



# The New York Flute Club NEWSLETTER

## NYFC 2000 Competition *Young Artists*



**Catherine Ramirez**

**C**ATHERINE RAMIREZ began her flute study at age 18, in El Paso, Texas. She completed her Bachelor of Arts degree in music at Occidental College in 1996, and the following year earned a Diploma with Honors from the Istituto Musicale “Luigi Boccherini” in Lucca, Italy. She has collaborated in duet and chamber music with such luminaries as Marzio Conti, Linda Chesis, Carol Wincenc, Jim Walker and Ransom Wilson. Currently, Ms. Ramirez is completing her master’s degree at Queens College with Dr. Tara Helen O’Connor. □



**Sophia Anastasia**

**A**native of New Jersey, SOPHIA ANASTASIA graduated from Montclair State University in 1997 with a bachelor’s degree in music, concentrating in performance and education. She has soloed at Weill Recital Hall and CAMI Hall, and has performed with OMTI (an opera reading orchestra under the direction of Jerome Hines), the Montclair Chamber Orchestra, the New Jersey Chamber Music Society, the New England Chamber ensemble, and the Seoul Symphony orchestra.

Ms. Anastasia was a winner of the 1998 Greek  
*(cont'd on page 3)*



**Jessica Warren**

**A**native of Kansas, JESSICA WARREN is an avid soloist and chamber musician. She gave her New York recital debut at Weill Recital Hall in January 1998. She has appeared as a soloist and clinician at numerous international festivals such as Temporada Flautistica in Lima, Peru, Festival en la Mitad del Mundo in Quito, Ecuador, and the National Flute Association Conventions in Chicago and Atlanta, where she performed in the Gala Concert with William Bennett. She has toured Latin America as an artistic ambassador to the United States Embassy, performing with orchestras and in recitals. She has been named a winner in Artists International, the

*(cont'd on page 3)*

### In Concert

#### **Winners of the NYFC 2000 Competition**

**Catherine Ramirez, flute**  
**Sophia Anastasia, flute**  
**Jessica Warren, flute**  
Colette Valentine, piano

**April 30, 2000**  
5:30 pm  
**The Lighthouse**  
111 East 59th Street

### Program

———— Catherine Ramirez ————  
Italian Concerto in F, Op. 82  
Jules Demersseman  
Chant de Linos André Jolivet

———— Sophia Anastasia ————  
Voice Toru Takemitsu  
Nocturne et Allegro Scherzando  
Philippe Gaubert  
Tango Etude No. 3 Astor Piazzolla

———— Jessica Warren ————  
Poem Charles Griffes  
Achat Scha’alti, Ufaratsta  
Paul Schoenfield  
*Program subject to change*

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1999-2000**

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*From the President:*  
**Thank You!** by Patricia Spencer

Once again the Flute Fair has left me with an intense feeling of gratitude for the warm cooperative spirit and generosity of the members and friends of the New York Flute Club. If we added up all the hours put in by the number of people contributing, the total would be years of dedicated work!

An enormous thank you to our Program Chair, Svjetlana Kabalin—a model of organizational skill, wit, and clear-sighted efficiency, who brought us an imaginative and memorable series of events for our Millennium year fair.

Thanks to her, treasurer Ardith Bondi reports an attendance of over 500. Special thanks are also due to Ardith for exemplary record-keeping and endless hours of tallying lunches/registration fees/CD sales/etc.

Other “behind-the-scenes” movers and shakers are mightily to be thanked: Renate Jaerschky and a battalion of wonderful volunteers (listed on page 3) were everywhere, and helped create an atmosphere of helpfulness and teamwork. Darla Dixon arranged expert publicity and photography. Registration was supervised by Susan Lurie and Nancy Toff; we are grateful for their expertise, efficiency and smart planning. Calvin Mercer, streamlining the ticketing both for the Fair and for our concerts, brought a special warm-hearted flair to the process. David Wechsler accomplished the awesome task of setting up the exhibitors, who in turn are to be thanked for participating and bringing us such a splendid array of instruments, music, and related wares.

A glowing response and thank you also to the panelists, who contributed time and expertise for events stretching across centuries and around the world. It was exciting to hear Dr. Garman Harbottle’s session on the 9,000-year-old flutes recently found in China. Jumping ahead to only a few hundred years ago, we had the enlightening pleasure of seeing Carlos Fittante and Ani Udovicki perform period dance steps to some of our most beloved Baroque suites (beautifully performed by Sandra Miller). Jumping to the present and future, we were introduced to some “state-of-the-art” developments in piccolo design by Lillian Burkart and Jeff Weissman. Hispanic musical forms were presented by Wendy Mehne and Sharon Levin, joined by colleagues Pablo Cohen, Louis Cardenas, and Luis Polanco—thanks to all of them for an unusual opportunity and insight.

The excitement of commissioning projects (even participatory!) was brought to us by Bart Feller, Thomas Oboe Lee, and Christina Williams (from Bang on a Can) in a session moderated by Patti Monson. Later in the day, we were immensely honored by the participation of composers Leo Kraft, Roberto Sierra, Oliver Schneller, and Joan Tower in a panel devoted to encouraging rehearsals, commissioning, and creative communication between flutists and composers.

A major event at the Fair is the Club’s annual competition—a chance to hear tomorrow’s artists at the early stages of their careers. Special thanks to the fine contestants, to Susan Glaser for expert coordinating, and to Trudy Kane, Mindy Kaufman, and John Solum for long hours of adjudication. Thanks also to the performers in Bonita Boyd’s inspiring masterclass, ably coordinated by Patricia Zuber. A new topic for the “Teen Scene” panel, namely the perspective of a performer in a liberal arts school, proved absolutely fascinating, thanks to the perceptive student panelists and moderator Sue Ann Kahn.

A very special aspect of the Fair is the opportunity for participation by players of all levels: the harmonious sounds of the Flute Choir Reading Session (led by Rochelle Itzen and Gerardo Levy), and of the Student Flute Ensemble Showcase (led by Elly Ball), started the day and seemed to define it with a wonderful spirit of musical cooperation.

An unforgettable recital by featured guest artist Bonita Boyd, with Barry Snyder, piano, and Nicolas Goluses, guitar, gave us a joyous and fitting close to an inspiring day—their wide range of repertoire and musicality of performance defined a standard to which we can all aspire.

Thank you all!! □



## New York Flute Fair 2000

**ROUND UP**

### A very successful fair!

A big thank you to Program Chair Svyetlana Kabalin and her team of organizers and presenters. Ardith Bondi reported a total attendance of over 500 people, including 183 students.

Our volunteers, led by Renate Jaerschky, included:

Ellyn Aronson	Karen Joseph	Rachel Negron	Michele Smith
Samuel Aronson	Arlene Keiser	Edith Ochsner	Beatrice Strauss
Carla Auld	Jennifer Kellerher	Richard Paratley	Margaret Swinchoski
Ronit Azoulay	Tamara Keshecki	Dorothy Popo	Robert Thomason
Sally Jo Brand	Arthur Levine	Mariko Perry	Gregory Thymius
David Bruskin	Chiung-Lien Liu	Rebecca Quigley	Edward Wolf
Louis Carlini	Rachel Mendez	Niasha Rodin	
Jennifer Cole	Calvin Mercer	Katherine Saenger	<i>Apologies for any omissions!</i>
Gwendolyn Dorell	Rolf Meyersohn	Monica Sands	
Ruth Hirsch	Christina Monaco	Virginia Schulze-Johnson	

And in case you missed these website addresses given at the fair, here they are:

- The Community Commission:  
[www.bangonacan.org](http://www.bangonacan.org)  
[www.thomasoboelee.com](http://www.thomasoboelee.com) (with links to "A Sound Investment")
- Historic flute: the oldest known playable flute (Chinese 7000 B.C.E.):  
[www.bnl.gov/bnlweb/flutes.html](http://www.bnl.gov/bnlweb/flutes.html) □

### **Sophia Anastasia, (cont'd from page 1)**

Women's University Club Competition in Chicago and is currently scheduled to give a recital in Chicago in December through the Dame Myra Hess concert series. She was a concerto competition winner in 1999 with the South Orange Symphony in New Jersey. Sophia gave her New York debut recital at Weill Recital Hall in May 1999 as the flute winner of the Artists International music competition.

Ms. Anastasia has completed her master's degree at Manhattan School of Music and is currently a scholarship student of Linda Chesis, working towards her professional studies degree. Ms. Anastasia is the flute instructor at Montclair State's Music Preparatory Division and maintains a private teaching studio of flute students in New York and New Jersey. She is principal flute of the Manhattan Philharmonia orchestra, and performs regularly throughout the metropolitan area in solo and chamber music recitals. □

### **Jessica Warren, (cont'd from page 1)**

Purchase Symphony Concerto Competition, the Meadows Symphony Concerto Competition, the Overland Park Orchestra Concerto Competition, and the Kansas City Flute Association Young Artists Competition.

Miss Warren began studying the flute at the age of ten. She holds degrees from Southern Methodist University, Purchase College and Conservatory of Music, and is currently pursuing a D.M.A. at the Manhattan School of Music. Her teachers include Jean Weger Larson, Carol Wincenc and Linda Chesis. In addition, she has participated in masterclasses with Rien de Reeder and Peter-Lukas Graf in Amsterdam, William Bennett in London, and with Marzio Conti and Phillippe Bernold in Nice, France. □

## FLUTE HAPPENINGS

M A Y

### May 12, 2000

Friday 7:30 pm

St. Ann's Church Music Society presents *The Collins Project*, with **Kim Collins**, flute, and Steve Collins, percussion. Works by Farr, Harrison, Heuser, Owens, MacDonald, and Whiteman.

- St. Ann's Church, 289 Arch Road, Avon, CT
- Admission is free/donations accepted • Info/directions: call (860) 673-9858.

### Deadline for Flute Happenings Column

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Mail Date</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
May 2000	05/08/00	04/20/00

## CLASSIFIED

**For Sale:** A new Lafin headjoint: 85% silver, 15% gold; 14 carat lip plate and crown. Flute tubing must be at least 0.016". \$3,280 (same price as bought from Mr. Lafin). Please contact Jung-Wan Kang at (212) 307-4976.

*Members may advertise in this section for \$10 for up to 320 characters/spaces. Your ad must be submitted by hard copy or e-mail—no exceptions. Name and phone number are required. Deadline is the same as for Happenings submissions. Ads must be paid for in advance. Make checks payable to the New York Flute Club and mail to the Newsletter Editor.*

## MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

### Request for Flute Fair Feedback

WHILE IT'S STILL FRESH in your mind, let us know what you liked about the fair, and what (if anything) you'd like to see done differently for the next one. Your Newsletter editor will see that your comments get back to the appropriate person.

*Members are invited both to submit paragraph-long responses to an existing query, or to submit discussion-provoking new queries for either the general membership or a specific NYFC member. Responses and new questions can be sent by email to [saenger@us.ibm.com](mailto:saenger@us.ibm.com). □*



# John Amadio—Virtuoso Flutist

by Ann Cecil-Sterman

Few flutists in America today have heard of John Amadio, a surprising fact given the extent and influence of his pioneering career as a flute soloist in Australia, Great Britain and North America. The life of this remarkable virtuoso flutist, born in 1883 in Christchurch, New Zealand, spans the introduction of sound recording, the advent of radio and television, and reaches into the 1960s.

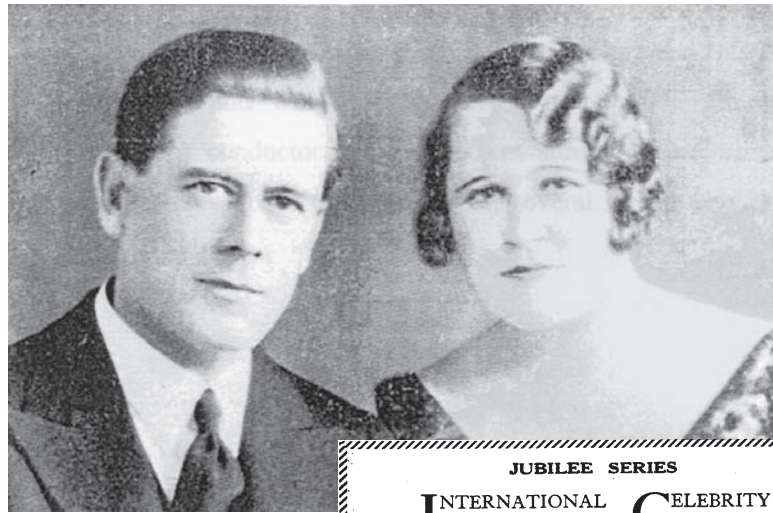
Amadio was one of the world's first acclaimed flute soloists at a time the flute was rarely considered a solo recital instrument. In the 1920s, 30s and 40s he was a household name in Australia and Great Britain, and enjoyed great fame in the United States. In the press he was hailed as "one of the world's greatest living flutists." Toscanini is reputed to have asked for more after hearing him play Bach. Here in America he was known as the "Pied Piper from the Antipodes." But perhaps the greatest complement ever paid Amadio came from the legendary Marcel Moyse who held Amadio in great esteem and once said that Amadio was the greatest flute player who ever lived.

Amadio toured the world both as a soloist and as the associate artist of his second wife, the world-renowned Wagnerian soprano Florence Austral. Recordings, interviews, and reviews of his performances reveal him to have been an extraordinarily charismatic and artistic performer of breathtaking technical ability. At the age of ten he performed as soloist with a full symphony orchestra in his native New Zealand. He moved to Australia in 1898 with his family. In 1902, at the age of 18, he was appointed principal flute of the Italian Opera Company in Melbourne where he was discovered by Nellie Melba, who invited him to tour the world with her as an associate artist. He went on to tour with the other great sopranos of the day: Luisa Tetrazzini, Emma Calve, Amy Castles, Freda Hempel, Lily Pons and Amelita Galli-Curci. In the United States, he often shared the platform with Tito Schipa, Richard Crooks, Alfred Campoli and Ezio Pinza.

Amadio's first taste of the United States came in 1925, when Sir Edward Elgar recommended that Austral be invited to sing the Brahms Requiem at the Cincinnati Festival. In an era of touring virtuosos, Amadio was one of the first flutists to hit the road.

From 1925 to 1936, Amadio spent a solid six months of each year touring the United States, appearing in countless cities including Washington DC, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, Evanston, Louisville,

Kansas City, Minneapolis, Detroit, Indianapolis, Buffalo, San Francisco and New York City. In late 1928 he and Austral toured 24 cities in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales in eight weeks, with concerts in the Royal Albert Hall and Queens Hall. From 1929 Austral began singing in the Paris Opera and at Bayreuth, leaving Amadio free to make more appearances without an associate artist. During at least one of Austral's absences he appeared at



John Amadio and Florence Austral, c. 1919

**The London Flute Society**  
 Founded January, 1923

**Nineteenth Guest Night**  
 FRIDAY, 18th NOVEMBER, 1927, at the Hotel York, Berners Street, London, W. 1  
 7:45 for 8 p. m.

SPECIAL ENGAGEMENT OF MR. JOHN AMADIO  
 Concertino, Op. 107 ..... C. Chamisso  
 Mr. JOHN AMADIO

1. TRIO FOR TWO FLUTES AND PIANO—Sonata in E minor ..... Loebel (1853-1728)  
 Mr. JOHN AMADIO

2. FLUTE SOLO—Mad Scene from "Lucia di Lammermoor" ..... Donizetti  
 Miss VIOLET MOUNT

3. ARCA—Flute Obligato—Sonata No. 4 in C major ..... Beethoven  
 Mr. JOHN AMADIO and Mr. PERCY KAHN

4. FLUTE AND PIANO—Andante-Presto. Menuetto, Adagio, Allegro Vivo  
 Mr. JOHN AMADIO and Mr. PERCY KAHN

INTERVAL

5. QUARTET FOR FOUR FLUTES—Adagio and Scherzo ..... A. V.  
 Op. 77 ..... A. Terschak

ENSEMBLE BY MEMBERS

6. FLUTE SOLOS—(a) L'Invasion..... M. A.  
 (b) Introduction et Air havanaise..... Ch.  
 (c) Romance for B-flat Flute..... Fv.  
 (d) Concerto Etude..... A. Terschak

7. ARCA—Polonaise from "Mignon" ..... A. Thome  
 Miss VIOLET MOUNT

8. FLUTE SOLO—Fantasie Melancolique, Op. 1..... M. A. Re  
 Mr. JOHN AMADIO

GOD SAVE THE KING ..... Mr. PERCY KAHN  
 Mr. HENRY GEMMEL

At the Piano..... Miss EVELYN BLAKE, L.V.  
 Conductor.....  
 Hon. Accompanist for Society.....

JUBILEE SERIES  
 INTERNATIONAL CELEBRITY  
 SUBSCRIPTION CONCERTS

**AUSTRAL & AMADIO**

SEASON 1928-29

Date 1928	Town	Hall	Time
Oct. 9	ACKBURN	King George's	7.30
" 12	"	Ulster	8
" 13	"	Theatre Royal	8
" 16	"	"	7.30
" 20	"	"	3
" 24	"	"	3
" 28	"	"	3
" 31	"	"	3
Nov. 5	"	"	3
" 6	"	"	3
" 9	"	"	3
" 11	"	"	3
" 12	"	"	3
" 14	"	"	3
" 15	"	"	3
" 17	"	"	3
" 21	"	"	3
Dec. 2	"	"	3
" 3	"	"	3
" 5	"	"	3
" 6	"	"	3
" 10	"	"	3
" 11	"	"	3
" 13	"	"	3

**Austral-Amadio Concerts**  
 Second Recital, Wednesday, June 25.

1. Aria—"Ocean Thou Mighty Monster" from "Oberon" ..... Weber  
 FLORENCE AUSTRAL

2. Flute—Sonata in E minor No. 5 ..... Liszt  
 Allegro—Andante—Allegro Vivo  
 JOHN AMADIO

3. (a) "Standchen" (Serenade) ..... Strauss  
 (b) Traum durch die Dämmerung" (Dream through the twilight) ..... Strauss  
 (c) "Elizabeth's Greeting—from "Tannhauser" ..... Wagner  
 FLORENCE AUSTRAL

INTERVAL

4. (a) "Seguidilla" ..... de Falla  
 (b) "O Quand je dors" ..... Liszt  
 (c) "Charmant Oiseau" (Thou charming bird) ..... David  
 From "The Pearl of Brazil" (with flute obligato)  
 FLORENCE AUSTRAL

5. Flute: (a) Gypsy Dance (from Suite) ..... Edward German  
 (b) Romance ..... Doppler  
 (c) Whirlwind (Flute in F) ..... Krantz  
 JOHN AMADIO

6. (a) Ballad—(after Pushkin's "Gypsies") ..... Lichina  
 (b) "Fairy Tales of Ireland" ..... Coates  
 (c) "Shepherd Thy Demeanour Vary" ..... Old English  
 (d) "Love Went A-riding" ..... Frank Bridge  
 FLORENCE AUSTRAL

At the Piano: Mr. Nils A. Nelson.

the New York Flute Club and shared a program with Georges Barrère.

Occasionally Amadio and Austral would sail to Australia for “a holiday” where they would tour frantically from coast to coast with piano in tow. In the United States, Australia and England they were commonly met by crowds of thousands. They would consistently sell out the balconies and require extra seating on the stage. The critics raved. A concert of 1928, in which Amadio and Austral shared the stage with Tito Schipa, is referred to in this somewhat amusing article in the American periodical, *The Flutist*:

*“Two glorious weeks, January 16th–30th... Will I ever find their equal! It would hardly seem possible, for seldom, if ever will one find so many musical stars of the first magnitude appearing before the public in so short a space of time. Heifetz, Kreisler, Casals, Gabri-lowitsch, Amadio, Schipa, Austral, and... Rachmaninoff. It seemed a century between the 25th and the 30th, so anxious were we to hear John Amadio, the flutist. The advance advertising, stating that he stood alone in his field, proved quite true... There is no denying that John Amadio is one of the very greatest flutists of his generation. Tito Schipa is a fine artist and he drew a bigger crowd than did Heifetz, yet Amadio and his flute quite completely overshadowed Schipa during the first half of the program. He was awarded four recalls. His playing of the Andante, Minuetto and Allegro from Bach’s Sonata No. 4 was an education to any flutist. This was positively the first time the writer has ever thoroughly enjoyed a Bach number. He played it superbly. He used a silver flute (on account of the American climate, so he said). On a wooden flute in F he played a whirlwind of a composition by Frank Bridge and as an encore gave the Carnival of Venice Variations that recalled Heifetz’s scintillating bow. It was just devilish, to one who understands a brother flutist; such rapidity and clean staccato were a treat to hear.”*

—(*The Flutist*, February 1928, p.43).

On 28 January 1928, Amadio made his Carnegie Hall debut. Amadio and

## Member Profile

### Michele Smith

*NYFC Member since 1998*

#### Employment:

Assistant at the New York Philharmonic Archives (where among other duties, she curates exhibits at the Bruno Walter Gallery in Avery Fisher Hall); freelance musician.



**Most recent recital/performance:** With the Schubert Musical Society on Sunday December 12, 1999, performing Charpentier’s *Messe de Minuit pour Noel* at St. Martin’s Episcopal Church in Manhattan.

**Career highlights:** Playing with the African Ensemble at Kent State University’s Annual Folk Festival, in a performance broadcast by National Public Radio (1994); performing with Tania León in her Contempo ensemble at Brooklyn College (1996-98) and with Ramon Rodriguez in his Salsa Ensemble at Boy’s Harbor at 105th and 5th in Manhattan (1999-present). Her January-February exhibit at the Philharmonic highlighted 20 violinists who played with the Orchestra between 1844 and 1950, including the notable Maud Powell. [Note: Ms. Powell first played with the Philharmonic in 1885, and in 1909 Gustav Mahler specifically requested that she be engaged while he was musical director.]

**Current flute:** Miyazawa MC-300RH.

**Influential flute teachers:** Bernard Goldberg, Raymond DeMattia, Linda Madsen.

**High School:** Tallmadge High School in Tallmadge, OH.

**Degrees:** B.M. (in flute performance, Kent State University, 1994); B.F.A. (in musicology, Brooklyn College, 1998).

**Most notable and personally satisfying accomplishments:** With the help of a professional teacher, finally getting her flute playing on track after a late start (at age 19 with a \$35 flute) and a dozen years of teaching herself; learning how to breathe and finding a workable embouchure. Her first Manhattan gig at the Lotus Club (in 1997); her first solo gig (at Ozzie’s Coffee and Tea in Park Slope)

**Typical practice routine:** 2-3 hours daily, warming up with Moyse and Taffanel exercises, followed by etudes and work on what is next for a lesson or rehearsal. If there’s time after this, she’ll work on improv, Latin and jazz pieces, and piano.

**Interests and hobbies:** Drawing, printmaking, painting; languages, travel, art exhibits, opera, and theater.

**Advice for members:** Having a good teacher and a good flute from the beginning are crucially important. Be prepared to spend endless hours at solitary work; reward yourself for small accomplishments. □

Austral would return there every year playing to capacity crowds until their final departure from the States in 1941.

Amadio had a flair for publicity and stagecraft. He was always flamboyantly dressed and was ever the debonair charmer. He dazzled, he was handsome. He was a true soloist and yearned for the introduction of television where he could be a showman for the masses. In the early days of recording, when the gramophone was being castigated for

jeopardizing the future of live performance, Amadio embraced it wholeheartedly as a means to a cultural end and spoke of the expressive challenges of non-visual performance. When music was still being recorded by the “acoustic process”—where the performer plays into a metal horn attached to a diaphragm, which engraved the signal onto a disc—Amadio was enthusiastic about exploring the new

(cont’d on next page)



**John Amadio***(cont'd from previous page)*

medium and was one of the first flutists with a major record deal, cutting his first disc in 1920.

Amadio, as we say in Australia, was “a character.” He was addicted to the thrill of performance, the adulation of his audience (he was a keen seducer of women), but above all else, he hungered for the adrenal hit of playing fast. He even managed to play the (six-minute-long) first movement of the Mozart D major concerto fast enough to fit on the old four-minute shellac discs. Listening to Amadio’s original recordings, one stands in awe of his technical mastery. An obvious negative criticism from the perspective of today is that Amadio tended to the frivolous, more popular repertoire, and his concern with speed diminished the emotive content of his performance. These criticisms, along with the notion that Amadio was simply a showman, seem not to be the opinion of the press at any time (or in any country) during his career.

Amadio did not record the Bach sonatas he was so passionate about (although he did broadcast them all live on radio in the

1950s), nor did he record much material demanding long cantabile lines, although

**John Amadio,**  
c. 1950



he would play a Bach *Sicilienne*, *Air on a G String* or the Schubert *Cradle Song* as an encore. His touring repertoire would include his own florid compositions which he often played on piccolo, including *The Wren* and *Fantasia of Scottish and Irish Airs*. Typically he would also choose from the Chaminade *Concertino*, a Koehler study he called *The Butterfly*, Briccialdi’s *Carnival of Venice*, Rimsky-Korsakoff’s *Flight of the Bumble Bee*, Chopin nocturnes and

“...Bach never sounded so glorious as under Amadio’s skillful fingers. His phrases were marvels of taste and smoothness; his shadings were astonishing.”

—*American Flutist*, 1928

waltzes, Paganini’s *Moto Perpetuo*, Ravel’s *Habanera*, the Doppler *Fantasy*, music by German, Reichert, Andersen, Krantz, Bridge and the Handel and Bach sonatas. With voice he would almost always perform the *Mad Scene* from Lucia. As soloist with orchestra there is only one account of his performance of the Mozart *Concerto for Flute and Harp*. Every other documented performance was of the Mozart *Concerto in D*, for which he always carried a full set of parts.

All this repertoire, including the Mozart, Amadio played at lightning pace. The fingerwork is flawless and dazzling. Nobody for whom I’ve played the recordings has heard anything akin to this seemingly superhuman agility. This is especially amazing when one remembers that the recordings were done in one take. One wonders how it is humanly possible to achieve what Amadio does in recordings such as that of Briccialdi’s *Carnival of Venice*, in which he picks out the melody in the middle to high register and is able to immediately drop to the sixty-fourth note accompanying figure in the low register, accessing it with no loss of clarity or volume at

a speed of eighth note equals 208. Much of the repertoire Amadio chose to play allowed him to demonstrate this incredible ability.

Amadio liked to be a showman even in the studio. In his recording of *The Keel Row* he changes instruments very quickly twice, beginning on what he called the alto flute, changing to C flute and then in a space of three seconds changing to piccolo with the aid of an assistant. The sound heard on the recording from the

alto flute is almost nasal but the piccolo playing is extraordinary, displaying the same amount of agility and expression as he did on C flute, which he was able to play at extreme dynamics with no loss of tonal quality.

Amadio’s technique, combined with his stage presence, had the effect of raising the level of acceptance of the flute as a solo instrument. In 1928 the *American Flutist* magazine wrote:

“*Brave old Bach never sounded so glorious as under Amadio’s skillful fingers. His phrases were marvels of taste and smoothness; his shadings were astonishing. If you ever thought the flute a cold, unsympathetic instrument, John Amadio cured you of that mistake.*”

Amadio had an extraordinary capacity for legato playing, particularly within wide intervals. He made runs sound like glissandi, playing the notes with no separation. His performance of *The Keel Row* is a great example of this. The melody is ornamented with two octave scale runs which make the flute sound like a slide whistle! Amadio also had astonishing agility when playing octaves. The Tulou studies, in which octaves are worked and reworked, have gone out of fashion now but were assiduously practiced earlier this century. Amadio would practice octaves like a singer, listening for all the pitches that were present in between. Amadio

held that one must always start playing the next note in the middle of the note before so that mentally and physically one is ahead. Listening to Amadio with this in mind, one can hear that he very slightly bends the end of a note upwards, easing it into the next, giving a seamless legato line.

Ever charming, Amadio had a keen sense of how to win an audience over, often addressing them directly and giving jovial, explanatory talks about the music on the program and each of the flutes he had with him. He loved to explain that the Bach sonatas called for wooden flute. The talks were particularly enjoyable for Australian audiences who, at the time, were accustomed to a staple diet of Wagner, Tchaikovsky, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Beethoven, Dvorak and Strauss. Amadio introduced baroque flute music to that country and further intrigued audiences by playing Bach, Handel, Gluck, Mozart and Purcell on alto flute (which he called bass flute).

Amadio was famous for carrying with him a large collection of flutes of various materials and pitches. At one point *The Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Amadio had arrived home with 33 flutes. Generally, Amadio toured with six instruments, three of which are now in the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney: a Radcliff System silver flute in B flat (Flute d'Amour), a Radcliff System alto flute in G (his "bass" flute), and Radcliff System flute in F in four pieces, made of cocus wood. This last one was his favorite, and is actually a soprano flute in E flat, the name being derived from a period when a flute's given key was determined by the note formed when the first three fingers of each hand were held down. It therefore sounded a minor third higher than the concert flute in C. Amadio regularly used the alto flute at recitals, especially in slow, popular pieces such as *Drink to Me Only* and *The Keel Row*. For the purposes of changing color he would play the flute in B flat.

With one exception, he played flutes of the Radcliff system, usually made by Rudall Carte & Co. in London. Early in his career Amadio played wooden flutes, but his orders to Rudall Carte in 1923 and 1924 were for silver. At that

time flutists in Australia and England were playing on wooden instruments whilst those in the United States were beginning to change to silver. The French had been playing almost exclusively on silver since the 1870s. There is no record of Amadio's reason for changing from wood to metal, but once he recalled an occasion in New York when the only flute he was carrying split as he took it from the cold air into a heated hotel room. A New York maker made him another in silver and guaranteed it against changes of temperature. Even long after changing to silver, Amadio used wood in preference to silver when he felt it suited the repertoire.

Amadio played with a typically English sound, which is normally characterized by an inflexible core. It has a trumpet-like solidity about it and is quite thick, produced with a tight embouchure and by blowing a lot of air. The French sound is markedly different because it was adapted earlier for silver flute, which responds to a flexible, open, supple embouchure and a less rigid airstream. Being a player of the English style, Amadio did not employ the French style vibrato in use today, although he did occasionally play with a little slow vibrato. By the early 1960s he was only using slow vibrato.

In Amadio's early performances, one can often hear a shaking of the tone which he generated in the throat. Throat-based vibrato was common practice at the time, and was primarily used as an ornament. It was considered expressive, and was identifiably English, but has now disappeared in favor of the vibrato of the French. In France, Hannebains had used the throat-based technique, but the modern French school, founded in the 1870s on the teaching of Taffanel and Gaubert, favored diaphragmatic vibrato, and it is this technique to which players all over the world aspire today. Indeed, on recordings, Gaubert still sounds like a modern player. Vibrato was not introduced to Australia until the 1930s, long after Amadio had left, when Richard Chugg brought back from Paris what was then called in the Antipodes the "French Singing Vibrato."

To today's ears, Amadio's tone seems to be produced by perhaps too forceful

an airstream, but it has to be remembered that a strong airstream was necessary on the old wooden flutes. In that style of playing the lips were drawn back a long way so that the corners of the mouth met the sides of the molars.

Amadio and Austral embarked on their last United States tour together in 1936. This was a marathon five-month tour from coast to coast which included performances by Amadio with the NBC orchestra. During that time Austral was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and the pair decided to return to their London home. Amadio played with the BBC orchestra, but his fondness for the States soon drew him back.

In 1939, two months after the outbreak of World War II, and after dodging submarines in the Atlantic, he was back, this time with the famous soprano, Lina Pagliughi. They too proved an extraordinary success at Carnegie Hall, so much so that they signed a five-year contract with NBC. Pagliughi went to Italy to see her husband just before the contract was due to commence and was unable to leave until 1945. Hence the contract was not started. Undeterred, Amadio embarked on a long tour of Canada and returned for yet more United States touring, making his final departure in 1941, when he went to England to perform with the Russian and International Ballet Companies. He performed at military installations, in factories, on war ships, and in the munitions factories. While he had applied for passage to Australia upon landing in England, his application took six years to be granted and he finally arrived "home" in 1947.

Amadio died while playing his flute on the stage at a rehearsal in Melbourne on 4 April 1964. He was eighty years old, still wore his black lace up ankle boots and still drew a crowd.

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**Ann Cecil-Sterman** is a freelance flutist living in New York. She recently moved from Australia, where she holds a six-CD solo recording contract with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, distributed by EMI. In New York she has played for CBS TV, on off-Broadway and with the Philip Glass Ensemble. □

**1999–2000 Concert Season**

**October 17, 1999** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
TIMOTHY HUTCHINS, *flute*

**November 21, 1999** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
MARK SPARKS, *flute*

**December 12, 1999** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
JOSHUA SMITH, *flute*

**January 30, 2000** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
JUBAL TRIO, Sue Ann Kahn, *flute*; Christine Schadeberg, *soprano*; Susan Jolles, *harp*

**February 27, 2000** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
PICCOLO EVENING Mary Ann Archer, *piccolo*; Jan Gippo, *piccolo*; Karen Griffen, *piccolo*

**March 19, 2000** • Concert 5:45 pm  
SIXTH ANNUAL FLUTE FAIR  
Sunday 8:30 am–7:45 pm  
Guest Artist, BONITA BOYD  
*Union Theological Seminary; 100 Claremont Ave. (between 120th & 122nd Streets)*



**April 30, 2000** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
2000 NYFC COMPETITION WINNERS  
*at The Lighthouse, 111 East 59th Street*

**May 21, 2000** • Sunday 3:00 pm  
ENSEMBLE PROGRAM CONCERT  
*at the Kaplan Space at Carnegie Hall*



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**From the Editor:**

**Greetings!** April brings you an introduction to the three Young Artists Competition winners who will be playing this month's NYFC concert: first place winner Catherine Ramirez, second place winner Sophia Anastasia, and third place winner Jessica Warren. Please join me in congratulating them and welcoming them to the Flute Club.

In place of an in-depth interview with this month's performers, we have an article by Ann Cecil-Sterman on John Amadio, the man Marcel Moyse once called "the greatest flute player who ever lived." Learn about this virtuoso flutist of the 1920s–1940s whose many performances included a New York Flute Club concert in a shared program with Georges Barrère.

I hope you enjoyed NY Flute Fair 2000 as much as I did. Ardith Bondi reports that over 500 people attended, and Renate Jaerschky tells me that we had a volunteer count of at least 36 (see page 3 for details). This month's Member Profile features one of these volunteers, Michele Smith, a recent NYFC member who some of you may have met at the Flute Fair front desk.

See you at the concert!

Regards,

**Katherine Saenger**  
*saenger@us.ibm.com*

