

**Inspiring Musicianship:  
String Playing Influences in H.L. Clarke's *Characteristic Studies***

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In the preface to his *Characteristic Studies*, Herbert L. Clarke (1867-1945) vaguely mentions that the contents “have been adapted from existing violin studies, in carefully arranged form to suit the requirements of the Cornet” (Clarke, 1915). It is apparent that 22 of the 24 studies were adapted directly from 22 of Heinrich Ernst Kayser’s (1815-1888) book of *Thirty-Six Etudes, Op. 20* composed in 1848 (see table). Yet, this remains a little-known fact and deeper investigation yields great historical and pedagogical insight for us today.

It is not surprising that Clarke used a prominent string etude book as his source. After all, his first instrument was viola, an instrument which he played in a family string quartet and apparently at a high level (Madeja, 1988). Clarke later cited the influence of his viola playing on his arranging and even his cornet playing (Clarke, 1934, p. 42). Yet we do not know exactly how he came up with the idea to reimagine Kayser’s etudes for the cornet. Perhaps he first read these etudes on the cornet as a way to challenge his own highly virtuosic playing. Or perhaps he simply grew up hearing them so often that they became part of his routine. A close examination reveals that Clarke did not merely steal the etudes from Kayser note-for-note, but clearly adapted them to fit the cornet at a level that continues to challenge students and professional players today.

Indeed, Clarke’s *Characteristic Studies* offer a unique case of how repertoire and pedagogy for another instrument influenced not only Clarke’s musicianship but has stretched the technical demands of cornet and trumpet players ever since. By comparing Kayser’s original etudes to those of Clarke, brass players without any background in string playing can be inspired and challenged. Informed by the historical context known about Clarke’s life, this study looks closely at Kayser and Clarke’s etudes to identify pedagogical concepts helpful to the development of cornet and trumpet players at all levels. Moreover, evaluation of the existing recordings of both etudes supplies ongoing inspiration for developing musicians (e.g. Schwartz, 2010; Cruz, 2020).

**Table**

<b><u>Clarke etude</u></b>	<b><u>Key</u></b>	<b><u>Kayser etude</u></b>	<b><u>Key</u></b>
1	C Major	4	C Major
2	a minor	28	a minor
3	D-flat	11	E-flat
4	b-flat minor	25	d minor
5	D Major	8	D Major
6	b minor	19	b minor
7	E-flat Major	32	E-flat Major
8	c minor	6	c minor
9	E Major	3	F Major
10	c-sharp minor	30	d minor
11	F Major	13	G Major
12	d minor	15	B-flat major
13	F-sharp Major	22	E Major
14	e-flat minor	18	G Major
15	G Major	12	G Major
16	e minor	N/A	
17	A-flat Major	31	A-flat Major
18	f minor	23	f minor
19	A Major	27	A Major
20	f-sharp minor	21	E-flat Major
21	B-flat Major	10	C Major
22	g minor	35	b minor
23	B Major	29	C Major
24	g-sharp minor	N/A	

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