IV. Finale

As is typical with Françaix, the music is filled with wit and humor, but it belies the difficulty of the piece. Wide leaps, and a typical range make it somewhat difficult, but like so much twentieth century, the difficulty comes from the rhythm of the piece. With syncopations and patterns that feel off but are correct, the difficulty of this work comes from the rhythms, which is compounded by the speed at which the patterns fly by.

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)*Cinq Pièces en Trio* pour hautbois, clarinette, et basson

Published in 1947 by Editions de L'Oiseau Lyre

Dedicated to Fernand Oubradous and the Trio d'Anches de Paris

Movements: I. Allegro vivo

II. Andantino

III. Allegro assai

IV. Andante

V. Allegro quasi marziale

This is a very enjoyable and accessible piece that presents enough challenges to be interesting but not enough to be frustrating, in addition to the piece being fun to play with two other musicians. The five movements each have a different character which adds a nice variety to the piece so that it doesn't get boring. It's a piece that one might get together and play on a nice afternoon with some friends.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

Pastorale pour hautbois, clarinette, et basson

Published in 1936 by Le Chant du Monde

Dedicated to the Trio d'Anches de Paris

One Movement

A delightful piece that is fun, yet challenging. A few sections have extended passages in the bassoon's higher register, but nothing that isn't within the grasp of an advanced college student. It is a great contrast piece for a recital.

Suite (d'après CORRETTE) pour hautbois, clarinette, et basson

Published in 1938 by Editions de L'Oiseau, Lyre

Movements: I. Entrée et Rondeau

II. Tambourin

III. Musette

IV. Sérénade

V. Fanfare

VI. Rondeau

VII. Menuets

VIII. Le Coucou

An accessible piece not unlike Milhaud's quintet *La Cheminée* in that he is using older forms in a modern piece. The bassoon part, also like the quintet, is not overly hard and uses a restrained range. The hardest movement is probably the fourth because of the fast marked tempo of 144. Many of the other movements have fairly brisk tempi, but nothing that a skilled college student could not play.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)

Trio pour piano, hautbois et basson

Published in 1926 by Wilhelm Hansen

Dedicated to Manuel de Falla

Movements: I. Preseto

II. Andante

III. Rondo

While the Trio has difficult runs, the majority of the work is highly playable and accessible to a high-level amateur player. The range is the standard of low B^b up to the high C. It does have an A^b-B^b trill in the opening cadenza-like passage which is difficult

on German system bassoons. This enjoyable work is one of the standard bassoon chamber pieces and is considered by many to be one of Poulenc's masterworks.

Alexandre Tansman (1897-1986)

Suite pour Trio D'Anches

Published in 1954 by Max Eschig

Movements: I. Dialogue

II. Scherzino

III. Aria

IV. Finale: Vivo-Lento

Like Tansman's *Suite* for accompanied bassoon, the bassoon part for this work seems, on the surface, easier by comparison to other French works of the era. The range is more restrained, descending as low as a C# and going up to only an A, but within that range is a challenging part. The first and third movement's are slow and technically are fairly easy, but will present an intonation challenge to many players. The fast second and fourth movements are very difficult both in counting and fingering, as there are many repeated leaps and syncopation abounds in both movements. There is no tenor clef in the work.

Henri Tomasi (1901-1971)

Concert Champêtre pour hautbois, clarinette, et basson

Published in 1938 by Henry Lemoine & Co.

Dedicated to the Trio d'Anches de Paris

Movements: I. Overture

II. Minuetto

III. Bourrée

IV. Nocturne

V. Tambourin

A piece of some difficulty, mainly in the second half of the first movement where the bassoonist has almost non-stop sixteenth notes for eighteen measures. These are mainly arpeggio patterns, but none-the-less difficult due to tempo and the number of repetitions. In the Nocturne, the bassoonist must strive to play softly and remain under the soloists, who themselves are already playing softly. It is an exercise in breath control. It is a piece well-suited to collegiate players.

Section 4: Quartets for Bassoon and Three Instruments

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)

Trois Pièces pour une Musique de Nuit pour flûte, hautbois, clarinette, et basson

Published in 1954 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I Andantino

II. Allegro Vivo

III. Moderato

This piece is one of Bozza's more playable works. The tempos are more moderate and there are very few fast runs. Of the three movements, it is the second one that might present the bassoonist with trouble. The movement being in one at 104, the opening rhythm that continues throughout most of the movement is the bassoon playing on one and three, which can be tricky at the quick tempo but can be easily overcome. After that, there are a few scale runs, but these shouldn't be too hard. Overall, it should be a very accessible for most college bassoonists and advanced high school players.

Sérénade (Quatuor à Vent) pour flute, hautbois, clarinette en Si^b, et basson

Published in 1969 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Allegro vivo

II. Calme

III. Vif

This is a piece that is made difficult due to the tempos marked by Bozza. The opening Allegro is marked at quarter note equals 144, which would logically make the closing Vif even faster. And in those two movements are many, many notes that if played up to tempo are not exactly easy scale runs. They leap and skip and go all the way up to a high C#. As with many Bozza pieces, this one is difficult.

Jean Françaix (1912-1997)

Quatuor pour flûte, hautbois, clarinette (Si^b) et basson

Published in 1955 by Schott

Dedicated to four of the members of the Paris Wind Quintet

Movements: I. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Allegro molto

IV. Allegro vivo

This is a piece by Jean Françaix that is different from many others he's written: it's playable. For higher-level amateur player, it's practically sight-readable: the tempos of the outer movements are quick; the rhythms are none of the awkward type found in many of his works; and if it were not for the many wide leaps, it would almost not seem like a Françaix work. If a college has four skilled undergraduate wind players, this is an excellent work for them. I will mention, though, that the flute has the work load in the outer movements.

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)

Deux Mouvements pour deux flûtes, clarinette, et basson ou flûte, hautbois, clarinette, et
basson

Published in 1923 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Allant

II. Assez vif et rythmé

This is a tricky piece, especially the first movement. There are some awkward rhythms and running passages, though thankfully there are few awkward leaps and the range is restrained, ascending only up around high A. The second movement, though fast, is mostly playable, though it does have two difficult runs that will give most players at least a moment's trouble. Beyond that, there are one or two awkward moments in rhythm, though most of them are fairly straight-forward in the second movement. It is the slower first movement that will give most players trouble.

Section 5: Woodwind Quintets

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)*Variations sur un Thème Libre* pour Quintette à vent

Published in 1943 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated the Quintette de la Garde Républicaine

Theme followed by seven variations

In this quintet, the third and fifth variations will probably be the ones a bassoonist would most want to preview. The third variation moves quickly and the bassoon part moves along quickly while leaping around. The fifth variation features some sixteenth passages that have skips that might trip one up. It is nice that the range of the work never extends above a high G which does make it a bit easier to learn, since one is not playing the difficult passages in the extreme register of the instrument.

Scherzo pour Quintette à vent

Published in 1944 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to the Paris Wind Quintet

One Movement

The *Scherzo* is a piece that flies by and features many florid runs by the bassoon that luckily are chromatic scales. There are some quick tonguing passages that thankfully are not long or are broken up by rests. Dynamics are key in a successful performance of the work and thus will take a skillful quintet to play well.

Jean Françaix (1912-1997)*Quintette* pour flûte, hautbois, clarinette (La), basson, et cor

Published in 1951 by Schott

Movements: I. Andante tranquillo

II. Presto

III. Tema. Variation 1-4

IV. Tempo di Marcia francese

As with most of Françaix's works, this one is very difficult and for much the same reasons. He employs wide leaps, awkward rhythmic patterns, and fast tempi. Not a good combination for an instrument not known for its nimbleness for most of its history. But that is why being able to play the works of Françaix on the bassoon is like a badge of honor. This quintet is hard at times, very hard at other times, and sometimes very playable, if not easy (you almost wonder if a page from something else has "snuck" in). But one wants to play the piece because of its characteristic wit, which makes the piece fun to play (when you can actually play it). The piece also has the range demonstrated in most of his works, high D marking the highest note in this work. As has been said, this piece is hard.

Quintette No. 2 pour instruments à vent

Published in 1987 by Schott

Commissioned by the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival

Movements: I. Preludio – Toccata
 II. Scherzando
 III. Andante
 IV. Allegrissimo

Everything written about the previous quintet holds true for this work despite it being written over forty-five years later. It is hard, with wide leaps and awkward rhythms being played at fast tempi. At least the part has big notes so it's easy to read while the music is flying by!

Jacques Ibert (1890-1962)

Trois Pièces Brèves pour flute, hautbois, clarinette, cor, et basson

Published in 1930 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Allegro
 II. Andante
 III. Assez lent – Allegro scherzando

A thoroughly fun piece with a few challenges, but something that a skilled player can do well with just a bit of work. The first movement is quick with some repeated sixteenth passages that seem like trills, but the fingerings are not very difficult. The second movement has barely any bassoon in it, and the third is like the first in terms of difficulty. There is a 3/8 section that is in one that might give some a bit of trouble at first, but it is not difficult to get together once a person has played it a few times. Like Ibert's *Cinq Pièces*, this is a fun work that is great to get together and play, but would also be appreciated on a recital.

Darius Milhaud (1892-1974)

La Cheminée du Roi René Suite for Woodwind Quintet

First performed on March 5, 1941 by San Francisco Woodwind Quintet

Published in 1942 by Albert J. Andraud

Movements: I. Cortège
 II. Aubade (Morning Serenade)
 III. Jongleurs (Jugglers)
 IV. La Maousinglade
 V. Joutes Sur L'Arc (Jousts on the Arc)
 VI. Chasse a Valabre (Hunting At Valabre)
 VII. Madrigal-Nocturne

This quintet is fairly easy when compared to other works in this survey, though there is some tenor clef and it does ascend to a high B; for the most part it is easy enough to be played by a skilled high school student. There are some awkward rhythms and syncopations that are somewhat difficult, but not beyond the reach of a young student. In

all, this is a great piece for young musicians to play to help build ensemble playing skills, as well as an awareness of style from another period of time.

Divertissement en Trois Parties pour Quintette à Vent

Published in 1958 by Heugel

Movements: I. Balancé

II. Dramatique

III. Joyeux

The bassoon part of this quintet, while harder than that in Milhaud's *La Cheminée*, is fairly accessible. It has a few difficult passages, one or two in each of the three movements, but a skilled player will find very little difficult. A high-level high school or early college student will find it sight readable, with the exception of the passages mentioned above. The range is from the low B^b up to a high B in the tenor clef.

Paul Taffanel (1844-1908)

Quintette pour Instruments à vent

Composed in 1876

Published by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Henri Reber, 'Membre de l'Institut'

Movements: I. Allegro con moto

II. Andante

III. Vivace

An influential piece and composer for modern wind music. The quintet at hand won many awards and is an essential part of any quintet's repertory. The bassoon part is fairly typical of other works: the quick first movement will provide a player with some challenges that will require practice, while the second movement takes a delicate player to make sure not to overtake the solo instrument with their sound, and the brisk finale will provide a few challenges to the skilled player with its notes. But the real challenge in this quintet not only in finding proper ensemble balance, but also the journey that the ensemble will take to get the finale to the marked tempo.

Henri Tomasi (1901-1971)

Variations sur un Thème Corse pour Quintette à vent

Published in 1938 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to the Paris Wind Quintet

Movements: I. Thème

II. 1^{re} Variation – Pastorale

III. 2^e Variation

IV. 3^e Variation – Toccata

V. 4^e Variation – Religioso

VI. 5^e Variation – Funèbre

VII. 6^e Variation – Final *en contrepont rigoureux*

This work alternates easy and hard variations with almost no middle ground. The theme, second, fourth, and fifth variations are fairly easy to play, while the first, third, and sixth variations are difficult with almost non-stop running note passages. The entire first variation is a constant triplet pattern that lasts for ten measures. Most difficult passages have either arpeggios or scale-like, so will be fairly easy to learn.

Quintette pour flûte, hautbois, clarinette, cor, et basson

Published in 1952 by Henry Lemoine & Co.

Dedicated to the Paris Wind Quintet

Movements: I. Temps

II. Scherzo fantastique

III. Nocturne

IV. Final

There's a lot of music to be had in this quintet, and most of it the bassoon part is readable by an advanced student. There are a few tricky passages, including some high-register work, most notably in the first movement where the bassoon has high Cs and Bs. There are other relatively fast passages that will give most a bit of trouble, but nothing that can't be overcome. A work worthy of a read by any advanced quintet.

Cinq Danses Profanes et Sacrées pour Quintette à Vent

Published in 1963 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to Rejcliovo Decliové Kvinteto de Prague

Movements: I. Danse Agreste

II. Danse Profane

III. Danse Sacrée

IV. Danse Nuptiale

V. Danse Guerrière

This quintet is an arrangement of other chamber works written by Tomasi and arranged by him to feature a different soloist in each of the five movements. The bassoon is soloist in two of the movements (III and V). The work features the instrument extensively in the other movements also, and while there are difficult passages in the other movements, such as I and II, it is a work that is accessible by non-professional players. For the bassoonist, the most difficult movement is the fifth which features an extended sixteenth note passage towards the end that, while comprised of repeated arpeggios, will give one problems due to the length of the passages.

Section 6: Sextets for Bassoon and Five Instruments

Pierre Max Dubois (1930-1995)*Sinfonia da Camera* pour Sextuor à vent (Wind Quintet + A. Sax)

Published in 1965 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to J.L. Martin, L. Olion, R. Desoomer, J.M. Londeix, P. Brille, and P. Ganzoinat

Movements: I. Entrée
 II. Gigue en Rondeau
 III. Variations

There are many tricky fingering issues for the bassoonist in this piece, both in the low and high ranges of the instrument. The piece extends up to a high C during a sixteenth passage that features many leaps, though most of them lie within arpeggio patterns. But the length of the passages increases the difficulty, and they come not in slow movements, but the faster outer movements. It is a difficult work, but not one that is outside the realm of playability for an advanced student.

Jean Françaix (1912-1997)*Divertissement* pour basson et Quintette ou Orchestre à cordes

Written in 1970, Published in 1973 by Schott

Dedicated to William Waterhouse

Movements: I. Vivace
 II. Lento
 III. Vivo assai
 IV. Allegro

Much like other works of Françaix, this work is both humorous and very hard. The leaps and syncopated rhythms at fast tempi and range make this a work that should be attempted only by advanced players because it is most likely to only prove frustrating to those whose skills are not up to the task. The range is that of typical twentieth-century works, low B^b up to high C or D.

Francis Poulenc (1899-1963)*Sextour* pour piano, flute, hautbois, clarinette, basson et cor

Published in 1945 by Wilhelm Hansen

Dedicated to Georges Salles

Movements: I. Allegro vivace
 II. Divertissement
 III. Finale

Another wonderful piece from Poulenc that features a challenging yet enjoyable bassoon part. Its range is typical, from B^b to high C, and features many challenging runs. Also, as is typical, the counting is difficult; there are many syncopated passages and passages where the bassoon is in opposition rhythmically to other players. The bassoon has many

wonderful moments of cadenza and solo playing that make this piece a joy to play. Along with Poulenc's Trio, the Sextour is a standard of the wind chamber music repertoire.

Henri Tomasi (1901-1971)

Printemps pour Sextuor à vent (Wind Quintet + A. Sax)

Published in 1964 by Alphonse Leduc

Dedicated to J.L. Martin, L. Olion, R. Desoomer, J.M. Londeix, P. Brille, and P. Ganzoinat

In one movement, but three sections: Réveil Des Oiseaux, Chant D'Amour, Danse Des Oiseaux

While there are no truly difficult passages in terms of fingering, there are a few trills one might have to look up. There are also some treble clef passages, though they never ascend higher than C. What makes this piece difficult, and it is that, is the counting. It is almost constantly changing meters and tempo which does make it very tricky to line up as an ensemble. It is a very interesting work, and worth study, and when hearing it, one almost hears Stravinsky and *Le Sacre du printemps* in the rhythms and pointillist nature of the work.

Section 7: Bassoon Ensembles

Eugène Bozza (1905-1991)*Duettino* pour deux bassons

Published in 1954 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Allegro moderato

II. Andantino

III. Allegro ma non troppo (*stretto canonique*)

IV. Allegro ma non troppo

A highly enjoyable piece to play with another bassoonist, with most of the movements centered around canonic material. Both parts are fairly accessible for a higher level college bassoonist, with enough of a challenge to make the duets a rewarding recital piece. Each movement has its own quirks, with the hardest and highest notes appearing in the first part, where the upper voice ascends to a high E. Special interest includes high, quick sixteenth passage in the first part at the end of the first movement, and some rhythmic difficulties in the third movement with 3/8 being written across the barline.

Divertissements pour trios bassons

Published in 1954 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: I. Allegro moderato

II. Adagio, ma non troppo

III. Allegro giocoso

Most of what is said about the *Duettino* holds true for the *Divertissements*. The individual movements, with the exception of the third, are built around a canon. The parts are accessible to most bassoonists of college age, with the biggest difficulty lying in the range of the first part, ascending again to high E. But other than the range issues, all parts have a few passages that would need working out, and ensemble issues would include some intonation work and special attention to the tempo changes in the second movement. But again, another very good bassoon piece that together with the *Duettino* should be played more often in collegiate bassoon studios.

Pierre Max Dubois (1930-1995)*Scherzo* pour quatre Bassons

Published in 1963 by Alphonse Leduc

Movements: One Movement

This *Scherzo* is a challenging and fun bassoon ensemble piece. It is a work that captures the character of the bassoon quite well. The four parts are well balanced, with none being too easy nor too difficult; the only main difference is that the top two parts are mainly in the upper registers and the third and fourth parts are in the lower registers. If you have four good players in the same room at the same time, this is a piece they should consider playing.

Index of Works by Composer

- Auric, Georges
Trio, 22
- Bernaud, Alain
Hallucinations, 11
- Bozza, Eugène
Contrastes I, 17
Contrastes II, 17
Contrastes III, 18
Divertissements, 38
Duetto, 38
Fantaisie, 11
Nocturne-Danse, 11
Récit, Sicilienne et Rondo, 11
Scherzo, 30
Sérénade, 27
Shiva, 12
Sonatine, 17
Suite Brève, 22
Trois Pièces, 27
Variations...Thème Libre, 30
- Charpentier, Jacques
Grave, 12
- Dubois, Pierre Max
Neuf Pièce Brèves, 12
Petite Suite, 18
Scherzo, 38
Sinfonia da Camera, 35
Trio d'Anches, 22
- Dutilleux, Henri
Sarabande et Cortège, 13
- Françaix, Jean
Divertissement (trio), 23
Divertissement (bsn/str), 35
Trio, 23
Quatuor, 27
Quintette, 30
Quintette No. 2, 30
- Sept Impromptus, 18
- Gallon, Noël
Récit et Allegro, 13
- Gartenlaub, Odette
Sonatine, 13
- Grovlez, Gabriel
Sicilienne et Algro. Giocoso, 13
- Ibert, Jacques
Cinq Pièces, 23
Deux Mouvements, 28
Trois Pièces Brèves, 31
- Jolivet, André
Sonatine, 19
- Milhaud, Darius
Divertissement, 32
La Cheminée...René, 31
Pastorale, 24
Suite (d'après CORRETTE), 24
- Poulenc, Francis
Sextour, 35
Sonata (Cl/Bsn), 19
Trio, 24
- Saint-Saëns, Camille
Sonate, 14
- Taffanel, Paul
Quintette, 32
- Tansman, Alexandre
Sonatine, 14
Suite (Trio), 25
Suite (Bsn), 15
- Tomasi, Henri
Cinq Danses, 33
Concert Champêtre, 25
Printemps, 36
Quintette, 33
Variations...Thème Corse, 32

Bibliography

- Blakeman, Edward. *Taffanel: Genius of the Flute*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Fletcher, Kristine Fletcher. *The Paris Conservatoire and the Contest Solos for Bassoon*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.
- Gillespie, Jr., James E. *The Reed Trio: An Annotated Bibliography of Original Published Works*. Detroit: Information Coordinators, Inc., 1971.
- Leech, Alan. "An Approach to the Bassoon and Its Literature." *The Journal of the International Double Reed Society* 16 (1988): found on-line.
- Oubradous, Fernand. "Fernand Oubradous: A Half-Century of Woodwind History," interview by Jean-Pierre Seguin, translated by Philip Gottling, *The Journal of the International Double Reed Society*, no. 14 (1986): found on-line.