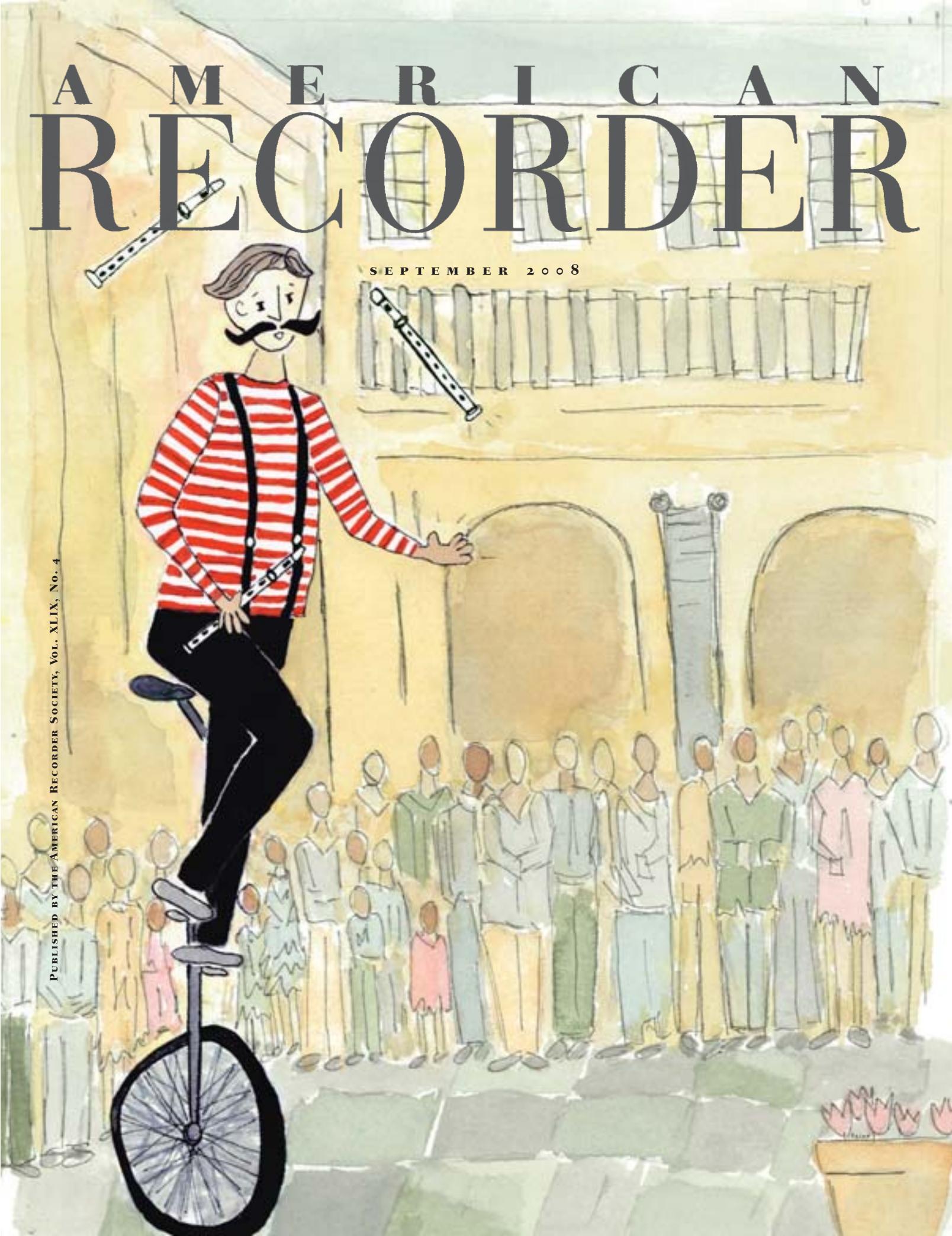


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SEPTEMBER 2008

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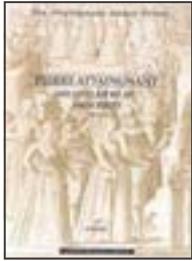
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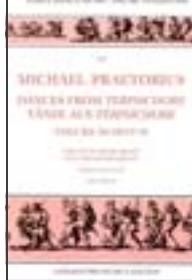


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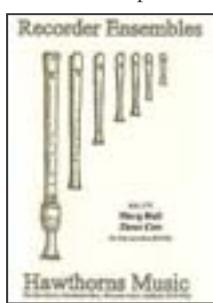
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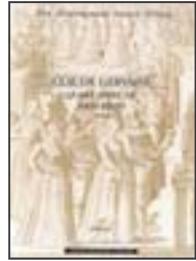
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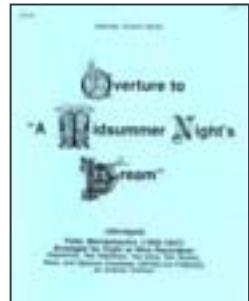
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EDITOR'S NOTE

With the summer Olympics starting as I write this, the young athletes (especially those gymnasts) have made me think about music prodigies. I've read of only a few in recent years—but do their accomplishments compare with the results of the single-minded effort and time put in by a 16-year-old (or perhaps really 14-year-old) gymnast? With less emphasis these days on music—and the arts in general—in our schools, we seem to rely on parents to recognize and nurture a young Mozart. Lucky is the music teacher who spots that potential in a student—and even luckier if the parents have the energy to support that spark while also serving as surrogate teachers for today's increased homework load and chauffeurs to numerous other activities that produce a "well-rounded" child.

I've enjoyed Mary Halverson Waldo's recent **Education** columns describing young South American students and their passion for the recorder—in this issue (page 24), how blind students have taken to the recorder in Bogotá, Colombia.

It was also encouraging to hear the talented young-adult recorder players during the summer's **Berkeley Festival** (page 8) events, especially the "New Generation" concert sponsored by the ARS. A young artist competition for recorder players—the second one sponsored by Renaissance band **Piffaro**, which had a strong Berkeley presence—is underway, with the initial deadline having passed before news made it to AR. It will be interesting to see what talent emerges this time in the 12-to-19-year-old group targeted by that contest.

Just at start of the school year, **Leslie Timmons** reviews music geared for younger players. This issue's **Music Reviews** (page 26) contain a comprehensive look at the Music Medals assessment scheme, as well as pieces by **Matthias Maute** for the young and young-at-heart. Maute is also the winner of the composition competition sponsored by the **Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet** and the **ARS** (page 4).

If any of the above efforts and resources help encourage recorder prodigies, then we're doing our part.

Gail Nickless

A M E R I C A N RECODER

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September 2008



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ON THE COVER:
"Henri juggling recorders"
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The mission of the American Recorder Society is to promote the recorder and its music by developing resources and standards to help people of all ages and ability levels to play and study the recorder, presenting the instrument to new constituencies, encouraging increased career opportunities for professional recorder performers and teachers, and enabling and supporting recorder playing as a shared social experience. Besides this journal, ARS publishes a newsletter, a personal study program, a directory, and special musical editions. Society members gather and play together at chapter meetings, weekend and summer workshops, and many ARS-sponsored events throughout the year. In 2000, the Society entered its seventh decade of service to its constituents.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Stop, play and listen

Hearing is the most important sense for musicians. Try taking 30 seconds to stop what you're doing and listen. Does the world suddenly seem more alive with sound? Were you blocking out the sounds around you before you started listening, like I often do?

Focus on one sound so that everything else seems to fade away, then open up your ears to listen to all the sounds around you. It's like being an amplifier with your own volume control.

We all block sounds at one time or another. Our habit of blocking the noise of traffic, crowds, machinery and other annoying urban sounds is a survival skill in a man-made environment, but leaves us in danger of blocking sounds we might want to hear. For musicians (recorder players especially, since our instrument's pitch is susceptible to any change in breath pressure), the temptation to block annoying sounds is particularly strong.

Blocking doesn't happen only in response to annoying sounds. Some players are unable to listen to a duet partner because they must concentrate on their own notes and rhythms. More advanced players, rather than blocking sound, may stop focusing on their own sound.

When we play music, we operate at several levels. We think ahead constantly, while being aware of the sounds we are making at that moment. Our ability to listen may be compromised if reading music is challenging. On top of all that, we have to remember tone, posture, hand position, articulation, and expressive playing. It's much easier to really listen to sounds being produced if techniques can be done automatically, without conscious thinking. This only comes with regular practice.

No matter what one's playing level, we can all learn to listen better. How much of playing and teaching time is spent really listening? What about when we're in the audience?

Those who attend music school are taught to listen critically, so that we can improve our own playing and our ability to discern good playing from bad. Just

listening to the music itself, without analyzing structure or judging technique, is a liberating experience. The feeling of being caught up, and transformed into a pair of ears and an auditory cortex—even for just one moment of a performance—is pure joy.

Allaudin Mathieu, in *The Listening Book: Discovering Your Own Music* (Shambhala Publications, 1991), writes: "Just pretend that your life depends on the next sound you hear" when you want to focus on your aural surroundings. He suggests sitting down with paper and pen, and recording every sound you hear.

I tried this at home one evening. The windows were open and I could hear the train, cars, a ticking clock, my stomach rumbling, the refrigerator creaking. I realized that I usually shut out the constant noise of the nearby highway, thereby protecting myself from one of the annoyances of urban living.

Try taking 30 seconds to stop what you're doing and listen.

In *Deep Listening: A Composer's Sound Practice* (iUniverse, Inc., 2005), Pauline Oliveros writes, "More often than not, urban living causes narrow focus and disconnection." Do you have a place where you can listen intently, without distractions? My ears are always happiest outside, away from traffic and crowds.

Since first trying Mathieu's exercise, I've been focusing on sounds. As I write this, it's the middle weekend of the Amherst Early Music Festival. The exhibition is in full swing, with people trying recorders, violins, harpsichords, harps, flutes and viols, or greeting old friends.

Standing in front of Jean-Luc Boudreau's booth, about to try a recorder, I become aware of Dana Maiben, violin faculty from the first week, playing two feet away from me. I home in on her sound, which isn't big so I haven't heard

her through the noise of the exhibition. She is playing Bach in the beautiful way she has of letting the music speak for itself.

The next several minutes are sublime. The cacophony of the exhibition doesn't disappear, but is separated from her sound so that I am able to concentrate on her playing. What a treat!

Both Oliveros's and Mathieu's books contain exercises for listening. Two I particularly like involve a single note. Mathieu's exercise varies dynamics, duration, timbre, texture, feeling and intention to discover the array of sounds available to us with one note. For example, play any note on your recorder—as soft as possible, as loud as possible, and everything in between. Try to keep the pitch the same.

Oliveros describes an exercise called the Extreme Slow Walk. While walking very slowly, eyes closed or open, sing long tones—one per breath. Or play long tones on your recorder while walking. Pay attention to the vibrations caused by your singing and playing.

We tend to turn off our listening when we play in large group situations. It is difficult for recorder players to play in tune in large groups, so we tend to stop listening just to protect our ears. Next time you're at a chapter playing session, try doing the opposite—really listen to the group, to yourself, to your neighbor, and to the people you can't see but can hear if you focus on them. Let me know if your large group playing experience changes at all.

Speaking of large group experiences, I hope you'll all come to the next **ARS Festival, July 30 to August 2, 2009**. We'll be in St. Louis, MO, to celebrate our 70th birthday with classes, concerts, demonstrations and playing sessions. Visit <www.americanrecorder.org> for details, and keep both ears open!

*Letitia Berlin, ARS President
<tishberlin@sbcglobal.net>*



TIDINGS

Matthias Maute wins ARS/ALSQ composition contest, reports on concerts from Florida to New York



"A motorical composition ... written in a very colorful and varied style ..." and "because of the composer's inventive ideas and his love for detail, the composition is more than just lively lines and nice ensemble actions."

"The strong formal structure makes Rush an adventure both to play and to listen to."

These are among the judges' comments that inspired an award of first place to **Matthias Maute** for his recorder quartet *Rush*, in the recently completed composition competition sponsored collaboratively by the **Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet** (ALSQ) and the **ARS**. ARS Board member Sue Roessel and ALSQ member Karel van Steenhoven acted as liaisons. Competition judges included ALSQ members and the Dutch composer **Peter-Jan Wagemans**.

The goal was to enrich the recorder repertoire with high-quality recorder quartet music by American composers, for the enjoyment of professional recorder players everywhere.

Announced in fall 2007, the competition was open to composers of any age from the U.S. and Canada. The composition criteria indicated a professional-level quartet work for any size (and any combination) of recorders, 7–10 minutes in duration.

Along with Maute, the two other competition winners are **William Ashworth** and **Glen Shannon**. All are being honored with a reception and pres-

Composition Competition Winners Named

entation at the Montréal Recorder Festival this month, with prize awards of \$1500, \$750 and \$500 respectively.

The premiere of the three winning compositions is planned for early 2009, during the ALSQ's 30th Anniversary Tour (see <www.loekistardust.nl/>). Maute's first-place-winning piece will also be included on their new 30th Anniversary CD.

Maute has achieved an international reputation, both as one of the finest recorder and Baroque flute players of his generation and also as a composer. In 1990, he won First Prize in the soloist category at the Early Music Competition in Bruges, Belgium.

Maute is also known for his artistic direction of Ensemble Caprice, for whom he produces ingenious programs. The ensemble has appeared at venues in Europe, North America (twice at the Boston Early Music Festival) Taiwan and Israel.

In addition to his work with Ensemble Caprice, Maute appears as a soloist at festivals in the U.S., Canada and Europe. In 2003, he appeared at the Boston Early Music Festival as a member of Rebel and returned in 2005 as an orchestral soloist. In December he makes his debut at New York City's Lincoln Center.

His compositions hold an important place in the world of contemporary recorder music and are published by Breitkopf & Härtel, Amadeus, Moeck and Carus. Maute plays on 20 recordings on the Analekta, Vanguard Classics, Bella Musica, Dorian, Bridge and Atma Classique labels. He is a professor at McGill University in Montréal, QC.

Having worked as a librarian and author of 13 books, second place

winner
Ashworth
is now a
full-time
composer.

He received his Master of Arts in theory and com-

position from Washington State University and did post-MA work at the University of Washington. He taught at Washington State University, founding the WSU Consort, an early music ensemble.

Recently performed works have been presented in Oregon and Washington. His composition, *Music for String Quartet*, was chosen to represent WSU at the Inland Composers Symposium.

Four of his books have won honors: the Colonial Dames Notable Books, the Oregon Book Award, the Great Plains Distinguished Book Award, and the Kansas Notable Book Award.

Ashworth is a member of the National Association of Composers, the American Federation of Composers, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and the Authors' Guild.

Third place winner Shannon composes and publishes music for recorder ensembles under his self-titled Glen Shannon Music, and has also been



published by PRB Productions and Moeck Verlag. His compositions have won prizes in competitions sponsored by the Chicago (IL) ARS Chapter and the San Francisco (CA) Early Music Society.

By day, Shannon is a production artist at TechArt International, a small graphic design and production boutique in San Francisco specializing in multilingual production, mostly in East Asian languages. He also consults with private clients on freelance design work.

Shannon served three years as president of the East Bay (CA) Recorder Society, and currently serves the ARS as *Members' Library Editions* editor. He performs on recorder and traverso with the ensemble Baroque Etcetera in the Berkeley area.



Bits & Pieces

In the Media

Judith Linsenberg and **Musica Pacifica** are featured in a podcast and article on the Minnesota Public Radio web site, <http://minnesota.publicradio.org/display/web/2008/04/15/classical_tracks>. About their latest release, *Fire Beneath my Fingers* (available through the ARS CD Club), New Classical Tracks host Julie Amacher says, "I picture them sitting on the edge of their seats, pushing themselves and their instruments to the limit."

Matthias Maute was interviewed by Fred Child, host of American Public Media's Performance Today as part of a series exploring improvisation in classical music. In the radio discussion, broadcast during the week of August 11-15 (with playlists at <<http://performancetoday.publicradio.org>>), Maute speaks about the art of improvisation and describes his own experiences while improvising. Maute also plays improvised versions of *Greensleeves* and a "techno" piece from the CD that accompanies his book, *Blockflöte & Improvisation* (Breitkopf & Härtel).

Awards

Anthony Rowland-Jones, a frequent contributor to AR and an ARS Presidential Special Honor Awardee, has been elected Honorary Vice President of the Society of Recorder Players (UK) for his "active support of the Society and the recorder over many years." He joins a distinguished list of Vice Presidents: Brian Bonsor, Frans Brüggen, Paul Clark, Jeanne Dolmetsch, Friedrich von Huene, Hermann Moeck, Kees Otten and Theo Wyatt.

José Verstappen has received the Order of Canada "for his contributions to the promotion and vitality of early-period music in British Columbia, and for showcasing Canada within the international early music community."

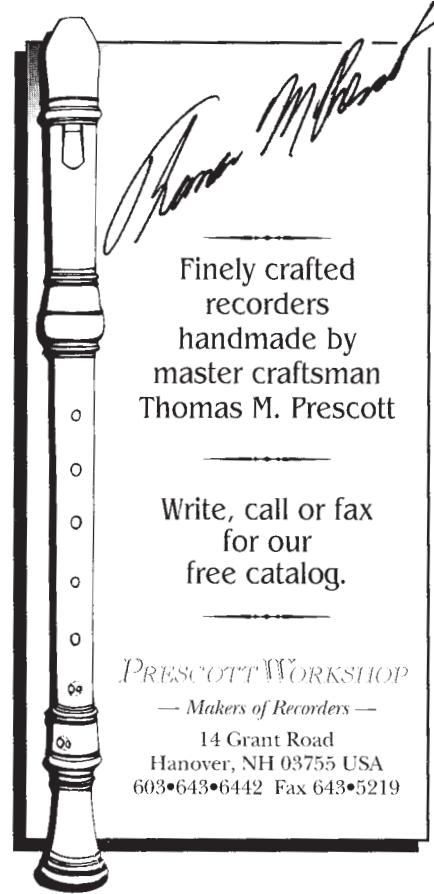
Established in 1967, the Order of Canada is Canada's highest civilian honor for lifetime achievement. Appointments are made on the recommendations of an advisory council chaired by the chief justice of Canada.

Verstappen has been the executive director of Early Music Vancouver (EMV) for over 25 years. EMV, which is devoted to the performance and study of early music, was founded in 1970 and was the

first of its kind established in North America. Under Verstappen's leadership, EMV has developed imaginative programming and educational activities such as the annual summer Vancouver Early Music Programme and Festival.

La Donna Musicale director **Laury Gutiérrez** has been appointed a Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study, Harvard University. The highly competitive program has provided yearlong residencies to more than 400 award-winning writers, artists, scientists and scholars since its founding in 1999.

Gutiérrez's project is entitled "The Artistic Development of Repertory for Concerts, Educational Performances, and Recordings of Early Music Written by Women Composers," and will result in bringing a repertory of music composed by Italian women into concert and educational programs. La Donna Musicale, heard periodically by AR readers at the Boston Early Music Festival, includes among its numerous regular members **Na'ama Lion**, Baroque flute.



A detailed illustration of a wooden recorder, showing its characteristic conical bore and finger holes. Above the recorder is a stylized, flowing signature that reads "Thomas M. Prescott". To the right of the recorder, there is descriptive text.

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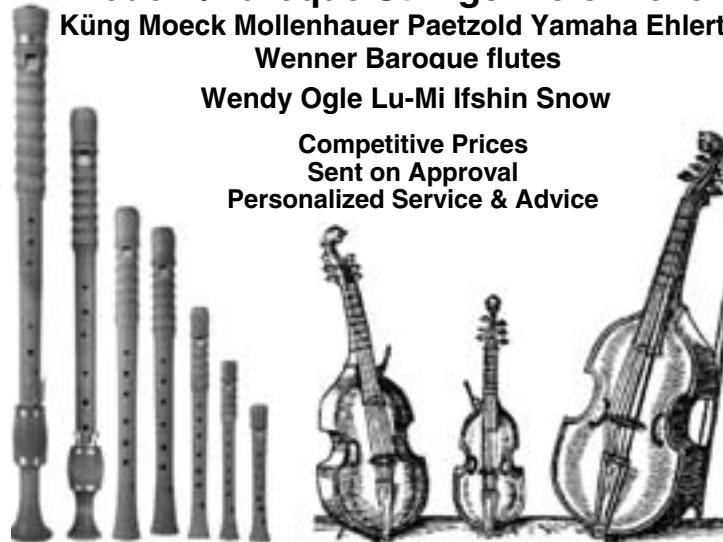
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Spring Concerts from up and down the East Coast

For the last 40 years, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Manhattan, NY, has had a tradition of performing the cantatas of J. S. Bach in the liturgical setting of Vespers or evening prayer. Except that the service is in English, it is very like the German language service for which Bach composed, thus giving an idea of how the first hearers experienced these profound works.

I try to attend on those Sundays when a cantata with a recorder part is presented. Last spring, recorders were heard in two Sunday Vespers: March 16, *Cantata 182*, "Himmelskönig sei willkommen" for Palm (Passion) Sunday; and April 13, *Cantata 175*, "Er rufet seinen Schafen mit Namen" for the fourth Sunday in Easter.

My husband and I spend winters in St. Petersburg, FL. Last March, we attended the third "Go-for-Baroque Early Music Festival," held in Clearwater and Dunedin, both a short drive north of St. Petersburg. This year's festival highlight was a concert by **Piffaro**—Rotem Gilbert, Grant Herreid, Greg Ingles, Joan Kimball, Christa Patton, Robert Wiemken and Tom Zajac. They all play a variety of instruments—shawms, sackbutts, recorders, krumhorns, bagpipes, lutes, guitars, harps, dulcians and percussion.

Their concert on this occasion was called "A celebration of musical genius from the Low Countries." The venue was the neo-gothic Peace Memorial Church in Clearwater, which features exquisite stained glass windows, several of them designed by Tiffany. The fantastic acoustics enhanced the listening experience for the capacity audience.

The concert began with several performers processing down the center aisle, playing a suite of Flemish tunes. It was easy to believe that we had been transported back to a Renaissance castle for an intimate chamber concert; even though the church is large, there was a feeling of being close to the musicians because of the setting and acoustics.

After a group of pieces by eminent Flemish composer Jacob Obrecht, Piffaro moved on to the early 16th century, sharing a story behind the music of Josquin Després and Heinrich Isaac. Both were vying for the post of Maestro di Capella of Hercule I of Ferrara. Piffaro played pieces by both composers—one composer followed by the other, in pairs, three groups in all—and the audience had to vote on which piece they preferred. At the end of the three groups, the winner was Isaac. (Although Josquin is more familiar to us today than Isaac, it was the latter who actually got the job at court.)

After intermission, Piffaro played music of the next generation of Flemish Polyphonists—Gombert, Jacob Clemens non Papa, and Andreas Povornago—followed by a suite of Flemish dances by Tylman Susato (1551). A standing ovation at the end of the concert, and cries of "encore, encore," brought them back to graciously perform for several more minutes. This last piece featured each member of the ensemble in turn, so we were able to hear the different solo instruments backed by the others.

Anyone attending this concert would not say that early music is boring. As a bonus, a reception following the concert allowed us to meet the musicians and examine their instruments, marveling at how many there are and how they transport them all by air.

Other concerts during the jampacked festival included the award-winning tenor Bryce Westervelt with the Choral Scholars; Gregorian chant for organ and cantor; a harpsichord recital by Julane Rodgers, "The young Bach and his mentor (Buxtehude)"; music of Italy with violin, viola and 'cello; and the Dunedin Scottish Country Dancers. Recorder was heard with Baroque oboe, gamba and harpsichord; trumpet and percussion; and guitar, the last with Nathaniel Thomas, recorder (see the report on him in the November 2006 AR). The next Festival is set for March 2009. For information, please e-mail founder and director Carol Alexander at <calexan1@tampa.rr.com>.

Patricia Grimes

The excellent Bach Choir and period-instrument Bach Players are led by Rick Erickson, who also plays organ continuo. **Susan Iadone**, the regular recorder player at Vespers, did some nice legato playing in *Cantata 182*.

For *Cantata 175*, she was joined by recorderists **Karen Snowberg** and **Larry Zukof**. Taking advantage of having three good recorder players, the April 13 service opened with a lovely playing of the Adagio and Allegro movements from the *Sonata (Quartettino)* for three alto recorders and continuo by Alessandro Scarlatti.

Anita Randolph

Reine-Marie Verhagen, a well-known recorder virtuoso and teacher from the Netherlands, was a welcome visitor in late March to St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Islip, Long Island, where she joined recorderist **Rachel Begley**, harpsichordist **Tami Morse** and Baroque violinist **Marc Levine** in a program of 17th- and 18th-century instrumental music. The performers breathed new life into familiar repertory: works by Handel, Telemann and masters of the French Baroque. I was particularly struck by Verhagen's performance with harpsichord of a Handel sonata—she was totally centered and relaxed, projecting a focused, radiant sound.

The ARTEK Early Music Ensemble joined forces with **Piffaro** last April in music of the three "S's"—Schein, Scheidt and Schütz (plus Praetorius) in a rollicking performance at Holy Trinity Church in New York City, NY. ARTEK's singers, plucked strings, violone, organ and harpsichord had the added spice of Piffaro's recorders, dulcians, bagpipes, sackbutts, hurdy-gurdy, krumhorns and shawms. Playing separately and jointly, the two groups completely wowed the audience with their artistry and enthusiasm. And yes, you could hear the recorders!

Nancy M. Tooney



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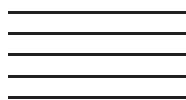
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RESPONSE



*Inspired to take up the pen and boot up the computer:
poems, and Erik Bosgraaf's playing*

ENVYING ERIK

I want to thank you for the article, "A Portrait of Erik Bosgraaf" (AR, May 2008). Listening to his recordings of Jacob van Eyck is at the same time inspiring and a matter of envy as his talent just oozes out of that CD. Would that I could be even half as talented as Erik. Thanks for this work of yours in AR.

Dick Jansson, Winter Park, FL

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bosgraaf reports that the number of hits from the U.S. on his web site "exploded" after the May AR appeared. His new CD, Telemann: Fantasias & Bach: Partita, is now out on Brilliant Classics.

INSPIRED TO VERSE

I love *American Recorder*. My first issue was the September 2007 publication. I read it from cover to cover. The article on jazz especially intrigued me.

I started learning jazz standards and writing alto recorder solos. Now my husband and I have 45 jazz selections we perform in our group, The Horton Duo. Audiences love our new tunes. We also perform Celtic and other World Music.

Here is a poem I wrote after reading the latest [January 2008] issue of *American Recorder*. Hope you can use it.

Sandi Horton, Waco, TX

Artist's Reflection

I am an artist.
My paintbrush is a recorder.
My breath is the paint.
Listen to my art!

I delight in creating
Timbre and expression
Deep within my soul of
Inner peace and transcendence.

Sacred sounds amaze
Brushing through time.
My spirit intertwines in
Soothing and dramatic melodies.

My art reflects me
And all mankind.
A song of the universe
Emerges from my magical recorder.

Quite on impulse, [my husband] Bert and I took a weekend trip to the coastal redwoods. Our recorders came along, and the experience inspired a sonnet. It uses imagery from Thomas Morley's madrigals.

Best regards, Dorothy Barth, Vallejo, CA

Rosewood to Redwood

Of fire and lightning
rosewood flutes discourse,
A serenade from distant times to you,
More ancient than the music's
gentle force,
Did elemental thunder split your trunk
in two?

When lo, by break of morn, a sacrifice,
As fragrant rosewood fell instead of
grew,
To bring to life our pipes, let joy arise,
And celebrate your majesty anew;

In misty month of maying did we meet,
A brief encounter in the
north coast's land,
Our madrigals we placed on creviced
feet,
Your trunk a welcome weathered
music stand;

Oh redwood tree, your wisdom
can't be wrong,
Did you prefer the silence or our song?
~~~~~

Charmion Burns of Manhattan Beach, CA, wrote the Italian sonnet below. She plays with La Mer Consort and Recorder Players West of Los Angeles.

## An Old/New Adventure

When I got old I could no longer sing  
My voice was shaky,  
breathing less than fine;  
We humans don't improve with age  
like wine,  
And seventy plus years is far from  
spring.

Could making music cease to be  
my thing?

I searched to find an instrument benign  
That I could teach myself to play  
in time.  
Recorders soon became my aged fling.

I found a group to give me some  
support,  
An early music consort that plays well.  
We give concerts of passable report.  
How this would grow on me  
who could foretell,  
But we all need adventure of some sort;  
I wasn't ready yet to bid farewell.

Responses from our readers are welcomed and  
may be sent to *American Recorder*,  
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# The Biennial Berkeley Festival

For recorder players willing to bounce from one coast to the other each June, there is usually plenty to hear and enjoy at a summer festival. The **2008 Berkeley Festival and Exhibition** (BFX) was no exception. The recorder highlight for BFX events, held June 1-8 in Berkeley, CA, was **Piffaro, The Renaissance Band**, in two BFX performances, plus fringe events involving its members.

On June 6, on the Festival's main stage at the University of California-Berkeley (UC-B) Hertz Hall, Piffaro collaborated in an evening event with **The Concord Ensemble**, "Trionfo d'Amore e della Morte: Florentine Music for a Medici Procession." Piffaro's members (**Grant Herreid, Greg Ingles, Joan Kimball, Christa Patton, Robert Wiemken, Tom Zajac** and young guest **Priscilla Smith**) played their usual battery of instruments: recorders, bagpipes, shawms, dulcians, sackbutts, pipe & tabor, harp, lute, guitar and percussion.

To tie together the short pieces typical of a concert of Renaissance music, the ensembles segmented the "Medici Procession" music into groupings to place the pieces in context. The opening section's works for "Entrata del Principe" focused on processions related to the *calendimaggio* (first day of May) festival and pieces that would have been sung by *laudesi* (lay religious groups of merchants or guild members). This segment showcased the shawm and sackbut band alternating with voices.

"Lorenzo Innamorata" spotlighted Lorenzo de' Medici as scholar and patron of the arts. Alexander Agricola's *Cecus non judicat de coloribus* was played on alto, tenor and bassett Renaissance recorders, with lines acoustically well-differentiated. Other pieces in the set alternated ATTB recorders and voices with lute and harp, then finally in combination for the anonymous *Or udite el buono horare*.

A third set, "Trionfo Della Guerra," included works (played in various shawm band configurations) of Heinrich Isaac, who worked for the Medici; and a fourth, "Morte del Principe," contained a single piece, Isaac's lament on Lorenzo's death—sung *a capella* by the six Concord voices, with Paul Flight's countertenor floating above in this plangent, haunting lament.

Piffaro brought out the bagpipes for the last set before the intermission, "Trionfo Della Fede," commemorating the mesianic excesses of the Dominican zealot

Savonarola, who caused books and music manuscripts to be burned. Playing the anonymous *La giloxia* on pipes in perfect unison, with guitar and tambourine, Piffaro added shawms and Concord voices for an exciting close to the first half.

Resuming, bagpipes for "Entrata degli Sancte" gave way to Piffaro's low-consort "louds" for "Martyre e Exili," the excommunication and execution of Savonarola, and the exile of the Medici.

Renaissance recorders (STTTB), sometimes with harp and lute, returned for "Trionfo d'Amore," music of Arcadelt and Carpentras. In the final set "Musica Divina," the rousing grand finale was Carpentras's *Servi Dominati/Jerusalem convertere ad Dominum*—two voices, adding sackbut, tenor shawm, tenor and bass dulcian, and finally all voices with shawms, sackbutts and dulcians. A well-deserved standing ovation, and an encore of *Torna, Torna*, ensued. Piffaro, as their name says, is unquestionably *The Renaissance Band*.

On the following morning, a Saturday program aimed at youngsters featured Piffaro in "The Pied Pipers of the Renaissance: A Colorful Tour of Instruments and Music." In the crowd of about 150, at least half were adults *sans* children, making it a "show for the children in all of us."

Less formal than on the previous night, Piffaro introduced the concept of the "Town Pipers" and their instruments—starting with a bagpipe trio processional to the anonymous Spanish dance *Española*. Other instruments were shown, and their modern counterparts identified. Wiemken defined the instrument family or matched consort, moving to the mixed or "broken" consort—ancestor of the modern band.

Wiemken asked how many knew what a recorder was and how many had played the recorder. Hands went up all over the hall. The anonymous Italian *Or udite el buono horare* was played by a consort (alto, two tenor, and bassett recorders), which expanded for the William Byrd *Sermone blando*—soprano, two tenors, bassett, great bass, and sub contra bass—a rich sound akin to that of the hall's pipe organ.

String instruments and capped reeds were shown and played, and audience members invited on stage to learn to dance a *bransle*. An energized audience responded enthusiastically to the musically enjoyable and educational presentation.



**Piffaro as "Pied Pipers"** (l to r): **Christa Patton, Greg Ingles, Joan Kimball, Priscilla Smith, Robert Wiemken, Grant Herreid and Tom Zajac.**

The festival was laced generously with a wide variety of music offered in addition to main events—the "fringe" concerts, starting as early as June 3 in the eight churches and halls near the UC-B campus (plus one each in Albany and San Francisco). This writing covers (for the most part) events featuring or including recorders—with a couple of sidesteps to mention concerts that recorder players would likely enjoy.

The June 3 noon fringe concert was **Ensemble Vermillion** (**Frances Blaker**, recorders; **Barbara Blaker Krumdieck**, Baroque 'cello; **David Wilson**, Baroque violin; **Henry Lebedinsky**, harpsichord), visiting Henry Purcell's 17th-century England. The group emphasizes performing recorder transcriptions of (mostly violin) music; this program was in that vein—works by Purcell, Henry Butler (a predecessor of Purcell who spent most of his life in Spain), Giovanni Battista Draghi (an Italian living in England while writing in the French style), and another Italian living and working in England, Nicola Matteis (credited with bringing the Italian violin school to the British Isles).

Blaker's soprano recorder (a Terton by von Huene) sang out with a lovely clear tone above the ensemble on Matthew Locke's *Suite in B<sup>b</sup> Major (For Several Friends)*, which closes in a lilting Jigg plus a slow coda. A large and enthusiastic audience gave the players well-deserved applause as the program ended as it had begun: with a Purcell trio sonata.

That evening **King's Trumpetts and Shalme**s presented a program of "Renaissance Music for Shawm Band" at Trinity Chapel. The ensemble (**Robert Cronin, Jim Kafka, Alan Paul**, shawms, crumhorns, recorders; and **David Hogan Smith**, sackbut, crumhorn and recorder) were joined by **Joanna Bramel Young** and **Douglas Mandell** on crumhorns and recorders.

Recorder players would have enjoyed the dark tone of the consort of matching Prescott Renaissance recorders used by the whole ensemble in three sections of the program, especially the final six-part anonymous *En quam honesta* that met with appreciative applause.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church was the site of the evening's gorgeous concert by **WAVE** (Women's Antique Vocal Ensemble). Director **Cindy Beitmen** chose English music that many recorder players would recognize from playing it themselves: pieces by Byrd, Dowland, Gibbons, Philips, Morley, Tallis and Henry VIII, accompanied on several by strings, cornetto, percussion and harpsichord. Cornetto player **Joyce Johnson-Hamilton** played a magnificent version of *Susanna Fair*, incorporating her own elegant diminutions, and later joined Beitmen to play recorder in Purcell's *Strike the viol*, from *Come ye sons of art*.

A busy June 4 started with a noon concert by **The Albany Consort**. Handel's opera *Clori, Tarsi e Fileno* (respectively sung by **Christa Pfeiffer**, **Kimberly Miller** and **Jerry Hui**) incorporated the delicious brightness of an occasional recorder, notably when **Marion Rubinstein** and **Carol Panofsky** accompanied Hui in his aria, *Son come quell nocchiero*.

Later that afternoon, **Three Trapped Tigers** (recorder duo **David Barnett** and **Tom Bickley**) took their appreciative audience on an audio roller coaster ride of "old" and "new" music, with some of the latter written by Bickley. They played mostly on Renaissance recorders, with the sounds blending superbly. Their final piece was *Les Moutons de Panurge*—challenging to keep track of when playing, and hypnotic in its effect on the audience. It was gratifying to see several non-recorder-playing admirers stay afterward to ask questions about the instruments and the program.

The evening brought overlapping concerts. First, the resonant acoustics of St. Mark's Episcopal welcomed a newcomer to BFX events, the **Pacific Lutheran University Faculty Consort**. Baroque music from the north and south of Europe featured each member in solos and chamber works of Bach and Buxtehude to Monteverdi and Purcell. The south–north contrast was nicely exemplified after intermission: first, a set of pieces for Baroque guitar, played by **Elizabeth Brown**, with the delicate cascades of a Spanish-flavor "Folia" set of variations by Gaspar Sanz leading to percussive accents of Santiago

**(From top, l to r) David Barnett and Tom Bickley (sporting a tiger's tail) as Three Trapped Tigers; ARS Administrative Director Kathy Sherrick sells CDs to Kraig Williams at the ARS Booth; in the exhibits, recorder maker Ralf Netsch looks on as Rebecca Molinari and Judith Linsenberg try instruments and Gerry Greer lends an ear (Corlu Collier of Lost in Time Press listens in the background); bottom, Peter R. Ballinger and Bill Lazar talk during a quiet moment in the exhibition.**

de Murica. Turning a musical corner, Brown was joined for a strong ensemble piece—Baroque flutist **Jennifer Rhyne** matching fingerwork with violinist **Svend Rnning**, while **Kathryn Habedank**, harpsichord, supported the ensemble energy in *Trio Sonata in D Major* by J.J. Quantz. A foot-stomping ovation ended the group's travels—but there was no encore, as two members grabbed a cab to travel home by airplane.

Later that evening, six young, energetic and remarkably talented musicians led a different tour with "Music from Around the World through Time," showcasing their virtuosity on recorders from soprano to contra bass. Organized by Bay Area native **Rebecca Molinari** (now studying with Matthias Maute at McGill University, QC), the recital featured her with friends **Ji Sun Kim**, **Alexa Raine-Wright**, **Andrew Maruzzella**, **Andrew Levy** and **Morgan Jacobs**. Their journey into Baroque, jazz and new music showed how fortunate the recorder is, to be chosen by students whose professional demeanor professed it as a "serious" instrument. The audience demanded an encore; they returned to tear playfully (and skillfully) through Jan Van Landeghem's *Türkischer Hummelflug*.

A break in recorder events meant Thursday was a perfect time to hit the Early Music Exhibition, organized by **Early Music America** (EMA) at First Congregational Church—which became nearly devoid of recorder players later when most trooped to nearby Trinity Chapel for a highlight of the festival fringe—mostly Scottish music performed by **Wild Rose**.

**Frances Blaker** and **Tish Berlin** added recorder magic (and Berlin's ukulele licks) to a program spiced with beautiful singing by soprano **Leila Lazenby** and supported by **Joey**



O'Donnell, violin and viola; **Shira Kammen**, violin, viola and voice; **Barbara Blaker Krumdieck**, 'cello; and **Henry Lebedinsky**, harpsichord and bouzouki—a Greek stringed instrument, surprisingly introduced into Celtic traditional music in the late 1960s.

A memorable moment was the traditional Scottish *Tramps and Hawker Lads*, played on recorders (by Blaker and Berlin) and on bouzouki by Lebedinsky, also arranger of the piece. This was sung by

**EMA awards ceremony: Robert Cole remembers past Berkeley Festivals; Hank Knox flanked by students (l) Ji Sun Kim and (r) Alexa Raine-Wright and Andrew Maruzzella**



Lazenby accompanied at first only by bouzouki and alto recorder. A ritornello propelled the voice into the next verse, and so it went until a free-for-all finale full of flips, snaps and trills.

Other recorder gems were written by Blaker: *Perotinian*, looking back to the early composer; and *New Psalm*, inspired by the Shaker hymn *Amazing Grace*, which was beautifully sung *a capella* by Lazenby between the two instrumental pieces. The refreshing trip to the British Isles ran from wistful and soulful to joyful and exuberant music, all performed with high virtuosity.

As the dinner hour approached, **Coro Ciconia** sang a full program of music by (yes) Johannes Ciconia, 1370-1412. The small ensemble's genuine love of the

music of this Medieval master was apparent in the heart and soul of—and work spent in preparing—the concert. Their physical placement in the intimate room (designed by Julia Morgan for the Berkeley City Club) was well-considered, standing in order of height and flanking two seated group members at center.

**Kit Robberson**, vielle, and director **Peter Fisher**, Renaissance tenor recorder, played on only a few pieces, adding a nice tone color contrast. The audience sighed in satisfaction at the close of several songs.

Audience members described themselves as in the dark about

**Le Poème Harmonique**'s performances of "Venezia delle strade ai Palazzi—Monteverdi and Manelli," performed in the near-darkness of the candelabra-lit stage at the UC-B Zellerbach Playhouse. Its multiple performances allowed those who had already seen and heard the French ensemble to forewarn those attending later to peruse the program before the lights went out.

Answers were not apparent even to those who heard the afternoon talk (in French with forays into English) by artistic director **Vincent Dumestre** aided by an unidentified cast member and UC-B music professor Anthony Newcomb. Dumestre compared the integration of music, dance, art and improvisatory

theatre used by Le Poème Harmonique to Lully's multiple talents as a composer, dancer, singer and viol player. An important point for musicians was his assertion that he approaches the staging from the standpoint of the music and how it leads to the collaborative and improvisatory outcome. (Some of us may recall scratching our heads upon hearing the improvisatory, flamboyant style of Il Giardino Harmonico at the 1996 BFX: Le Poème Harmonique may be its vocal/theatrical counterpart.)

Although past productions have included winds, this one showcased four singers and six players of strings and percussion. The evening of high- and low-brow music from Venice of around 1600 was passionately and expertly performed in semi-staged fashion, with gesture and costumes, to an appreciative audience that called for two encores.

A leisurely stroll through the exhibits on Friday morning became the warm-up for the hike up the hill to International House (past a pair of black men's lace-up shoes, waiting patiently on a Berkeley street corner for their owner—a musician?). It was worth the walk to attend the EMA annual meeting/awards ceremony, preceded by a feast of finger food.

EMA's Howard Mayer Brown Award for lifetime achievement in the field of early music was given to **Robert Cole**, soon to retire from his position since 1986 as director of Cal Performances at UC-B and founder in 1990 of BFX. **Hank Knox** received the Thomas Binkley Award for outstanding achievement in performance and scholarship by a university collegium director. The early music program director at McGill University was congratulated by some of his students (some of the ones who had played with such promise on Wednesday evening).

Piffaro members, despite being only hours away from a concert with the Concord Ensemble, showed up to support **Tina Chancey**, who was honored with the Special Early Music Outreach Award for achievement in early music education—as founder/performer of Hesperus and recorderist with Washington D.C.'s Folger Consort, both with her late husband Scott Reiss. Piffaro's Grant Herreid accepted her award in absentia.

Evening became night, as **Philharmonia Chamber Players** offered "Corelli by Candlelight" at 10:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church (unfortunately without their excellent recorder player, Hanneke van Proosdij, who was on tour).

# EARLY Music A M E R I C A



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**"Next Generation" players Ji Sun Kim,  
Alexa Raine-Wright and Rebecca Molinari**

There was much that wind players could enjoy in the flawlessly-played string pieces, motivic cousins to Corelli's charming Christmas concerto.

June 7 brought a busy Saturday schedule for recorder aficionados. Overlaps in events started after the morning Piffaro concert, as **Alta Sonora** offered "Les Violes Douces & Singers: Spanish Renaissance Music" at Trinity Chapel. Five winds, with four each of strings and voices, swapped louder for recorders, wood for brass in the alternation often heard in cathedrals of Spain's Golden Age. Recorders offered cascading up-tempo lines in two pieces by Guerrero, bookending one by Juan Vasquez. Stunning unison singing and duets were heard from soprano **Alice Benedict** and counter-tenor **Tako Odo** in Vivanco's *Caritas pate rest*.

Around the corner at St. Mark's Episcopal, an audience of about 50 landed amid gusts of wind for an afternoon of ARS events, starting with a concert in a format changed from its previous Festival "Recorder Relays" of established recorder artists. Instead, the audience was treated to "**The Next Generation in Concert**," three mini-recitals given by young players: **Rebecca Molinari**, **Alexa Raine-Wright** and **Ji Sun Kim**, all of whom have studied at Montréal's McGill University with Matthias Maute. Each soloist was at a different stage in her studies at McGill, with Raine-Wright having completed her first year, Molinari her second, and Kim having received her Artist Diploma and moved to Vienna to work on a doctorate.

Molinari, known to Bay Area audiences who have watched her artistic development over some years, opened on a Ganassi-type soprano recorder playing Van Eyck's *Preludium of Voorspel* and segueing into his *Malle Symen*—shaping each phrase beautifully to express its musical meaning, while maintaining a lovely tone.

Raine-Wright climbed the steps to the stage, entering while playing the same Van Eyck *Preludium*—but on a Ganassi-type alto—and when on stage segued into his *Courante Madamme de la Mountaine*. As each piece ended, the music drifted from stand to floor. Before beginning her final work, *Les Folies d'Espagne* by Marin Marais, she not only changed to a Baroque alto, but also changed her scarf. Raine-Wright has quick, sure fingers, and offered the Marais in a most musical fashion—using second fingerings to shape phrase endings, avoiding dynamic and tonal distortions that had crept into her playing early on.

Kim also opened with pieces from Van Eyck's *Der Fluyten Lust-hof*—this time *Fantasia & Echo, Phylis schoone Harderinne*, then an improvisation using bird calls to create a bridge to his *Engels Nachtegaeltje*. Her musical maturity was immediately apparent in her tempos—constant among variations and statements of the melody—and in her virtosity and understanding of how divisions relate to the melodies they embellish.

Later Kim strapped on a bass and picked up an alto for Isang Yung's *Chinesische Bilder*—scampering through the fast notes of the second movement, "The Actor with the Monkey" on a Kynseker soprano and ending the event dramatically with the required foot stamp and shout.

ARS president **Tish Berlin** remarked at the end, "It looks like the future of our instrument is in some very good hands." She invited the audience to remain for a roundtable discussion, "Early Music is Hot! How can we make the recorder sizzle?"—introducing participants **Judith Linsenberg** of Musica Pacifica, **Joan Kimball** and **Robert Wiemken** (both of Piffaro), Mid-Peninsula Recorder Orchestra director **Fred Palmer**, Ensemble Vermillion and Wild Rose member **Frances Blaker**, and East Bay concert organizer **Marilyn Marquis** to a small audience. Concern was voiced that there had been less recorder on the main BFX 2008 schedule, with no recorder soloist of "star" status or an associated master class; there seemed to be less on the fringe also.

More discussion touched on Piffaro's recorder competition for young players (with the winner playing with Piffaro on a concert, much as Priscilla Smith had at BFX); and sugges-



tions that recorder players and groups try to vary programs to embrace styles from Medieval to jazz.

After a break, 17 players remained for a play-in under Kimball. Even lacking a bass recorder, the group enjoyed Kimball's insightful direction in an hour of Renaissance music including *Simile est regnum celorum* of Francisco Guerrero, which Piffaro had played on their morning concert.

"*Early Music Written Lately: New Music in Old Styles*" was the theme of a concert at nearby Trinity Chapel. An enthusiastic audience of about 60 heard composer **Glen Shannon** perform some of his compositions, aided by some 16 friends. Old instruments and modern, recorders to trumpets and clarinets, offered tuneful music that left you humming. It was very gratifying to hear the complete *Little French Sweets*, a shortened version of the 2007 Chicago (IL) Composition Competition winner (see Chapters & Consorts in this issue)—here Shannon playing traverso in a quintet with oboe d'amore, violin, bassoon and harpsichord.

As the festival wound down, there was yet a pair of notable American premiere performances of a recently revived work: UC-B professor Davitt Moroney's rare production of Alessandro Striggio's *Missa sopra "Ecco si beato giorno"* for five choruses comprising 40—and, for the last movement, 60—voices. Each voice had its own line, which was sung distinctly, creating a rich ocean of sound that enveloped the sold-out audience at First Congregational.

The mass employed two harpsichords, two organs, two cornetti (**Jamie Savan** and **Jeremy West**) and seven sackbuts—the most notable being the contra bass, played by Brussels-based **Wim Becu**.

The piece was such a success that the standing ovation on June 7 was sustained for at least a full minute, causing Moroney to return to the stage, saying, "Well, there is only one piece written for 60 voices...," so they reprised the final *Agnus Dei*—a fitting cadence to the week as a whole.

*Gail Nickless, with contributions from Gerry Greer and Greta Hryciw*



**Festival frequenter Barry Moyer talks with Greta Hryciw and Stevie White (r) after hearing Glen Shannon's concert**



**Shirley Robbins (l) in September 2007 with Mark Davenport and Gloria Ramsey, during the ARS Board meeting at which Robbins received the ARS Presidential Special Honor Award. (Photo by Gail Nickless)**

By Martha Bixler  
(Transcribed & edited with an introduction by Mark Davenport)

Martha Bixler has long been active in the administration and with various committees of the ARS. She has been a member of the Board of Directors and twice been President of the Society. For 10 years she was editor of the ARS Members' Library Editions. Her memoir of the ARS is being prepared to appear next year on the ARS web site. She is a teacher/performer on recorders, piano, harpsichord, sackbut and viola da gamba. Prominent early music ensembles with which she has performed include the New York Pro Musica, Musica Sacra, the Bach Aria Group, and the Berkshire Bach Society. She has taught at many early music workshops around the U.S., Canada, England, and Ireland.

Mark Davenport has just begun his second four-year term on the ARS Board of Directors, where he chairs the Education Committee. He has also served as Book Reviews Editor and contributor of feature articles and music reviews for AR. Davenport is director of the Recorder Music Center at Regis University, in Denver, CO, where he is an Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Music Program. Active as a recorder soloist, he regularly serves on faculty for workshops throughout the U.S.

## An Interview with Shirley Robbins

On September 23, 2007, Martha Bixler conducted a telephone interview with Shirley Robbins. Earlier that September, at the ARS Board meeting in Los Angeles, CA, Shirley was awarded the ARS Presidential Special Honor Award.

The award was in recognition of her many years of fostering the education and appreciation of the

recorder in North America, and especially in her role—for more than three decades—as a recorder workshop director and teacher. Shirley passed away February 22, 2008, at the age of 79, after a long battle with cancer.

Shirley Ann Goldman was born in Bayonne, NJ, and moved to New York with her family when she was 12 years old. In this transcript, she talks about her early years in New York, her relationship with the Krainis family, her introduction to the recorder, and her first studies on the instrument with the young Bernard ("Bernie") Krainis in the 1940s. Bernie's father, Abe "Papa Krainis," gave Shirley and Bernie their first recorders. Shirley became a close friend of Bernie's sister Esta, who introduced Shirley to her husband, David Robbins.

In the interview, early impressions of Erich Katz are offered, with insight into the initial directions of the ARS. Shirley recalls vividly Katz's intentional move away from the Germanic classical and romantic musical traditions in favor of earlier Renaissance composers and musical styles.

In the early 1950s, Shirley moved to California where she and David raised their two children, Alan and Karen. A brief chronology of Shirley's involvement with the recorder workshop at the mountain campus of the University of Southern California Idyllwild School of Music and the Arts (ISOMATA) is outlined below—first with her attendance as a student, in 1954; then later as a teacher, in 1958; and finally as director of the workshop, beginning in 1971. This popular week-long workshop became known for its breadth of curriculum, including the interdisciplinary study of early performance practice (in recorder, early winds, viols and voice), history, music theory and dance. Over a span

of some three decades, many well-known early music teachers and performers served on the faculty there, including Carl Dolmetsch, Joseph Saxby, Murray Lefkowitz, Grace Feldman, LaNoue Davenport, George Houle, Friedrich von Huene, Ken Wollitz, Shelley Gruskin, Martha Bixler, Angene Feves, Bruce Haines, Gloria Ramsey, Shirley Marcus, Jon Bailey and others.

As director of the Idyllwild workshop, Shirley helped to introduce the singing of early music as a regular component of the musical studies there. Shirley describes the initial resistance to and ultimate acceptance of adding voices to the workshop's collegium repertoire. She fondly recollects the shared emotional exultation of performing Josquin's Pange Lingua Mass, conducted for the first time there in 1971 by LaNoue Davenport.

In 1986, she continued the "Idyllwild Experience" when she and Thomas Axworthy formed an independent workshop called Canto Antiguo. They moved the summer event to the Thornton School in Ojai, CA. At Canto, Shirley continued to provide new teaching opportunities for young recorder professionals. For the past decade, the workshop has continued each summer at Chapman College in Orange, CA.

Also in 1986, she became a credentialed teacher of the Alexander Technique, which she taught as a faculty member of Pomona College's Department of Theatre and Dance for 18 years. In 2006, she was recognized by the American Society of Alexander Technique for her decades of contribution to the development of the Alexander Technique. Shirley speaks of the collaborative role she played at Pomona College with the training of theater performance students there.

Shirley concludes the interview with reminiscences of her years in Claremont, CA, how the recorder has helped to keep people connected there, and how much the Southern California early music community meant to her in both her professional and personal life experiences.

A memorial service for Shirley was held on April 20 at Pomona College, at which the theater department presented a plaque in her honor, to be placed on the wall of the studio where she taught. To send a message to her family, e-mail her daughter Karen at <[krisa101@gmail.com](mailto:krisa101@gmail.com)> or visit <[www.shirleyrobbins.com](http://www.shirleyrobbins.com)>.

*MB: When did you get started playing the recorder?*

*SR:* What started me on the recorder was a friendship with the Krainis family ... Bernard Krainis's family. Esta, his sister, and I were schoolmates, and we became very close friends. I spent an awful lot of my time at the Krainis household while I was in New York. I lived across town and I would just take the crosstown bus out to school, and the two of us—Esta and myself—would have wonderful adventures. She was a dancer ... and [the Krainises] sort of adopted me in a peculiar way.

I had my own wonderful family, but this was a very fun environment because the father—although he didn't live there because mom and he were separated—was one of the people who brought the recorder to New York, to the Dalton School. "Papa Krainis" introduced recorder to the Dalton School. He was a violinist, but he was earning his living doing whatever he could and he also had a mandolin orchestra, which was very exciting. Bernard grew up in the midst of this beautiful, musical environment.

*MB: Excuse me, so you're saying that Bernie's father started the recorder at the Dalton School?*

*SR:* Absolutely!

*MB: That's absolutely unknown to me. I'm fascinated to know that.*

*SR:* At any rate I was just a kid, from Bernie's perspective, when he first met me. I was about 12 years old. He was five years older so was already a grownup guy. Esta and Bernie and I didn't have much connection with each other until later years after he went off to service. He went to India, etc., and I think he was a radio operator if I'm not mistaken.

When he came back I was a grownup young lady and interested in him. "Papa Krainis" was very interested in giving us an opportunity to get to know each other so he gave us each a recorder.

Bernard was already playing saxophone through those growing-up years, but he fell in love with the recorder, as did I. He was working on his own and I worked basically with him as my teacher ... on and off, not very formal, but we played together. He gave me pointers and talked about breathing and what he was learning. Although I feel self-taught, Bernie was a very brilliant man and he figured lots of stuff out. He did not have a recorder teacher. He discovered what he

discovered on his own, and he shared some of that with me, and I did my own discovering.

My first ... instrument was a soprano. It fascinated me because I actually learned to read music at that time, and I learned to read quite well. Bernard was a taskmaster and I was very motivated.

Eventually an alto came into my possession through a cousin wanting to buy one for his wife. He wanted an alto, and Bernard and I went to Schirmer's to pick out a really good alto—my not really knowing exactly what to look for. Bernard at this time was sophisticated and we bought an alto—which, at that time, seemed so expensive. I think it was \$36!

But it seemed like a lot of money, and my cousin kept calling me and asking, "When are you going to deliver?!" Meanwhile I had fallen so much in love with that instrument that I knew I could never give it up. The months passed and eventually my cousin said, "I got the message. You simply have to have that instrument!"

*MB: What was the instrument?*

*SR:* It was a Koch alto. And so I held onto that instrument and developed my Baroque skills on that Koch until later, down the road, I got more sophisticated and a little more able to make decisions about buying something, until I worked myself up to all the wonderful instruments I own today. But it was a humble start.

*MB: You were friends with Bernie's sister?*

*SR:* Bernard's sister Esta, who was a classmate or co-college person at Alfred University, introduced me to my husband David. Esta was going to school there, and my husband was just out of the army and finishing his Bachelor's Degree at Alfred University, which [includes] the school for ceramics in New York. Esta was an art student and he was an engineering student. My husband was always much more artistic than most engineers, and he drifted to those people. He and Esta became fast friends. She told him about this friend in New York who played recorder, and when he went home he should look me up. That was the beginning and that was it—we got married!

*MB: What was the year?*

*SR:* That was 1949. But before that we lived in New York. That was when Bernard and my husband and I formed a trio. I don't know whether we gave ourselves a name but it certainly was Bernard's trio.

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## **What started me on the recorder was a friendship with the Krainis family ... Bernard Krainis's family.**

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We worked very hard on a Beethoven trio that he had transcribed because we knew that we would be playing it at one of the American Recorder Society meetings, and that Erich Katz would be there.

*MB: How exciting. You know, Shirley, I had no idea you were a New Yorker! I've learned a lot in the last few minutes about you!*

*SR:* Well, let me tell you how wonderful it was—but how shocking it was too! Bernie, with great anticipation, had poured a lot into that transcription and into the conducting of it with the three of us, and with Erich Katz sitting in the first row listening, and anticipating.

Bernard introduced that we were going to do a Beethoven trio and, before we even started playing, Erich got up and walked out of the room and went into the next room, which was a dining room area—this was a very fancy apartment on Fifth Avenue, very large rooms.

Poor Bernie almost came apart. He said, "Well let's go on," and we played under very nervous conditions. Why did he leave us? Was he ill? What was wrong? Everybody was so concerned.

When we were finished with the playing, they applauded and there were a lot of lovely comments. Then Bernard walked into the next room, and there was Erich standing there. [He] said, "Not Beethoven... Not Beethoven, not Mozart, not Brahms... Isaac, Josquin, Machaut ... that's our music for developing this organization. This is what we're bringing—an alertness and an awareness of early music. We are bringing alive music that has not been heard before."

And I'll tell you, Martha, that has stuck in my mind as a banner for my work my whole life. I agreed with Erich, and I felt very strongly, through the years, that there was no future for me to play the recorder if I wasn't going to be playing really wonderful, exciting music.

I wasn't concerning myself with whether an audience was going to be unfamiliar with the music. We have to educate and expose them to it. So that's where I came from—a very committed

feeling about wanting to expose those composers that Erich was so totally committed to bringing to New York.

MB: That was a very interesting experience. So you really took that to heart, that what we should play on the recorder is early music, and not Beethoven and Mozart, etc....

SR: Well, you came to the literature that you were exposed to from buying music at Schirmer's, but those early books that were collections from the 15th and 16th centuries intrigued me.

Then what really took off for me was that eventually I was invited to Idyllwild. I was not the director in 1954. I was a student. Dr. Max Krone was the [workshop] director. He and some others from Indiana University, including his wife Bea, were very important people in the development of music. I believe that Max was the director of the School of Music at USC.

MB: And Idyllwild was part of USC?

SR: Not anymore. It was connected to USC for many years while Max was alive, and for a number of years after he [died] they tried to maintain a relationship, but it turned out that it wasn't so successful for either side. There was a private board that took over, and USC quietly removed itself.

During the years that I was teaching, it was part of USC. And they kept having new directors after Max died. Some of them were good; some of them were terrible. Nonetheless, the site was such an amazing place of creativity because you had so many dimensions.

I've been looking through this wonderful book [recently published about Idyll-

wild]. I have restored my connection with the people that I had gone to Idyllwild with, and I was sitting next to and having lunch with, and doing music with. Bella Lewitzky, the great choreographer, moved into the studio right next to mine. These were the people that you gathered your creative senses from.

MB: When I taught at Idyllwild, it was a weeklong workshop. Ken Wollitz was there too. I believe it was 1970. That was the first time I met you. You were teaching there, and so was Shirley Marcus.

SR: And Gloria Ramsey?

MB: Yes, I think Gloria too. You know there were 12 ladies who all lived together in one house. I'm not sure whether you were one of them or not? Gloria was, and so was Shirley.

Now what you are talking about, when you went there in 1954—you went there as a student at the University, right?

SR: Right.

MB: How long did you go there?

SR: I missed only one summer when my daughter was born [laughs]. She was born in March, and I didn't think I was ready for it so I skipped a year. And one year the ARS came—I don't remember the sequence of this, but they didn't invite me to come and teach, and there was a huge protest at the end of that season to Dr. Krone.

MB: So in other words there was an established recorder workshop long before ARS got involved. Is that right?

SR: Right. It wasn't so established, but we had people like Murray Lefkowitz. There

were some very significant people who were coming to teach at the workshop.

Idyllwild was an all-summer program for all the arts, for many ages. It was particularly an environment in which young people could go to a conservatory-level [program while they were] at either a junior high level, or high school or college level.... They had a very fine choral group that met, and there was dance with Lewitzky. Then there was early music with me and eventually with Carl Dolmetsch.

Dolmetsch was the interim person to come. Carl came for seven years, and he really brought a lot of sophistication to a very unsophisticated field for us.

A lot of the people who showed up for the recorder workshop had been playing the Elizabethan and Jacobean music books [*Elizabethan & Shakespearean Musick for the Recorder* and *Jacobean & Restoration Musick for the Recorder*, both arr. Claude Simpson and still available from EC Schirmer] over and over again—doing library concerts or whatever, and revealing the recorder in a very limited way.

Dr. Krone decided to bring in Carl Dolmetsch, who was well known and at that time was a prolific performer all over the world—and he was interested in Idyllwild, and how it worked. He came, he taught, and Joe Saxby came as his accompanist. I was his master class teacher. In other words, I prepared the students for the master class.

MB: Those seven years when Carl came over and taught, was that just a weeklong session?

SR: Yes, it was a weeklong workshop at that time. Then, after seven years with Dolmetsch and the one or two years with the American Recorder Society, Max asked me to be the director. He turned over to me all of the planning for changes that I had wanted to initiate for a long time, and he was willing to stand by me. I wanted a faculty of about nine, and I wanted to cover as many of the components of early music that I could, that would be useful to the students.

I insisted that they gave a vocal class. They had never had that before, and in fact I don't know if they had many of them in the United States—a recorder workshop was a recorder workshop—you didn't go to sing. But in our collegium that is what we developed. It was a collegium in which half the evening was devoted to instrumental music and half was devoted to vocal music

MB: Did you have dance too?

SR: And then we had dance—a very successful dance program. We brought Angene Feves, from USC, who came for many years. I don't know if I can give you the exact continuity of these things, but at the time Angene came we also had George Houle from Stanford. He was the director of the New York Pro Musica for a couple of years. Then Friedrich von Huene came and was wonderful too. He added so much to our feeling about the recorder and the knowledge of the instrument. Ken Wollitz came back—we had him for a while, and Shelley Gruskin came a couple of years, I think.



Shirley Robbins conducting a group of students at Canto Antiguo in 1977. Historical photos courtesy of Mark Davenport and the Recorder Music Center.

MB: I think I was only there one year, with Ken. And Bruce Haines was there, and Shirley Marcus...

SR: Shirley Marcus and Gloria Ramsey came. And then I started thinking about other dimensions, so I brought Jon Bailey from Yale, who eventually became music director here at the Claremont School, Pomona College. But [then] he was at Yale, the director of what they call Sacred Music at Yale. Jon was a phenomenal vocal director, and he eventually became the director of The Gay Men's Choir in Los Angeles, which became very famous. He came, and Murray Lefkowitz taught during the years he was here, doing gamba. Grace Feldman also taught gamba—a thrilling teacher! So we expanded to the gamba as well.

MB: How long did you stay at Idyllwild?

SR: Well, we stayed at Idyllwild—meaning me as director, and a basic staff, which always included, as often as possible, LaNoue Davenport. And what I wanted to get to, and not overlook in terms of what I started out with, thematically—with what Erich Katz had to say—was that, when we did our first program with LaNoue, I wanted to have the *Pange Lingua Mass* [Josquin Després]. We bought the score, and people didn't want to do it. They said, "I didn't come here to sing, I came here to play—and I want my money back, and I want to leave!"

MB: Oh, Shirley! I knew there was resistance to doing that *Pange Lingua Mass*, I'd heard about that.

SR: Tremendous resistance, but you know the amazing breakthrough of it was LaNoue said, "If we don't do it now, we'll never do it. Tell them if they want to leave, [we'll] give them their money back." But that was USC money, I couldn't easily do that [laughs].

I didn't even talk to Dr. Krone about it; I was so scared. And so the performance was held on the Saturday after the beginning of the workshop. Envision an open-air studio with an open roof—with a view of the San Jacinto Mountains, the pine trees and big boulders all around—and a wonderful [seated] group of very intense musicians... and there was beautiful LaNoue, standing there conducting in his inimitable way.

There was not a dry eye anywhere by the end of it. People embraced and hugged and said, "Oh my God, that was wonderful—what an experience!" So after that we never had another problem!



**At Canto Antiguo, c.1971, reprinted from the March 1994 American Recorder:** (l to r) faculty members Ken Wollitz, Shirley Marcus, Shirley Robbins, Friedrich von Huene and LaNoue Davenport.

[Editor's note: for more about those years, see "LaNoue Davenport and the Idyllwild Experience," AR, May 1978.]

MB: That's terrific. Now would you say that was sometime in the early '70s?

SR: The early '70s. And remember, I kept LaNoue coming all through the years, even after the stroke and him really wearing down. He had developed around him a cadre of intense musicians who worked so hard for him and loved him so much. We all did. But this intrepid group, I mean, they couldn't miss a summer without LaNoue.

During one of those later years we decided to have a "LaNoue Festival," in which we played all of the music LaNoue

had edited. He was so touched by that. And then one year his students, because of the stroke, decided that maybe he could play a one-handed instrument and so they went out and bought him a sackbut. One of our local members also had an instrument ordered for LaNoue that was a one-handed recorder.

MB: And Mark [Davenport] was there too.  
SR: We brought Mark to teach as well. We wanted papa and son to experience each other in a workshop.

We did that more than once, especially after we left Idyllwild in 1986 and became in residence at the Thatcher School in Ojai [with the new name Canto Antiguo Early Music and Dance].

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**Shirley Robbins with faculty members at the Canto Antiguo Early Music & Dance Silver Anniversary Workshop, 1994, Ojai, CA (l to r): (back row) LaNoue Davenport, Mark Davenport, David Wilson; (front) Tom Axworthy, Sally Price, Tom's daughter Dulcie Axworthy, Henrietta Bemus, Shirley Robbins, Peter Farrell. (Other faculty members that year, who are not shown, were Ron Glass, co-director, and Kathy Lear, historical dance.)**

*MB: That's where you started having an Elderhostel?*

*SR: That's right. At Ojai we had our full one-week workshop to ourselves, and we were no longer under anybody's direction. It became a private recorder workshop with three directors—I shared it with Tom Axworthy and Ronald Glass. Ron is an outstanding trombonist, and Tom is now the director of the Los Angeles Recorder Orchestra.*

About the time that we moved to the Thatcher School, I graduated from my Alexander school. For three years, I studied the Alexander Technique at Berkeley and became a licensed teacher.

*MB: Oh, that's interesting.*

*SR: I'm now experiencing my 17th year in the Theater Department at Pomona College, where I have built an Alexander program. I've been involved in scores of plays here. We just finished on an exciting note. They did *Hamlet*. Now I had spent an awful lot of time with Elizabethan music. All the years at Pomona, every time they did Shakespeare, somebody would write music for it! Or they would use inappropriate—to me, inappropriate—music for it. Sometimes they would even use Brahms. In one performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, one of the directors chose Brahms for the background music—it killed me. The idea of authenticity in music is left hanging.*

But we did *Hamlet* ... with original music, and the stage was built to conform to Shakespeare's theater. So [the musicians] were up on a platform, as they would have been in his day. I had three musicians: Tom Axworthy and Richard

Glen, who is a marvelous lute player, and Steve Padilla, who is a wonderful singer. That was the core group of musicians visible throughout the entire play. They did a beautiful job, and it added so much. I don't think they're going to wait too long to do authentic music again in the future.

*MB: Oh, Shirley, how exciting!*

*SR: And the other thing that was so exciting for me was that all of the principals of the play were studying Alexander Technique with me. I was involved in their vocal development and their gesture work—movement—because that's what Alexander is all about. I had what I considered a very major role in the play, and a major role in the construction of that play. That was a thrill.*

*MB: Sounds like it.*

*SR: And I'm going back to school, tomorrow, against all the odds.*

*MB: Doing what?*

*SR: Teaching my Alexander work. I do one class that is a combined class with dance people, musicians and athletes. In the other part of my program, I do half-hour individual sessions with theater students.*

*MB: I'm sure it's very satisfying for you.*

*SR: So satisfying—after the miserable summer I have had, with so many illnesses. It truly seems like a miracle.*

*MB: So I hope that means that you are feeling better?*

*SR: I am. Otherwise I wouldn't have been able to do it. You know I missed Canto Antiguo this past summer—that was the*

first time [since we left USC] that I ever did. I had been hospitalized, and I didn't repair fast enough to make it even conceivably possible to go.

But everyone was so kind, and the letters came flowing in and the phone calls. And the two guys [Ron and Tom] just pulled it off. They did a great job. We had a very good staff.

Living in Claremont was really lucky for me. When I first moved here, I knew a daughter of a pianist who was head of Scripps [College] Music Department. She introduced me to her father, and he said, "You know, we have never had any early music at Claremont, and I would like to see that happen." So they had a chamber music society, and Carl Dolmetsch got invited to do concerts at Scripps College. It was a beginning.

Then I learned there was a woman at the College with great wealth who taught the viola, and she wanted to build an early music collection. Her name was Peggy Smith. Now Honnold Library, in Claremont, houses one of the best collections of early music—enviable, anywhere in the country—and I have been the beneficiary of this huge collection all through these years. All I have to do is walk through the stacks, and they fall off and hit me on the head and say, "This is what you're going to do this year." And the librarians over the years have been so cooperative with me whenever I want to find something. I'm not great on the Internet. They all do the research for me, and they'll find it.

*MB: That's a private library?*

*SR: It's the library of the Claremont Colleges. All the colleges can use it. It's a big library. The stacks aren't open to everybody. But they're open to me, and I can browse these wonderful collections of masses. I have done a Mass Workshop every year for 17 years, in which I bring a new work that has come from these*

stacks—a composer that maybe I had not been aware of.

MB: *What a thrill to be able to get your hands on that stuff!*

SR: I've fallen in love with the Spanish Renaissance composers, so we've done a lot of work with Victoria, for example.

MB: *And where have you been conducting these masses?*

SR: I did the Mass Workshop as a private enterprise. I would solicit among the recorder societies—they would know about it in advance, and I live in a community not far from a retirement community where a number of those people studied with me for many years. They were very gracious and gave me their auditorium and stage as a place to hold this once-a-year experience. We would have a wonderful whole day ... start at nine in the morning and not finish until five o'clock.

MB: *For the community.*

SR: I was depending on the whole recorder community from all over: from San Diego, from Orange County, from LA. In the early years, we used to get as many as 50-some-odd people to come all the way out here to Claremont for the entire day.

I would make lunch for everybody [laughs], crazy me. And we would have a wonderful time sitting in my back yard, drinking wine, having lunch, and then going back and trying to get our energies back together to play this wonderful music. Then there would be a concert for the public. The public was invited to come in. It wasn't presented as a concert; it was just a "sharing."

One of the things that I really appreciated tremendously was being given the ARS President's honor. I didn't sit up at night thinking about what I was going to say—it just came. I just talked about how music had meant so much to me in my life, and it's been a huge thing—just huge. I can't imagine my life without it. Can you?

MB: No! [laughs]

SR: When you go through all the different stages of life: loss, birth and death, and all the shifts and changes in the political world and society—all of this—I think to myself how lucky I am to have music.

I wanted to say something also about an event that really meant a lot to me. In the year of the Watts Riot [1965], I had my Mass Workshop. It was just three days before, that the Watts riots took place.

I had on the books 57 people scheduled to come to Claremont, and in this case also a lunch that was at a Persian restaurant—already pre-paid, etc...

And yet, people couldn't drive through the city. They didn't know where they might get blocked. They called the police, and the police said, "We can't protect you. If you go anywhere you're on your own."

So I went over to Decker Hall, where we were having the event. The chairs were all in place, and we just sat there and we waited. It took a little while but all 57 people showed up. Isn't that something?

It's because we have had this kind of community—a very bonded community—in Southern California, and it has been a beautiful evolution. In some ways, I worry about the future because there are not enough young people coming in, and we would like to see if there is something we can do to correct that.

MB: *This was a pretty marvelous thing. Here it was, just after the Watts Riot, and people might actually have been in danger to get to your workshop!*

SR: One of the members of the group—her name is Nancy Davis, a recorder player, a very, very good recorder player—lived in the Watts area. Before we started the music, Nancy said, "I have something I have to say." And she talked about her feelings about the riot. She wanted to leave this group of people sitting there with the knowledge that, you know, when people have not learned how to express their pain through language, they do it through violence—she talked about it through that perspective, to try and understand the depth of this experience, of these people. She's not Black.

Anyhow, it was very moving, and the music that happened afterwards was just so beautiful for the occasion that everyone just hugged and kissed afterwards, and said, "Thank you for restoring my inner feelings." It was a very frightening experience for the whole city—for the whole area.

MB: *You know it makes me think of the music-making that went on here in New York after 9/11—a somewhat similar situation.*

SR: Absolutely. The same kind of thing, maybe not on the same scale.

MB: *But the same kind of experience.*

SR: It was a restoring of some kind of faith in each other, that we have a community. We're doing something beautiful, and we came through thick and thin to do it.

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**I see the recorder as an important ongoing way that people can stay connected to their humanity.**

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That's one of the treasured memories of my recorder world.

I see the recorder as an important ongoing way that people can stay connected to their humanity. We're losing that connection—we're going off and being the spectator and listening to things, instead of making the music in the home or with friends and having that be the continuity of our lives.

And the fact is that I do see it as my community, and I wanted very much to serve it by bringing the best of what I could find in early music—through my capabilities, into their sphere of life and their music playing. So I've had a good time—a good run!

MB: *It sounds pretty wonderful.*

SR: Pretty wonderful!



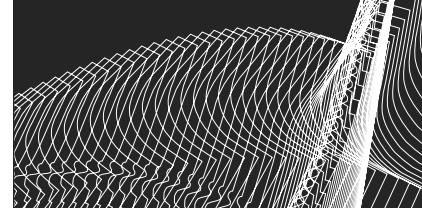
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# COMPACT DISC REVIEWS

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**A CELTIC CELEBRATION, DA CAMERA (EMMA MURPHY, RECORDERS; SUSANNA PELL, VIOLS; STEVEN DEVINE, HARPSICHORD).** Da Camera DC-CD0001, 2004. Magnatunes (<[www.magnatune.com/](http://www.magnatune.com/)>). Abt. \$13, less as download. 61:53.



**EAST OF THE RIVER, NINA STERN AND DAPHNA MOR, RECORDERS; URI SHARLIN, ACCORDION; OMER AVITAL, BASS AND OUD; TOMER TZUR AND DANIEL FREEDMAN, PERCUSSION.** 2007. <[www.cdbaby.com/](http://www.cdbaby.com/)>, <<http://musicishere.com/>>, or at Von Huene Workshop. \$14, less as download. 42:24.



**TRANSIENCE: CONTEMPORARY MODAL MUSIC, BY RACHEAL COGAN, RECORDERS, AND TONY LEWIS, PERCUSSION.** Orpheus Music OM602, 2006. <[www.orpheusmusic.com.au/DisplayPage.jsp?file=Recordings/Recordings.jsp](http://www.orpheusmusic.com.au/DisplayPage.jsp?file=Recordings/Recordings.jsp)>. Abt. \$30 U.S. 54:38.

We live in interesting times—not only as human beings and musicians, but also specifically as recorder players. The early music revival in the last half of the last century has succeeded with effects similar to that of other revolutionary cultural movements. We can assess that success by noting the presence of formerly segregated Baroque and Renaissance repertory in mainstream concerts, radio programming, and new media (e.g., webcasting). Medieval music is nudging into those areas as well.

Yet a part of the appeal of the recorder and other early instruments lies in their very “outsider” status in relation to the mainstream of European classical music repertory. Remember, the early music revival occurred in the revolutionary times of the late 1960s and 1970s. So, what’s happened to the countercultural energies present in recorder playing, now that formerly outré repertory has been welcomed by the mainstream?

One response has been participation

in experimental music, exemplified by Pete Rose, Susanna Borsch, Kees Boeke, and Rara Avis (Terri Hron and Robbert van Hulzen). This has been my avenue of engagement as well, via solo work and Three Trapped Tigers (with David Barnett). However, going experimental is certainly not the only option. The three CDs reviewed here demonstrate three distinct approaches to repertory outside of the mainstream, with audible roots in the soundscape of modal music.

Closest to the familiar early music repertory is Da Camera’s *A Celtic Celebration*. In fact, this CD is a *ceilidh*, a social occasion for music-making and dancing. Emma Murphy and friends perform 24 tracks with tunes by Turlough Carolan (1670-1738) forming the core. The other works on the disc are by more and less well-known Irish, Scottish and English musicians of the 17th and 18th centuries: John Blow, John Playford, William Byrd, Solomon Eccles, David Mell, John Oswald and Thomas Tollet, and from the *Fitzwilliam Virginal Book*.

Keeping with the social nature of this Celtic tradition (in which pieces become essentially community property), the ensemble arranges many of the works. Though we tend to regard published music from the British Isles of this time as music for “professionals,” in fact this was social music for performance by lovers of the music (a.k.a. “amateurs”). This is certainly very social music.

The members of Da Camera, all active in the London early music scene, play with stylish ornamentation and musically virtuosity such that the informal,

*Modal music: exploring borderlands*

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## Going experimental is not the only option.

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social nature of these pieces comes to the fore. A great part of the pleasure in listening to this disc is that the instruments sound like themselves—Murphy is not imitating the penny whistle in her recorder playing, nor is Susanna Pell imitating a fiddle with her viol.

To my ears, the most successful tracks are those from the wonderful body of divisions upon popular tunes and chord change patterns. The playing on this disc happily bridges the traditional folk aspects of the Celtic sound and the closely related art-music-tinged popular music of 17th- and 18th-century London.

New York-based recorder players Nina Stern and Daphna Mor take on a different (and less familiar to most American ears) modal repertory with their aptly titled project, *East of the River*. If the river is the mainstream European repertory, the East to which they turn is Eastern Europe and related cultures.

The 10 tracks on this disc cover music from Bulgaria, Armenia, Macedonia and Italy. Seven of the pieces are traditional, with one from Medieval Armenia (*Oor Yés Mayr Im*), one from Medieval Italy (the familiar 14th-century *Lamento di Tristano*), and *To the River* by Armenian *duduk* (cylindrical double-reed instrument) virtuoso Djivan Gasparyan.

Recorder playing in this CD is full-bodied and vigorous—a fine example for us all. However, the disc works not only for that model, but also for the wonderful band of accordion, bass, oud and percussion joining the recorders. Uri Sharlin plays accordion in the tradition of reed organs, enriching and filling out the sound to near chamber orchestra dimensions. Percussionists Tomer Tzur and Daniel Freedman drive the motion most effectively—timbrally and through the beats. Omer Avital (bass and oud) is especially effective in *Lamento di Tristano*.

While we encounter a significant

Each CD review contains a header with some or all of the following information, as available: disc title; composer (multiple composers indicated in review text); name(s) of ensemble, conductor, performer(s); label and catalog number (distributor may be indicated in order to help your local record store place a special order; some discs available through the ARS CD Club are so designated); year of issue; total timing; suggested retail price. Many CDs are available through such online sellers as <[www.cdnnow.com](http://www.cdnnow.com)>, <[www.towerrecords.com](http://www.towerrecords.com)>, <[www.cdbaby.com](http://www.cdbaby.com)>, <[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)>, etc. Abbreviations: rec=recorder; dir=director; vln=violin; vc=violoncello; vdg=viola da gamba; hc=harpsichord; pf=piano; perc=percussion. Multiple reviews by one reviewer are followed by that reviewer’s name.

range of expression in the major and minor tonalities of classical European music, the larger sound-world of modality opens a much greater range of finesse and subtlety. The general sound of modal music beyond tonality is recognizable from the Celtic tradition.

When we dive into Eastern European musics, we meet not only less familiar modes but a marvelous panoply of time signatures beyond duple or triple. Pieces on *East of the River* employ various groupings of five, seven, nine, etc., yielding a deeply enjoyable asymmetry and entrancing quality. Stern, Mor and company take a direction well worth exploring.

Orpheus Music's 2004 CD *Beyond the Fields* by Nardoo (Zana Clarke, recorder, and Peter Biffin, various instruments; reviewed in the November 2005 AR) showed how to use the recorder in a genuinely world-music context. Collaborators Racheal Cogan, recorders, and Tony Lewis, percussion, continue that exploration. *Transience: contemporary modal music* results from Cogan's travels in Greece, Macedonia and Turkey (chronicled in her November 2002 AR article).

Not surprisingly, the sound has a great deal in common with *East of the River*, with the important difference being texture. Both discs are rooted in

excellent percussion work, but in the case of *Transience*, the only instruments heard are recorders and percussion. This provides a satisfying, intimate sound.

Cogan composed five of the pieces; world string instrumentalist Ross Daly composed two, and two are from traditional repertoires of Turkey and Macedonia. Cogan's compositional work gained impetus from instrument maker Fardin Karamkhani. In the thoughtfully written notes for the disc, Karamkhani is credited with saying that "...to learn other people's music is one thing, but to make your own is, in the end, the only real thing to do." The strength of her creations on *Transience* make me glad for Cogan's compositional work, but I believe the statement also points us to the necessity of integrating any music we play in such a way that it becomes our own. This is a core value of much of the repertory on all three reviewed discs.

The ways in which Cogan and Lewis make the music their own provides a striking contrast to *East of the River*'s approach. They share Eastern European modalities, rhythmic structures, and timbrally-focused percussion.

The divergence comes in the use of extended performance techniques by Cogan on three pieces in particular.

On *For Fardin*, she plays two Ganassi recorders simultaneously. (See a video of this at <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=08JdpJWyH\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08JdpJWyH_s)>, with links to more of her work.) Her technique with two recorders opens new possibilities—thanks to the Ganassi instruments' open fingerings for "d" and "g", and holding the recorders in one's lap. In *Absence*, Cogan sings while playing, over a rhythm texture of *udu* (Nigerian clay pot drum) and *llama* (rattles of llama's toenails).

The piece that especially grabbed my attention was *Nanourisma*, a lullaby based on a Greek tune. In this Cogan adeptly sings and plays simultaneously while accompanied by Lewis on Chinese and Korean gongs, Indonesian cow bells and Nepalese temple bowl—a wonderful contrast to the actively dance-like feel of the other pieces. With *Nanourisma*'s ear-cleansing effect, I found myself refreshed and delighted by the final piece *Absence*.

I happily continue to play recorder in the outside territory of experimental music, and it is exciting to hear strong, engaging work in other areas outside the mainstream. Recorder players Emma Murphy, Nina Stern, Daphna Mor and Racheal Cogan point to musical borderlands deserving much more exploration.

Tom Bickley

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# CHAPTERS & CONSORTS

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*Denver chapter member and performance organizer Elaine Granata leads chapter members in their Play-the-Recorder Month event.*

This year **Play-the-Recorder Month** (PtRM) was celebrated in March, as always, with **Recorder Day!** happening on Saturday, March 15. Small groups and chapters all over North America participated in interesting ways to commemorate it, and many submitted contest forms, including photos, detailing what they had done.

The submissions are judged each year by the Chapters & Consorts Committee. As has been common in the past, chapters offered different kinds of performances and events, for many types of listeners, throughout the month. Based on submissions received by the Committee, the following awards were made.

The prizes were given for the **most interesting event**, for the **largest percentage increase** in chapter membership, and for the **largest number of**

school groups, as well as two novices. It was the first-time performances of the Denver ARS Jazz Ensemble, playing in period costume; and the Chapter Renaissance Band offered a double-choir piece, alternating with krumhorns as the second choir. Their prize was a gift certificate donated by the **Von Huene Workshop/Early Music Workshop of New England** in Brookline, MA.

Coming in second was the **Metropolitan Detroit (MI) Recorder Society (MDRS)**. The group played at the Old

**new members** gained during March. Prizes were graciously donated, primarily by ARS Business Members who show their continued support for our goals.

The top winner was the **Greater Denver (CO) Chapter**, with a total of 53 players performing in a shopping mall. This included 26 children from two

## *Play-the-Recorder Month 2008*

Troy Church in the Troy Historic Village. The church was built in 1837 and was used until 1963, when it was moved to Troy Historical Village.

The performers consisted of members of the MDRS, and three other groups: Good Neighbors All, The Festival Recorder Players, and the Pied Pipers of Mussin, a children's group who played at different times during the concert. There were two adults, and most of the 10 children in the Pied Pipers of Mussin, who only have a few years' experience. Money they received in free-will donations by concert attenders was given to support the Troy Historical Society Heritage Campaign.

The chapter's prize was a gift certificate from **Honeysuckle Music** in St. Paul, MN.

The third prize winner was the **Arizona Central Highlands Recorder Society (AZCHRS)**. Two events employed a total of 12 members, plus one player from Eugene, OR.

One event was on Recorder Day! in the Prescott Samaritan Village Nursing Home in Prescott, AZ, where they played a selection of familiar tunes and Irish music for 30 residents. The residents sang along, played rhythm instruments, wore festive hats and received favors, all adding to their enjoyment (*photo below*).

The second event offered the Mountain Winds Recorder Ensemble,



**Twin Cities Recorder Guild members play on Recorder Day! in front of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom**

part of AZCHRS, in a concert of Renaissance music for recorders and voice—playing in full costume at the Prescott Public Library for a standing-room-only audience of 95 people. They received a gift certificate from **Lazar's Early Music** in Sunnyvale, CA.

For the largest percentage increase in membership, the prize of a set of soprano and alto woodgrain recorders from **Courtly Music Unlimited** in Warrensburg, NY, went to the **Alabama Recorder Association**, which increased its membership by 100%—going from three to six members in this new group! No matter how one looks at it, that's terrific. We hope they continue to grow—and to enjoy their new recorders.

The **Carolina Mountains Recorder Society**, headquartered in Brevard, NC, recently had its application to become a chapter approved. They are the winners of the chapter with the most new members, adding six members to their existing group. For this increase, they received a copy of the piece *Zara Zote* (see below for its history), composed and donated by **Glen Shannon Music**, as well as a gift certificate from Shannon.

A number of other groups reported activities to the ARS. We salute their energy and the time that went into planning and executing these events.

The **Sarasota (FL) Chapter** celebrated its 25th anniversary and PtRM with a concert on March 9 at St. Boniface Episcopal Church. The Sarasota Earlye Musicke Consort and Grande Bande (both directed by Lynelle Williams) played the first half of the concert, and other chapter members joined them for the last part.

To do something special for the occasion—to highlight recorder music and to help enlarge the modern repertoire—the chapter commissioned Glen Shannon to compose a piece for the group.

Shannon adapted a beautiful love poem by Petrarch—one of hundreds he wrote to Laura—and worked in the phrase, “Zara Zote.” *Zara Zote*, the original name of Sarasota, means “rocky place,” and was probably first used by the Calusa Indians in the 1600s.

The new work was a great hit with the chapter and the audience alike, and will be played many times in the future.

The **Shenandoah Recorder Society** in Charlottesville (VA) hosted the ARS Board meeting in March and had the pleasure of all the chapter and all the Board playing Matthias Maute's specially

composed piece, *Recorder Rally*, together (after the Board had played it earlier by themselves in their business meeting) on March 15. Several recorder players in the community who have not yet joined the Society, and spouses of chapter members, attended the play-in and potluck.

The **Twin Cities (MN) Recorder Guild** celebrated Recorder Day! by giving a concert at the new Minneapolis Central Library. They performed in the busy atrium, playing both last year's PtRM selection *Deep Blue Sea* by Peter Seibert and this year's *Recorder Rally*. When they announced that others across the nation would be playing the latter, there were exclamations and applause.

The **Greater Cleveland (OH) Chapter** gave a concert at the Beachwood Library on Recorder Day! that included 12 chapter members and friends. The four featured ensembles performed a mix of Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, folk and contemporary music on recorders, viola da gamba, Baroque flute and guitar—including, of course, Maute's *Recorder Rally*.

The **Highland Park (NJ) Recorder Society (HPRS)** collaborated with the Zorzar Music Ensemble in presenting two concerts in two different New Jersey cities. They tackled a variety of Sephardic music, as well as the world premiere of a new composition by conductor-composer Dr. Lynn Gumert, which had been commissioned by HPRS in celebration of its 21st anniversary.

Up the road, at Brentwood High School in Brentwood, NY, another anniversary was celebrated on March 15 at the annual **Suffolk County Music Educator's Association Eugene Reichenthal Recorder Festival**. Participants from across Long Island included 275 elementary students. This was the 40th anniversary of the festival, which until 1999 was a part of the Long Island Recorder Festival.

Reichenthal, who ran the event for many years, was honored with a few surprises at the landmark event. A number of recorder players who have known him over the years attended the day to pay him a visit. On the concert at day's end, they performed one of Reichenthal's compositions, *Whistling Willy*.

Others wrote letters to him, telling him how he and his festivals had an impact on their lives. The letters were compiled into a book and presented to him at the concert. (Reichenthal was the



1999 ARS Distinguished Achievement Award recipient, and has had a far reaching influence in the recorder world.)

On March 15, seven members of the **Utah Recorder Society** percolated in a popular coffee shop not far from the University of Utah. One member of the group played the entire concert of music, ranging from Medieval music to Debussy, even though she had had surgery the day before. The youngest member, a college freshman, gained performing experience through this event.

The **“Heralds of Spring” recorder workshop**, led by Deborah Booth, was held March 2 in a large classroom in

#### **CHAPTER NEWS**

**Chapter newsletter editors and publicity officers should send materials for publication in American Recorder to:**

**AR, 7770 South High St., Centennial, CO 80122-3122,  
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**Also send short articles about specific activities that have increased chapter membership or recognition, or just the enjoyment your members get out of being part of your chapter. Digital photos should be at least 3" x 4" x 300dpi TIF or unedited JPG files. Please send news to the AR address above, and to the following:**

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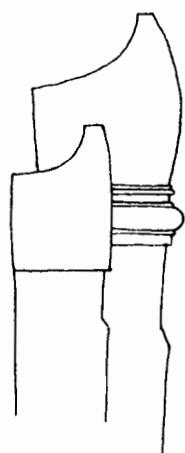
Cathedral Village, a retirement center in north Philadelphia, PA. Thirteen participants—some creeping across the state line from NJ—encircled the room. After articulation and tone exercises, Booth (photo above) led four- and five-part pieces by Bach, Isaac and Orlando di Lasso plus *La Prima Vera*, arr. Erich Katz.

After lunch, she conducted large ensemble pieces by Bach and Scheidt plus *Goliwogg's Cake-Walk* by Claude Debussy (arr. Alyson Lewin for

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S'oSAATTBgB). The afternoon ended with a rousing four-part *Sollt ich meinem Gott nicht singen?* by Bach. Most participants played SATB; adding sopranino and two great basses produced a full, rich sound.

Booth's comments included pithy tips. "With Baroque music, play long notes short and short notes long: play eighth notes short, 16th notes connected." And "My job is to pester you to play better than you could on your own—and playing it right is the hard part!"

The **Hudson Mohawk (NY) Chapter** did everything in its power to "Drive the Cold Winter Away" with an energized push toward spring. Gathering at Colonie Center Mall, the chapter tried a new PtRM venue and format. From 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on March 7, March 15 and March 19, chapter president Ole

On April 20, the **Chicago (IL) Chapter** presented the winning compositions of its 2007 biennial recorder composition contest. They also honored contest creator **Hilde Staniulis** (at right in photo, with head contest judge Lisette Kielson).

Six past and present winning composers attended the celebratory concert: **Alice Maguire** ('89), **Ann McKinley**, ('91,'93,'95), **Patrick O'Malley** ('91), **Glen Shannon** ('97,'01,'03,'07) and **Jean Boisvert** ('07).

The first piece ever entered in the contest was performed first: *Arm in Arm*, a duet written for young people by Maguire. The short simple piece for two equal voices uses syncopation and imitation in 4/4 time and explores the use of triplets and dotted rhythms.

*Three in Five* by **Karl Stetson**, 2003 first prize winner, was played to represent a past contest category for trios. Its title represents the time signature, 5/4, and its AAB trio scoring.

The 2007 contest entries, for quartets, were presented in reverse order of their winning places, countdown-fashion.

The honorable mention, *Philosopher and the Jester* by **Dr. Michael Karasis**, is written for ATTB. The piece opens in quasi-D major, moving to D minor/D modal, and proceeding through meter changes to settle into 6/8 with a surprise finish.

The third prize, *La Folia a 4* by **Anthony St. Pierre**, is for SATB and is finely-crafted on a famous 16th-century ground bass, "La folia." It unfolds as a set of divisions/variations, in several

Christensen was at the mall playing recorders, joined by others who could either prepare pieces as a group or show up to play in a pickup ensemble.

Seven **Dallas (TX) Chapter** members did their part to boost home sales, meeting on Recorder Day! for an open house in a new house—with no furniture, and thus very live acoustics. They played Praetorius dances and *Recorder Rally* for many guests. (There was no report on whether the house was sold.)

As is made clear by the activities of the reporting chapters, recorder players are an inventive group of people. It's time now to put on your own thinking cap and find some interesting things to do for Play-the-Recorder Month and Recorder Day! in 2009. Have fun and be creative!

Marilyn Perlmutter  
Chair, Chapters & Consorts Committee

contrasting sections with more modern harmonies at times, and challenging virtuoso passages for all performers.

Two 2007 entries tied for first prize.

Berceuse-fantaisie by **Boisvert** is scored for SATB and uses Bach-style Baroque counterpoint with a modern voice. Challenging modulations and interesting harmonies fulfill the mood of the composition.

*French Sweets* by **Shannon** is in four contrasting movements (suites) for SATB, written in gallant style with intricate ornaments in the slow movements. Its fugal allegro and two bourees are sprightly.

Kielson ably and energetically conducted a grand consort of all present in playing the two first-prize pieces.

Staniulis initiated the Chicago chapter composition contest in 1989; 2007 was the 10th biennial contest. Initially, it was limited to Chicago-area ARS members, but gradually expanded to composers from around the world. Judges are chosen from a pool of professional recorder players in the Chicago area.

This fall will see the release of a CD of the contest's first prize winners plus three notable entries from the 10 contests. See <[www.chicagoars.org](http://www.chicagoars.org)> for information on how to obtain copies.



# ON THE CUTTING EDGE

Congratulations to composer and recorder virtuoso **Matthias Maute** for his piece *Rush*, the winning entry in the **ARS Composition Competition**. You can read about the contest in Tidings on page 4 of this issue.

I contacted Maute to learn more about his winning entry. He was gracious enough to provide answers to all my questions and to share his insights regarding this exciting new composition.

*Rush* was composed in 2007 and is scored for four alto recorders. It is a one-movement work with differing sections and lasts about eight minutes. Maute describes the music as containing motoric parts that alternate with some lyrical sections employing canonic structure.

To answer my question regarding his inspiration for the piece, Maute provided the text that accompanies the score. Here are some excerpts:

American history is full of dynamic events. The flood of first settlers, the fast conquest of the continent, the construction of the sprawling transcontinental railway, ... the gold rush, skyscrapers, ... cities endlessly expanding, ... (just to mention a few phenomena) clearly show that the American Dream has a tough, fast rhythm that seems to whip the continent forward.

The heavy motor-like musical drive of the present piece is meant to push the players to their limits. Here various aspects of

being-with and being-next-to come into play: the fast unison of the beginning soon disperses and spreads into a whirling fabric in which the frenetic rhythms are woven together in ever new and different ways. The melancholy slow sections gaze back to the Old World through the technique of partially employed contrapuntal canon.

I was curious about any influences or prior musics that affected the creation of *Rush*. In Maute's words,

... Short, almost inaudible quotations (B-A-C-H) and references to Sitting Ducks by the Dutch composer Chiel Meijerink let a glimpse of distant Europe shine through, to which ragtime and jazz associations are set up in contrast.

When I asked his reaction to learning that his piece had won the ARS competition, Maute replied, "I was very happy!"

At this time, there are no immediate plans for publication of *Rush*, but no doubt it will become available in the

Hail Matthias!

**When I asked his reaction to learning that his piece had won the ARS competition, Maute replied, "I was very happy!"**

future. We will have to await the live performances by Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet to gauge the effectiveness of the music.

Meanwhile, for those who are interested in playing already published compositions by Matthias Maute, a good starting point might be *Six Solos in 18th Century Style*, for solo alto recorder (Amadeus Verlag Edition #BP 812); or *Indian Summer*, for SATB recorder quartet (Moeck Verlag).

Tim Broege <timbroege@aol.com>

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# EDUCATION

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Another trip to South America? I had to think twice about this one. Just mention the word "Colombia" to friends and family, and a cloud of concern comes over their faces.

However, when I was invited to teach at the June 2008 **X Festival Internacional Suzuki de Colombia**, I had already met several incredible music teachers from Bogotá, and I had a gut feeling that they would take good care of me; and so they did—with unbelievable hospitality.

While there, I discovered the contrasts of beautiful early-17th-century colonial buildings surrounded by the growing, modern city of Bogotá. Perched as the city is, among several mountain ranges, I was surprised at how cool and invigorating the temperatures were, and how lush and green the landscape.

But the most unexpected surprise upon my arrival was that—among the group of 12 wonderfully savvy adult recorder teachers, and the large group of children attending the Festival—there was a group from the local Institute for Blind Children.

All the children attending the Festival were students of my good friend **Gustavo Velandia**, a dynamic, multi-talented young music educator who is equally at ease using Orff, Kodály and Suzuki methods in his classrooms. Velandia had been working diligently to teach recorder using the Suzuki Method for over a year in several Bogotá schools, including the Blind Institute, since attending the Lima Festival teacher training classes in January 2007.

His students (ages 4 through 15) who attended the Festival Colombia represented a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. All of them reflected Velandia's high standards for beautiful tone and musicianship. The blind students had actually been taking recorder lessons for only three months, but the combination of a strong musical environment at the Blind Institute, and the students' highly developed ability to listen, had made for rapid progress.

In fact, the music program has become a key factor in the existence of

the Blind Institute. My Canadian colleague, Kelly Williamson, reported after a visit to the Institute that it is operated on a thin "shoestring"; its facilities, while clean, are spartan out of financial necessity. The children all come from impoverished families, so this is a great gift for them. Some also have more severe disabilities. Some come from abusive or exploitative situations, and the state has stepped in to have these children live at the Institute on weekdays, to provide for their well-being.

Generally, impoverished blind children in Bogotá have no future. They are put out to beg in the streets. It is hoped that the kids at the Institute will have a better future. For now, they are happy in this caring environment, and the residents at the Institute are their family.

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## ***The music program has become a key factor in the existence of the Blind Institute.***

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The blind adults working there have been studying various musical instruments—with Colombian and visiting North American Suzuki teachers—in order to be able to teach the children. The director, a gentle, smiling man named Tarcicio, attended my week-long recorder teacher training class in June, along with two of the other blind adults. They are extremely grateful for the donations of various instruments, from North America and beyond. (Currently, they are in need of alto, tenor and bass recorders.)

Local donors to the Blind Institute have been impressed by the fruits of this music program in the few years of its existence, and they drop by frequently to hear the children play. The children also learn to help with bread-baking, garden-

*Working with blind recorder students, in Colombia and at home*



ing vegetables and flowers, and raising chickens, rabbits and even a pig (although Tarcicio said, "If you don't see the pig, we ate it").

Working with visually impaired or blind folks was not totally new to me. At a teacher training session in Tennessee a few years back, I had been a "buddy" to a blind adult flutist and her seeing-eye dog. She had devised methods for memorizing music (even complex repertoire), and for taking notes in the class.

And then there was Joey, a lively little visually impaired boy, who had been my student at the MacPhail Center for Music in Minneapolis, MN. Even with other physical disabilities (fine motor delay and chronically weak fingers), Joey made slow but steady progress over the years in learning to play the recorder, to the point of performing pieces by Bach, Handel, Dieupart, etc.—all with surprisingly good tone, expression and ornamentation.

I'm convinced that Joey's success was due to starting recorder study at a young age (five years), when all children are like "sponges" in their learning. He also had the advantage of a program of daily listening, and good help from his mother with home practicing (always in a positive spirit!). Joey even got to the point of beginning musical literacy along with his peers, but only by having his musical scores enlarged by 250%. His parents were deeply dedicated to their son's confidence-building experience of learning to play the recorder well.

To enable Joey's success in ensemble experiences, as well as in solo performances, he listened daily to recorded repertoire and memorized it. During group rehearsals and performances, I kept Joey in close proximity to make subtle communication easier. Learning from Joey, I have often asked all the students in a recorder class to perform a piece together with their eyes shut, making for a new way of listening to the ensemble. The group sound invariably improves!

Working with blind children and adults in Colombia has deepened my understanding and my commitment to making the joy of recorder-playing accessible to folks with visual as well as other disabilities. Visiting that beautiful country, and getting to know people there who share my love of music and music education, has confirmed for me a statement by Albert Einstein that "people are the same everywhere." The universal language of music, combined with love, hope and respect, can conquer the greatest barriers.

Mary Halverson Waldo

*For other thoughts about helping people with low vision to play the recorder, see Tom Green's article in the January 2007 AR, "How I Play Music While Using Technology to Help Low Vision," and see <www.blindmusicstudent.org>.*



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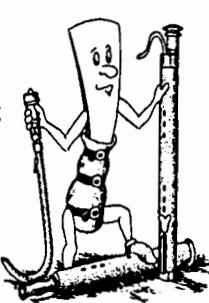
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## Technique Tip

### Mexican Air, Canadian Air

Sometimes your recorder playing sounds great; it's all smooth sailing. But other times you are surprised by embarrassing squawks and squeaks. This happens to everyone occasionally.

There are three factors in recorder technique: **air**, **tongue** and **fingers**. If you had unlimited time, you could determine which ways of blowing, tonguing and fingering would eliminate your troubles.

But who has time for that? I would like to make some suggestions for blowing effectively on the recorder. Let's assume that your fingers are covering the holes completely. There are many articles on tonguing that explain the complex syllables to start and stop the airflow. For now, I'll also assume that you are using a basic, clear "D" articulation.

The recorder has three "registers"—low notes, medium notes and high notes. Each needs a particular way of blowing. On an alto recorder, finger a low G# (on soprano, low D#). You can get three or more different pitches to sound using your air alone! Hear the low note, then an octave higher, then a fifth higher than that—produced without moving any fingers.

It's not simply a matter of blowing soft vs. hard. It's about the quality of the air, and the shape of the mouth. Different adjectives work with different players, so use the one below that makes sense to you.

- Low register (alto: low F to middle G; soprano: low C to middle D): warm, wide, slow airstream, foggy, "Dah" vowel, aiming only for the labium.
- Middle register (alto: middle A to high D; soprano: middle E to high A): medium temperature and speed, "Deh" vowel, aiming for the middle of the bore.
- High register (alto: above high D; soprano: above high A): cool, fast, narrow airstream like whistling, "Dü" vowel, aiming out the bell like a peashooter.

Thinking about temperature is my favorite. Picture your sheet music like a weather map of Mexico, the U.S., and Canada. Low notes are orange and warm, going up to cool blue air for your highest notes. On big leaps, just like on big trips, it helps to prepare (your air) in advance.

Patrick O'Malley teaches recorder in Chicago, IL, and works with students worldwide at <[www.PatrickRecorder.com](http://www.PatrickRecorder.com)>.

# MUSIC REVIEWS

An international selection of music for young players (and young-at-heart players)

## DER FLÖTENKÖNIG (THE RECORDER KING), BY THEODOR KÖHLER.

Moeck 2210, ISMN M-2006-2210-2 (Magnamusic), 2006. SA. Sc 15 pp. \$ 21.

Born in 1974 in Capetown, South Africa, Theodor Köhler resides in Frankfurt, Germany, where he composes lieder, chamber music and large symphonic works.

*The Recorder King* is a collection of 16 newly composed, very easy short pieces (12-28 measures each) for beginners on soprano. They are in progressive order with limited ranges and simple rhythms in 2/4, 3/4, and 6/8 meters. The final piece begins in 3+3+2/8.

The accompanying second part for alto recorder adds interest with a slightly wider range and a few accidentals; it

could be performed by a more advanced student or teacher.

Titles are all in German. Illustrations by Nanari Keller are suitable for coloring.

## GESPENSTERSCHLOSS FÜR ZWEI BLOCKFLÖTEN (PHANTOM CASTLE FOR TWO RECORDERS), BY GRAHAM WATERHOUSE.

Zimmermann ZM 35500, ISMN M-010-35500-9 (C. F. Peters), 2002. S+S/A. 2 Sc, 4 pp ea. \$14.95.

Graham Waterhouse was born in London in 1962, but has resided in Munich, Germany, since 1992 as a free-lance composer and 'cellist. His compositions include chamber music, concerti and several commissions.

*Phantom Castle* had its debut at the 2002 Young Musicians Competition in Munich. The opening Adagio is punctuated with "unexpected" sounds that evoke

visions of a mysterious presence. Clearly notated contemporary techniques include glissandi, flutter-tonguing, sputato, singing while playing, clapping, and producing piercing high pitches.

A frantic chase ensues in the Vivace section, with the composer giving free license for performers to enhance the ghostly scenario with their own imaginative interpretation.

While intended for young players, the demands of precise rhythmic accuracy, extended range and excellent breath control from both musicians place it firmly in the advanced intermediate category.

Inside the beautifully illustrated cover are two full four-page scores, each with a brief composer biography, preface, technical remarks and explanation of notation symbols. All text is in German, English and French.



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**OSKAR UND DIE COOLEN KOALAS**  
**(OSCAR AND THE COOL KOALAS),**  
**BY MATTHIAS MAUTE.** Heinrichshofen  
 N 2615, ISMN M-2044-2615-7 (C. F.  
 Peters), 2004. SATB. Sc 24 pp, 4 pts  
 11 pp ea. \$25.

**OSKAR UND DIE COOLEN KOALAS**  
**AUF TOURNEE (OSCAR AND THE**  
**COOL KOALAS ON TOUR), BY**  
**MATTHIAS MAUTE.** Heinrichshofen  
 N 2616, ISMN M- 2044-2616-4 (C. F.  
 Peters), 2006. S'oSATB, perc ad lib. Sc 30  
 pp, 5 pts 12 pp ea, perc ad lib 8 pp. \$29.  
**OSKAR, DIE COOLEN KOALAS UND**  
**DER DIEB (OSCAR, THE COOL**  
**KOALAS AND THE THIEF), BY**  
**MATTHIAS MAUTE.** Heinrichshofen  
 N 2617, ISMN M-2004-2617-1 (C. F.  
 Peters), 2006. SATB. Sc 24 pp, 4 pts  
 12 pp ea. \$32.50.

Matthias Maute is certainly regarded as one of the leading recorder performers of our time, but his compositions are as appealing as his prowess on recorder. These three volumes of the adventures of Oscar, a 12-year old German recorder player, are an example of his clever and uniquely inclusive style that encourages joyful participation, diligent practice and excellent musicianship from performers, without requiring fiendishly advanced technique.

*Oscar and the Cool Koalas* introduces Oscar, who has a problem with his cat Nero. Poor Nero has nightmares that cause him to have panic attacks. The only reprieve is for Oscar to play his recorder. Since Oscar doesn't enjoy playing alone, his Australian pen pal Lisa suggests forming a band with his friends.

A storyteller recites the included text (all in German!) that links the 13 short movements of this volume. Movement 5 is for soprano solo, but the remainder is scored for SATB ensemble. The writing varies from easy to intermediate in difficulty, and it invites interaction among the performers and between the ensemble and the audience.

Volume two, *Oscar and the Cool Koalas on Tour*, is perhaps the most musically challenging of this set, with 12 movements that include additional parts for sopranino and percussion. Australian pen pal Lisa accompanies Oscar's ensemble as they go on tour. They select repertoire appropriate for each venue: an African celebration, a Turkish tavern and a swimming pool disco. Their theme song, "Let's Go!" is a tour hit, so they play it everywhere.

Audience interaction is an important requirement of performing these pieces,



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an appealing aspect for the teen audience for which they are intended.

Carolyn Peskin gave a vivid description of the experience of being coached in this work by Maute himself at a Cleveland Chapter workshop (AR, May 2008). Inspired by the experience, she has recently undertaken the project of translating the narration (really a children's book) for each Oscar piece. She has completed the first two volumes, and plans to tackle the translation of the third book as she can. Having the English translations for these works will make them more attractive to American audiences.

The third volume of these adventures—Oscar, the Cool Koalas and the Thief—uses the same story format and is scored for SATB. Oscar confides his boredom to his e-mail companion in Australia. When she responds that he needs something exciting in his life, he suddenly hears suspicious noises in his house. Lisa responds via e-mail from Australia that it must be a thief, and that Oscar should investigate immediately!

After 14 engaging movements and a uniquely Maute scenario involving the now infamous cat, Nero, the mystery is solved.

The orchestrations (SATB or S'oSATB with optional percussion) include snippets of audience participation, special effects, body gestures, rhythmic speech and even a bit of singing.

All three works hold broad appeal for the intended young adult performers, but many young-at-heart consorts would find them useful for young audience programs as well.

Leslie Timmons



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ABRSM, ISBN 1-86096-517-2, 2004. SA. Teacher manual 58 pp, student book 10 pp. \$17.25.

The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) in London publishes a series of individual assessments for all instruments that is designed specifically for students who receive instruction in group classes. Detailed information on the entire series is available at <[www.musicmedals.org](http://www.musicmedals.org)>.

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examiner, or an official examination may be arranged with a certified representative of the ABRSM.

The ensembles in this series are duets, trios and quartets representing various composers, many of whom have published other works for recorder. Each volume includes a title page that lists the name of the work, the composer, and an indication of the playing level for each line of music in that work.

*Copper Recorder Ensemble Pieces for Soprano Recorder* includes 18 selections for two or three sopranos by 12 different composers. These are divided into two groups according to the tone set used—reflecting the preference of some teachers to begin instruction with G, A, B, C, D, as opposed to B, A, G, low E, low D.

Every piece in this collection is written in 4/4 with the rhythm predominantly quarter and eighth notes and rests. Melodies tend to move stepwise for the lines that are indicated as exam material. If a beat is subdivided, the pitch remains the same. There are no slurs, but staccato articulation is frequently indicated.

Titles are generally reflective of the style of the piece. Some pieces are duos or trios all at the "Copper" level, but others have lines that are labeled as appropriate for a teacher or the next ("Bronze") level.

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All ensembles in the series are available only in score form. Printing quality is excellent, and there are few page turns. This extensive collection of original works includes a few arrangements of traditional tunes and would offer enjoy-

able playing and excellent sight-reading opportunities for any level player at a consort gathering.

*Music Medals Recorder Options Practice Book* is a collection of practice examples for the third section of the Music Medals exam. Designed for teachers, this book provides detailed assistance on how to include development of musicianship, improvisation and sight-reading skills in a group instruction setting. Activities include rhythm games, scale practice, and developing awareness of aural and written harmony. Sample exercises for each level of Music Medals Options are included: Call & Response, Make a Tune, Question & Answer, Sight-reading. Verbatim spoken directions are included for the teacher for each category.

***This is an excellent resource for new or inexperienced teachers. It would also serve well any novice players interested in improving their overall musicianship.***

A separate student practice book of sample test questions (which can also be downloaded from the web site) is included with the teacher manual.

The examples provided in this book are progressive, beginning with three notes on either soprano or alto. A key to the musical features of each level is printed as part of the preface, enabling teachers to create their own appropriate examples.

Aside from its function as test preparation, this is an excellent resource for new or inexperienced teachers. It would also serve well any novice players interested in improving their overall musicianship.

Leslie Timmons is on the faculty of the music department at Utah State University in Logan, UT, and serves on the ARS Board.

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# Q & A

**Q**uestion: Please advise what the consensus is regarding recorder vibrato. Are there certain genres where vibrato is appropriate and others where it is taboo? —Jim Sittton, Banning, CA

**A**nswer: Vibrato refers to a regular pulsing of a musical tone's pitch and intensity. There are various ways of producing vibrato on the recorder. Only the two traditional kinds will be discussed here: **breath vibrato**, which involves alternately increasing and decreasing the pressure or speed of air entering the windway, and **finger vibrato (flattement)**, which involves alternately uncovering and partially covering a tone hole. Exercises in producing and controlling those types of vibrato can be found in the modern recorder method books included in my reference list (on page 32).

There are a few brief references to breath vibrato in historical treatises on musical instruments. Publications by Martin Agricola (1529 and 1545) and J.J. Quantz (1752) both noted that breath vibrato improves the tone obtainable on the transverse flute. Therefore, we know that some Renaissance and Baroque woodwind players in Germany used it.

Jacques Hotteterre's treatise on flute, recorder and oboe playing (1707) made no mention of breath vibrato, but recommended frequent use of *flattement* on long notes (i.e., whole, half and dotted-quarter notes). He provided specific fingerings for the effect, and noted that the speed of the vibrato should depend upon the tempo and character of the piece.

Quantz, too, mentioned finger vibrato in connection with what Italians called  *messa di voce*, a gradual crescendo and diminuendo on a single long tone, produced by combining finger vibrato with a gradual increase and subsequent decrease in breath pressure. Sylvestro Ganassi, in the earliest known recorder method book (Venice, 1535), might also have been referring to  *messa di voce* technique when he wrote that "an instrument can imitate the expression in the human voice by vary-

Send questions to Carolyn Peskin, Q&A Editor,  
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## Recorderists today use vibrato to enliven their tone and help them play more expressively.

ing the pressure of the breath and shading the tone by means of suitable fingering."

From the above discussion, we can conclude that vibrato was part of Renaissance and Baroque performance practice, but the kind of vibrato used seems to have varied from one country to another. In playing French music of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, we should definitely use *flattement*. The treatises are vague on what kind of vibrato to use in early music of other countries and periods.

Recorderists today use vibrato to enliven their tone and help them play more expressively. Since control of dynamics, on which players of modern orchestral woodwinds strongly rely for expressiveness, is very limited on the recorder, the recorder player must rely mainly on varied articulation and, to a lesser extent, on vibrato. By varying the speed and intensity of the vibrations, the performer can accent the most important notes in a melody line, alter tone color, suggest dynamics, and reinforce the mood of a piece.

When to use vibrato, and how wide and fast to make the vibrations are largely subject to personal interpretation, but some general guidelines can be found in *The Recorder Book* by Kenneth Wollitz (included in my reference list). He states that vibrato can be used quite freely "when the recorder is functioning as a solo instrument, in sonatas, trio sonatas, and the like." That would include Baroque solo works, either unaccompanied or with basso continuo accompaniment, as well as conservative pieces composed in the 20th and 21st centuries. (In contemporary avant-garde music, the composer often specifies where to use vibrato and what kind to use, including some unconventional types such as labium, lip, tongue, and knee vibrato.)

Wollitz notes that slow, wide vibrato is

## Recorder vibrato

usually best for slow, serious pieces, and faster, narrower vibrato for lively pieces. He discourages applying vibrato to notes too short for four pulses. Therefore, you would use very little if any vibrato in a fast country dance tune or in a Jacob van Eyck variation consisting mostly of eighth and 16th notes.

According to Wollitz, vibrato can also be applied to consort music, but much more sparingly. In consort playing, vibrato "must be used very discreetly if at all, and only at those moments when your line has genuine melodic importance. Even then it must be delicate and not too wide.

... If all lines of a consort piece are played with vibrato, the texture gets muddy, and perfection of intonation becomes an impossibility."

As an example of a place in a Renaissance quartet where vibrato can be used effectively, Wollitz mentions a sustained top-line note over moving chords in the four closing bars of Diego Ortiz's second *recercada* on the 16th-century chanson *Douce Memoire*. Daniel Brüggen, a member of the Amsterdam Loeki Stardust Quartet, cites a similar place in a motet by the 16th-century Spanish composer Tomás Luis de Victoria (see reference list), where he suggests applying breath vibrato to sustained notes in the upper voices over a straight tone in the bass line.

Contemporary composers may call for vibrato on certain notes in a consort piece. For example, in *Indian Summer* (2004), for SATB recorders, Matthias Maute asks for finger vibrato on specific notes.

Continuous vibrato, although often used by modern orchestral musicians, should be avoided in recorder playing. Brüggen feels that continuous vibrato has some advantage in masking intonation problems, which is, however, outweighed by its diminishing effect on flexibility of interpretation. Wollitz, too, notes that vibrato, "if constantly present, diminishes its expressive force." Frances Blaker, in *The Recorder Player's Companion* (see reference list on page 32), especially discourages the "involuntary, tight and ugly vibrato ... particularly common among recorder players with a lot of singing experience."

Carolyn Peskin

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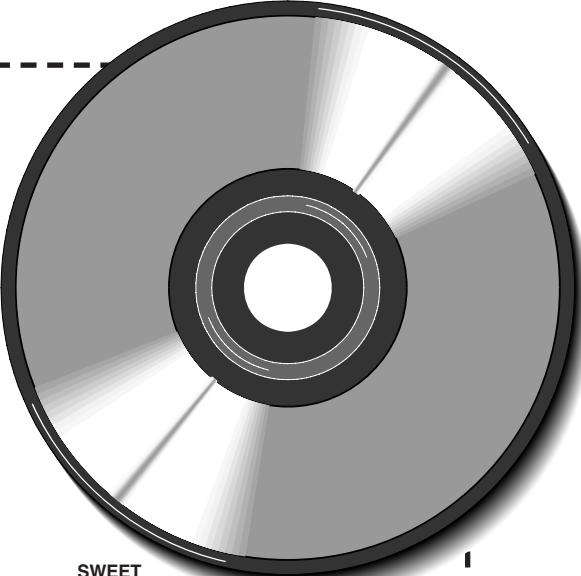
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Rates good through November 2008. Please inquire about discounts on multiple-issue contracts, inserts, or other special requests. Extra charges for typesetting, layout, halftones, and size alterations. 133-line screen recommended. Advertising subject to acceptance by magazine. First-time advertisers must include payment with order.

For more information, contact the ARS office 1129 Ruth Drive, St. Louis, MO 63122-1019 800-491-9588 toll free; 314-966-4082 phone 314-966-4649 fax E-mail: <[advertising@americanrecorder.org](mailto:advertising@americanrecorder.org)>

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