

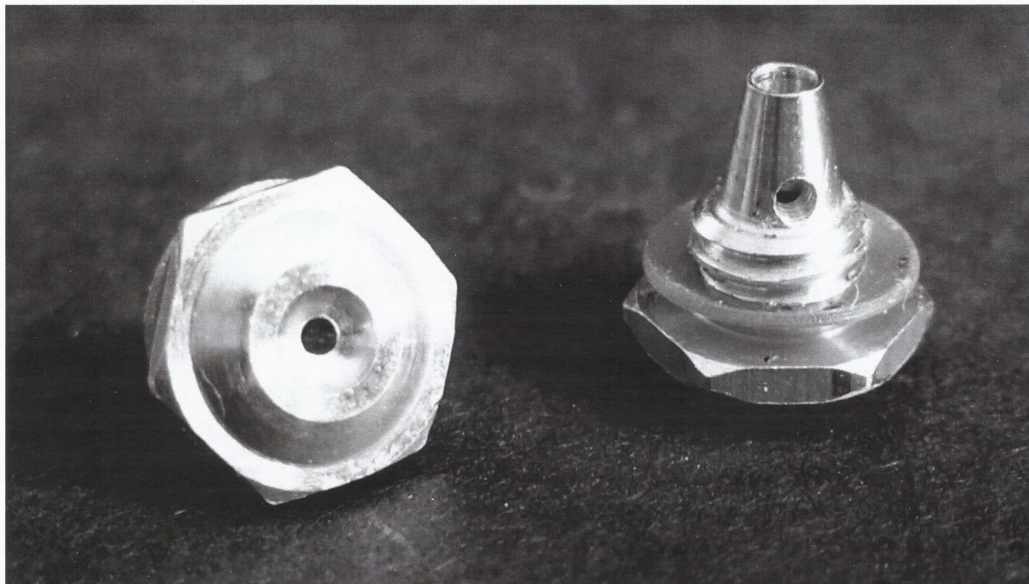
Solution to an oboe problem By Jennifer Porcas

Woodwind repairers will be familiar with that perennial problem suffered by many oboists, water in the octave key, when the player's warm air condenses and blocks the tiny hole in one or both of the octave boxes rendering it impossible to play many of the higher notes.

HELP IS NOW AT HAND in the form of the *anti-condense octaves* invented and supplied by Italian oboist and inventor Alberto Castellani. www.oboicastellani.it

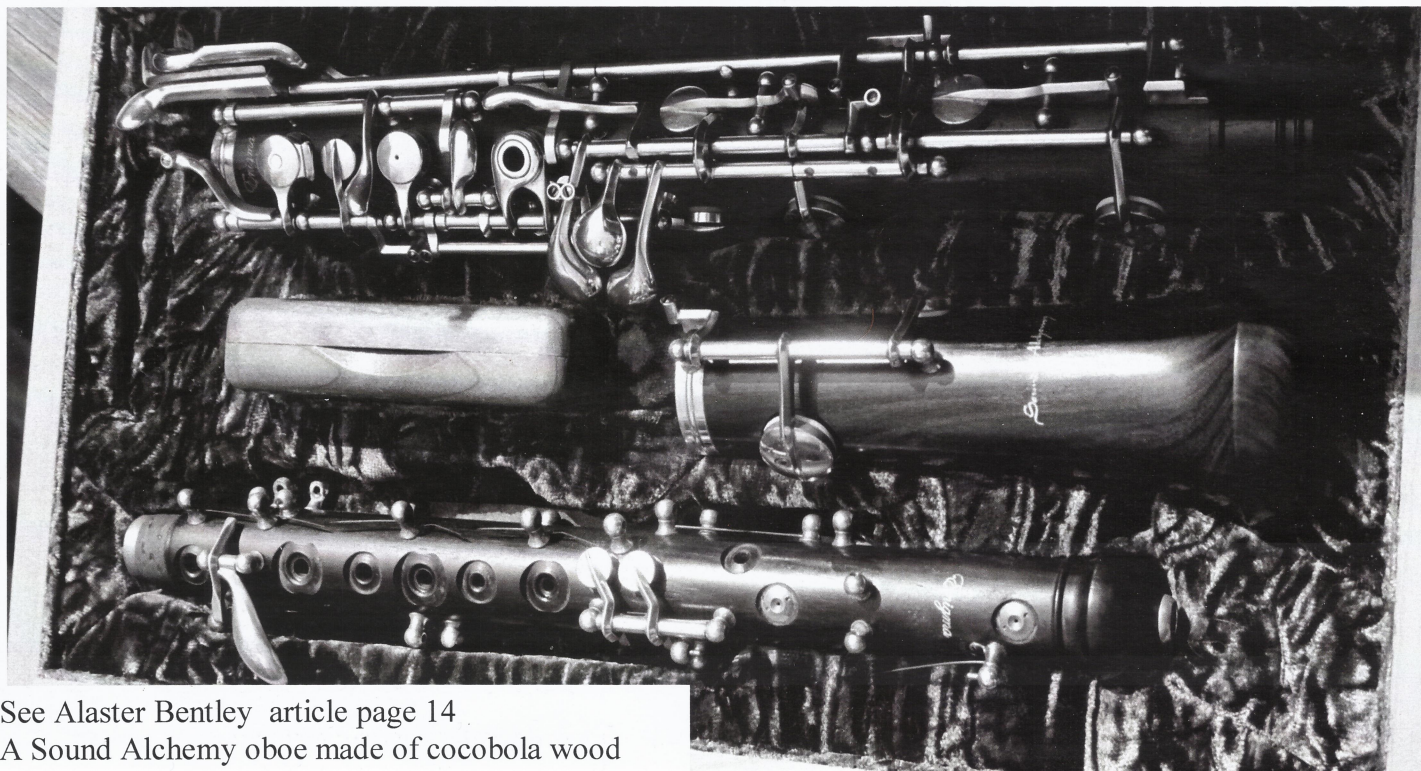
The *anti-condense octaves* are cone shaped with small holes. Having removed the original octave boxes they are easily set in with a custom-made tool, provided in the kit. It may be necessary to change the octave pads in order to ensure an airtight seal and also to provide enough opening as Alberto's octave inserts lie a little proud of the body surface. Replacing the supplied washer with a smear of grease can also help.

Mr Castellani's octave inserts are made in one size which he says 'fits all'. I have successfully fitted them to my oboe, oboe d'amore and cor anglais, though I needed a thin strip of plumber's tape for one of the octaves of my ancient cor anglais. Alberto can now also supply a replacement 'bowl' (chamber into which the insert is screwed) which, he says, enhances resonance and can be useful if the thread of the insert is not compatible with the oboe.



Mr Castellani's octave inserts

I can't praise these octaves too highly. Since fitting them to my oboe I have enjoyed *water-free* playing and have almost forgotten that it could be a problem. I am sure many more oboists would be glad to know about this invention.



See Alaster Bentley article page 14
A Sound Alchemy oboe made of cocobola wood