



Featuring TZUYING HUANG Clarinet & Bass Clarinet

Watch the following videos:

- Interview with Tzuying Huang
- Clarinet and Bass Clarinet Demonstration

The clarinet (a.) is a woodwind instrument that uses a single reed to produce sound. Reeds are made from a type of cane or bamboo and held onto the mouthpiece (usually made of hard rubber or plastic) with a ligature (most often made of metal, leather, or plastic). Ligature is just a fancy word for connector. Sound is produced when a musician, with his or her lips pressed firmly around the mouthpiece, blows into the mouthpiece, causing the single reed and then the air inside the instrument to vibrate. When you play a single reed instrument, you can feel the reed vibrate on your bottom lip. A clarinetist creates different notes or pitches by opening and closing holes along the body of the clarinet.

Moody Melodies

Tzuying plays two melodies. How does the first melody, played on the clarinet, make you feel? What about the second melody, played on the bass clarinet (b.)? What makes them sound this way? Would the first melody feel different if it was played on the bass clarinet?

What sounds or instruments would you use if you wanted to compose a scary melody? What if you wanted the melody to sound happy? What other feelings can music inspire, and what instruments would you use to make that music?

Adding On

Tzuying begins by playing just the mouthpiece, ligature, and reed. Then she adds one part of the clarinet at a time. What happens to the sound when she adds on each part? Why is the sound changing?

Finding an Echo

If you could play music anywhere in the world, where would you play? For Tzuying, it's the bathroom, because "the echo is so good in there!" What is an echo? Why do different rooms or places make music sound different?

Try this: Pick a short tune to sing or play. Sing that tune where you are now and notice how it echoes (or doesn't). Visit different rooms around you, sing the same tune, and notice if the sound changes. Is it different in the bathroom? What about outside?

Work and Play

"If you don't have fun, why do you want to play it?" Tzuying says that it is very important to have fun. What in your life is so fun that you want to do it all the time? Is it something you can get better at or make a career out of?

