THE MYSTERY OF THE CHALUMEAU AND ITS HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AS REVEALED THROUGH SELECTED WORKS FOR CHALUMEAU OR EARLY CLARINET BY ANTONIO VIVALDI, A LECTURE

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Dissertation Prepared for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

May 2016

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Factual evidence concerning the ancestry of the clarinet has been a perpetual topic of debate among musicologists and organologists. Scholars have widely agreed that the clarinet, first documented in 1710, emerged from the baroque invention of the chalumeau (invented circa 1690), which in itself was an improvement upon the recorder. Considering the chalumeau’s short lifespan as the predominant single reed instrument in the early eighteenth century, the chalumeau inspired a monumental amount of literature that includes vocal and instrumental genres written by distinguished composers. Vivaldi is considered to be the most significant composer that wrote for both clarinet and chalumeau; he wrote for both instruments simultaneously throughout his life whereas his contemporaries seemingly replaced the chalumeau with the clarinet.

This project will discuss Vivaldi’s proximity to the chalumeau and the clarinet and will provide an in-depth analysis of relevant works by the composer to determine how he, unlike his contemporaries, treated the chalumeau and the clarinet as separate and equally viable instruments. Following a brief history of the chalumeau and clarinet in Italy and a relevant biography of Vivaldi (Ch. 2), this document will discuss the integral Vivaldi compositions that include clarinet and chalumeau and the role of the clarinet or chalumeau in each work (Ch. 3). Chapter 4 solves the mystery of why Vivaldi continued to compose for the chalumeau while his contemporaries replaced the chalumeau with the clarinet.
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By

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank the following Colin Lawson and Mark Simons for their kindness, generosity, and wisdom.

Thanks to my committee members John Scott, and Deanna Bush for their support and assistance on the finalization of this document.

Sincere thanks to my major professors, James Gillespie and Kimberly Cole Luevano, for your tireless efforts and bountiful encouragement.

To Malena McLaren and Mary deVille, thank you for being my personal and academic cheerleaders for the last twelve years.

Most of all, deepest thanks to my amazing husband-to-be, Dustin Neal, and my parents Kathy and Carl Braun for your constant love and encouragement.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Factual evidence concerning the ancestry of the clarinet has been a perpetual topic of debate among musicologists and organologists. Scholars have widely agreed that the clarinet, which was first documented in 1710, emerged from the baroque invention of the chalumeau. Described as a simple idioglot instrument by Marin Mersenne in his 1636 treatise *Harmonie Universelle*, the chalumeau in itself was an improvement upon the recorder. The placement of a mouthpiece and single reed on the chalumeau increased the level of projection that a recorder previously possessed. Colin Lawson’s research on the eighteenth century chalumeau has uncovered a substantial amount of literature that was composed for the instrument; however, the growing popularity of the clarinet eclipsed that of the chalumeau within approximately fifteen years according to my research. Considering its short lifespan as the predominant single reed instrument in the early eighteenth century, the chalumeau inspired a substantial amount of literature that includes vocal and instrumental genres written by distinguished composers including Caldera, Fux, Telemann, Graupner, and Vivaldi.

The Germanic invention of the clarinet at the turn of the eighteenth century can be described as an evolved version of the pre-existing chalumeau with several minor modifications, most notably the incorporation of a register key which extended the range of the chalumeau. The middle register was the most desirable timbral quality of the instrument. The lower register remained unfocused until later developments were made.

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While researching the early development of the clarinet, a single sentence in Lawson’s Cambridge Companion to the Clarinet illuminated an interesting area of research; “Vivaldi is one of a select group of composers to have written for both chalumeau and clarinet... but he is the most significant, since he continued writing for chalumeau even after discovering the full range of the clarinet.”\(^2\) This alludes to a neglected query: why did Vivaldi continue to write for both instruments while his contemporaries seemingly replaced the chalumeau with the clarinet?

The Historically Informed Performance (HIP) movement encourages modern day performers and musicologists to bring antiquated music and its performance practice into modern day music culture. This can be achieved through extensive exploration of available data concerning the composer and the work, restoring period instruments and their learned performance practice, and applying all of this information toward a historically informed revival of the work. The thriving HIP movement revived Vivaldi’s single-reed compositions, which consequently reestablished the chalumeau as a significant instrument in contemporary music practice. This project, largely influenced by the progressive HIP movement, will discuss Vivaldi’s awareness of the chalumeau and the clarinet and will provide an in-depth analysis of relevant works by the composer in order to determine how he, unlike his contemporaries, treated the chalumeau and the clarinet as separate and equally viable instruments. Following a brief history of the chalumeau and clarinet in Italy and a relevant biography of Vivaldi (Ch. 2), this document will discuss the Vivaldi compositions that include clarinet and chalumeau and the role of the clarinet or chalumeau in each work (Ch. 3). Chapter 4 solves the mystery

of why Vivaldi continued to compose for the chalumeau while his contemporaries
replaced the chalumeau with the clarinet. This document will also provide a
chronological list of Vivaldi’s works that include chalumeau or clarinet and a
discography of any recordings that are commercially available.

In order to gain a clear understanding of the performance conventions for
Vivaldi’s music, I have established personal correspondence with early music specialist
Mark Simons, Professor of Clarinet at McGill University, Montreal, Canada, who actively
performs on both chalumeau and classical clarinet. I will use information collected
during an interview and lesson with Professor Simons in October of 2013 to clarify the
differing performance conventions between clarinet and chalumeau. An interview with
Colin Lawson, a prestigious pedagogue and historian, was particularly enlightening
because of his extensive knowledge of the period instruments and thorough
performance history of Vivaldi’s works for the chalumeau and baroque clarinet.

A hands-on study of the early clarinet and the chalumeau has provided insight
into the timbral qualities of each instrument, the technical features of each instrument,
and the idiosyncrasies of each. Applying a thorough knowledge of these properties of
early clarinet and chalumeau to Vivaldi’s idiomatic use of them in his concertos will
provide a better understanding of his unique treatment of both instruments.

Extensive score study of each Vivaldi concerto that contains clarinet or
chalumeau will be necessary to focus on Vivaldi’s idiomatic writing for the clarinet and
chalumeau respectively and how each instrument is used within the concertos. I have
acquired several recordings of the concertos, particularly RV 558 and 559, by
historically informed ensembles. The instrumentalists are performers who play on period

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3 Mark Simons, e-mail message to author, September 6, 2013.
instruments that accurately depict the timbral qualities of the clarinet and chalumeau within context of the concertos.
CHAPTER 2

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHALUMEAU AND CLARINET

Brief History of the Chalumeau

The chalumeau originated from a variety of cylindrical tube instruments with single reeds, the earliest of which have been traced back over four thousand years. The first instruments of this variety were idioglots, meaning the tongue of the reed was carved from the cylindrical tube or a reed plate. Iconographical evidence is key in assessing the earliest forms of the idioglot as the items were too fragile to survive to present day. Sibyl Marcuse published images that show idioglots in use as early as 2700 BC in Mesopotamia and soon thereafter in Egypt.\(^4\) The aulos, an idioglot that was depicted in Greece as early as 800 BC, is still used today. These instruments that span time and civilizations were constructed out of a variety of materials including wood, cane, and bone. Although there is no clear evidence that these antiquated instruments influenced the design of the European medieval idioglots, the high-traffic trade routes connecting these societies indicate the possibility of a connection.\(^5\)

The term “chalumeau” is a French derivation of the Greek word *kalamos* meaning “reed.” It refers to a broad range of similar instruments with features such as cylindrical bores and tone holes that span centuries. The designs of the earliest chalumeaux are similar in construction and simplicity to the idioglots of antiquity. The baroque chalumeau was a more standardized instrument than earlier versions, although there were still variations according to place. This standardized chalumeau first appeared simultaneously in Germany and France circa 1700. It was described and

utilized as a more robust version of the recorder with six front holes, a thumb-hole directly behind the top front tone hole, and the implementation of a single reed on the top of the newly designed mouthpiece. The mouthpiece enabled the reed to be a separate entity from the cylinder of the instrument, which altered its classification from idioglot to heteroglot. The standardized chalumeaux were constructed by some of the most famous instrument makers across Europe and were utilized in works by many notable composers.\(^6\)

Italian Jesuit scholar, Filippo Bonanni, published engravings of 150 international musical instruments in his *Gabinetto armonico*. This publication was dispersed in 1723 and included a detailed drawing of both the chalumeau and clarinet under the *scialumò* section of his chapter on oboes. They were labeled *calandrone* and *clarone* in the Italian vernacular.\(^7\) The timbral quality of the chalumeau was described as “strident and raucous” by Bonanni, yet idiomatic writing of the baroque chalumeau is primarily pastoral in quality.\(^8\) Bonanni’s engraving of the chalumeau is iconographic evidence that the chalumeau was a familiar instrument in Italy in the early eighteenth century. Although Bonanni did not describe the reed in detail, he suggests that the reed was in fact separate from the mouthpiece. Bonanni provided an insightful opinion about the quality of sound the chalumeau produced by commenting, “it has a sound that is not pleasant.”\(^9\)

J. F. B. C. Majer’s 1732 publication, *Museum Musicum*, provides a description of four different sizes of chalumeau (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass) that corresponded in

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\(^6\) Ibid., 45.


\(^8\) Ibid., 125.

length to the 4 most commonly pitched recorders. Majer expressed displeasure regarding the range restrictions of the chalumeaux, stating that the instrument hardly surpasses an octave in range making it inferior to the recorder. The placement of the instrument’s diametrically opposing keys made overblowing to the upper register nearly impossible, which impeded the range and necessitated the construction of four separate chalumeaux to represent the desired range of the instrument. The design of the chalumeau also prompted restrictions to the volume output.

The earliest recorded evidence that connects Vivaldi to the chalumeau is found in the 1706 account books from the *Pio Ospedale della Pietà*. Ludwig Erdmann, a native oboist of Germany, is listed on faculty at the *Pietà* as a professor of chalumeau.\(^\text{10}\) There are many Italian names for the chalumeau that might suggest the novelty of the instrument in Italy.\(^\text{11}\) Vivaldi referred to the chalumeau at his disposal as a *salmoè*, which directly translates to chalumeau and has etymological connections to the word oboe.\(^\text{12}\)

**Emergence of the Clarinet in Italy**

The account books of the *Ospedale della Pietà* in Venice reveal that on March 13, 1740 there was an exchange of payment for the repair of two clarinets.\(^\text{13}\) This shows that clarinets were available at the *Pietà* from an unspecified time that predated this entry. Identifying the clarinet for which Vivaldi would have composed can be reasonably

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achieved by examining the only two surviving baroque clarinets, one from Nuremberg and the other from Amsterdam. Eric Hoeprich has suggested that of the two surviving baroque clarinets, only the one displaying a Jacob Denner stamp from Nuremberg would have been capable of performing the works by Vivaldi. The other baroque clarinet bears a stamp of Boekhout from Amsterdam and lacks the range required in Vivaldi's works for clarinet. This information, combined with the recorded previous employment at the Pietà of a chalumeau and oboe teacher from Nuremberg, suggests that a clarinet equivalent or very similar to the early Denner model would have been utilized.

The exact year that the clarinet was invented has been a topic of debate. Musicologists are in agreement that it can be traced back to circa 1700 in Germany. Johann Christoph Denner was most likely the inventor of the clarinet, which he designed as an improvement on the pre-existing chalumeau. It is clear from documented transactions between Denner's son, Jacob, and the Nuremberg Duke of Gronsfeld that both clarinet and chalumeau were sold simultaneously as early as 1710. The biggest difference between the two instruments was Denner's elevation of the speaker/register key closer to the mouthpiece, which extended the range of the chalumeau by enabling it to easily overblow a twelfth. The first clarinets existed in the keys of C and D and could play chromatic scales with the exception of a few notes. The reed is shown on top in the earliest iconographical representations. The middle register had the most desirable timbre while Bonanni described the upper register as "high and vigorous". The lower register remained unfocused until later changes were made. By the end of the 18th century the chalumeau had practically disappeared, replaced by the
clarinet. The only trace of the chalumeaux that remained is the name for the bottom register of the clarinet.

Antonio Vivaldi: Biography

Antonio Vivaldi was a Venetian composer, talented violinist, and priest. Born in 1678, he was the oldest of nine children. He was sickly at birth and was therefore baptized directly following his birth. The condition, which can be described by modern physicians as bronchial asthma, plagued him his whole life although it did not prevent him from laborious work and physically taxing travel. His father, Giovanni Battista Vivaldi, was a violinist at St. Mark’s Cathedral in Venice and taught Antonio the violin at an early age. The two became a virtuosic father/son duo that toured Venice. Giovanni Battista was a fixture of the musical culture in Venice and organized composition lessons for Antonio through his connections. Antonio trained for priesthood at the age of 15, but continued to study composition and violin. He was ordained in 1703 and nicknamed il prete rosso (the red priest) because of his vibrant red hair. He was excused from duties a year after his ordination on account of his perpetually poor health.

Vivaldi remained in Venice and took a job as a violin professor for girls at the orphanage for abandoned children, Pio Ospedale della Pietà, in 1703. Within a year he received a promotion for teaching more string instruments and managing the purchase and repair of all string instruments in the Pietà. His position was renewed until he was dismissed in 1709, most likely for budgetary reasons. For the next two years Vivaldi focused on his composition career. Many works surfaced from this period, several of
which were commissions that were dedicated to a specific event or person. He was reappointed to his previous position at the Pietà in 1711 and maintained his post until it was no longer renewed in 1716. Surprisingly, two months later Vivaldi was appointed Master of Concerts at the Pietà, a position that came with more pay, prestige, and responsibility.

Vivaldi's reputation as a composer spread throughout Venice and beyond. 1718 marked the beginning of many years of travel to accept and fulfill commissions from several locations, the first being Mantua. He went to Rome several times and played for the Pope on two separate occasions. Different patrons commissioned Vivaldi to write over 49 operas, and he would often travel to the venue to oversee the production of these operas. In 1723, he traveled to Rome to oversee the production of one of his operas and stayed for two years. The Pietà commissioned him to write two new concertos per month for an additional fee during his absence which serves as testament to their high regard of him as a composer, although his travels prohibited him from maintaining a consistent teaching post. He returned to a new position, maestro di cappella, at the Pietà in August of 1735 and remained until he was censured from his post in 1737 for conduct unbefitting a priest. He continued to acquire commissions in Venice and was even asked to compose and conduct on a few occasions at the Pietà after his censure.14

Vivaldi pursued work outside of Italy the last few years of his life. He traveled to Vienna in 1740 in attempt to gain favor with the Emperor, Charles VII; however, soon after Vivaldi’s arrival, the Emperor died unexpectedly. All of the theaters in Venice were closed in mourning which left Vivaldi unable to find work. He was assumed either too

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poor or too ill to return home; Vivaldi died in Vienna in 1741 and was buried in a pauper’s grave. Pietro Gradenigo, a Venetian patrician, indicated in Commemoriali, a Venetian commonplace book, the once rich Vivaldi (worth over 50,000 ducats at his death) died in poverty as a result of his wasteful and extravagant spending.\textsuperscript{15}

There are many cataloging systems used to organize and identify Vivaldi’s music; The Ryom-Verzeichnis (RV) classification, created by Peter Ryom, is the most standardized system and will be used in this document. Most of Vivaldi’s compositions were written for the music ensemble at the Pietà, which famously comprised all females. Although he composed many operas and oratorios, Vivaldi’s innovation of the baroque concerto is of utmost historical significance. Vivaldi wrote several works that include both chalumeaux and clarinets. Early music specialists such as Eric Hoeprich commend him for his exceptional compositional treatment of the two instruments.\textsuperscript{16}

\textsuperscript{15} Michael Talbot, \textit{The Vivaldi Compendium}, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2011), 91.
\textsuperscript{16} Hoeprich, \textit{The Clarinet}, 55.
CHAPTER 3

SELECTED WORKS INCLUDING CHALUMEAU OR CLARINET BY ANTONIO VIVALDI

Chalumeau: RV 779, RV 579, RV 555, RV 558

The salmoè was indicated for five of Vivaldi’s compositions: the Latin oratorio Juditha Triumphans (soprano chalumeau), and four instrumental works: sonata RV 779, and three concerti RV 555, 558, and 579. Each of the concerti is in C major, and Vivaldi composed each for tenor chalumeaux. Vivaldi wrote each of the aforementioned works especially for the Pietà ensemble; it was his intent that the Pietà ensemble perform these compositions. Vivaldi used the salmoè to fulfill many roles, providing insight into the various timbres possible with the instrument. Though the dates of composition are debatable, Lawson presented information suggesting that Vivaldi composed RV 779 in 1706 and RV 579 and 555 around 1725. RV 558 has been dated to 1740, a year before the composer’s death.17

RV 779 (1706)

Chronological exploration of these works verifies that Sonata RV 779 in C major was the first of Vivaldi’s compositions calling for the chalumeau. It was composed in 1706, the same year that the German oboe and chalumeau professor, Ludwig Erdmann, arrived at the Pietà. This work is noteworthy because Vivaldi recorded the names of the musicians, all female, in the score. The musician assigned to the chalumeau was Candida (1674-1757), a prominent female musician at the Pietà.

Records indicate that she sang and played the viola and chalumeau.\textsuperscript{18} The range of the chalumeau line necessitates a tenor chalumeau to join the oboe and obbligato organ. Vivaldi notates in the score that the chalumeau is optional as its solitary role is to double the bass line. In this case, the role of the chalumeau is not to serve as a solo instrument, but rather to add color and depth to the left hand of the organ.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{RV 579 (1725)}

RV 579 is better known as \textit{Concerto Funebrè}. The primary function of the chalumeau in the \textit{Concerto Funebrè} is to double other instruments (as was seen in RV 779), but unlike RV 779, the chalumeau has now become an essential rather than optional part of the instrumentation. Its role shifts from doubling the bass line to doubling the violins, violas, or oboes but always in a different register. Vivaldi even provides a few solo moments for the chalumeau, though they are fleeting and do not encourage the listener to consider the chalumeau as a solo instrument in this concerto. The most prominent example of the chalumeau as a solo instrument begins in mm. 49-54, a duo between the oboe and chalumeau. The following example is unique as it

\textbf{Example 1. Measures 49-54.}\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{center}
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\end{center}

\textsuperscript{18} Talbot, \textit{The Vivaldi Compendium}, 39.
\textsuperscript{19} Hoeprich, \textit{The Clarinet}, 55.
\textsuperscript{20} Antonio Vivaldi and Gian Francesco Malipiero, ed., \textit{Concerto Funebrè in Si♭ Maggiore per oboe, salmo, violin, 2 viole, violoncello, archi e cembalo F. 12/12, RV 579}. (Milan: Edizioni Ricordi, 1960).
Example 1 (continued)

The chalumeau provides a harmonic bass line to the oboe’s melodic solo. This is a truly exposed portion of the music for the chalumeau making it an integral part of the concerto. Vivaldi does not limit the role of the chalumeau to doubling other instruments for color and timbre in RV 579; he instead promotes the chalumeau to a genuine soloist with harmonic obligation.

RV 555 (1725)

RV 555 is an extensive concerto scored for two recorders, oboe, chalumeaux, two trumpets, violin, two viole all’ inglese, and strings. While the chalumeau primarily doubles other instruments as in earlier works, it sometimes has melodic material. The tenor chalumeau line, as is normal in Vivaldi’s works, is notated in bass clef. The first movement features the chalumeaux in unison as a counterpart to two flutes in mm. 20-22 and mm. 53-55.

Example 2. Measures 20-22.\(^{21}\)

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\(^{21}\) Antonio Vivaldi and Gian Francesco Malipiero, ed., \emph{Concerto in Do Maggiore per 2 flauti, oboi, salmo, 2 trombe, violini, 2 viol, 2 cembalo, F. 12/23, RV 555.} (Milan: Edizioni Ricordi, 1960).
The chalumeaux (depicted in Ex. 2 in bass clef) play the bass line of a small trio and add some depth and clarity to the husky and lugubrious lower register of the flutes. The chalumeaux are tacet in the second movement, but the invigorating third movement, Allegro, is densely scored. The continuo ceases at m. 12 and the chalumeaux take over for the next four measures as a driving bass line until the full ensemble returns. The next chalumeau feature is in mm. 61-64. Reminiscent of the first movement, the chalumeaux functions as a bass line that accompanies the flutes.

RV 558 (1740)

RV 558 is heavily orchestrated with two flutes, two chalumeaux, two tromba marina, two mandolins, two theorbos, cello, strings, and cembalo. Written several years after the aforementioned pieces with chalumeaux, it is exemplary of Vivaldi’s best writing for the chalumeau as a solo instrument in a concerto. The chalumeaux appear in bass clef as a duo alluding back to the pastoral timbres that were utilized by Viennese composers. The piece’s title, Concerto in Do maggiore, identifies it as a concerto based on functional tonality with C major as its tonal center. This piece is of extreme importance because Vivaldi composed it after composing three concerti for the clarinet.

The first movement is in ritornello form and begins with a large tutti section that includes all voices in eighth notes. In the beginning of this movement, the chalumeaux primarily double other instruments in the beginning of this movement. The first instruments with solo material beginning in m. 31 are the tromba marinas accompanied by chalumeau, flute, cembalo and cello. After a small cadential fermata in m. 42, the chalumeaux have a pastoral section marked piano.
This solo is important to this document because it is the first solo section in a Vivaldi concerto that features a solo passage for the chalumeaux. They are true soloists from m. 42 through m. 49 until the solo passes to the flutes. Within their solo section, the chalumeaux prove that their unique timbre, especially when played in thirds, serve as an irreplaceable pastoral timbral quality.

The second movement, written in the dominant key of G, involves only a light scoring of instruments, excluding the flutes, chalumeaux, tromba marina, and theorbos. It is extremely short and acts as a reprieve between the first and last movements. The third movement, Allegro, is in C major and begins with a stately ritornello in C that is outlined by an octave jump from C to C in the soprano voices. Directly following the

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short ritornello is a solo section featuring the tromba marina accompanied by the chalumeaux (mm. 187-201). Almost initially in the solo section (measure 194) an f sharp is encountered in the chalumeaux part. This is harmonically imperative as it modulates the harmony of the entire section to G major, the dominant key center. The tromba marina states solo theme in C major at m. 265.

Example 4. Measures 264-274.

The solo then shifts to chalumeaux, flutes and mandolin before returning to the second ritornello theme. The chalumeau demonstrates its technical facility and its unique tone quality in the solo as it echoes the tromba marina. As mentioned earlier, RV 558 is the only Vivaldi concerto for chalumeaux that provides true solo sections for the chalumeaux alone. This is extremely important as the piece was composed a year before Vivaldi’s death, long after he had demonstrated an idiomatic understanding of the clarinet. Yet Vivaldi chose to score the virtually irrelevant chalumeaux in preference to the newly popular clarinets.

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
Clarinet: RV 556, RV 559 and RV 560

In addition to his works including chalumeaux, there are also three Vivaldi concerti that include the clarinet: RV 556, 559, and 560. Vivaldi composed RV 556 circa 1719 and orchestrated it for two recorders, two oboes, two clarinets, bassoon, solo violins, strings, and cembalo. The middle movement was originally scored for solo violin and cello, cembalo, clarinet and lute, though at a later date, Vivaldi removed the clarinet and lute.24 RV 559 and 560, composed circa 1726-1730, are each scored for two oboes and two clarinets with continuo.25 It is in these two concerti that Vivaldi proves his knowledge of the newly invented instrument: he exploits the well-known contrast in the timbres produced in each register. The lower range of the early clarinet was renowned for its murky tone, difficult fingerings, obscure or inaccessible pitches on several notes and an inability to project loudly. In stark contrast, the clarino (upper) register recalled its namesake, the trumpet. It projected loudly with a bright color and sounded like a cross between a woodwind and a trumpet. Vivaldi used this knowledge to compose effectively and idiomatically for the instrument. His exploitation of the clarinet’s technical capacity and contrasting tonal colors was unique in clarinet compositions in the early 1700s. Vivaldi always wrote the clarinet parts in treble clef as opposed to the tenor chalumeau’s placement in bass clef. Vivaldi clearly understood how to write idiomatically for both instruments and demonstrated his comprehension of the relative timbral and tonal strengths of both instruments.

RV 556 (c. 1718)

RV 556 differs markedly from the other two Vivaldi concerti that include clarinets. The most audible difference is the thicker orchestration: this concerto grosso is scored for two recorders, two oboes, two clarinets, bassoon, solo violins, strings, and cembalo. A lute is also added for the second movement. Another notable difference is that there is an inscription on the score, “Per la Solennità de San Lorenzo.” In his 1988 article about Vivaldi’s connection to Rome, Vivaldi historian Michael Talbot suggests that the concerto was almost certainly written for Cardinal Ottoboni’s orchestra at the church San Lorenzo in Damaso on the feast of St. Lawrence Martyr.26 Whereas RVs 559 and 560 were likely intended for the orchestra at the Pietà in Venice, RV 556 was one of Vivaldi’s commissions in Rome. Although the autographed score does not bear a compositional date, Colin Lawson places the date of composition in the late 1710s. It is significant to note that in Talbot’s previously mentioned 1988 article, he states that Cardinal Ottoboni’s music library contained additional clarinet music. Vivaldi is unrestrained with his treatment of the clarinets in RV 556 including rapid interchanges between the registers and difficult cross-fingerings. This audacious usage of the clarinet combined with our knowledge of the clarinet music in Ottoboni’s library implies that Vivaldi wrote for talented and capable clarinetists.

The first movement features a slow introduction before the Allegro molto. The clarinet acts as a supporting instrument that adds a variety of textures and timbres to the music. The chalumeau register enhances the husky tone of the melancholy recorders while the upper register enriches the distinct brightness of the oboe timbre.

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The baroque clarinet’s upper register was notorious for its ability to play trumpet-like passages at a soft dynamic. Vivaldi engages this distinctive trait in m. 112 when the clarinets are given their first soli.

Example 5. Measures 112 – 115.27

The solo is written in the upper register and mimics a trumpet line, but it is written at a soft dynamic level. J. C. Weigl accurately described this distinctive trait in a caption that accompanies an engraving from 1722 of an elegant man playing a baroque clarinet in a lavish room:

“When the trumpet call is all too loud,  
The clarinet does serve to please.  
Avoiding both the high and lowest sound,  
It varies gracefully and thus attains the prize.  
Wherefore the noble spirit, enamored of this reed.  
Instruction craves, and plays assiduously.”28

Weigl poetically describes the unique timbre produced by the clarinet. It is reminiscent of a trumpet, yet preserves the reedy suppleness of a woodwind instrument.

The clarinet soli continues but drops to a lower register in m. 115.

Example 6. Measures 115 – 118.29

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28 Rice, *The Baroque Clarinet*, 138

29 Ibid.
The material from the three previous measures is repeated down an octave. There are no changes in dynamics or instrumentation yet the timbre and mood completely shift with this octave change in the clarinets: the bright and trumpet-like soli in the upper register contrasts the unfocused and melancholy reiteration in the chalumeau register.

In this short six-measure passage, Vivaldi prudently exploits the notoriously inconsistent timbres throughout the range of the clarinet by simply displaying the same material in both registers. Vivaldi again utilizes the agility and range of the clarinet beginning in m. 118 as the clarinets play arpeggiated sixteenth-note chords.

Example 7. Measures 118 – 121.\(^{30}\)

These sixteenth notes give way to a short lyrical melody in beat three of m. 120. Vivaldi juxtaposes the technical facility of the clarinet with its lyrical capacity within the span of a measure. Although the clarinets are only featured as soloists for 13 measures in this movement, Vivaldi conveys an idiomatic comprehension of the strengths and presumed weaknesses of the early clarinet. He highlights the agility, lyricism, range and diverse timbres of the clarinet by juxtaposing agility with lyricism, and the upper register with the chalumeau register.

\(^{30}\) Ibid.
The middle movement of RV 556 was originally scored for solo violin and cello, cembalo, clarinet and lute, but at a later date Vivaldi removed the clarinet and lute.\textsuperscript{31} The third movement, Allegro, reveals a clarinet soli in m. 235. Vivaldi continues the same approach he employed in the first movement of contrasting elements of the clarinet. The clarinets again play arpeggiated sixteenth notes in the upper register, similar to the solo in the first movement. In mm. 246-250 the clarinets alter between the trumpet-like fast passages in the upper register and descending eighth notes into the chalumeau register.

Example 8. Measures 246 – 250.\textsuperscript{32}

These four measures signify the different characters of the multi-functional clarinet. Vivaldi reuses a technique from the first movement in mm. 353-355 and mm. 357-360; by exposing material in the upper register and repeating it in the chalumeau register he explores the timbre contrasts that are unique to the clarinet.

RV 559 (c. 1726-1730)

RV 559 is similar in structure to the previously discussed RV 558 with chalumeaux. It is in C major with three movements; the outer movements are fast with a slow, contrasting middle movement. One significant difference to RV 558 is that RV 559 begins with a slow introduction constructed of staccato quarter notes grouped into


\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
threes. The first two outline the key of C while the third one is legato and ends on the dominant with a fermata. The pattern repeats pausing on the dominant. It is at this point that the solo oboes enter with a c minor theme in thirds. The clarinets repeat it an octave lower in mm. 6-7, highlighting the notoriously unfocused chalumeau register.

Example 9. Measures 6-9.\textsuperscript{33}

The staccato pattern from the introduction returns at a forte dynamic level in measure 8 but clearly outlines C major this time. This combination of oboes and clarinets in their given registers in measures 8-9 emit a color similar to that of a trumpet. It is repeated in measure ten in piano with the soloists an octave below. From this introduction Vivaldi has displayed the tonic key center of the piece, captured our attention with contrasting dynamics and articulations, and exposed the roles of the soloists as that of equal pairs of soloists with different timbral colors.

An allegro section follows the introduction. The oboes play the first theme at the allegro and pass it to the clarinets in measure 15. A tutti at measure 18 constitutes the first ritornello. It is in the key of C major with a half cadence in measure 21 on the dominant. The soloists as a quartet expose the second theme in c minor. Each pair of instruments is at thirds and the clarinets play an octave below the oboes. The ritornello at 26 returns to C major with new melodic material and a very definite cadence at measure 30 on C major. The next solo section that is very trumpet like in nature,

\textsuperscript{33} Antonio Vivaldi and Gian Francesco Malipiero, ed., \textit{Concerto in Do Maggiore per 2 oboi, 2 clarinetti, archi e cembalo, F. 12/2, RV 559}. (Milan: Edizioni Ricordi, 1960).
involves arpeggiated chords trading between the two groups of soloists, although the clarinets are considerably softer than the oboes. This solo section opens up to a harmonic sequence in m. 34 that trades between the two instruments and cadences in C major. Oboes play new melodic material in m. 37 that implements an F# which doesn’t entirely settle on a key until the cadence at mm. 43-44 when e minor is established as the tonal center. The ritornello beginning in measure 44 is a modified version of the original ritornello though this time it is in e minor as opposed to the original key. Harmonic sequences between mm. 48-54 alternate between oboes and tutti until a declaration of C major at the short ritornello at m. 55. Clarinets begin the next solo section at m. 56 with a clearly pastoral melody.

Example 10. Measures 56-59.\(^{34}\)

\[\text{Example 10. Measures 56-59.}\]

It is repeated at m. 61 an octave below and at a softer dynamic.

Example 11. Measures 61-63.\(^{35}\)

\[\text{Example 11. Measures 61-63.}\]

This repetition of the exposed clarinet line highlights the contrasting timbres of the differing ranges of the clarinet. The oboe takes over with a higher and brighter texture in m. 65, then the clarinets and oboes trade arpeggiated and scalar material in m. 70 all

\(^{34}\) Ibid.

\(^{35}\) Ibid.
outlining the key of C major. The original ritornello finally returns at m. 75 when Vivaldi repeats the c minor section from m. 21. The ritornello that occurs afterward is the same as m. 26, bringing the movement to its end with a final cadence on C.

The second movement of RV 559 is a slow movement consisting only of the two oboes and the two clarinets. It is in C major with a short modulation to G major. The A section begins with the clarinets in thirds expressing a beautiful dance melody while the oboes play arpeggiated chords underneath them.

Example 12. Measures 1-4.\textsuperscript{36}

![Example 12](image)

The soloists switch roles in the next two measures. This pattern continues until the cadence at the end of the A section (which repeats). The B section uses the same compositional pattern and even the same melodic idea at the beginning but lower and in the dominant. There is definite cadence on C before the B section repeats.

The third movement again features the ritornello form in a fast 3/4 with an opening ritornello. There is a small solo section in the opening ritornello in which the groups alternate. This is quickly joined by the continuo for a half cadence under a fermata at m. 128. Beginning in m. 132, the soloists trade back and forth, demonstrating their individual abilities. These passages enabled Vivaldi to highlight the technical

\textsuperscript{36} Ibid.
capabilities of the new clarinet. Through his writing, Vivaldi proves that the clarinet is as mechanically efficient as the oboe and places the instruments on the same technical level for the first time. The oboe takes the leads into the next ritornello cadencing on the dominant. This is the same material is the original ritornello at the beginning of the movement but in the dominant. The oboes then lead through a few harmonic changes including E flat major and E major. The ritornello at m. 183 returns to C major. A solo section that follows again exhibits the pastoral qualities of the clarinet, and oboes introduce a new theme in c minor in m. 220. The quality of the theme changes entirely when it is transferred to the clarinets an octave lower in m. 229.

Example 13. Measures 229-232.37

Placement in a minor key is one way that Vivaldi chose to exploit the dark, somber timbre of the chalumeau register of the baroque clarinet. It has a haunting quality that cannot be matched by other instruments. The ritornello at measure 243 is the familiar recurring theme from the beginning. From this point to the end is direct repetition of previously exposed material.

RV 560 (c. 1726-1730)

RV 560 is a concerto grossi in C major that again features two clarinets in C and two oboes. The continuo is comprised of a full consort of strings and basso continuo.

37 Ibid.
Three movements comprise RV 560: Larghetto: Allegro, Largo (clarinets are tacet), and Allegro Molto. The range of the first clarinet part extends from $g$ to $c'''$ while the second clarinet part spans $f$ to $c'''$. This concerto again showcases Vivaldi’s knowledge and understanding of the abilities and timbres of the different registers of the clarinet. Vivaldi uses the subtle and unfocused timbre of the chalumeau register to add an unmatched despondent tone to somber sections often in a minor key. The upper register is treated very differently as the two clarinets in thirds frequently mimic trumpet calls.

Clarinet with accompanying continuo open the Larghetto of RV 560 with a dotted arpeggiated motif. When the melancholy timbre of the clarinet’s chalumeau register is applied to that repetitive figure, it is reminiscent of a low hunting horn. As the motif in the clarinet part increases in range, the tone of the clarinet becomes more focused and brash causing the motif to take on the character of a trumpet call. As the music progresses in the Allegro, the clarinet doubles the oboes or the continuo. The first clarinet soli begins in the pickup to m. 29.

Example 14. Measures 29-32.\textsuperscript{38}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{example14.png}
\end{figure}

The clarinets are paired in thirds in their upper register and imitate trumpets. The melody is passed to the oboes and returns to the clarinet in measure 40; however, this time it is in c minor.

\textsuperscript{38} Antonio Vivaldi and Gian Francesco Malipiero, ed., \textit{Concerto in Do Maggiore per 2 oboi, 2 clarinetti, archi e cembalo, F. 12/1, RV 560}. (Milan: Edizioni Ricordi, 1960).
Example 15. Measures 40-43.\textsuperscript{39}

The clarinets drop into the chalumeau register for this temporary modulation and the eeriness of the c minor section is underscored by the drastic change in timber. The key promptly returns to C major in m. 44. To emphasize this change in key and character, Vivaldi utilizes the clarity and brightness of the clarinet’s upper register. He simultaneously displays the agility and range of the clarinet with a sixteenth note flourish of the c major scale in canon (mm.46-47). In a small span of 8 measures, Vivaldi demonstrates an understanding of the clarinet’s idiomatic strengths and weaknesses, juxtaposing upper and lower registers in conjunction with a shift from minor to major.

The clarinet melody exposed in mm. 50-51 mimics a trumpet call.

Example 16. Measures 50-53.\textsuperscript{40}

It is repeated twice in the upper register at contrasting dynamic levels, \textit{forte} and \textit{piano}. This two-measure passage is then repeated an octave lower and also includes the \textit{forte} - \textit{piano} dynamic markings. These four measures alone illustrate many distinctive characteristics of the clarinet: dynamic contrast, timbre variance, and extensive range.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.\\
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.
\end{flushright}
Although mm. 50-53 are a trivial part of the melodic structure of the piece, they are significant when evaluating Vivaldi’s idiomatic knowledge of the clarinet. The clarinet is treated in a comparable manner for the remainder of the first movement though it is altogether absent from the second movement.

The third movement, Allegro molto, treats the clarinets and oboes as opposing pairs that impersonate and echo one another. The clarinets and oboes play with the orchestra from the beginning throughout m. 156. The clarinets’ upper register is featured, resembling a trumpet, in mm.157-158 with a descending arpeggiated line. The oboes mimic the clarinets in the following two measures, which is answered by a definitive statement in the clarinets. The clarinet melody in m. 162 is remarkable even for Vivaldi: oboes, strings, and continuo rest while the clarinets take over as soloists.

Example 17. Measures 162-170.\(^{41}\)

\(^{41}\) Ibid.
This is the first example of clarinets playing in a Vivaldi composition without any accompaniment for any given time. To expand upon the uniqueness of this section, the two clarinets are separated; the first clarinet carries a lyrical melodic line in the upper register while the second clarinet, in its chalumeau register, is employed as a contrasting continuo line. In each of Vivaldi’s previous clarinet compositions, the clarinets were scored in close harmony (often separated by a third or fourth) in both registers. Here they are responsible for two separate functions, melody and continuo, and they are scored in two contrasting registers, upper and chalumeau. In m. 168 the first clarinet leaves the melodic upper register to join the chalumeau register of the second clarinet. Their triplet figure in thirds simulates two horns echoing the triplet figure at the end of the first clarinet’s solo and segues into the oboe solo. In mm. 194-197 Vivaldi again uses a similar echoing technique. He writes a sixteenth note melody for the two clarinets in harmony that is vibrant in the upper register. The same material is then transposed down an octave into the strikingly dissimilar chalumeau register.

Example 18. Measures 194-197.\(^{42}\)

The timbre of the baroque clarinet is inconsistent throughout the registers, a trait the Vivaldi’s contemporaries interpreted as a disadvantage of the instrument. Vivaldi chose to emphasize the clarinet’s irregularity in his compositions by having the clarinet echo itself using the two separate registers. The contrasting timbres of the opposing registers give the illusion of two completely different instruments.

\(^{42}\) Ibid.

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RV 664: *Juditha Triumphans* (1716)

*Juditha Triumphans*, an oratorio composed in 1716, uses a wide range of instruments and singers and was most likely a showpiece for the *Pietà*. It is the most significant Vivaldi composition to this document because it includes two trumpets, two clarinets, and two soprano chalumeaux. There is some debate about the presence of clarinets in the score. Vivaldi refers to the pair of instruments as *clareni*, which was a common name for trumpets as well as a reference to the new clarinet. The designation *clareni* is ambiguous, but the clarification resides in regional differences, other instrumentation listed in the score, and instrument limitations. The term *clareni* was used in Germanic languages to refer to a trumpet and a specific register of the trumpet, but the term *clareni* was not at all common in Italian. Also, according to Philip Bate’s research on the baroque trumpet, the repeated sixteenth notes and arpeggiated jumps in *Juditha Triumphans* would have been all but impossible on the trumpets at Vivaldi’s disposal.⁴³ Lastly, Vivaldi indicates trumpets elsewhere in the *Juditha* score with the term *tromba* and refers to clarinets as *clareni* in RV 556. The clarinet parts in *Juditha* are the earliest known written orchestral parts for the clarinet, making this work and its clarinet passages historically significant.⁴⁴

*Juditha Triumphans*’ clarinet parts are written in the upper register. The clarinet line does not dip into the chalumeau register at all and is therefore used primarily to mimic trumpets.

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⁴⁴ Rice, *The Baroque Clarinet*, 83.
Example 19. Measures 22-34 of chorus ‘Plena nectare’.45

Vivaldi’s compositional style for the clarinets in Juditha is simple and does not reflect the in-depth understanding of the full capacity of the instrument seen in Vivaldi’s later works. Vivaldi’s clarinet concerti, the first of which was composed 2 years later, indicate a strong idiomatic comprehension of the clarinet and its abilities.

The soprano chalumeau appears in Juditha as an obbligato instrument in an aria about the lament of a turtledove, “Veni veni me sequere.” The chalumeau mimics Judith’s vocal line at times while imitating a turtledove at others.

Example 20. Measures 1-4.46

The obbligato soprano chalumeau exposes a lovely melody with a calm, pastoral quality. The timbre produced by the soprano chalumeau is sweet and velvety. Although the clarinet is technically capable of playing in the range of the soprano chalumeau, the sound produced by the clarinet is not as consistent through the range of the instrument as that of the chalumeau. The timbre of the clarinet would be closer to a trumpet and would not accurately mimic the turtledove as Vivaldi intended. It is therefore logical that

46 Ibid.
Vivaldi would pick the gentle chalumeau for the turtledove aria and use the clarinets elsewhere to mimic trumpets. Colin Lawson mentioned German influence in the structure and style of “Veni, veni” including strophic form, simple melodies, and short orchestral ritornelli. He attributes the Viennese style to the presence of the German Chalumeau instructor, Erdmann, at the *Pietà*.\(^7\)

\(^7\) Colin Lawson, e-mail message to author, 5 August, 2015.
CHAPTER 4

SOLVING THE MYSTERY: VIVALDI’S CONTINUED USE OF THE CHALUMEAU

The analyses of Vivaldi’s compositions including clarinet and chalumeau have provided some important evidence about Vivaldi’s treatment of the chalumeau in opposition to the 2-key clarinet. The chalumeau has a very individual sound that cannot be recreated by any other instrument; the soft and mellow chalumeau timbre is highlighted in its unique repertoire that is amorous or pastoral in context. The newly invented clarinet demonstrates a wider range, more dynamic contrast and discontinuity in timbre between the registers; its upper register is reminiscent of a trumpet while the lower register lacks clarity and focus. A short chronological exploration of Vivaldi’s compositions for single reeds will establish Vivaldi’s understanding and utilization of the chalumeau and the clarinet.

Vivaldi first used chalumeaux to enhance the timbre of the continuo in his compositions. This is seen in RV 779 (1706) where the chalumeaux add a rich, dark sonorous quality to the sound. His later chalumeau compositions reflect a more idiomatic understanding of the instrument. The amorous and pastoral context of the chalumeau repertoire is depicted in the Juditha Triumphans aria, ‘Veni veni me sequere’ (1716) as it is used to both mimic the female voice and the pastoral turtledove. Colin Lawson stated in an interview, “recording ‘Veni veni’ in Juditha was a special joy – a very delicate piece in which the chalumeau imitates a turtle dove. Each note has its own resistance and the tuning is knife-edge, but there’s a natural blend with the voice and the idiom couldn’t be more different from Vivaldi’s trumpet-like clarinet writing.”

[48 Colin Lawson, e-mail message to author, 5 August, 2015.]
discussed in chapter 3, *Juditha Triumphans* is unique for its inclusion of both the chalumeau and clarinets. *Juditha Triumphans* was a showpiece that utilized most of the instruments and players at his disposal in the *Pietá*, so the newly invented clarinets would have been an exciting inclusion. The clarinet writing in *Juditha* is simple; the range is confined to the upper register producing a trumpet-like sound (as Lawson described in the above-mentioned quote) that was unachievable by the chalumeau. In this solitary composition, Vivaldi portrays an understanding of the strengths and limitations of the chalumeau and the new clarinets by composing for both instruments in their epitomized roles. The first concerto that Vivaldi wrote for clarinets is the thickly scored RV 556 (c. 1718). The baroque clarinet appears to be portrayed in its archetypal role: mimicking the trumpet with its upper register. Unexpectedly, Vivaldi exposes the unrefined chalumeau register of the clarinet and its notoriously unfocused timbre. Lawson explains the irregularity and ingenuity of Vivaldi’s exploration of the chalumeau register with the following information, “Vivaldi was the first composer to use the low register of the 2-key clarinet, and that’s a challenge.”

Vivaldi resourcefully found a niche for the lower register of the clarinet, but its weakness in both tone and pitch left something to be desired that could only be fulfilled by the chalumeau. This explains his next two compositions for single-reed instruments: RV 555 and RV 579 (both c. 1725). The chalumeau is an integral part of both compositions, but its range and timbre brings depth and clarity to the chalumeaux counterpart, whether it is raucous oboes in RV 579 or husky flutes in RV 555. This timbral effect could not be achieved with the 2-key clarinet due to the weakness of the lower register. It is important to note that the critical information in this document

49 Ibid.
concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the 2-key clarinet and chalumeau could only be truly realized by interviewing active performers; Colin Lawson and Mark Simons, two prevalent performers on baroque clarinet and chalumeau, gained a definitive and intimate knowledge of both instruments by performing frequently.

Vivaldi continued to explore both registers of the clarinet in his next compositions: RV 559 and RV 560 (both c. 1726). The upper register is continually utilized in a trumpet-like function; it blends well with the oboes and is often used to emphasize the brightness of a major key. Vivaldi explored and visited the lower register in his previously composed RV 556, but his two later clarinet concerti exemplify a developed idiomatic understanding of the clarinet in its entirety that surpasses his contemporaries. In RV 560 he juxtaposes the upper and lower registers in conjunction with harmonic shifts from major to minor. Vivaldi also highlights the dynamic contrast of the clarinet and the extensive range. RV 559 is particularly exceptional in its second movement that is only comprised of two oboes and two clarinets. The clarinets are utilized as true soloists in concurrence with the oboes.

Vivaldi’s compositions for clarinet communicate a comprehensive idiomatic knowledge of the clarinet at his disposal, yet a year before his death he composed concerto RV 558 (1740) that included chalumeaux instead of clarinets. His inclusion of chalumeaux in this late work combined with his clearly demonstrated idiomatic knowledge of the clarinet indicates that Vivaldi desired a quality, effect, or technique in his composition that only the chalumeau, not the clarinet, could fulfill. Conclusive proof of this theory is found in m. 42 of RV 558 when Vivaldi highlights the clear and mellow quality of the tenor chalumeaux in a pastoral passage. If he had assigned the
chalumeau passages to the clarinet instead, the notoriously unfocused lower register of the clarinet would not have the capability to produce a clear, pastoral sound. When questioned about performing RV 558, Lawson stated that the “chalumeau has a directness of sound that would not be achievable on the clarinet of the time.”

Vivaldi’s idiomatic treatment of the chalumeau evolved with his compositions over time. The instrument was originally used to enrich continuo with its unique timbre. Concerto RV 558 uses a pair of chalumeaux in a more soloistic capacity although the passages are never as virtuosic as the other solo instruments included in the orchestration. The mellow sound acquired by the chalumeaux in the range that Vivaldi highlighted in this work would not have had the robust projection had he used the early 2 key clarinets. Although the clarinet was capable of a wider range, Vivaldi favored the lower range of the chalumeau for consistency. However, this infamous flaw of the clarinet did not dissuade Vivaldi from exploring the lower register of the new instrument in his RV 559. Vivaldi capitalized on the color achieved from the notoriously weak low register and accentuated the sonority with a softer volume in the continuo and often a dramatized shift to a minor key. The bright trumpet-like clarino register produced a contrasting resonance than the chalumeau register and was equally exploited by Vivaldi in arpeggiated, fast passages that resemble trumpet calls.

Vivaldi was proficient in writing idiomatically for the clarinet in a way that his contemporaries never equaled. His choice to continue writing for the chalumeau coincides with this knowledge of the instruments’ capabilities. The sonority and function of the two chalumeaux in RV 558 could not have been achieved with the engineering hindrances of the early clarinet. Likewise, the technical dexterity, wide range, and
contrasting colors achieved in each register of the baroque clarinet are cultivated in Vivaldi’s clarinet compositions culminating in RV 559. Each of his compositions show Vivaldi’s familiarity with the two instruments and provide insight into why he would continue to write for a nearly extinct chalumeau while simultaneously composing for its progeny, the baroque clarinet.

When asked why Vivaldi continued to write for the chalumeau while his contemporaries simply replaced the all but obsolete chalumeau with the clarinet, Colin Lawson simply responded, “It was probably a question of musical character in this case.”\textsuperscript{50} Lawson continued to emphasize an essential perspective concerning the two instruments, “…we tend to regard them as similar instruments whereas I’m sure that Vivaldi did not.”\textsuperscript{51} Perhaps the clue to solving the mystery lies in historical perspective. Clarinetists and musicologists of the 21\textsuperscript{st} century understand that the clarinet historically evolved from the chalumeau. The development of the clarinet stemmed from improvements on the chalumeau and then proceeded with continual improvement to the clarinet itself. However, from Vivaldi’s perspective, the chalumeau and the clarinet were two different instruments that should be treated as such.

\textsuperscript{50} Colin Lawson, e-mail message to author, 5 August, 2015.
\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

The turn of the eighteenth century was momentous for the development of single reed instruments and their repertoire throughout Europe. The chalumeau (first documented circa 1690) rapidly grew in popularity and developed a large repertoire with many popular composers. The clarinet (first documented 1710) appeared a mere 20 years after the first mention of the baroque chalumeau. J. C. Denner, the same German instrument maker that produced the original baroque chalumeaux, designed a 2-key clarinet; it is described as an improvement on the pre-existing chalumeau with an extended range and more dynamic contrast.

There are several composers who wrote for both the chalumeau and clarinet, although the works by Antonio Vivaldi are particularly significant. He deliberately continued writing for the chalumeau after fully discovering and composing for the clarinet whereas his contemporaries simply replaced the chalumeau with the ostensibly improved clarinet. Vivaldi’s chalumeau compositions are representative of the chalumeau repertoire as a whole: the soft and mellow instrument is used in an amorous or pastoral context. His clarinet compositions explore both the trumpet-like upper register as well as the unfocused and lugubrious chalumeau register. Vivaldi’s idiomatic expertise of both instruments can be traced chronologically through his single-reed compositions.

Vivaldi’s status at the Pietà and his proximity to colleague Ludwig Erdmann, the German oboist who played and taught chalumeau, afforded him the opportunity to

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become familiar with the chalumeau and write proficiently for it. *Juditha Triumphans* demonstrates his ability to write idiomatically for the soprano chalumeau as well as for the newly invented clarinets. It is historically significant in that it includes both chalumeaux and clarinets and is the first known orchestral work for clarinets.  

53 His concerti for clarinet show an idiomatic mastery of the baroque clarinet; he even embraces the weak chalumeau register that his contemporaries avoided. Vivaldi's chalumeau concerti, including RV 558 (composed a year before his death), display a function and timbre unachievable by the baroque clarinet.

Vivaldi understood strengths and weaknesses of both the chalumeaux and the newly invented clarinet. His exploration and utilization of both throughout his compositional career is utilitarian in nature; he perceived the clarinet and chalumeaux as two very separate instruments capable of different sounds and functions. Vivaldi utilized the lower register of the clarinet, avoided by his contemporaries, to highlight a shift from a major key to a minor key and achieve a haunting echo of the upper register. The chalumeau, in contrast to the lower register of the clarinet, embodied the clarity and focus that was achievable in the upper register of the clarinet. Colin Lawson explains, “When one realizes how difficult it is to make a modern clarinet with both registers perfectly in tune, it’s not surprising that effectively the 18th century clarinet existed as two separate instruments for much of the time.”  

54 Vivaldi’s compositions for both clarinet and chalumeau reflect this concept, solving the quandary of why he continued to compose for the chalumeau long after he demonstrated an idiomatic understanding of the clarinet.

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54 Colin Lawson, e-mail message to author, 5 August, 2015.
APPENDIX A

A LIST OF WORKS BY ANTONIO VIVALDI INVOLVING CLARINET OR CHALUMEAU
LISTED CHRONOLOGICALLY BY DATE OF COMPOSITION

RV 779 (chalumeau)
- Sonata in C Major
- Orchestration: violin, oboe, organ (obligato), chalumeau (optional)
- Date of Composition: 1706

RV 664 (soprano chalumeau; clarinet)
- Juditha Triumphans devicta Holofernes barbarie
- Oratorio
- Orchestration: 3 contraltos, 2 sopranos, female choir, string orchestra, timpani, 2 trumpets, 2 clarinets, mandolin, 4 theorbs, 5 lyra viols, 1 viola d'amore, 2 recorders, 2 soprano chalumeaux, 2 oboes, organ
- Date of Composition: 1716

RV 556 (clarinet)
- Concerto in C per la Solennità de San Lorenzo
- Orchestration: 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 flutes, 2 violins, strings, bassoon
- Date of Composition: c. 1718

RV 555 (chalumeau)
- Concerto in C major
- Orchestration: 3 violins, 2 oboes, 2 chalumeaux, 2 recorders, 2 viola all'inglese, 2 cellos, 2 harpsichords, 2 trumpets
- Date of Composition: c. 1725

RV 579 (chalumeau)
- Concerto in B-flat major
- Orchestration: violin, 2 oboes, 2 chalumeaux, 3 viola all'inglese, continuo
- Date of Composition: c. 1725

RV 559 (clarinet)
- Concerto in C
- Orchestration: 2 clarinets, 2 oboes, continuo
- Date of Composition: c. 1726

RV 560 (clarinet)
- Concerto in C major
- Orchestration: 2 clarinets, 2 oboes, continuo
- Date of Composition: c. 1726
RV 558 (chalumeau)
- Concerto in C major
- Orchestration: 2 flutes, 2 chalumeaux, 2 theorbes, 2 mandolins, 2 violins in “tromba marina”, cello, continuo
- Date of Composition: 1740
APPENDIX B

A SELECTED DISCOGRAPHY OF WORKS BY ANTONIO VIVALDI INVOLVING CLARINET OR CHALUMEAU
LISTED CHRONOLOGICALLY BY DATE OF COMPOSITION

RV 779 (chalumeau: 1706)

RV 664: JUDITHA TRIUMPHANS (soprano chalumeau, clarinet: 1716)
- Modo Antiquo. Tactus B00DMD2QBI. CD. 2013.

RV 556 (clarinet: c. 1718)

RV 555 (chalumeau: c. 1725)

RV 559 (chalumeau: c. 1725)

RV 559 (clarinet: c. 1726)
- La Folia Barockorchester. La Folia B00381OBTY. CD. 2010.

RV 560 (clarinet: c. 1726)
- La Folia Barockorchester. La Folia B00381OBTY. CD. 2010.

RV 558 (chalumeau: 1740)
## APPENDIX C

### TABLE OF VIVALDI COMPOSITIONS:
CHRONOLOGICAL WITH OBSERVATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chalumeau</th>
<th>Clarinet</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1706</td>
<td>RV 779</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1716  |            | RV 664   |      | - Optional tenor chalumeau  
        |            | (Juditha)|      | - Doubles bass line  
|       |            |          |      | - Includes clarinets and soprano chalumeau  
        |            |          |      | - Simple clarinet writing stays in upper register and mimics trumpets  
        |            |          |      | - Pastoral and amorous chalumeau imitates turtledove and Judith  |
| c. 1718 |            | RV 556   |      | - Clarinet mimics trumpets  
        |            |          |      | - Exploration of lugubrious low register  |
| c. 1725 |            | RV 555   |      | - Massive scoring  
        |            |          |      | - Chalumeau adds depth and clarity to flute solos  |
| c. 1725 |            | RV 579   |      | - Doubles other instruments  
        |            |          |      | - Limited solos  
        |            |          |      | - Functions as bass line  |
| c. 1726 |            | RV 559   |      | - Upper register mimics trumpets  
        |            |          |      | - Haunting lower register  
        |            |          |      | - 2nd movement only scored for clarinets and oboes  |
| c. 1726 |            | RV 560   |      | - Juxtaposes the upper lower register with harmonic shifts  |
| 1740  | RV 558     |          |      | - Chalumeaux are true soloists  
        |            |          |      | - Highlights chalumeau’s pastoral quality  |
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__________. *Concerto in Do Maggiore per 2 flauti, 2 salmo, 2 trombe, 2 mandolini, 2 tiorbe, violoncello, archi e cembalo, F. 12/37, RV 558*. Milan: Edizioni Ricordi, 1960.


Recordings


Primary Resources:
