

# CALICO CONCERT COMPENDIUM

## What is Chamber Music?

- Music played by an ensemble with players numbering between two and ten
- Usually performed without a conductor
- Each member of the group is the only person playing his/her part in the music
- Without the aid of a conductor, the ensemble must master togetherness in tempo and rhythm
- The players alternate between being accompanists and soloists within the flow of the music
- The musical interpretation is a consensus of all the players' ideas

*At the highest level of artistry, a concert is the result of many hours of rehearsal preparation dedicated to working out these musical issues. It is for these characteristics that chamber music is special. No other art form so beautifully combines the intimacy of personal expression with the excitement of the ensemble dynamic.*



## The Story of The Wind Quintet

The Wind Quintet (also called Woodwind Quintet) is a standard chamber music ensemble.

### Wind Quintet

1 flute  
1 oboe  
1 clarinet  
1 bassoon  
1 horn (French horn)

A "standard" ensemble means that many composers have written and continue to write works for a specific set of instruments

Other standard ensembles are:

### String Quartet

2 violins  
1 viola  
1 cello

### Piano Trio

1 violin  
1 cello  
1 piano

### Brass Quintet

2 trumpets  
1 horn  
1 trombone  
1 tuba

# History

- Originated during the Classical Era (1750-1830)
- Formed by one of each instrument in the wind section of a standard orchestra

*An answer to the frequently asked: "Why is the French horn in a woodwind quintet?" FYI, the horn was the only brass instrument to be included in the standard Classical orchestra. Other brass instruments were added to the orchestral wind section for very festive occasions.*

- First works were composed by Antonin Reicha and Franz Danzi, contemporaries colleagues of Beethoven
- A relatively small number of works were composed in the 18th and 19th Centuries (Classical and Romantic Eras of music history)

*This is due in part to the mechanical limitations of wind instruments during this time, which may have kept master composers from applying their sophisticated chamber music sensibilities to the voices of the wind quintet.*

- Wind Quintet literature blossomed in the late 19th and 20th Centuries when the technical evolution of the orchestral wind instruments was complete

*With the many styles of music in the 20th Century, including those that sound Romantic or Classical (a.k.a. "Neo-Romantic" or "Neo-Classical"), the result is a large body of literature written for the wind quintet, rich with an infinite array of different tones, colors, forms and modes of expression.*

- The art of arranging (adapting already composed music for a different combination of instruments) has expanded the repertoire of the wind quintet in the 20th Century

*A wind quintet program may now include a delightful variety of music, from Gregorian chant, Renaissance madrigals, and Baroque organ works, to Dixieland, Latin jazz, and other Popular styles, i.e. "From Bach to Zappa!"*



## Instruments of the Wind Quintet

- The term Wind Instruments encompass both the woodwind and brass families
- Four of the five instruments of a wind quintet are members of the woodwind family: the flute, oboe, clarinet, and bassoon
- The horn is a member of the brass family
- A player creates sound on a wind instrument by blowing through a mouthpiece that is attached to one end of a hollow tube
- The formation of the mouth and facial muscles on the mouthpiece is an embouchure
- The length of tube determines the pitch, or notes
  - Shorter tube = higher pitch
  - Longer tube = lower pitch
- The speed of a player's air stream determines volume (dynamic)
  - Faster air = louder sound (forte)
  - Slower air = softer sound (piano)
- A player creates different styles of notes (articulation) with the tongue
  - Short (staccato) notes and connected (slurred) notes are made with different movements of the tongue.

# The Woodwinds

- Named "woodwinds" because at one time all these instruments were made of wood.
- To change notes, a player covers or opens holes and keys along the tube with the fingers.
  - *Covering the holes makes the tube longer and the pitch lower.*
- A smaller and/or larger version of the primary instrument (auxiliary) exists for each member of the woodwind family

## Flute



- High (soprano) range Modern instruments made of metal, usually silver or gold
- Cylinder shaped tube, with open-hole mouthpiece (head joint)
- Player blows across open hole, splitting the air column and causing it to vibrate
- Instrument is held horizontally from the player's lips, to the player's right side
- Common auxiliaries: piccolo (highest), alto flute (lower)

## Oboe



- Double-reed: two pieces of cane (similar to bamboo) scraped to paper thinness on one end, tied together and attached to a small pipe
- Player directs air between the two pieces of cane, vibrating them together to create sound
- Reeds are usually hand-crafted by the player and last for a limited amount of time
- Covers soprano range, though not as high as flute
- Instrument body made of extremely dense wood such as grenadilla from Africa, or sometimes rosewood
- Slender conical tube (small at one end, gradually expanding)
- Main auxiliary: English horn (lower)

## Clarinet



- Single reed: flat piece of cane, shaved very thinly on one end, attached to a hollow mouthpiece
- Player blows across reed into mouthpiece, vibrating the reed
- Reeds are produced commercially and like double-reeds have limited life
- Extreme range from high to mid-range (soprano, alto, tenor)
- Cylindrical tube (uniform diameter) made of grenadilla wood
- Auxiliaries: E-flat clarinet (higher), Bass clarinet (lower)

## Bassoon



- Double-reed like oboe, but larger size and wider proportions
- Reed attached to foot-long metal tube at top of instrument (bocal)
- Made from hardwood like rosewood or maple
- Because of heaviness of instrument, seated player rests instrument on leather strap (seat strap) which is sat upon, relieving bulk of weight from player's hands
- Wide ranges from medium to low (alto to bass)
- Conical tube, extremely long, bent back upon itself, so instrument resembles a double pipe
- Auxiliary: Contra-bassoon (lower)

# The Brass

- All brass instruments are tubes of coiled metal with a bell on the end to project the sound
- Sound is made by vibrating “buzzing” the lips together into the mouthpiece
- The narrowness of the tube allows the player to play a series of notes just by changing the tightness of the lips
- Tone color and dynamic of a brass instrument can be altered with the use of mutes, made of wood or metal, which fit into the bell

## Horn



- The mouthpiece is shaped like a funnel
- Length of tubing can extend to 16 feet
- The valves change the length of tubing, enabling the player to play all the notes of the scale
- Alto to Tenor range
- Mellow, smooth tone allows for blending with other families of instruments more easily than any other member of the brass family
- Hand placed in bell not only holds up the horn but also aides in pitch adjustment and ton