

Annotated list of CLARINET GREATS compiled and submitted by Chuck Currie

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CLASSICAL

1. Ricardo Morales Poulenc Sonata Mve 3 Appointed principal of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra at the age of 21, and now principal of the Philadelphia Orchestra, Morales exhibits the phrasing, lyricism and fluidity of a fine opera singer.
2. John Bruce Yeh Morton Gould Derivations. Yeh was invited to be Assistant Principal of the Chicago Symphony at the age of 19! Ripe, romantic tone. Founder of Chicago Pro Musica, an elite chamber orchestra.
3. Robert Spring Rimsky-Korsakov Flight of the Bumblebee. The fastest and lightest tongue in all of clarinet history.
4. Sabine Meyer Stravinsky 3 Pieces 2nd Mve. A fine soloist from Hanover, left the Berlin Philharmonic after one year to pursue her solo career. Seamless precision and an alluring dynamic flexibility
5. Jonathon Cohler: Stravinsky 3 Pieces 3rd Mve. International virtuoso. Incredible musicianship and total technical command.
6. Richard Stoltzman Debussy The Girl with the Flaxen Hair The world's most well known soloist. Terrific phrasing. Entrances come out of nowhere! Warm, subtly shaped tone.
7. James Campbell Shearing Miniature #1 Canada's 1989 "Artist of the Year" Recorded with over 50 orchestras. Professor of music at Indiana University, one of the world's great music schools.
8. Harold Wright Brahms Clarinet Quintet Harold Wright, until his untimely death in 1995 was the Principal Clarinetist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra from 1970. This was recorded just months before his death. A legendary icon of the clarinet world.
9. Thea King Crusell Clarinet Quartet King is considered the doyenne of British clarinetists. She has had one of the leading international concert and recital careers in the history of the instrument. Note the sound character of the "wide bore" English clarinet.
10. Stanley Drucker Debussy Petite Piece 50 years as principal of the New York Philharmonic without missing a performance, his whole life is the clarinet. Became a principal player in Indianapolis at the age of 16. Teaches at Juillard.
11. Larry Combs Gershwin Prelude #3 Principal of the Chicago Symphony since 1978. A "big" sound, somewhat more flexible than some orchestral players due to playing commercial music and jazz in his youth.

ENSEMBLES

12. Trio Indiana Peter Schickele Dance for 3 Finale Three great clarinetists and teachers. The clarinet faculty of Indiana University: Eli Eban, James Campbell and Howard Klug.
13. Thurston Clarinet Quartet Caprice 24 Paganini/Goodman. Namesake of the English clarinetist, Frederick Thurston, this is a leading eclectic chamber group.
14. Clarinet Summit Mood Indigo. A mixed group of modern young players and an Ellington Alumnus show the jazz side of clarinet quartets.
15. Budapest Clarinet Quintet Debussy Le Petit Negre All players from various Hungarian Orchestras and teachers at prestigious universities. This unusual (4tet is the norm) group is equally at home in classics, rags, pop and jazz influenced styles.
16. Finnish Clarinet Ensemble: Founded in 1980, this group shows the power, warmth and delicacy of the entire clarinet choir from Eb Soprano to Bb contrabass.

JAZZ

17. Eddie Daniels Tricotism This Juillard graduate shows what a brilliant classically trained clarinetist can bring to jazz. Played tenor sax with the legendary Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Big Band, then embarked on a solo career that has largely focused on the clarinet.
18. Pete Fountain Do You Know What It Means to Miss New Orleans A New Orleans icon. Another "wide bore" player, like Thea King, and you can hear that same sonority even in this very different style.

19. Paquito d’Rivera Lecuoneras This Cuban virtuoso was classically trained, and also played in his father’s dance band. First featured in a solo performance with the Cuban National Symphony when 12 years old. Equally talented as a saxophonist. Wonderful latin“lilt” to his phrasing.
20. Artie Shaw Diga Diga Doo Brilliant band leader with a crystalline tone and impeccable technique.
21. Bennie Goodman I Got It Bad And That Ain’t Good A warmer and “jazzier” sound than Artie. Musicians love to argue over their merits. Both are “hall of famers” in the Jazz Pantheon.
22. Buddy DeFranco Skyliner The clarinetist who brought the Charlie Parker “bop” school to the horn. Paquito d’Rivera said “IMPOSSIBLE” when his dad played him DeFranco in his youth.
23. Don Byron Chopin Larghetto This largely avant-garde jazz player was classically trained while playing Klezmer on the side, Don’s recording projects are each unique and conceptually themed.
24. Kenny Davern Mood Indigo Kenny started playing professionally when he was 16 and in 1954 made his recording debut with Jack Teagarden. Also played Soprano Sax, now focuses solely on Clarinet.

BASS CLARINET

25. Eric Dolphy The Baron The biggest and woodiest Bass Clarinet sound you will ever hear. His untimely death from undiagnosed diabetes in his 30’s cost the jazz world a leading innovator. Very “vocal” style, with “cries” and even shrieking from time to time. Startling and compelling.
26. Ron Odrich Jaunt A New York dentist and world renowned Jazz clarinetist. Smooth sound and incredible proficiency. This project has him overdubbing himself on Bass and Soprano clarinet.
27. Renate Rusch Genzmer Sonata for Bass Clarinet Solo. Bass Clarinetist with the German Opera, Beyreuth Festival Orchestra and the North German Radio Symphony. She has a beautiful, powerful bass clarinet sound.
28. Henri Bok Schoeck Sonata Professor of Bass Clarinet at Rotterdam Conservatory, attracting students from all over the world. A master player and supporter of the development of the bass clarinet literature.
29. Jeff Reilly When I Fall In Love This Halifax native is a distinct and powerful voice in the field of improvised contemporary music. Featured here with P Togni Organ and C. Booth on Cello.
30. Michael Lowenstern Ten Children #5 One of the greatest current bass clarinetists, performing with a very diverse collection of groups and repertoire, Michael is also a composer. This piece is dedicated to his daughter.
31. Howard Klug Schumann Stark und markirt A legendary teacher and equally great player.