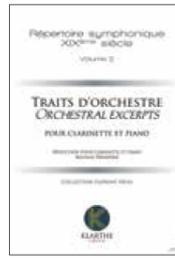


Florent Héau. *Orchestral Excerpts for Clarinet and Piano.* Piano reduction by Nicolas Dessene. Klarthe Editions, 2024. €26. [Klarthe.com](https://www.klarthe.com). [Performance Video](#).

Florent Héau, the multi-talented French clarinet soloist and teacher, has addressed a gap in the clarinet literature with his new series of books *Orchestral Excerpts for Clarinet and Piano*. Published by Klarthe Editions and currently in four volumes, it provides piano accompaniments to a number of the most standard solos. Equivalent collections exist for other instruments (Jeanne Baxtresser's extensive *Orchestral Excerpts for Flute with Piano Accompaniment*, for example), but to my knowledge this is the first published option for clarinet.

The repertoire is organized by date of composition, with the 19th and 20th centuries each subdivided into two volumes. Se-



lections from the 19th century include Beethoven's fourth, sixth, and eighth symphonies, Mendelssohn's *Scottish Symphony* and "Scherzo" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Schubert's *Symphony No. 8*, and Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 6*. Volume 1 of the 20th century includes Kodaly's *Dances of Galanta*, Respighi's *Pines of Rome*, and Rachmaninoff's *Symphony No. 2*. Volume 2 of the 20th century is forthcoming pending copyright permissions and will include Bartok's *Miraculous Mandarin* and Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 9*.

The piano reductions are by Nicolas Dessenne. He has succeeded at capturing all the important rhythmic and harmonic material from the orchestra and translating it to the keyboard. As demonstrated by Héau and Dessenne in an impressive [video mon-](#)

[page](#) posted on Vandoren's YouTube channel, these are concert-level arrangements. They are fairly difficult, however. Even accomplished pianists will need to practice them, and intermediate pianists and those with small hands may need to modify some passages.

Klarthe offers each volume as a PDF download for €26 and a paper edition for €43. From a retail standpoint, an omnibus edition containing all four volumes at a reduced price would be welcome. One further critique is that the current editions lack a separate clarinet part. While most students will have access to the parts from other sources, it would be convenient if a part for the soloist were included.

There is a growing pool of resources available to clarinetists studying the orchestral repertoire and preparing for professional au-

ditions. Books by Daniel Bonade and Peter Hadcock are classics in the category. Additions over the last decade include two volumes of *The Audition Method* by Mark Nuccio and Benjamin Baron, nine volumes of *E♭* clarinet excerpts elected and edited Jacques Merrer, several new volumes in Michael Drapkin's bass clarinet excerpt book series, Ralph Skiano's recent *Little Scores for Audition Success* and *Behind the Screen*, and my own *Clarinet Excerpts in Context*. Florent Héau and Nicolas Dessenne's *Orchestral Excerpts for Clarinet and Piano* are a welcome and important contribution to this body of work. Beyond adding to our collective toolbox, they will make practicing excerpts more varied, enjoyable, and fruitful.

– Daniel Friberg