



The New York Flute Club

NEWSLETTER

February 2001

Meet Ransom Wilson

Interview by Ann Cecil Sterman



Ransom Wilson's career highlights are too numerous to list, and span several idioms. Ann Cecil Sterman explores both what makes this brilliant man tick, and his view of the current state of the art of the flute.

ANN CECIL STERMAN: *With the death of Rampal so recent—what were your impressions of the Master?*

RANSOM WILSON: Well, he was my teacher and I was very close to him; I was at the funeral and I'm still very close to the family. It's hard to assess what this loss means to the flute world at

this point. I think people are just beginning to respond to the fact that the man responsible for all of it is no longer with us.

What I found out when I went to France to study was that what he represented technically and flutistically was actually quite common in France—there are many people who play the instrument in the same style, with the same kind of technical brilliance that he did; from that standpoint he wasn't that uncommon. But what was uncommon was his amazing, almost God-like spirit. He could touch people because he was carrying this incredible soul.

ACS: *What was his teaching like?*

RW: It was inspiring without ever being specific. If you asked him about breathing he would just say, "Breathe!" He wanted everything in life to be a natural expression.

(Cont'd on page 4)

In Concert

Ransom Wilson, flute
James Lent, piano

February 25, 2001
Sunday 5:30 pm
CAMI Hall

Program

Sonata in F major, K 377
W. A. Mozart

Introduction and Variations on
"Trockne Blumen"
Franz Schubert

Flute Sonata (NY Premiere)
Carl Vine

The High and the Mighty,
for piccolo and piano
(NY Premiere)
Michael Daugherty

Un joueur de flûte berce
les ruines, for solo flute
Francis Poulenc

Introducción y Allegro
Carlos Guastavino

Carmen Fantasy
Bizet/Borne/Wilson

Program subject to change

You are invited

to a

Pre-Concert Ensemble Gathering

on Sunday, February 25, 2001

at the

Kaplan Space at Carnegie Hall,
from 3–5pm, prior to the 5:30 recital by
Ransom Wilson at CAMI Hall.

Contact Ardith Bondi
if you plan to attend:
ardbon@worldnet.att.net or
212-724-3869 (phone).

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2000–2001**

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From the President:

New Work in the Works

by Patricia Spencer

In the space below you will read about the untimely death of an exemplary past president of the New York Flute Club. Eleanor Lawrence will be mourned—and celebrated—in all of our hearts, and her guiding influence will be felt for many years to come. I know she would be pleased to hear this announcement about our commissioning program.

The New York Flute Club announces the selection of composer Colin Homiski to write a commissioned work to be premiered in the 2001–02 season. The new piece will be scored for flute, piccolo, slide whistle and piano. A special part of this commission will be the inclusion of a “companion” piece suitable for performance by an elementary level student.

Colin Homiski was chosen through an anonymous listening process from nominations submitted by members of the NYFC last season. His previous awards include the Tindall Hutchinson National Composers Prize for *Dance of the Broken Puppet* (scored for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano) and the Debussy Trio Foundation International Competition for *Igor’s Firecracker* (flute, viola, harp), among many others.

We thank all of you who submitted nominations, and advise everyone to be on the alert for announcements about the next round of commissioning. □

Eleanor Lawrence

(1936–2001)

We are sad to announce the death of Eleanor Lawrence, who served the club ably and loyally as three-term president, member of the board of directors and advisory board, and frequent performer at our concerts over a period of some thirty-five years. Eleanor died on January 16 after a long battle with brain cancer. A graduate of Radcliffe College and the New England Conservatory of Music, she studied flute with James Pappoutsakis, William Kincaid, and Marcel Moyse and was one of the founders and a past president of the Marcel Moyse Society. She taught at the Manhattan School of Music and played with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra and the American Symphony Orchestra. Eleanor was the founder and artistic director of the Monomoy Chamber Ensemble on Cape Cod and for the last two years presented the ensemble in a series of New York concerts. She also performed as soloist with the Boston Pops and at Alice Tully Hall.

Eleanor produced a two-hour videotape on which she teaches all of Moyse’s *24 Petites Etudes Mélodiques*. Her recordings include *French Music for Flute and Voice* (with Bethany Beardslee), *The Complete Flute Works of Paul Hindemith*, and *Music for Flute and Piano* (including the *Aria* and *Passacaglia* by Dohnanyi, which are dedicated to her). Her last CD, *Flute Favorites*, includes a selection of short pieces from the teaching repertoire. Eleanor coordinated *The Best of Marcel Moyse*, a CD soon to be released by the Marcel Moyse Society.

Also active in the National Flute Association, she was for many years the editor of the *National Flute Association Newsletter*, for which she conducted now-historic interviews with many of the leading flutists of our time. □

—Nancy Toff

Member Profile

Marya Martin

*NYFC Member
since 1990*



Employment: Solo flutist and chamber musician; artistic director of the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival; member of Windscape (a woodwind quintet); teacher at the Manhattan School of Music and Boston University's School for the Arts.

A recent performance/recital:

Performing with Windscape on November 17–19, 2000 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (in NY) and the Freer Gallery (in Washington, D.C.). The program, called "The Floating World," was made up of French and Japanese music (arranged by members of the group) chosen to illustrate the influence of the East on the West, and vice versa, in both art and music. The music (which included Takemitsu's *Rain Sketch #2* and Debussy's Piano Preludes, *La Pagodes*) was accompanied by projections of over 200 thematically-related Japanese and French art works.

Career highlights: Winning the Young Concert Artists International Competition (1978), the Concert Artists Guild Competition (1978), and being a top prize winner in the Naumburg Competition (1977), the Munich International Competition (1978), and the Jean-Pierre Rampal International Competition (1979). Later, performing duos and trios in Avery Fisher Hall with Rampal and Julius Baker (in 1980), and performing the Cimarosa Concerto for two flutes with James Galway for eight performances touring New Zealand (in 1983). A joint performance with Rampal in 1990 at the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival (which she founded). Commissioning and playing the world premieres of works by Ned Rorem, Bruce Adolphe, Kenji Bunch, Bruce MacCombie, Derek Bermel, David Shoal, and Paul Moravec.

Current flute: Gold Brannen Cooper #188 (made by Bick Brannen and purchased in 1979), used with a Rainer Lafin gold headjoint (purchased in 1983).

Influential teachers: Thomas Nyfenger, Jean-Pierre Rampal and James Galway.

High School: Epsom Girls Grammar School, Auckland, New Zealand.

Degrees: B.M. [University of Auckland, New Zealand, 1976] and M.M. [Yale University, 1979].

Most notable and/or personally satisfying accomplishments: Spending an entire year studying with Rampal at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique in Paris; founding the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, now in its 18th year. On a more personal level, the birth of her two daughters, now twelve and fifteen, which she says "was (and continues to be) the most amazing experience of my life."

Favorite practice routines: To warm up, she plays soulful melodies to encourage the air to flow freely. Then she plays a couple of long tones to rein in the sound and fine-tune the control. She also enjoys creating drills that will challenge her—a current favorite concentrates on double-tonguing groupings of five and seven. She explains that groups of two, three, four, and six have all become an automatic technical and rhythmical part of our playing. However, playing the same scales (be they Moysse or Taffanel) at the same speed, but grouped in fives or sevens, is more difficult, and leads to a stronger and more flexible technique.

Interests/bobbies: Traveling with her husband and two daughters—going to new places, meeting new people and absorbing new experiences. Entertaining (casual style preferred!) and spending time with the interesting people she's met. She also loves fashion design (past and present) and vintage textiles.

Advice: Find your own voice and follow it. □

FLUTE HAPPENINGS

F E B R U A R Y

February 4, 2001

Sunday 4:00 pm

Recital by Ana Berschadsky, piano; Joanna Hoty Russell, mezzo-soprano; **Virginia Schulze-Johnson**, flute. Works by Bach, Bizet, Hoover, Schumann, and Strauss.

• *Brothers College Chapel, Drew University, Madison, NJ* • *Donation at the door.*

February 25, 2001

Sunday 5:00 pm

"UpTown Flutes" (a flute octet with **Carla Auld, Elise Carter, Melissa Chiarolanzio, Patricia Davila, Jeanne Fessenden, Marcia Hankle, John McMurtery, and Virginia Schulze-Johnson**) performing "20th Century Blowout," featuring works by Hoover, Bozza, Boone, Wells, Schocker, and more.

• *Nicolas Music Center, Rutgers University—Douglass Campus, New Brunswick, NJ*
• *Donation at the door.*

M A R C H

March 9, 2001

Friday 8:00 pm

The OMNI ENSEMBLE continues its 18th season with a concert featuring music by Schickele, Haydn, Barber, and Wechsler performed by **David Wechsler**, flute/midi wind controller, Sara Wollan, cello, and Michael Rose, piano/synthesizer.

• *Brooklyn Conservatory of Music, 58 7th Avenue at Lincoln Place in Park Slope, Brooklyn, NY* • *Admission \$10 general; \$8 students/seniors* • *Info: 718-859-8649.*

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Patricia Harper is hosting a guest masterclass by Mary Karen Clardy on Wednesday, February 21, 2001 from 4–6 pm at Evans Hall, Connecticut College, New London, CT. Info, call 860-739-2719.

The 7th Annual New Jersey Flute Choir Day for flutists of all ages will be held on Saturday March 24, 2001 from 9:30 am to 6 pm. The commissioned work, *Renaissance for a New Millennium* by Ricky Lombardo, will be premiered at final concert. \$60 for the day (includes T-shirts). Drew University and Grace Church, Madison, NJ. Contact: **Virginia Schulze-Johnson**, director, 973-408-3428 or vschulze@drew.edu.

Deadlines for Flute Happenings

Issue	Deadline	Mail Date
March 2001	02/08/01	02/26/01
April 2001	03/22/01	04/09/01
May 2001	04/19/01	05/07/01

Ransom Wilson

(Cont'd from page 1)

ACS: How would you compare the French style with the American style of flute playing today?

RW: I just gave a big masterclass at Juilliard the day before yesterday, and that was exactly the theme of the whole class. I'd chosen all the French Conservatory pieces as the theme, because those pieces and the way they were intended to be played are so little understood in this country. That is radical to say. But I participate in many international juries—I'm going to be at Kobe this summer, for example—and I feel a lot of patriotic pride about Americans and Canadians. I'm always hoping that there will be a North American who will wow everybody [and] be better than everybody else, but there never is.

ACS: What do you attribute that to?

RW: They always—and I'm sure that I seemed this way when I first arrived in France as well—seem under-educated. They seem incredibly talented but very inconsistent and undisciplined and willful.

ACS: How would you remedy that?

RW: Well, at Yale I remedy that! I had had the best training available in the

United States when I went to France and I wouldn't trade that for anything else. But what I was lacking, even with all the best available training—I studied with Julius Baker and Arthur Lora and Philip Dunigan—was basic skills.

ACS: Such as?

RW: Such as consistency of articulation, consistency of dynamics, consistency of color, consistency of style and knowledge of style, and all of those

“My biography looks more like that of an

things that are just part of an education in Europe, particularly in France and Germany. Having said that, very often the French-German players lack an individual personality, so I really think that the best combination is both. I urge Americans who are serious about competing at an international level to go and study in Europe as I did. I also urge Europeans to come here and study.

ACS: To get a balance in what respect?

RW: So they can find out what it means to be an individual. The greatest of them are going to succeed anyway. But the more influences you have, the better you're going to be, particularly if you're going to compete or communicate internationally. I have a perfect example [at Yale]: we have an exchange program with the Paris Conservatory. It's a pilot program, but we've had two people on each side go in the other direction. So I've had two of the Paris Conservatory students in my class for the past two years, which is very exciting because their basic skills are so well developed. They can play faster, cleaner, louder, more accurately, more beautifully than anyone else; it's astonishing to hear. But when they come to their lesson and ask what we're going to work on and my answer is, “What would you like to work on?” they have this kind of panic. That's never been an option for them and so they learn a great deal from it. Unfortunately, I have to say in both cases (and these are brilliant players—they will be famous), one of the things that happened to them was that they got lazy and they began doing shocking things

like coming unprepared to lessons—things that I expect from the Americans.

ACS: And when they return to France?

RW: Oh, it gets completely beaten out of them.

ACS: But they retain the individuality they gained.

RW: Yeah, and they talk so fondly of their time here—they had no idea of what it would really be like. Their

impression of America is from film and however accurate that might be it isn't the same as being here.

ACS: Is there a technical hallmark of the American player?

RW: I think one of the things that we do at least as well as anyone else in the world and perhaps better, is that we produce a really big round sound. I would say that probably comes from Baker's influence. He was the first one to really develop a consistently big, beautiful sound.

ACS: Have you been able to work out the exact technicalities of that? Because we know that he's made copious notes on that very topic. Are you able to put it on paper?

RW: I don't know about on paper. I can certainly teach it, and do all the time—but it's too long—it would take a book. Maybe when I'm 70.

ACS: Speaking about national characteristics, you play a Japanese flute. I was curious about that.

RW: I always have, ever since I was at Juilliard. I had a Powell for a while. I'm not very flute-centric. There are a lot of good instruments out there now and I may change some day. I've played this for a long time. I think that Sankyo has perhaps the most solid mechanism in the world. Nothing ever goes wrong with them. Everyone else I know, no matter how great their flute is, [needs] little adjustments made constantly, and that never happens to me.

ACS: Can I ask you what head you have on it, because people often change the heads on Sankyos.

RW: Yes, I have the new RS1.

CLASSIFIED

New CD—“Sound and Repercussion”

Contemporary compositions for solo flute merging the traditions of European modernism and world folk music. Works of Matthus, Takemitsu, Arnaoudov, Vali, and Yun performed by flutist **Linda Wetherill** in a recording praised by Fanfare. Order from www.amazon.com or contact Linda Wetherill at Muzarte@msn.com.

New CD—“CONSPIRARE”—Patti Monson

performing chamber music for solo flute. Compositions of Steve Reich, Robert Dick, Martin Bresnick, Harold Meltzer, Kaija Saariaho, and Jennifer Higdon. Available now from CRI (Composers Recordings, Inc.) at 212-941-9673 or www.composersrecordings.com, or from www.amazon.com.

Members may advertise in this section for \$10 for up to 320 characters/spaces. Your ad should be submitted by hard copy or e-mail. 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.

ACS: Which has a slight wave in the plate.

RW: Yes, very slight. I think the wave is just a hold-over from their basic design, because it doesn't have to be there any more. [It's] basically a high chimney which all the companies have. The Powell Boston is also a high chimney.

ACS: I'd like to ask you about flute colors. In one web bio you mention your time at the Kirov Opera, and how

2001 FLUTE FAIR

Masterclass

LINDA CHESIS, MARYA MARTIN and ROBERT STALLMAN will be conducting a Rampal-style masterclass at the Flute Fair on March 11, 2001. Anyone interested in playing for the class must contact Rie Schmidt (rieschmidt@juno.com) or Bärli Nugent (212-749-0097) and submit a cassette tape of contrasting selections up to 10 minutes in length, along with a bio and completed flute fair registration form. **Deadline: 5:00pm February 23rd.** □

18th century musician than a 20th century musician...”—Ransom Wilson

impressed you were that Gergiev was very particular about the delineation of the voice of each instrument. How might the flute player participate in the worldwide de-homogenization process of the orchestral flute sound, should there be one?

RW: I think it's very interesting that all of a sudden the two major orchestra positions in America [in the NY Philharmonic and the Chicago Symphony] are held by French people. I saw it coming for a long time. Whereas we talk about the fact that all the French players sound alike and you go to the Paris Conservatory and you hear factory of great technicians and nothing more—here we are in a situation where the orchestras can't seem to find in America a flute player they like and they want French people instead. I think it's very curious that the Americans are trying to play the excerpts perfectly and yet [Mathieu Dufour] arrives in Chicago and the only complaint about him [is] that he's never played these pieces before! And he's wonderful—that's not a criticism at all. I find it curious that things have changed in that way. I think it's a good sign. I wish that it was Americans taking all those jobs; I don't like the idea of giving them away to people who are not American. Langevin's Canadian. (He trained in France.) I think that's very interesting. I think that—this is a bit radical—the whole process of orchestral auditions is flawed, and that it forces us towards homogenization—towards the lowest common denominator.

ACS: How would you change that?

RW: I don't have a solution—it's just my observation that the normal audition process for orchestras tends to reduce people to sameness.

ACS: Would you do one elimination round and then put everyone in the section?

RW: I don't know—it's complicated; there's a whole union issue. But in the old days when it was only the music director making the choices, all the orchestras sounded different. Now it's a committee of players and everybody sounds the same. I wouldn't want a situation where it was only the music director making the choice—that

doesn't seem fair to me; it doesn't seem American, but I don't know what the answer is. Certainly this isn't working.

ACS: I wanted to ask you about [Leonard] Bernstein and whether he shaped your flute playing in any way.

RW: Yeah! I think he did! I've never known anyone like him before. He's the most creative person I've ever been around. When he couldn't sleep at night he would get up and write poetry. Everyone else I know either watches TV or reads a book. He was always trying to extend his brain. He played word games all the time because he wanted to keep his brain working. There is some evidence that

(Cont'd on next page)

MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

Unpublished Practice Drills

IN THIS MONTH'S Member Profile, we learn that Marya Martin enjoys creating challenging practice drills for herself, and that a current favorite involves double-tonguing groupings of five and seven. That got me wondering about all the other interesting unpublished exercises that might be floating around out there. What non-standard drills do *you* find useful for yourself and/or your students? What clever routines are good for nailing down those perennial problem passages that just don't seem to get good enough with slow repetitive practice? Submissions can be exercises you've invented yourself, or ones handed down from a teacher. Let us know—and send the exercise in on manuscript paper (or as a midi file) if it makes things easier to explain.

Readers 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.

Ransom Wilson

(Cont'd from previous page)

active brain work delays the onset of senility or Alzheimer's disease and he was obsessed with that. I know, because he taught me those word games so he could play them with me on the road, and they're very, very difficult. So with that in mind I would say, yes, he had a huge influence and continues to have a huge influence on me.

ACS: You're quoted as saying, "...Different timbres, bright, dark, focussed, diffused, produce various tone colors and subtle shadings that change the meaning of things, and that became my trademark." Did you consciously pursue those qualities, or did they arise from your training in an unexpected way?

RW: I would say both. Maurice Ravel used to say that one learns first by imitation and then if one has something to say, it will emerge. I think in the early years I was trying very hard to imitate Jean-Pierre. He was a very colorful player but I don't think the instinct for coloration comes from imitation. I think that was always there. I have to credit my very first teacher, Sandra Taylor. She talked about color from the first lesson! I had no idea what she was talking about. It was something that was very important to her and she would say, "Now when you play this next phrase, it should be that if somebody were standing outside they would think that there were two different flute players in the room." And that I could understand. I was about twelve years old.

ACS: Was she French-trained?

RW: No, she studied with Betty Bang (now Mather) at the University of Iowa.

ACS: What did you commission from Francaix?

RW: It wasn't a commission per se; it was [an orchestration of] the *Divertimento* for flute and piano which he did for me. For some reason [the orchestration] is not well-known, although it's a much better piece with orchestra. It's [for] a very small orchestra, and it was done for me and Orpheus; I was a member at the time. The flute part is changed slightly. A lot of people have been asking me to see if I can get the

recording we did for the Musical Heritage Society re-released.

ACS: You're quoted as saying, "A Mozart piano concerto is the ultimate instrumental music." How do you reconcile your fondness for commissioning with your preference for the classics?

RW: It's not that I prefer the classics—it's that I prefer great music and flute repertoire does not have very much of it so I'm constantly looking (as are people like Carol Wincenc) for the opportunity to add another great piece to the repertoire for future generations. Unfortunately, our Mozart concertos are not among his greatest concertos.

ACS: Unlike the clarinet concerto.

RW: Exactly. We do have the Nielsen which I think is a masterpiece. We have the Martin *Ballade*, the Dutilleux *Sonatine* and the Prokofiev *Sonata*, the Schubert...I feel like I haven't done nearly enough commissioning but what I've done is to try to identify composers that would add a great piece of repertoire like Steve Reich did. Aaron Kernis is writing a concerto for me and I think that may very likely be the one that I've been looking for in terms of a concerto.

ACS: How do you think late 20th century music and early 21st century music will be viewed by future generations?

RW: It's so hard to say because there are so many different things happening now. I think the very end of the 20th century might be viewed as a curiosity because it looks backwards so much. I'm really glad that it does. Things had gone way beyond my interest; I've never understood the necessity for the twelve-tone system—I just always thought it was a waste of time. The music that was written in twelve-tone almost never touches me. I've said this in Germany, and gotten a lot of heat for it.

ACS: Even the Schoenberg *Kammersymphonie*?

RW: They're OK. I'd much rather listen to early Stravinsky or late John Adams than listen to that crap. Sorry, but I can't stand it.

ACS: Can you talk about your arrangements of Ravel's Greek Songs? That sounds like a dramatic undertaking.

RW: Well they're little pieces. It wasn't like trying to do one of the piano works but I since did another one: *Piece en form de Habanera*. I did it for Jean-Pierre to play but he was too sick and never played it. I was very pleased [that] when we did it the orchestra thought it was a Ravel arrangement. It was the highest compliment. Mind you, I don't pretend to be as brilliant a man as Ravel, but I can do a pretty good impersonation of his orchestrational style.

ACS: You've said that Bernstein's ability to find a unique point of view was significant to you. How do you go about finding a unique point of view when performing music by people like Reich and Adams?

RW: It's hard with something brand new to have enough perspective to know. Maybe my approach to the Reich will be different than (for example) Robert Aitkens' approach to the Reich, but I think that's due to the difference in our view of music in general. I just conducted *Eight Lines* again for the first time in almost 20 years (at a school in CA), and because of how I feel about the music I was able to make it work with 16-year-old kids. They were wonderful kids, but when I got there it wasn't working. What Lenny was so amazing at [was] finding the key to a phrase and then working backwards from that. He would try to find the big question that a phrase posed, and in performance try to answer that question. He called it the Talmudic approach.

ACS: You liken your breathing to "sleight of hand."

RW: Well, a lot of people will approach breathing as an athletic event—you know: "I've gotta make it to the end of the first two lines," and then they stop, take huge breath a go on. My approach has always been to try to sneak them in so that no one could tell. It's something I learned from Jean-Pierre, who was the Master. You never, ever heard him breathe. He would take little sips along the way; he rarely would stop and tank up.

ACS: Rampal was a large man—do you think he gained any advantage from that?

RW: Perhaps, although he always would say that he felt that he had a small capacity and he certainly didn't try to extend his capacity very [much]. Very

often the students in the class could play much longer phrases. He just never developed that. He liked the idea of deftly fitting the breath into the phrase so that they felt so natural that no one noticed them. [That's] what I try to teach to my students.

ACS: What do you think is your greatest responsibility as a teacher?

RW: I'm lucky that I teach the age group I prefer...

ACS: College-age, obviously.

RW: No, even later. I teach only graduate students. I have them at the very end of their school time and I love that because it's the point when they're having to try to define their own way of playing and become their own teachers. Something I can really help them with [is] the psychology of finding their own voice and then maintaining the quality of their playing without the help of a teacher. I think that even if I were teaching younger people, my biggest responsibility would be to help them find their individual voice while meeting the highest possible standard.

ACS: What aspects of psychology are you focussing on?

RW: I try to help with psychological barriers. I still feel that I'm overcoming barriers in my own playing, and that overcoming those things—like fear—has made me get better. So I try to help people overcome their fear of failure in a passage, feelings of inability to make a long phrase, feelings of embarrassment in public, problems with memorizing. One assumes that by the time they're 21 years old they've pretty much learned to play the flute. I can help them to play better, but I'm not having to teach them their scales.

ACS: What's your opinion about the status of flute teaching in the States in general?

RW: It seems pretty good these days. I'm receiving students from all parts of the country and they seem fairly well prepared. There's a lot of good stuff happening out there. My point of view is pretty particular, because most Americans are not trying to have an international career. For those who are,

there's a particular path I feel they need to follow, at least for a while, to find out what the international standards are.

ACS: Your career has been vast and varied—I wonder how you'd like to be remembered?

RW: I don't know. My biography looks more like that of an 18th century musician than a 20th century musician because there's so much specialization now. But frankly, I began to get bored. It's not that by sticking only to the flute I couldn't have played better and better. I don't play nearly as well as I could...

ACS: Really?

RW: No, I'm too lazy. I feel I had reached the point where I had to do something different because I was too bored. Having worked as a conductor has particularly helped me enrich my playing. Now I like my playing better because it's more influenced by other things. I don't mean that to sound like I'm better than everyone else; it's just what I needed to do for my playing because I was bored with my playing. I think [if I were remembered as] an all-round musician that would be fine.

ACS: I'm sure everyone asks you which you would choose if you had to.

RW: I haven't had to choose and that's a good thing. I'm in line for two music director positions right now and if I were to win one of them I might have to seriously cut back on playing. It hasn't come up yet—I'm able to do a lot of things and I never get bored any more.

ACS: Have you parachuted yet?

RW: I did! One of my former students took me skydiving. I don't think I'll do it again. I was doing a tandem dive with an instructor and had he not been there I'd be dead now because I forgot to pull the cord; I was having too much fun. There's no sensation of falling which is interesting, because you have no horizontal reference until the very end when the earth suddenly rushes up to you.

ACS: And as a gardener, I have to ask you, what's in your garden at the moment?

RW: Not a whole lot! I have a bonsai collection that I work on. The Japanese

Hawaiians [have] a whole different approach to it, and I have several tropical bonsai going at the moment. I'm always experimenting with different plants.

ACS: Would you like the reader to hear anything about the February 25th program?

RW: There are two really interesting pieces on it. One of the composers you would probably know, Carl Vine.

ACS: Fantastic! He's my favorite Australian composer.

RW: I just conducted the U.S. premiere of his piano concerto. There's a new piccolo piece, too, [by] Michael Daugherty, called *The High and the Mighty*.

ACS: Thanks for taking the time to talk. It's been wonderful.

RW: Thank you. It's one of the best interviews I ever remember having. □

Ann Cecil Sterman is a freelance flutist living in Manhattan. She has four best-selling solo CDs released on the ABC label in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong.

STOLEN: Burkart-Phelan, Inc. had the majority of its headjoint stock and a prototype piccolo stolen while on a sales trip. They were checked as baggage in Boston and never arrived in Texas. The headjoints will probably still have the labels at the top of the headjoint by the crown stating the styles and wall thickness of the headjoints.

Info, contact Tim Bower
(tim@burkart.com):

Burkart-Phelan Inc.
20 Main Street
Acton, MA 01720
PH (978) 263-7177
FAX (978) 263-8187.


2000–2001 Concert Season

October 22, 2000 • Sunday 5:30 pm
PAIGE BROOK MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

November 12, 2000 • Sunday 5:30 pm
ROBERT LANGEVIN, flute

December 10, 2000 • Sunday 5:30 pm
INTO THE MILLENNIUM
The "Best of the New"—Highlights from recent repertoire

January 28, 2001 • Sunday 5:30 pm
FLUTE FORCE: Sheryl Henze, Gretchen Pusch, Rie Schmidt, and Wendy Stern, flutes



February 25, 2001 • Sunday 5:30 pm
RANSOM WILSON, flute
CAMI Hall, 165 West 57th Street

March 11, 2001 • Sunday 9:00 am–8:00 pm
Seventh Annual FLUTE FAIR
Remembering JEAN-PIERRE RAMPAL
Union Theological Seminary; 100 Claremont Ave. (between 120th & 122nd Streets)

April 22, 2001 • Sunday 5:30 pm
2001 NYFC COMPETITION WINNERS

May 20, 2001 • Sunday 5:00 pm
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Concerts are at CAMI Hall, 165 West 57th Street, unless otherwise noted. All programs are subject to change. Tickets \$10, only at the door; free to members. For more information, call (212)799-0448.

February 2001



From the Editor:

Greetings! February's concert features flutist/conductor Ransom Wilson. In this newsletter issue, Ann Cecil Serman probes Ransom's opinions on the state of American flute playing in an exceptionally stimulating interview (the best he remembers ever having!). Check it out.

Marya Martin is this month's Member Profile subject. Like Ransom Wilson, she was a student of Jean-Pierre Rampal, and greatly influenced by him. You can hear more from her about Rampal at the Flute Fair on March 11. And speaking of the flute fair, a few reminders. By now, you should have received your Flute Fair program and registration forms, and, in a separate mailing, applications for the Young Artists Competition (contact: Patricia Zuber at pgzuber@idt.net or 201-750-7989). Participant slots for the Rampal-style masterclass are still open (contact: Rie Schmidt at rieschmidt@juno.com or Bärlü Nugent at 212-749-0097). And don't forget to volunteer as a Flute Fair helper (contact: Renate Jaerschky at 914-368-1749).

I'm in the process of lining up articles for our April and May issues. Please contact me if there's a flute-related topic you'd like to read (or write) about. I can always write something myself—but the topic I have in mind (the *real* reason why flutes get flat when they're cold—with just a *few* simple equations) should surely be enough to encourage some alternative suggestions.

On a more somber note, past Flute Club President Eleanor Lawrence died on January 16th (see obituary by Nancy Toff on p. 2). At the January 28th concert, Nancy spoke of Eleanor's long association with the flute club, and her kindness to newcomers. I became acquainted with Eleanor in the early '70s, around the time she began her first term as president. I was still a teenager, and playing in a NYFC-arranged flute quartet with several of her students. She took our group under her wing—even me, and she didn't even know me!—and made us feel like we were important to the Club and had something valuable to contribute. That feeling stayed with me for many years, and I like to think that it is one of the reasons that I am your Newsletter Editor today, a generation later.

Best regards,

Katherine Saenger
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