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Reviews and Reports

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VINKO GLOBOKAR: VOIX INSTRUMENTALISÉE for a bass-clarinetist
 Edition Peters No. 8285, 1975 (£7.50)
 VINKO GLOBOKAR: DEDOUBLEMENT for a clarinetist
 Edition Peters No. 8359, 1975 (£12.00)

KEVIN CORNER

Vinko Globokar, a Yugoslav born in France in 1934, is, as I am sure most readers are already aware, a highly respected trombonist who has been responsible for many revolutionary innovations in the playing of his instrument. As a performer he has been a member of the ensemble New Phonic Art (the other members being clarinetist Michel Portal, percussionist Jean-Pierre Drouet and

pianist/composer Carlos Roqué Alsina); among the works inspired by his abilities are Berio's *Sequenza V*, Stockhausen's *Solo* and Kagel's *Atem*.

Globokar is also a prolific composer whose works have been included in concerts in Britain by, for example, the London Sinfonietta (*Etude pour folklor 1*, written in 1968), but he is not widely known here as such. Many of his demands upon instrumentalists are bound to weigh against the wider dissemination of his scores: *Etude pour folklor 1*, for example, calls on the performers to play Eastern European folk instruments. His other best known works are probably *Discours II* (1967-68) and *III* (1969) for five trombones and five oboes respectively and the more recent *Atemstudie* written for Heinz Holliger which makes impressive use of the oboist's technical command, notably by opening with a single note sustained for some two minutes without interruption but altered timbrally throughout its duration. Many of the other effects used in *Atemstudie* are also to be found in *Dédoublement*.

Neither of the two scores under consideration here bears a dedication, but both were presumably inspired by Michel Portal. *Voix instrumentalisée* was written in 1973 and consists of a mere four pages reproduced from the composer's MS. Its title really sums up the whole piece, as does the fact that it is written for the player rather than the instrument itself. The instructions to the performer at the head of the score are to 'sing, speak and play into the instrument without the mouthpiece; play as if on a trumpet'. An impressive array of effects is produced from the instrument, and more particularly from the instrumentalist, without playing in the customary way. Most of the sounds produced by the instrument consist of the percussive noises of the mechanism which, being of limited dynamic range, call for the use of two microphones, one for each half of the instrument, and two loudspeakers at each side of the stage. The instrumentalist is called upon to sing in the normal way as well as in falsetto and guttural fashion, to whisper as fast as possible and to indulge in Sprechgesang and stuttering on various consonants (all derived from the words 'L'art et la science ne peuvent exister sans la possibilité d'exprimer des idées paradoxales'). At several points in the score the player has to produce these effects simultaneously; in one section chromatic movements of the keys in contrary motion to a lip glissando are produced together with a quiet sustained sung note varied timbrally in a way reminiscent of Stockhausen's *Stimmung*. In the final section (Globokar actually prefers to call these sections 'structures') the key movements are, rather irritatingly, written an octave higher than is customary. Surely this is unnecessary: most clarinetists would prefer to read a few ledger lines than to be troubled with an octave transposition of this type. The instrument is, after all, one which does not work on octave principles, and even the more normal transposition of higher notes down an octave can cause difficulties in certain circumstances.

In *Dédoublement* (1975) Globokar gives the performer some problems apparently unique in the literature of the instrument. Here only long and short sounds are indicated, but the score, which is again reproduced from the composer's MS and is in this case nine pages long, is divided throughout into units which, although the performer can choose his own speed, should not be slower than crotchet = 60 and must be constant. Again several actions sometimes occur simultaneously and in this case involve the use of a pair of timpani. Each line of the score consists of four parts: at the top a graphic representation of the position of the clarinet's bell in relation to the skin of one or other of the drums and to the audience; then a second line indicating the sounds produced by the clarinet, a third denoting the relative position of the pedal of one of the timpani and a fourth indicating merely the second drum, on which coins have been placed. The player has therefore three actions to perform: the manipulation of the timp pedal, the usual range of playing techniques and the moving of the bell of the instrument over the drums in an anti-clockwise motion.

Microphones are placed near the drum skins to pick up the resonances from them, and at first the clarinetist has to inhale through his instrument while fingering low notes, so that the sound is controlled mainly by the bell on the drum skin. Needless to say, these operations demand an unusual degree of co-ordination. The same three actions continue throughout, but the sounds gradually change, first becoming long and sustained and then modified by a lip vibrato specified at rates between two and 13 to each of the time units previously decided upon by the performer. Slowly more effects are introduced, such as singing as low as possible while playing and later singing as high as possible while playing (both effects demanding enormous concentration and practice to control, even though pitches are not specified, because of the difficulty of controlling two functions depending on the same air supply but not necessarily the same air pressure). Requests for the use of such techniques are of course frequently encountered these days, but are not usual over such wide ranges. Globokar also exploits the multiphonics which have become such a regular feature of contemporary woodwind playing, as well as glissandi (both vocal and instrumental) and fluttertonguing over the entire range up to and including the C sharp a twelfth above the staff (many players aver that it is well nigh impossible to produce fluttertonguing more than an octave above the staff). In addition he asks for tremolandi over more than three octaves, which involves a great deal of alteration in the formation of the embouchure. As these occur for only one second at a time the result could hardly be called a

tremolando. If, however, these were sustained for longer they would certainly result in the production of pitches other than those notated.

Globokar has therefore used the clarinet fully in these two pieces, and in *Dédoublement* has come up with some very interesting ideas concerning resonances from the instrument. Both scores are produced on fairly stout card (more durable than the covers of most music), but interest will surely be restricted by the high prices. Finally, it would not, I think, have been beyond the publishers to provide translations of the performance instructions which are, with the exception of the explanation concerning multiphonics, entirely in German.