



The New York Flute Club

NEWSLETTER

May 2003



In Concert

NYFC ENSEMBLES IN CONCERT

Rochelle Itzen, Coordinator
Sunday, **May 11, 2003**, 4:00 pm
Kaplan Space at Carnegie Hall

Sonata, Op. 2, No.2 G. Ph. Telemann
Largo—Allegro
Lauren Bennett and Ed Wolf, flutes

Badinage J.S. Bach
*George Kimmel, William Dickerson,
Petra Groeneveldt, Joanne Wong,
Laurie Uguccioni, Danielle Leon,
Rochelle Itzen, and
Andrew Bolotowsky, flutes*

Grand Trio, Op. 87 L. van Beethoven
Adagio cantabile—Presto
*Kaylyn Kinney, Nicole Grant, and
Jennifer Ackerson, flutes*

Four Pieces Louis Moyses
III. Music box—IV. Dances
*Ann Bordley, Nina Attar, and
Ed Wolf, flutes; Ed Christie, piano*

Andante and Rondo,
Op.25 Franz Doppler
*Carol Weinstein and Jennifer Ackerson,
flutes; Nelson Padgett, piano*

Serenade (1960) Ingolf Dahl
Alla Marcia—Cadenza—Canon—
Pas de Quatre—Alla Marcia
*Craig Devereaux, Rana Boland,
Shoji Mizumoto, and Dorothy Papo, flutes*

Season Finale for all (TBA)
Rochelle Itzen, conductor

Reception to follow
*(coordinated by Beatrice Strauss,
please call her at 718-859-5280)*

Program subject to change

(Group Biographies on page 4)

KEITH UNDERWOOD: Above and Under Ground

Interview by Ann Cecil-Sterman

Keith Underwood is one of the United States' most innovative and gifted flute teachers. He also has a reputation for being one of the most enigmatic and elusive. In this, his very first interview, Mr. Underwood explains why he was underground for so many years, and laughs a lot about why he wants to return there. The interview took place in my living room since Keith and my husband Andrew Sterman have been close friends for decades. When he arrived he saw three pieces of music on the music stand—the Saint-Saëns Air de Ballet, Dinicu's Hora Staccato, and the Handel sonatas—and declaimed with enormous enthusiasm:

KEITH UNDERWOOD: Well that says a lot right there. Three *incredible* recordings. Gaubert [Air de Ballet], Baker [Hora] and Rampal [Handel]. Oh, man!...

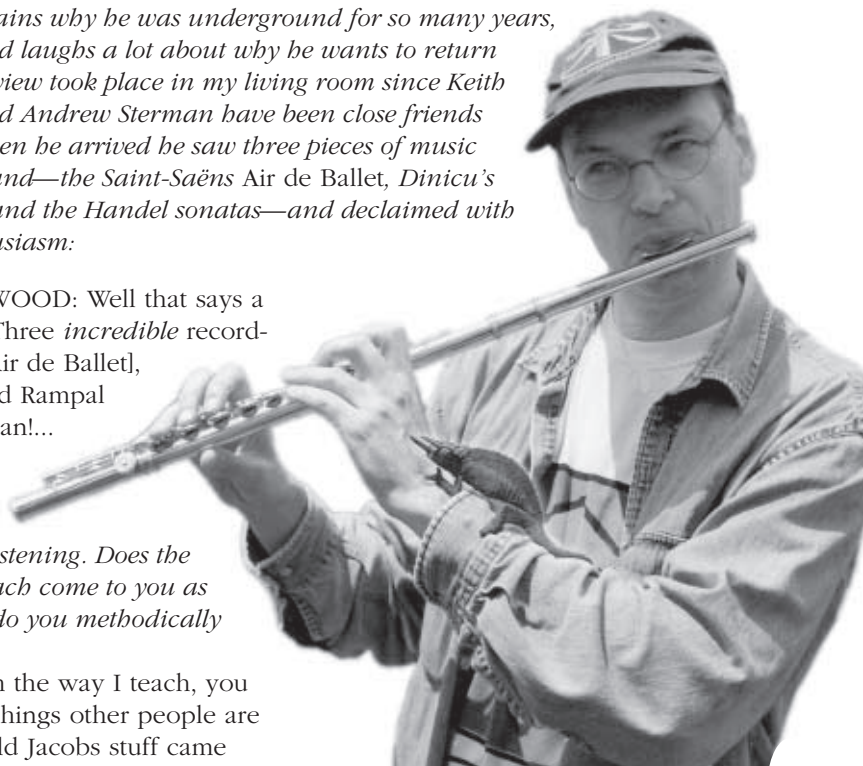
ANN CECIL-STERMAN:

You're always listening. Does the material you teach come to you as inspiration? or do you methodically work it out?

KU: If you teach the way I teach, you hear about the things other people are doing. My Arnold Jacobs stuff came from knowing brass players. If you teach body awareness—making people aware of what the moving parts of the body are and how they align—people will come up to you and tell you things. If you teach brass players and you say "You don't have to strain your embouchure if you use it this way and put your tongue this way," they'll tell you to talk to this guy because he's thinking the way you're thinking.

You're influenced heavily by Jacobs. Yes. I would like to have met him, but I never did. I learned a lot of what I know about his [ideas on wind use]

(Cont'd on page 4)



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THE NEW YORK FLUTE CLUB INC.

2002–2003

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Paige Brook	1960–1963
Mildred Hunt Wummer	1963–1964
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Harry H. Moskovitz	1967–1970
Paige Brook	1970–1973
Eleanor Lawrence	1973–1976
Harold Jones	1976–1979
Eleanor Lawrence	1979–1982
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End-of-Year Reflections

Dear Friends: *by Jayn Rosenfeld*



From the President

This is the last letter of our season, and I find it hard to convey to you how much I have learned about flutists and clubs and the Flute Club this year. It has all been good!

About flutists I have learned: we are a noisy bunch, full of ideas, convictions and energy. The Board meetings are focused and constructive. No wall flowers here! And more jokers than you might think.

About clubs I have learned: a club is as strong as its sense of mission and its volunteers. The mission of our club is clear to all, I believe: we want to enhance the musical part of our members' lives, their learning, listening, and sharing. And our volunteers—the Board and all the other helpers who enable the club's activities—are superlative. While you have probably heard me say this already, I will say it again: if you wish to join this dedicated group, you are more than welcome.

About our Flute Club: this is a very healthy organization. Things are being planned and happening all the time. We look forward to new concerts and projects, at the same time that we look backwards to the vision of Georges Barrère and the generosity of the people who have run the Club over the years. I feel I should thank all of you for the opportunity to be a part of this wonderful community.

On May 11 we will have the last meeting of the season, with an ensemble concert, the annual meeting, and a reception. Please come, vote for our new slate, and if you care to, bring a delicious contribution to the party. Thank you.

Have a good summer — Jayn



Ensemble Concert Group Biographies

The Jennifer Ackerson, Carol Weinstein, and Nelson Padgett trio:

Jennifer Ackerson, an elementary school music teacher, and Carol Weinstein, a physician, met through the NYFC ensemble program, and play in local ensembles as often as possible. Since meeting, they have attended several masterclasses together, including Julius Baker's. They met Nelson Padgett, a professional pianist, through Linda Mark.

The Craig Devereaux, Rana Boland, Shoji Mizumoto, and Dorothy Papo quartet:

The group started as a trio 3 1/2 years ago, when they met through the NYFC. They met Shoji Mizumoto at a NYFC ensemble gathering a year later, and have been a quartet ever since. Their common bond is that they all love 20th century flute music, and have always played flute quartets from this period (Bozza, Bennett, and now Dabl).

George Kimmel, William Dickerson, Petra Groeneveldt, Joanne Wong, Danielle Leon, Laurie Ugucconi, Rochelle Itzen, and Andrew Bolotowsky ensemble:

This group met at a NYFC ensembles gathering.

The Lauren Bennett/Ed Wolf duo:

The duo met while playing flute together in a Brooklyn community orchestra. Lauren Bennett, a native of Sarasota, FL, holds a B.M. in flute performance from DePauw University and works at Young Concert Artists. Ed Wolf, a former preparatory department student at Eastman, has physics degrees from Swarthmore and Cornell.

The Nina Attar, Ann Bordley, Ed Wolf, and Ed Christie quartet:

The quartet started when Ann's flute teacher, Susan Friedlander, introduced her to Ed Wolf. All amateurs (Ann is an attorney with the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, Ed is a physics professor), the group now includes Ed Christie, a computer programmer who has a degree in music from Brooklyn College, and Nina Attar, a flutist with the Albert Einstein Symphony Orchestra.

Member Profile

Jim Blair

NYFC member
since 1995



Employment: Litigation lawyer at Wolman, Babitt & King, LLP; treasurer of New York Flute Club.

Most recent recital/performance:

Playing "Simple Gifts" at the baptism of a cousin in Cleveland, and performing in Christmas day concert at the Church of Christ the King, Stone Ridge, NY, both in 2001.

Career highlight(s): Performing with the spring tour of the Dartmouth College Band (1959), and playing a bagpipe chanter on Polaris submarine patrols (1965-67). Membership in the John Phillip Sousa Post #1112 of the American Legion (1989-) and playing piccolo in the lawyers' orchestra of the Association of the Bar of the City of NY (1995-6). His two paid gigs with the Local 802 band in a Flag Day concert at the World Trade Center (1990) and a Labor Day parade (1991); participating in Jayn Rosenfeld's ensemble workshops (2000-2001) and organizing the Rondout Trio (flute, cello, piano) in Stone Ridge in 2002.

Current flute: A French-model silver Haynes with B-foot (#47360), bought in the 1970s during a flush period of his second bachelorhood; Yamaha YPC-61 piccolo and Armstrong Model 25 alto.

Influential flute teachers:

Francis Taylor (Sergeant, U.S. Army Band ("Pershing's Own"), Fort Myers, VA); Pat Spencer, Jeff Weissman, and Jayn Rosenfeld.

High School: Groveton High School in Alexandria, VA.

Degrees: A.B. [Mathematics, Dartmouth College 1962]; Reactor Operator's License [Atomic Energy Commission, 1965]; J.D. [Harvard Law School, 1970].

Most notable and/or personally satisfying accomplishment(s): Getting his vibrato together after 50 years of flute playing. Learning the piccolo part to "Stars and Stripes" (a protracted effort over several weeks) without driving his wife crazy; playing duets with daughter Hilary. The awareness (at the advanced age of 62!) that "not only is there a great deal left for me to learn about the flute (no surprise!), but that I am capable of learning some of it."

Favorite practice routines: In Jim's words, "Practice is such a luxury that it can't bear serious efforts to describe it." His hypothetical perfect practice routine would begin with some long tones and scales, continue with something from Moyse's *Tone Development Through Interpretation* and an exercise from Taffanel and Gaubert or Maquarre. Then he'd practice pieces for his trio and try a favorite Bach sonata. His ideal vacation would allow him at least 30 minutes of practicing each day; everyday real life leaves him feeling very lucky if he gets this twice a week.

Interests/hobbies: Other than the flute, fixing cars, things, bicycles and a handyman's paradise in Ulster County; XC skiing and bicycle riding; singing bass in his church choir and a neighborhood chorus.

Advice for NYFC members: (i) Appreciate the awesome amount of work done by the volunteer members of the NYFC that make it function; (ii) get involved in some at least semi-serious singing. Jim says, "My biggest advances in breath control and tone have come when I was working on them in both flute playing and choral singing." □

FLUTE HAPPENINGS

MAY '03

MAY
21

Wednesday 8:00 pm

The Sylan Winds with **Svjetlana Kabalin**, flute, will perform a program of wind masterpieces featuring Richard Strauss' Suite in B \flat Major, Op. 4 (conducted by flutist Ransom Wilson), Elliott Carter's Wind Quintet, Mozart's Serenade No. 11 in E \flat Major (K. 375), and Beethoven's Quintet for oboe, bassoon and 3 horns (Hess 19).

• Weill Recital Hall, 154 West 57th Street (at 7th Avenue), NYC • Admission \$20/\$25 general, \$10 students/seniors • Info, sylvanwinds@att.net or call 212-222-3569.

MAY
31

Saturday 8:30 pm

Artist International presents Eight Strings and a Whistle with **Suzanne Gilcrest**, flute, Ina Litera, viola, and Matthew Goeke, cello, in a New York debut recital program including works by Hilary Tann, Douglas Anderson, Dawn Avery, Albert Roussel, Johann Gottlieb Graun and Josef Doppelbauer.

• Merkin Concert Hall, 129 West 67th Street, NYC • Admission \$20/\$12 general/student (limited) • Info, eightsw@earthlink.net or call 212-489-1138.

JUNE '03

JUNE
8

Sunday 7:00 pm

UpTown Flutes in a program of works by Lowe, Burnette, Hirosi, McMichael, Barber, and Mower.

• Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 344 Washington Avenue, Dumont, NJ • Suggested donation \$12 • Info, call 973-851-5435.

JUNE
23

Monday 2:30 pm

Flute Cocktail: A Flute Quartet, recent winner of the Artists International Chamber Music Competition, will perform with members **Amy Ziegelbaum**, Lauren Ausubel, Jordan Vogel, and **Helen Richman**, in a program of works by JeanJean, Massenet, Boismortier, and Guiot.

• Fresh Meadows Library, 19320 Horace Harding Expressway, Flushing, NY • Admission is free • Info, call 718-454-7272.

CLASSIFIED

Members may advertise in this section for \$10 for up to 320 characters/spaces. Your ad should be submitted by hard copy or email. Name and phone number are required. Deadline is the same as for Flute Happenings submissions. Ads must be paid for in advance. Make checks payable to the New York Flute Club and mail to the Newsletter Editor.

FLUTE HAPPENINGS

JUNE '03

JUNE
23

Monday 7:00 pm

Patricia Davila, flute, and Elaine Christy, harp, will perform works by Caliendo, Alwyn, Debussy, McMichael, and Bizet/Borne .

- Mahwah Library, Ridge Road, Mahwah, NJ
- Admission is free.

JUNE
30

Monday 7:00 pm

Flute Cocktail: A Flute Quartet, same program as June 23.

- Steinway Library, 2145 31st Street, Long Island City, NY. 11105 • Admission is free • Info, call 718-728-1965.

(UNDERWOOD, *Cont'd from page 1*)

from Vincent Panzarella who plays trumpet in the New York Philharmonic and is a great teacher. When I was playing in the Philharmonic in the early '80s, Vince was very generous about talking to me, especially on a tour we did which started in Japan and wound up in India. It was great to play with those guys but probably the most influential thing about that time was talking to Vince. The way of perceiving wind technique that Arnold Jacobs taught had a lot of appeal to me. Jacobs used breathing devices with hand gestures, rubber bags, machines.... If you use those things in the right way you can learn a lot about the muscles that are involved in the right way of breathing. [It was] when I started to use [those things] in my teaching that my teaching started to get popular.

That's an understatement; you're now getting international recognition.

I think I was lucky enough to come across techniques that were appealing to large numbers of people. I had a variety of influences on my playing and my teaching, starting with my first teacher Sal Amato, who was a doubler and a great musician. Then Tom Nyfenger was my flute teacher at Yale.



Both of them were creative and analytical about how you do things on wind instruments, and both were inspirational. They admired so many people's ways of playing; absorb[ing] so many different ways of playing into their own style, and [it] influenced me a huge amount. They explained things in words to me in a way that inspired me to put into words things that people were leaving up for grabs. There was an evolution in my work that went from Sal to Tom to Alexander to Jacobs back to Alexander, to various singing teachers. I loved seeing Pavarotti [and Schwarzkopf] teach masterclasses at Juilliard. I love watching any good teacher teach. And I love seeing them trying to put the mystic aspects into words and provoke people to make great sounds and have great technique by putting things into words....

Do you ever find that Alexander Technique can make people stiffen a little?

Yes. Every school of teaching has a drawback. When people say "tighten your abdominal muscles to produce breath support," there's a reason that they say that—there's an origin for that. But that tight breath support is almost as responsible for the epidemic of tendinitis and overuse syndromes as the ergonomics of playing instruments. Some of the sound producing pedagogy has produced a lot of tension in people's hands and arms.

So you're modifying Alexander Technique?

I think there's a meeting ground for everything. Jacobs' school says you have to learn how to take as much air in as possible comfortably, with end result that you'll have a cushion in your sound and you won't have to strain to produce the sound. The Alexander Technique sounds like the polar opposite: you never should think about inhaling, you should think about exhaling; you should concentrate on opening your back and exhaling fully and if you can do that comfortably you will inhale correctly due to having exhaled correctly. I admire both of those schools of teaching. I also love teachers who don't believe in inhaling or exhaling; that you can do it all with the right embouchure; if you have the right air compression at your lips it will tell your body what to

do with breathing, and thinking about breathing to solve all your problems is a dangerous thing to do. I like that teaching too. I've had periods where I got a reputation as a breathing teacher and then I would get invitations to go and teach somewhere and teach breathing and I'm contrary enough as a person that I'll go and not teach breathing at all, I'll say okay let's talk about articulation. I love Rampal's playing so much, and so much of the beauty of his playing comes from his articulation.

What is it about his articulation that's so mesmerizing?

I love everything about how Rampal plays. He projects such a distance without appearing to work too hard and his articulation was very distinct from a distance without putting a lot of forceful energy behind the air...The French language assists it by putting the point of articulation forward in the mouth [and helping] the general shape of the tongue in the mouth. But forget about the consonants in French, when you say the vowels in French you make sounds! We [say]: "Damn!" [but] the French say "Dauh." It's an explosive sound that sounds a lot like a great articulation. We talk about how French people tongue forward on the lip. That's the beginning of it but what *part* of the tongue hits forward? I like the back syllable as well as the front syllable. I think the French "gk qu" is more guttural than people realize. "Gauh." In English we say "tu ku" but the French say "teuh geur teuh geuh" in a looser position.

But they're still getting the front of the tongue between the teeth.

Yes, the front's between the teeth, and the back is down in the throat: "Gaaaauh." I think his tongue is low in his mouth and therefore he doesn't reach up to do the k syllable; it's fitted in his mouth so the tongue doesn't have to flip around to make the tonguing syllable. That's why he can be so fast.

And yet he has such tremendous crispness at the front.

That's because the forwardness of the

tongue is helping make the air quite fast in the front. We think the forward thing is to make a clean consonant, but I think the forward placement of the tongue is something that makes the air go faster without even a consonant. When he's articulating forward he's leaving the tongue forward in such a way that the front of the tongue is part of the embouchure.

So it's supporting the bottom lip.

It's not locking against it but it's forward enough to touch. I'm not inside Rampal's mouth!

You've spent a very long time looking at his videos.

Yeah. People who have their tongues in different positions look different on the outside of their faces. If you're playing with your teeth apart but with your lips closed and your tongue forward your mouth will look different than if your teeth are closed and your tongue is curled and pulled back in your mouth. So what you see outwardly is a manifestation of something that's going on inside the mouth.

Do you think anyone's ever surpassed Rampal?

I think that great flute players choose to take the components of playing and mix them all up in different ways. Sometimes we undervalue what Rampal was able to do. He [didn't] appear to be conscientious and caring about maintaining his technique, so people assume that he was a natural person who didn't think about the flute that much and wasn't disciplined about his technical foundation, but [in] really great Rampal he's doing things that are just magical, technically and musically. Then there are people like Julius Baker or Tom Nyfenger who are just spectacularly great flute players and have taken the elements of French flute playing and made their own style out of it. Julius Baker makes the flute sound like the violin—like Heifetz or Oistrakh.

That's his stamp.

Well, he's got everything working. But I could spend the entire interview just

(Cont'd on next page)

Author Query on Robert Russell Bennett by Janet Somers

Robert Russell Bennett (1894–1981) came to New York in 1916 and became interested in the flute through Brown Schoenheit, a fellow resident at the Y and student of Barrère. His “Rondo Capriccioso” for flute quartet was written for Barrère and some of his students, including “Billy” Kincaid. Other early Flute Club members with whom he was especially close were Lamar Stringfield and Quinto Maganini (who in 1926 was on his way to Paris on the same ship as Bennett and his wife; he was going to study with Nadia Boulanger and convinced Bennett to study with her also). Despite this serious study of music he is best known as the orchestrator of more than three hundred musicals, although many of us probably first became familiar with him through his band music and the “Symphonic Pictures” drawn from the most famous of his orchestrations.

Almost completely unknown, however, are his “serious” works, among which are “Concerto Grosso for Woodwind Quintet and Band”, “A Dry Weather Legend for Flute and Orchestra”, two woodwind quintets, and at least twelve chamber works, only two of which have been published and four which are in the collection of his manuscripts and papers at Northwestern University. Of interest also are solos written for his radio program “Russell Bennett’s Notebook” (including at least one for alto flute) and the television series “Project 20.”

Following is a list of his works and the probable years of their composition, largely compiled from George Ferencz’s excellent bio-bibliography of Bennett.

- Rondo Capriccioso for Flute Quartet (1916)
- Dance for Flute and Piano (1926; first performed with the “Nocturne” by Quinto Maganini in Paris)
- Nocturne for Flute and Piano (1926)
- Toy Symphony for Woodwind Quintet (1926; written for the principal winds of the Philadelphia Orchestra)
- Dance Scherzo for Woodwind Quintet (1937)
- A Dry Weather Legend for Flute and Orchestra (1946; written for Lamar Stringfield)
- Five Improvisations on Exotic Scales for Flute, Cello and Piano
- Six Souvenirs for 2 Flutes and Piano (1948; first performed by Mildred and John Wummer)
- Trio for Flute, Cello and Piano (1950 or 51)
- A Flute at Dusk for Solo Flute (1952; first performed by Paul Renzi)
- Concerto Grosso for Woodwind Quintet and Band (1958)
- Trio for Flute, Harp and Cello (1960)
- Seven Postcards to Old Friends for Flute, Viola and Piano (1966; the “old friends” include Gershwin, Berlin, Porter, et al.)
- Suite for Flute and B♭ Clarinet (1973)

Of these works the “Rondo Capriccioso” is definitely an interesting work which deserves to be better known, although it shows its origins as a vehicle for Barrère with its dominant first part. With the exception of the “Concerto Grosso” and the “Suite” the remainder have languished since their premieres, unpublished, unplayed, and unevaluated. Perhaps the time has come to bring them to light so they can take their rightful places in the flute repertoire. □

Janet Somers (jsomers@rider.edu) is a music librarian at Westminster Choir College and prospective master's degree student at Rutgers University in Music History.

(UNDERWOOD, *Cont'd from previous page*)



talking about Rampal's tongue and how much I admire his articulation.

People [have to hear] his recordings: his D minor C.P.E. Bach concerto with Boulez, his Mozart sonatas with Veyron-Lacroix—the C major scale starting off the C major sonata—there's nothing better than that on flute.

What are you listening to now?

Right now [*cheeky grin*] I love them old players playing on them old Louis Lots, so now Gaubert is almost my favorite flute player. His articulation in the *Air de Ballet* is almost unbelievable! sooo flexible and sooo musical. And then Moysè! Moysè's articulation in the *Carnival of Venice*—forget about it! It's fantastic—I could just listen to that stuff forever.

When are you going to record?

Oh, I always hope! I love those [live] recordings that Baker did of [his recitals].

And all the shuffling and coughs are there.

Yeah, the coughs and dropping plates. It's sounds as though they're cleaning up the kitchen in the background...But I would love to just play raw flute and piano for live recording rather than go into a studio.

Have you not done it because you're so busy? I think you've been in four countries during the time we've been trying to get this interview together.

It's because I'm undisciplined. (laughs) But for better or worse, I feel like I shed my flute skin every six months or so. I come up with some new thing, some new perspective, or some new way of playing. Right now I love my iBook and I love the software that allows me to slow down MP3 files so I can listen to things at half speed. I use it to show people what Baker's doing, or what a jazz player does. You can use it to transcribe jazz solos but also to hear what classical people sound like—where they place the beat, what they do rhythmically and also what their sound sounds like broken down.

Because you can now slow it down and the pitch doesn't change.

Yes. Tom Nyfenger would've gone crazy over that stuff. He always had a tape recorder set up and he would play you recordings of Rampal or your favorite flute player making a beautiful vibrato and he would slow it down so you could hear what the shape of the wave was and how many pulses there were and how the vibrato connected through the notes. Then he would do mean things like take YOU and have YOU play for his tape recorder and slow YOU down. GULP. And you would hear your vibrato come to a screeching halt when it saw a tie or something.

Has slowing down the MP3s been revelatory as far as your own playing is concerned?

Oh yeah!!! Right now I just LOVE that I can listen to Coltrane and think My goodness, what an interesting run, I wonder what that was and then you can slow it down to such a crawl that you can hear what he's playing [and even transcribe it]. That's just too good to be true. Or slow down Philippe Gaubert playing *Air de Ballet* in 1919! Baroque musicians use the term *inegal* to describe unequal tonguing and lilted not-exactly-machine-gunning the notes. Slow down Rampal and slow down Gaubert—it lilt. Even though Gaubert is tonguing so cleanly there's a fluttering integral quality. At a fast speed you just hear clarity. At a slow speed you hear this organic lilted; each two note group of syllables has a gesture to it. It's just so beautiful.

What have you learned from Baker videos?

There's one of him playing Brandenburg No. 5 that I love, with Glenn Gould. You can see how he comes off the flute and releases notes. And his body mannerisms! He's so in touch with the flute in that video and you can see the way he's carrying his body. It's so interesting.

Do you think that's intrinsic or learned?

I don't know. It doesn't matter—he has an inspired way of taking the end of one phrase and passing it to the next

phrase [demonstrates]. So he doesn't close off and you can see that. Either it's his concept of phrasing that's causing his body to look like that, or [he got it from] his father, or he saw somebody do that and learned it. I never studied with Mr. Baker but I admire his playing to pieces and one of the things I admire is how violin-like it is. He goes to the flute and leaves [it] the way violinists do bowing, so his head [moves] at the end of a note in the same way your bow might come off the violin while the sound is still going on. I think a lot of times on the wind instruments we tend to hold on to the sound and try to end it by closing it down as if you kept the bow on the string and gradually stopped the bow. Baker does all these bowing terms like *into the string* and *off the string*. *Retaking*. He comes off the flute for an exit for a note and it's very much the equivalent of how a violinist releases the note.

Can you tell us about the time you left your flute in a cab.

I've left flutes under restaurant tables in Italy but you're thinking of my Louis Lot that was owned by Laurent that I bought from Tom. Powell had sold the flute for Laurent and they have a letter from Powell to Laurent asking for a story [about the] flute. He said, "Philippe Gaubert bought the flute for me when I was 17 years old, and I played it at Paris Conservatory and I left it in a taxi cab on New Years Eve 1914 in Paris and the taxi driver returned the flute."

A few of your flutes have impressive provenances.

I don't know how I wound up with them. I have a gold Haynes that belonged to Tom Nyfenger which he played a lot. I have a platinum Powell that belonged to Albert Tipton.

You have a special relationship with doublers, and so did Nyfenger. And you started with Sal who was a doubler...

The wonderful thing about doublers is that they appreciate what's great about the tradition on several different instruments and therefore their ears are open. They're always looking for

what's the stuff on each instrument. So there's an efficiency to the way they play the instrument that sometimes doesn't appear with people who are specializing in one instrument. People who specialize can get so tied up in knots because they don't have to be as efficient in their production.

You're at a pinnacle in your teaching career now. Where to from here?

Once I was an underground flute teacher. I taught great people but I was secret. Then I became less secret and people [who once studied with me on the side] became *my* students. I came above ground, and now I want to go back underground. I want to go [back] to school as an undergraduate jazz studies major and have someone to say "Oh, practice this sequence in every key and make it reflexed like [a] jazz musician." I want to study Clifford Brown, Coltrane, Sonny Rollins. Bird, Freddie Hubbard. I love listening to *Giant Steps* and *Countdown* and Clifford Brown playing *Donna Lee*. I want to understand how to play better over chord changes. I'm talking flute but what I'm really interested in is people's note choices and solos and chord substitutions.

Can you imagine teaching that with the same intensity?

Yeah.... We sit around with slowed down Coltrane and we say let's do that lick that he's doing on Blue Train but over the bridge to Wave. Let's do a bossanova but with this one lick and we lift it. Oh man, that's so great! I can't believe it! I'm just starting to teach that and I'm very animated by it.

That's the next thing?

[Yeah. If it came down to] recording the complete Bach sonatas or doing a Sonny Rollins study group with Andrew Serman, I think I'd choose the study group.

My friend in Brazil and I have this running joke that we're going to commit minor crimes out of altruism for each other [so we'll] get six month prison sentences in minimum security prisons. I'm going to steal [his] mother's stereo system in Maui so I can be locked up. I don't need much—just a

small electric keyboard and three Herbie Hancock CDs and that would be good for the six months. Get some work done.

You're immensely fond of your teachers.

I was so blown away that they were not just great musicians but that they were such music FANS. [Instead of saying,] "Have you heard my latest recording?" they'd [ask if I'd] heard...some singer. Tom was into Harold Wright's clarinet playing. Sal was totally into Caruso. What a great thing to be a twirpy high school person from New Haven and walk into somebody's house where before the guy does anything with you he puts the needle down on a Rampal recording followed by 78s of these Italian singers from the '20s—Caruso, Rosa Ponselle, Tito Schipa. [Sal would say] "Here's Caruso making a vibrato. Here's Rampal making a vibrato. See how that's the same thing? You don't have a vibrato."

Tom was such a fan of Baker and Rampal. It was beautiful. We would have flute classes where we listened to people's recordings of things just to try to develop your own style. Tom treated classical music like he was a jazz musician. Jazz musicians, when they listen, [are] learning the notes but in the process they're learning the inflections, the time feel. Great classical musicians have a certain type of great time just like Elvin Jones has great time or Jobim, or Ciro Battista who lives in NJ—a great percussionist. Julius Baker has great *time*. And you could talk about Julius Baker's time just the way a great drummer has great time or the way a great piano player has great time and you can develop that by listening to them and learning about he way the put the notes in the beat.

How can we get the public to realize that these wonderful subtleties of performance you're talking about will be an impossibility if, for example, producers get their way and use recorded music on Broadway?

I think that you [have to] appeal to that side of people interested in the mechanics [of music making]. People love watching Tiger Woods play, but I know

a lot of people who just want to talk about Tiger Woods' swing. People think "I have to play an arrangement of the Titanic song in order to get ten-year-old kids to want to play the flute." Or they think that you have to play with a synth to modernize the sound. But it's the way you talk about it; [being] animated talking about what you're doing. [If you say to] elementary or junior high school kids "There's this guy Rampal and there's a video of him playing a piece by Couperin who was a French organ and harpsichord player and it's got these fast little ornaments and this articulation..." and you're animated about it and can make them feel connected to their instrument in the right away, they'll say "Mom, can you get me that Couperin piece." They wouldn't have that reaction if they [just] heard it on a CD.

One thing that might save music over time is that the U.S. doesn't have the depth of classical music culture that Europe does, obviously, but Americans are very appealingly do-it-yourself. They don't want to invite Galway to their party to have him play a soirée—they want to play like Galway.... [Of course,] there should be more children's concerts, more education in the schools. But [you have to] talk to people about music, in your own personality and [with] animation about the music. Communicate to people so they want to hear it and want to understand how it's done.... When they feel the connection to the instrument they can't wait to play.... I think everybody needs to take that spirit and put that spirit out in the world. Otherwise there'll be these things called virtual orchestras—there'll be less and less craft. I just want people to appreciate the craft and be able to talk about the craft in an engaging way.

Thanks, Keith, it's always great to talk to you. □



Ann Cecil-Serman recently recorded a CD of new music by Peter Flint and last month premiered Douglas Cuomo's new opera Arjuna's Dilemma.



The New York Flute Club
Park West Finance Station
P.O. Box 20613
New York, NY 10025-1515



May 11, 2003 concert

Sunday 4:00 pm • Kaplan Space at Carnegie Hall (57th Street and 7th Avenue)

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NEW

January 12, 2003 • Sunday 5:30 pm
ULLA SUOKKO, flute and theatre

February 23, 2003 • Sunday 5:30 pm
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From the Editor

Greetings! Our May 11th concert features participants in the NYFC's ensembles program, and some impromptu open readings. The annual meeting of the club, including the election of new officers and board members, will precede the concert. A reception will follow.

This newsletter issue features a full length interview with Keith Underwood by Ann Cecil Serman. I learned a lot about Keith Underwood, but perhaps even more about three of his favorite flutists: Baker, Nyfenger, and Rampal. While most of the recordings Keith so admires are no longer available, Ann tells me that one can still get the Baker and Moyses recordings via the web (www.juliusbaker.com and www.marcelmoysesociety.org).

Jim Blair, the NYFC's new treasurer is this month's member profile subject. Those of you waiting for a profile subject willing to admit to not always practicing need wait no longer.

I would like to thank our interviewers, article/feature writers, and proofers for their many contributions to the year's newsletters. Particular thanks are due to Ann Cecil Serman, Cathy Comrie, Patti Monson, Jayn Rosenfeld, Nancy Toff, Barbara H. Williams, Dorothy Wu, and Patricia Zuber.

Both Alice Barmore and I will be continuing our newsletter duties next year, so if you have some newsletter ideas, let us know. Especially welcome are suggestions for feature articles topics and writers/interviewers, nominations for member profile subjects (yourself or someone else), and member perspectives questions.

Hope to see you on May 11th, and best wishes for a happy, healthy and productive summer.

Best regards,

Katherine Saenger (klsaenger@yahoo.com)