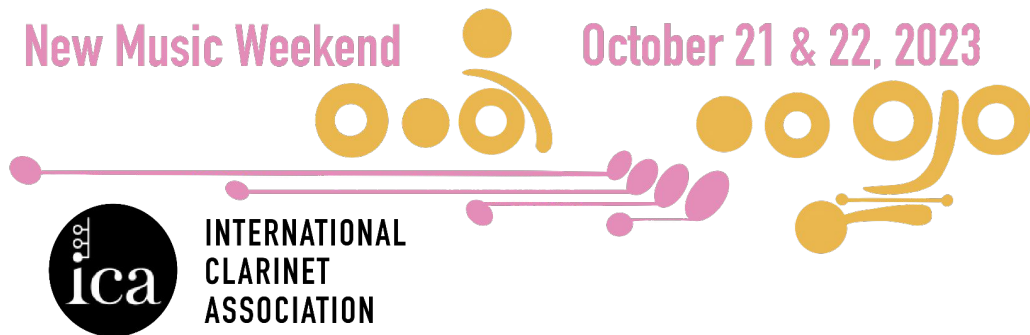


# SLAP TONGUE 101

New Music Weekend

October 21 & 22, 2023



with

Dr. Jason “Glizzy King” Alder

and Dr. Stefanie Gardner

# First Steps

- Practice making a suction with the tongue to the roof of the mouth
  - Similar to calling a horse
- Anchor tongue position
- Use a large reed or finger only to feel the suction
- Focus the suction to the front middle of the reed (minimize motion)

## **Add the embouchure**

- Practice with the reed only
- Listening for a popping sound
- Avoid jaw motion—major cause of squeaks

## **Add the mouthpiece and neck (bass) or barrel (soprano)**

- Listen for the popping sound
- Eliminate jaw motion
- Avoid the tongue protruding from sides of embouchure—yes, this is a thing!
- Practice in the mirror

## **Add air**

### IMPORTANT

- Slap THEN add a small puff of air like a cough
- If you slap and blow at the same time, you'll likely squeak
- The order of events is critical

## **Add the instrument!**

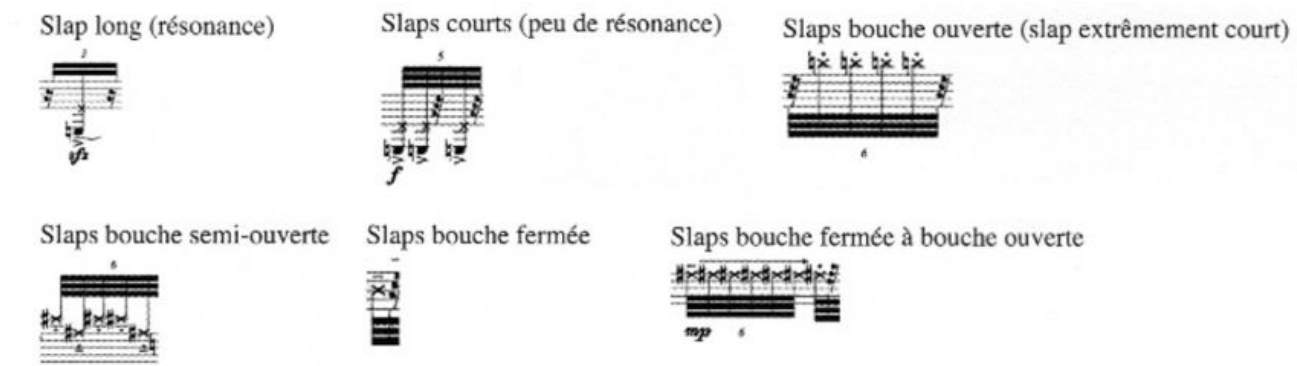
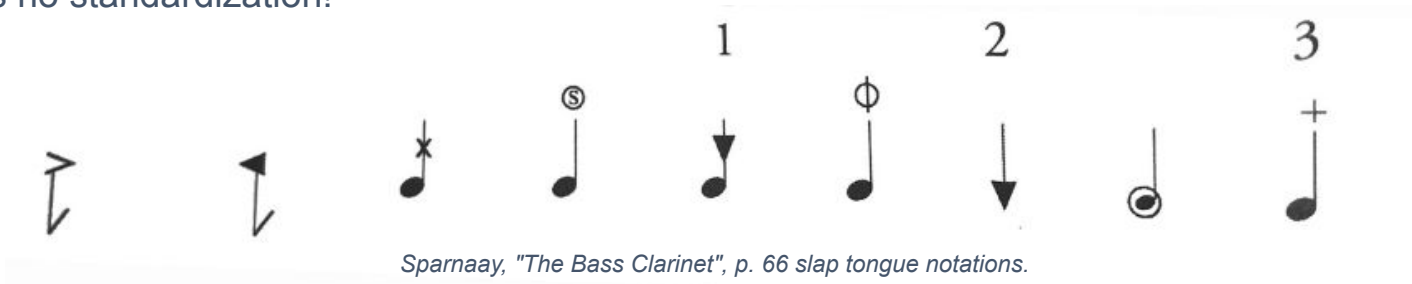
- Start on a low note first: less resistance is good

# Types of Slap Tongue

- ***Tone slap***: A slap attack of a sustained note. All dynamics are possible. The amount of the slap in the attack can vary from forceful to light. Quick repetitions are possible to the extent that there is still time for the note to sound; otherwise, it starts to become a staccato slap. Subtone pitches can also have a light slap attack.
- ***Staccato slap***: A slap attack producing a pitch by actuating the reed and immediately returning the tongue to it, stopping any resonance of the note. All dynamics are possible. Quick repetitions are possible, as well as alternating between a normal articulation and a slap.
- ***Open slap***: A slap sound, but without much pitch. Rather than producing the slap as an articulation, the tongue pulls the reed down with suction and releases it without any vibrations. Some pitch may occur due to the resonance of the instrument, but not as a product of a vibrating reed. The mouth does not need to be fully formed around the mouthpiece and can be opened to varying degrees to create different resonance. The dynamic contrast can vary according to the tongue's force creating the slap, but it is a smaller range than the pitched slaps.
- ***Reed slap***: Only the sound of the reed slapping against the mouthpiece. It is similar to the Open Slap because there is only reed suction and no actuation, and some resonant pitch may occur; however, it differs because no air at all is involved in producing the sound. The result is much softer, and there is very little dynamic contrast.

# Notation Examples

There is no standardization!



. Yann Robin "Art of Metal II" performance notes descriptions of slap tongues.

# Tips

- Patience
- Don't give up
- Practice daily for a few minutes and you'll eventually figure it out!
- Approach slap tongue as another type of articulation
- Incorporate into your warmup with scales for agility
- Harder in the higher ranges
- [Ultrasound video](#) (thank you Josh Gardner)



# Try it out!

More detailed information [here](#)

Email us if you want more help:

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