



New York Flute Club Newsletter

March 1998

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ANNUAL FAIR, JULIUS BAKER, GUEST OF HONOR

At the Riverside Church, located at 91 Claremont Avenue between 120th and 122nd Streets, 9:00 am - 6:00 PM.

CONCERT ADMISSION, Saturday, March 21st:

The club neglected to announce that there would be a concert-only admission the day of the fair for the 3:00 PM concert, even though the concert is during the fair activities. Between 2:30 and 3:00 PM at the Nave of the Riverside Church, members will have free admission and only need to show their NYFC membership card, non-members will be \$20.00 and senior citizens and full-time students will be \$10.00. Any other events will require a badge at entry and must be registered for at the Assembly Hall: \$20.00 members, \$25.00 non-members, \$15.00 senior citizens and full-time students, and \$5.00 non-flutist family members attending with students (limit 2.)

NYFC TABLE:

There will be an NYFC table within the exhibits in the Assembly Hall of Riverside Church. Hours will be 9:00 am to 6:00 PM. Any member who wishes to sell their own CDs, tapes, books, music (no used items, please) can bring them to the fair after 9:00 am. Each member may bring 10 items (maximum) to be sold; i.e. 10 of the same or different CDs, books, tapes, etc. You must mark on each item the price that you wish to charge; the club will take a 10% commission on all items sold. All unsold items brought to the fair must be taken home by 6:00 PM. The club will not be responsible for items remaining at the table after 6:00 PM.

LUNCH:

Lunch will be served from 11:30 am to 1:30 PM near registration at the Assembly Hall. If you have not preordered, you can buy it the day of the fair on a first-come, first-served basis. We will try to estimate quantity based upon last year's orders. Anyone who has preordered or bought a lunch at the registration table will receive a ticket to exchange during the time lunch is distributed. If you buy lunch on Saturday, March 21st, we cannot guarantee you will have a choice of Vegetarian or Non-Vegetarian lunches.

Please remember to go to the registration desk upon arrival on Saturday. We will have a table for preregistered people and a separate table for on-site registration, lunch order and concert-only tickets.

It will be an exciting array of artists, competitions, exhibits and lectures. Robert Dick is joining the roster of flutists playing at the 3:00 PM concert. We look forward to seeing you at the fair.

Speaking with New York Composer Ushio Torikai

Ushio is a unique both as a composer and a woman. Her work *Air 4* inspired me to talk to her about her Japanese roots and her views on composing in the 20th Century. This interview took place on 20 January 1998, after a tasty meal of Dominican food.

C: When did you first start to compose?

UT: Good question. Are you talking about professionally? Or . . .

C: No, no. Just even as a child.

UT: Oh yeah. It wasn't so long ago, like high school. Really like junior high, but not like 5 or 10 or anything like that—much older. And I didn't think of being able to become a composer. I never thought about it.

C: What did you want to be?

UT: I just wanted to be close to music, that's all. But I knew the way I wanted to approach it was to search about myself—search about history of music, history of human beings, history of myself, everything. So to combine everything was a natural result—becoming a composer.

C: Who or what are some of your greatest influences?

UT: If you are asking about composers, I love many many composers because there are a lot of wonderful composers out there. But I have a tendency to appreciate several pieces of each composer. You know every wonderful composer has a really strong representative time or part of the music which I want to appreciate. So everybody, Stockhausen, Boulez, Berio Xenakis, Carter, I mean I learned [from] all of them. Nancarrow. . . I like all different parts of different composers.

C: Were there any non-musical influences that you had?

UT: Oh yeah. . . . Music is [not only] the most important part of my life, but music is the life itself. . . . So just daily life interests me most. You know talking to you Cathy, I appreciate your personality and

music even coming out of your conversations, and the way you work, the way you talk, and everything is musical. There's all music in them. Because you yourself express music, so I don't have to listen to music all the time. But if I talk to you then already I experience the music you have in deep—the beauty of music, of personality and of life. . . . Human beings are the greatest influence and appreciation [to me]. I appreciate their love, their energy, their intelligence. And that's the biggest influence. For example, you played my piece {*Air 4* for flute/alto flute} and I was so moved, because you have your own beautiful love of music to start with, and you have a wonderful energy toward new music creation. You're a great, wonderful performer, and I really love to experience that through my music—because my music is [what] I understand most.

C: I've listened to a lot of recordings of your music, you gave me a CD and also a cassette of some different pieces and I was shocked at how different the styles were. It almost seemed like a collection of different composers.

UT: {laughs} I know, a lot of people say that.

C: You had a piano piece that sounded like Brian Ferneyhough to me . . . you had some really different styles. You had used clearly Japanese influences—although the percussion piece wasn't so clearly influenced. Is this an intentional thing? Do you really try to have different kinds of pieces?

UT: Yeah. A lot of people asked that question, it seems like a natural question "how come same composer has so different. . ." because usually a composer has [the] tendency to have one style or to push that one style forward or [the] tendency over same kind of style. But my point is my life is very short—I live here 45 years on the planet but [the] history of each instrument, [especially] about very primitive percussion instruments, it's a long history. All those instruments . . . tell about beauty, about music itself, and you can't learn every beauty or every old depth each instrument has—you can't learn all of it. [But] I wanted to research about history of instrument and to research about what was music about for each historical moment and what music did to society, to the life and to the world. So that led me to also think about why I am here and why I have to compose and why I am thinking this way. But also, now after all, there is a long history of those instruments, and there are more than a million (ways) of expression. Here comes only one composer facing the instrument and you see the instrument and you see your own music through that instrument. In order to do that, you really have to learn about that instrument, otherwise maybe you don't need that instrument. Maybe you don't have to particularly have to compose for flute. But my life is about learning, so I don't want to waste [a] chance to learn about all different instruments. For example, [a] flutist spends whole life to search about flute. And oboist spend[s] whole life. And a composer doesn't have those 200 lives! Although, yet, you don't want to give up. You do just whatever is like you ignoring what that instrument is about, or you just want to think about your own style, but I rather want to put myself in the music history.

C: So the instrument itself inspires what kind of piece you write?

UT: Oh definitely. Oh, exactly.

C: What about commissions?

UT: I'm the typical type—I compose for someone special. For example someone who commissions me or who cares my music. I don't compose thinking about many opportunities, like this piece will be played, or that kind of thing. Like how many possible people {will play it} and that kind of thing.

About compos[ing]: I don't want to be an unconditional believer only in one style of music. There are many wonderful composers and those composers have their own beauty, and I want to be open to be able to appreciate the differences and diversity of the composers. I just don't want to shut out the world—I don't want to be closed mind[ed] or blind about the diversity of any field of creations—Not only new music, but visual art of what ever, because I know I am such a small, one individual and there's a beautiful creation out there everywhere in the world and I want to learn about all of it..

C: You sometimes compose for Japanese traditional instruments like the Japanese temple gong, the koto or the shamisen in a contemporary setting. Do you enjoy this combination of old instruments in a new style?

UT: Traditional instruments is a complicated issue. I love traditional music, traditional Japanese and Asian music. I think I can say very deeply and very seriously, I don't want to compare with other composers in Japan or but I spent more than 10 years studying traditional instruments, yet since I moved to New York, I was invited quite often to use traditional Japanese instruments on concerts because of course somehow I could play and even in Japan I could

be a very good performer. Because of that unusual being and also [that] not many players [were] around for those instruments, clearly it told me that using Asian or Japanese style music-- either using Asian or Japanese traditional instruments could bring quite a lot -- quite huge opportunity for my music and my career -- it was so clear. But, I started realizing more and more that that wasn't my priority you see. My priority was to confront my music, confront myself. You know, find my own music if I could, is my priority of course, it's the most important thing. Especially if I could without any special tool or weapon [laughs] such as Asian or Japanese style music or instruments or whatever, that kind of thing.

In Japan, for them, traditional music, they don't consider that field as a music. Yet, when they want to sell their music to the world, they want to use traditional instruments because they don't have the confidence to approach the world without having some kind of special weapon or something. [laughs] But my attitude is opposite. I studied traditional Japanese instruments because I am Japanese, and I grew up in Japan and speaking in Japanese and seeing a Japanese landscape and living in a Japanese society and customs, and there was a necessity for me to learn [what] Japanese music is. To understand about myself, about my own music. That's why I studied the instruments. But you didn't have to study the instruments. But always studying the instruments itself gives you more learning about music itself actually. Like you know, every composer has a beautiful piece, and the reason is very simple. It's because they understand about that instrument.. My case of studying instrument was to understand myself as a Japanese. And of course, I learned how different from the traditional Japanese music and instrument is from Western Classic instruments. And I never wanted to put both together so easily. I never understood myself why I had to do that -- because they are such extremely two different things.

C: Like a shamisen and a computer.

UT: Yeah. But the thing was, when I started [to] experience computer, I thought such a non-emotional thing will help to grasp the real point of the beauty of that instrument.. Without dealing with a lot of long, deep, almost black hole of the traditional instruments history. The traditional didn't reach everybody. For example a western classical instrument has the ability to be able to put themselves into a different part of the world. Because of that mechanical development and analysis of music tonal system, you can use those instruments to reach to a different world. But instruments like shamisen and other ethnic instruments - these instruments are supposed to talk only about that society. So how come you can just grab that to express yourself as a 20th century or 21st century living composer. Because if you want to communicate on [the] universal side, instead of just introducing yourself as ethnic. I never thought I could do so easily. And after all, when I started to develop the computer thing and I thought because it was [the] most systematic equipment you could think of and then reach out one of the most ethnic instruments, and bring the purely expressive[ness] as an instrument, not an ethnic instrument. As a music --not as a Japanese music. I thought I could do it.. Otherwise I could never do it. But once I did it, then people in Japan [said] "OK, apparently you did it, so why don't you compose for me and . . ." But still it took a few years for me simply writing for those instruments. I think writing new music for ethnic instruments is quite challenging. When I do that I try to do that, the same thing when I write for flute, I try to bring the most beauty out of it in my mind. Maybe other people think the most distorted [laughs] or something.

A related thing is leaving Japan -- there's the same patterns. I was lucky enough back there in Japan to make my career, such is that album from JVC (*Go Where*), which I will make again [another album] later this year when I go back for a smaller set of pieces. [But in my] journey of finding my own music, . . . I had to leave that country. I had to leave the way I could live comfortably . . . I had to decide to do something despite the fact it was a hard way to do.

C: Do you like to add improvisational elements to your compositions?

UT: Oh, you know, improvisation - training in improvisation helped me a lot [in] finding [out] about my music.

C: What kind of training did you have?

UT: Just simply playing with so called avant garde jazz people.

C: Like George Lewis?

UT: Yeah. There are a lot of good jazz players in New York. And also in Japan. A very interesting thing, Mozart was a very good improviser. A whole history tells us that a good composer has good improvising element in their mind. And I really agree.

C: It's like spontaneous composition.

UT: It means you have your own music. Not by the systems, or measurement or the calculation of the notes' distance. You're supposed to have music just naturally. And those people are able to do improvisation very well. Improvisation is not easy. It's a whole life project. For example Boulez believes that improvisation is very important, and I agree with him. I think it developed my musical expression.

Ms. Torikai has a wide-ranging musical background. She began her education at an early age on violin and piano, followed by studies on traditional Japanese instruments, shamisen and koto. She also holds a B.A. in Economics from Keio University in Tokyo.

She started a concert series of her own music in 1979 in Tokyo, and was invited to the Paris Biennale in 1982. Concerts of her music have since been presented at the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine (New York), The Museum of Modern Art (San Francisco), Walker Art Center (Minneapolis) and Georges Pompidou Center (Paris), among others.

Ms. Torikai has received commissions for diverse performance contexts and instruments, including those from the Japan National Theater for the Orchestra of Ancient Asian Instruments and Buddhist Monks' Chant; the City of Los Angeles for a permanent music installation to mark the hours at the Grand Hope Park; the Mabou Mines Theater; the Canadian Electronic Ensemble and the Kronos Quartet. Her music has been performed in many different venues in the United States and internationally, including major cities in Europe and East Asia.

Her solo album GO WHERE? was released by the Japan Victor (JVC); the compositions were realized at IRCAM -- the contemporary computer-oriented musical research center in Paris.

Flute Happenings: Please send your listings for the April newsletter to the editor by April 6.

NYFC member **Linda Marianiello** will perform with pianist Mitchell Vines in New York on:

- * Friday, March 6, 1998, 12 noon-2 PM: Masterclass and short recital, Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, Lincoln Center (Amsterdam Ave. between 64-65 Sts.)
- * Sunday, April 26, 1998, 5 PM: Flute and piano recital, Bay Ridge United Methodist Church, 362 Ovington Avenue (corner of 4th Avenue), Brooklyn, NY. For more information, call (212) 666-3122 or (914) 351-5950.
- * Sunday, May 3, 1998, 2:30 PM: Guest soloist for the Long Island Flute Club recital series, concert to take place at SUNY-Stony Brook. For more information, please call Paul Gray at (516) 887-3712.

NYFC member **Patricia Davila** will perform in recital with pianist Ron Levy at the Steinway Piano Gallery, 455 Rt. 17 South, Paramus, NJ on Friday March 13, 1998 at 8:15pm. The program will include works by Gaubert, Mower, Lane and Taktakishvili. Tickets are \$10. For information call (210) 529-2337.

NYFC member **Linda Weatherill** will perform two works of Dary John Mizelle at the Purchase Performing Arts Center at SUNY Purchase on Tuesday, April 7th at 8pm. The two works are *Highest Notes are Hard to Hear* for bass flute and *Winter Light Suite* for flute and microtonal aluminum bars, which was written for Ms. Weatherill. For more information, please call (516) 345-0518.

A concert presented in tribute to Samuel Baron by the New York Woodwind Quintet (NYFC member **Carol Wincenc**, flutist) as part of the Daniel Saidenberg Faculty Recital Series at Juilliard. Works by Carter, JS Bach (arr. Baron), Villa-lobos, and Brahms (trans. Baron). Wednesday, April 8, 1998, 8 PM. Paul Recital Hall, the Juilliard School, 60 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, New York. Tickets will become available March 18 at the Juilliard Box Office. For further information, call 212 769 7406.

The Omni Ensemble with NYFC member **David Wechsler** will be performing three concerts in the month of April. On Saturday, April 18th the ensemble will perform at the Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, 58 7th Avenue, Brooklyn, Park Slope at 8pm. The program will include David Lang's headlong *Burn Notice* and Allen Shearer's *We Three*. Trios by Kuhlau and Wechsler and Messiaen's *Le merle noir* are also on the program. On April 22 the Omni Ensemble will perform at Concordia College, 171 White Plains Road, Bronxville, NY at 8pm. The program will include trios by Ned Rorem and Jean-Michel Damase as well as Eric Klein's *Dolce far niente*, Beethoven's *Sonata in F Major* and Nevett Barto's *Sonata for Flute and Piano*.

On Sunday, April 26th at 5pm, the Omni Ensemble will perform a Techno Dance Party at the Tenri Gallery, 575 Broadway in Manhattan. Bring your dancing shoes as Omni plugs in and treats you to original works and classic dance favorites plus a few surprises.