



The New York Flute Club

NEWSLETTER

April 2004

2004 Young Artist Competition Winners



First Place

Leonie Wall, 23, is currently pursuing a master's degree at the New England Conservatory of Music, where she studies with Jeanne Baxtresser. A native of Ottawa, she completed her bachelor's degree at McGill University in Montreal with Timothy Hutchins in 2002 and was principal flute of l'Orchestre des Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montreal for their 2001–2002 season.

She spent last summer with the orchestral training program at the Music Academy of the West, studying with Tim Day and Jeanne Baxtresser. In the summers of 2001 and 2002, Leonie was a member of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada, touring the Canadian maritime provinces in 2001 and Asia in 2002. She recently completed a month-long tour of the Eastern United States and Puerto Rico as principal flute of Les Violons du Roy. □



Second Place

Philipp Jundt, 25, is currently a graduate student at the New England Conservatory of Music, where he studies with Jeanne Baxtresser, and a visiting student at Harvard University, where he studies economics. Born in Basel, he is a graduate of the Munich Hochschule, where he studied with András Adorján. He has performed as soloist with numerous European festival and chamber orchestras, including those of Basel, Bern, and Lithuania, and has been a member of the quartet ERGO ensemble Toronto since 1999. Recent CDs include chamber music for "Sounds Global" in Belgrade, and a set of Swiss flute concertos accompanied by the Camerata Zurich, conducted by R. Tschupp (Guild). □

He has performed as soloist with numerous European festival and chamber orchestras, including those of Basel, Bern, and Lithuania, and has been a member of the quartet ERGO ensemble Toronto since 1999. Recent CDs include chamber music for "Sounds Global" in Belgrade, and a set of Swiss flute concertos accompanied by the Camerata Zurich, conducted by R. Tschupp (Guild). □



Third Place

Conor Nelson, 22, is currently a master's degree student at Yale University, where he studies with Ransom Wilson. Originally from Canada, he is a recent graduate of the Manhattan School of Music. He attended the Aspen Music Festival and School as the winner of a woodwind WAMSO Young Artists Competition award, and has performed concertos with a variety of orchestras, including those of Bach and Mozart with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra in January 2001. His earlier teachers were Linda Chesis, Susan Hoepfner, Amy Hamilton and Ruth Laredo. □

In Concert

2004 NYFC YOUNG ARTIST WINNERS

Leonie Wall, Philipp Jundt, Conor Nelson

Sunday, **April 18, 2004**, 5:30 pm
CAMI Hall, 165 West 57th Street

Program

Histoire du Tango Astor Piazzolla
Conor Nelson, flute; Ayano Kataoka, marimba

Fantaisie on Themes from Der Freischutz Paul Taffanel
Caprice No. 24 (Rampal-Jundt) Nicolo Paganini
Philipp Jundt, flute; Linda Mark, piano

Duo for flute and piano Aaron Copland
Pièce en forme de Habanera Maurice Ravel
Chant de Linos André Jolivet
Leonie Wall, flute; Linda Mark, piano

Program subject to change.

IN THIS ISSUE

2004 Competition Winners 1
Meet the Young Artists

From the President 2
The Art of Competition

Member Profile 3
Chip Shelton

The Flute-Voice Connection 4
by Robert Dick

A Chat with Albert Weatherly 6
by Katherine Saenger

Announcements

Ensemble Concert Invitation 2
Flute Happenings 3
Member Announcements 4
Classified 4



THE NEW YORK FLUTE CLUB INC.

2003–2004

Board of Directors

Jayn Rosenfeld, *President*
 Ardith Bondi, *First Vice President*
 Katherine Fink, *Second Vice President*
 Sijetlana Kabalin, *Recording Secretary*
 George Kimmel, *Membership Secretary*
 James Blair, *Treasurer*

Nadine Asin Rie Schmidt
 Rochelle Itzen Patricia Spencer
 Sue Ann Kahn Stefani Starin
 Robert Langevin Nancy Toff
 Barbara H. Williams

Advisory Board

Jeanne Baxtresser Gerardo Levy
 Harold Jones Laurence Libin
 Marya Martin

Past Presidents

Georges Barrère 1920–1944
 John Wummer 1944–1947
 Milton Wittgenstein 1947–1952
 Mildred Hunt Wummer 1952–1955
 Frederick Wilkins 1955–1957
 Harry H. Moskovitz 1957–1960
 Paige Brook 1960–1963
 Mildred Hunt Wummer 1963–1964
 Maurice S. Rosen 1964–1967
 Harry H. Moskovitz 1967–1970
 Paige Brook 1970–1973
 Eleanor Lawrence 1973–1976
 Harold Jones 1976–1979
 Eleanor Lawrence 1979–1982
 Paige Brook 1982–1983
 John Solum 1983–1986
 Eleanor Lawrence 1986–1989
 Sue Ann Kahn 1989–1992
 Nancy Toff 1992–1995
 Rie Schmidt 1995–1998
 Patricia Spencer 1998–2001
 Jan Vinci 2001–2002

Newsletter

Katherine Saenger, *Editor*
 115 Underhill Road
 Ossining, NY 10562
 (914) 762-8582
 klsaenger@yahoo.com

Alice Barmore, *Layout/Production*
 125 Christopher St., #4H
 New York, NY 10014
 (212) 675-9706 (phone and fax)
 abarmore@earthlink.net

www.nyfluteclub.org

The Art of Competition

by Jayn Rosenfeld



From the President

I had a chance to chat with the winners of our 2004 competition after our Flute Fair last month, and I think it's fair to say (no pun intended!) that they are an extremely focused bunch. The parameters of the competition were: age limit 27, each contestant to play the "set piece," which this year was the first movement of the Prokofiev Sonata, in addition to other music of their choice. There were 28 contestants in all, who were narrowed down to six finalists, three of whom placed "in the money." It is these three we shall hear in concert on the 18th.

Leonie Wall, our first place winner, had two quite distinct experiences, she said: first, auditioning for the three judges (Linda Chesis, Sandra Church, and Stephanie Mortimore) in the first round, and then playing for a "real" audience, at the Fair in the finals. And perhaps one could say that she had three psychic backboards: the judges, the audience, and herself; that is, she was competing against herself, first of all, to play the best she could, and secondly, and more practically, to get into the final round. That was her goal, and, as it turned out, an extremely realistic one. She spoke of having the confidence one has if one has prepared "meticulously" (her word) and the insurance one has, if well-prepared, of not being disappointed. This is strikingly mature, and devoutly to be wished.

Conor Nelson, 22 years old, seems to thrive on competition. He has entered the NY Flute Club competition before. In his previous appearance he placed among the top six, and this time, he got to third. He joked that if he enters again...hopefully, there's nowhere to go but up. He said, in fact, that rather than a sense of competition in the preliminary round, there was a supportive camaraderie among the contestants. I can imagine a hanging together rather than hanging separately type of atmosphere. Conor said he used this competition partly for his own purposes, that is, to focus his flute-playing, to have a clear and immediate goal. He felt it was quite different to play in a flute competition versus, for example, a general concerto competition. Again the word "focus" comes to mind. He mentioned that he used his friends very constructively: he "grabbed them," put them in a room, and made them listen to him, so he could test his memorization—a very gentle form of exploitation to be sure. These mini-performances prepared him to be excited instead of nervous when he finally arrived at LaGuardia and the big hall on the big day, virtual to actual.

Philipp Jundt admired our organization, and didn't mention his own, which had to be considerable. But this is the perfect place to acknowledge the fine work of Pat Zuber who managed all aspects of the competition, and of Kathy Fink, who was superbly in charge of the whole Fair. They plus the many selfless volunteers made a great day for us. Heroes all round.

Recently there was an audition for a flute opening at the Metropolitan Opera, and 100 flutists were picked to audition from a larger pool of flutists who wanted to be heard. Does that make some of you happier to be amateurs? □

An Invitation for Ensembles

If your ensemble would like to play at the NYFC's May 9 concert, please contact Ensembles Coordinator Rochelle Itzen immediately at 212-982-2703 (phone) or itzenflute@aol.com (email).

Post-concert refreshments will be needed. Please phone Beatrice Strauss (718-859-5280) if you can bring something.

Photos of the 2004 Flute Fair

are available for viewing online at www.peterschaaf.com/proofs/flutefair2004.

Member Profile

Chip Shelton

NYFC member
since 1988



Employment:

Dual careers as a multi-flutist/Summit Records recording artist and a Manhattan orthodontist (two-and-a-half days/week) specializing in Invisalign™ clear, removable braces.

A recent recital/performance: Featured artist at the Nomme International Jazz Festival in Estonia in October 2003, and a standing-room-only performance at the A-Trane Jazz Club in Berlin during the same European jaunt.

Career highlights: Four critically-acclaimed CD releases since 1996, including *A Labor of Love* (RUP Records), *Onaje Allan Gumbs; 3 Flutes Up and More What Flutes 4* (Satellites Records), *Ryo Kawasaki and Roy Meriwether*; and *Flute Bass-ics* (Summit Records, www.summitrecords.com), featuring bassist Ron Carter. All releases received major radio airplay, especially *Flute Bass-ics* which was on the Jazz-week Jazz Chart the entire months of December 2003 and January 2004. Complete career highlights available at www.chipshelton.com.

Current flutes: Haynes alto flute; Altus bass flute, J.B. Weissman exotic wood piccolo, and most recently, a Hogenhuis contrabass flute, custom made in the Netherlands. Altus C flute and Yanagisawa B♭ flute with B♭ foot, both custom-fitted with Wesley End-Blown head-joints. [Chip is both a clinician and endorser for the Wesley Flute Co. (www.endblown.com)].

Influential flute teachers: Musical training began with drums in preschool, piano in grade school, and clarinet/choir in middle and high school. Upon arrival in NY in the '70s, saxophone and flute studies included workshops with Bill Barron, Jimmy Heath, Frank Wess, Frank Foster, Yusef Lateef, Hubert Laws, and

James Newton. In 1988 Chip became a flutist exclusively, attending Manhattan School of Music full time for two years as a jazz flute major, studying with John Purcell, Julius Baker, and musicianship master Dr. Helen Hobbs Jordan.

High school: Chaminade High School in Dayton, Ohio.

Degrees: Three pre-med years at the University of Cincinnati; DDS (Howard University, 1969).

Most notable and/or personally satisfying accomplishments: Founding and leading the Jazz Flute Orchestra (mid to late '90s); playing contrabass flute with the NY Jazz Flutet (a four-person offshoot of the same group still in existence).

Favorite practice routines: Warm-up consists of orofacial exercises, hand/arm/body stretches, overtones; scales and arpeggios from Julius Baker's *Daily Exercises* with metronome; etude-like reading; songs practiced with metronome, drum machine, or play-along recording. Practice time varies between one and eight hours depending on life's demands.

Other interests: Quality time with family and community; exercise at nearby fitness center; health foods; combining travel with music performance; using computers and related technologies without being completely consumed by them.

Advice for NYFC members: Brush, or at least rinse/swish thoroughly after eating, before playing your flute. You'll cut down significantly on flute repairs, overhauls, and other unsavory results of a "sticky-icky" flute. At the point of experiencing pain or discomfort while practicing, take a stretching break, switch to a different flute (piccolo, alto, etc.), when possible, to modify your playing position, and redirect the way the muscles and tendons are being stressed. And lastly—unless you are totally incapacitated—do some music every day! □

FLUTE HAPPENINGS

FREE to current NYFC members, this section lists upcoming performances by members; flute-related contests, auditions, and masterclasses organized/sponsored by members; and brief descriptions of members' new recordings, sheet music, and books. Send submissions to the Newsletter Editor.

APRIL '04

APR
8

Thursday 8:00 pm

The Sylvan Winds with **SVJETLANA KABALIN**, flute, will appear as part of the Cutting Edge concert series in a program including works and talks by composers Oteri, Shatin, Zannoni, and Deak.

• Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow Street, NYC • Admission \$15 general, \$10 students/seniors • Info, call 212-242-4770 or visit www.gharts.org.

APR
10

Saturday 8:00 pm

Palisades Virtuosi with **MARGARET SWINCHOSKI**, flute, will perform works by Fauré, Debussy, Dutilleux, Ravel, along with the world premiere of the newly commissioned *Three Scenes from the Mountains* by Robert Manno.

• Unitarian Society of Ridgewood, 113 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ • Admission: \$15 general; \$12 students/seniors • Info, call 201-836-1124 or 201-488-1149 or visit www.palisadesvirtuosi.org.

APR
18

Sunday 7:00 pm

UpTown Flutes, with **CARLA AULD, ELISE CARTER, PATRICIA DAVILA, KAREN DEMSEY**, Jeanne Fessenden, John McMurtery, **VIRGINIA SCHULZE JOHNSON**, Becky Vega, in recital.

• Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, 344 Washington Avenue, Dumont, NJ • Admission: \$12 suggested donation • Info, call 212-539-3565 or visit www.depts.drew.edu/music/beyond.

APR
24

Saturday 3:00 pm

LINDA WETHERILL, flute, will perform Orlando Jacinto Garcia's *Sonorous Wind* for solo bass and C flute. She will be joined by Constellation Trio members Steve Salerno, guitar, and Terry Keevil, oboe, for performances of Joel Thome's *Twilight of the Ideal* and Robert Martin's *Amulets*.

• Horace Mann Auditorium at Columbia Teachers College, 120th Street at Broadway, NYC • Admission: \$10 donation requested.

APR
25

Sunday 7:30 pm

The Da Capo Chamber Players with **PATRICIA SPENCER**, flute, will perform "Da Capo Downtown," featuring works by Kyle Gann, Frederic Rzewski, David Lang, John Mackey, Derek Bermel, and Dennis DeSantis.

• The Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard Street, NYC • Admission: \$15 general, \$10 students/seniors.

Flute Happenings Deadlines

Issue	Deadline	Mail date
May 2004	04/01/04	04/22/04

FLUTE HAPPENINGS

MAY '04

MAY 1

Saturday 8:00 pm

The Volanti Flute Quartet (**JILL MCCLURE**, Elizabeth Stewart, and **BARBARA HIGHTON WILLIAMS**) will perform a program including quartets by Bozza, Kuhlau, Dubois, Castérède, Schocker, and McMichael.

• Miller Chapel at Princeton Theological Seminary (Alexander Road at Dickinson), Princeton, NJ • Admission is free • Info, call 609-497-7890.

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

AUDITORS WELCOME at a free flute masterclass by Paula Robison on Monday, April 26, at 4 pm, at the JCC Thurnauer School of Music, 411 East Clinton Avenue, Tenafly, NJ. Performers to be pre-college students who live and study in NJ. Directions, visit www.jcconthepalisades.org. Additional info, contact Michael C. Reingold at mreingold@jcconthepalisades.org (email) or 201-569-7900 x376 (phone).

ROBERT STALLMAN—Flute masterclasses, lessons and chamber music coaching this summer in Prague, Czech Republic, with Ameropa faculty of string and wind soloists from the Czech Philharmonic and Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, internationally renowned pianists and string quartets. The two week intensive program, July 25–August 8, is for serious students, young and old, amateurs and professionals. Common language is English. For brochure with complete details, email your address to stallmansflute@earthlink.net or call 215-893-9030.

CLASSIFIED

NEW CD by Petina Cole. *Works for Flute By People I Know*, a diverse collection of classical and new age music by living composers, for flute with other instruments. "...a CD unlike anyone else's, and one that is refreshing to listen to."—composer Katherine Hoover. Info/sound clips and purchase, visit cdbaby.com/petina.

SEEKING HIGHER LEVEL INSTRUCTOR with teaching studio in Orange, Rockland, or Bergen Counties for advanced high school student. Please call Clare Herceg at 845-469-5742 or email therceg@optonline.net.

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.

The Flute-Voice Connection

by Robert Dick

It has been a virtually eternal maxim in music that the performer should "SING!" Flutist, tubist, pianist, timpanist: the musician who is singing inside is going to play more musically and expressively than the musician who isn't. This is a fundamental truth of musical art, something that should be taught and practiced from the first lesson on every instrument—and even before an instrument is started. The voice is the direct route to connection with the spirit and soul of music, all periods, all styles.

To get into the magic zone where you're singing the music inside yourself, there is no better way than to actually sing. Thinking about it just won't get the job done. While many musicians are quite comfortable using their voices, others aren't. The goals of this article are to explain what really physically happens when we use our vocal cords as part of flute tone production, and to encourage the folks who think they simply can't sing.

I don't mean to be didactic or irritating, but must firstly say that there really is no such thing as "I can't sing" except in rare instances where there is actual damage to the larynx or some other physical issue that interferes with the voice's function. For physically normal folks—and especially those who are musically inclined—"I can't sing" really means "I don't sing." This is typically a consequence of "I don't like to sing because I don't sing well." Without working to connect the voice to the inner ear, even someone with excellent musical hearing may not be able to sing in tune. Given this frustrating situation, avoidance is a common response. And so a negative cycle feeds on itself, affirming the illusion of "I can't sing" rather than the truth of the matter, which is "I just need to allow myself to be a beginner, to make mistakes and to get through the beginning phases of singing, just like everything else."

Before going on to explain the enormously important physical connection between the voice and the flute tone, let me first say that it is wonderful when those who avoid singing get past

the barrier of their inhibitions to express themselves vocally. Being someone who started to sing as an adult, who was totally convinced he could not sing, this is spoken from heartfelt experience. As long as we don't believe we can sing, we also often believe somewhere down deep that our musicianship is somehow fake.

For flutists and other wind players, including the brass, there is also a stunningly important reason to develop vocal technique alongside the ur-truth that singing releases your musicality. For us wind artists, there is the unique and powerful physical connection between the resonances in the body and those in

“The voice is the di
and soul of

the instrument. Use of the vocal cords is as important in the creation of beautiful tone as use of the lips.

Let's digress a little to help set the scene. There was a time when no effective answers were available to the following questions:

- 1) *Why is it that many flutists have no idea what is going to happen when they first start playing each day, even though they are diligently practicing and are clearly "in shape"? And further, for those who are in shape, what's the cause of "bad days" and why is it that these "bad days" don't seem to be in a cause and effect relationship to practice?*
- 2) *Why is it that if ten flutists were to play on one flute, they all would sound different—and if one flutist were to play on ten flutes, she would sound very much the same?*
- 3) *And, most frustrating of all, why is it that flute teachers had no answers to these questions? "You just have to work through the bad days" or "It sounds right when it feels right" are certainly true—but are merely encouragements, not answers.*

There are answers now, and actually have been for some thirty years. This vital information has come from our colleagues the acousticians, the people who do the science of sound. Their data makes it possible to connect the science and art of music, to understand how the flute tone really works—how those rare artists such as Julius Baker had their incredible consistency, a consistency that seems to elude many other fine players and dedicated students.

The existence of resonances in the mouth and throat of flutists and other wind players was scientifically proved by a series of experiments at the Acoustics Laboratory at Case Western Reserve University in the 1960s and 1970s. (This laboratory was acknowledged in the scientific community as one of the

Now let's look at those questions again...

1) *Why is it that many flutists have no idea what is going to happen when they first start playing each day?*

The classical image of the flutist's body (in a very simplified description) is in three parts: posture and breath, the mouth (articulation and embouchure), and fingers. There's a huge hole in this model, because the throat is missing. If we are not conscious of such an important part of production, we can't be surprised if there are days where we're "on" and days we're "off." I believe that every musician ought to sing as a normal, vital part of daily work. I warm up vocally when starting to practice—it saves so much time and I don't have to wonder if my tone will be there or not.

Sing a passage first, then play it. (If

I'm often amazed at how many musicians don't know much about sound. Is it a fear that engaging the intellect will make one less expressive? Or (dare it be said) laziness? Or simply a belief that our teachers know everything we'll need to know? If the 20th century taught us anything, it is that no single tradition has all the answers. Creative solutions emerge from synthesis of information from many sources. We then can fuse our knowledge and technique with our emotions and make art.

A few tips:

- Using a simple scale pattern, first play a short phrase, then sing it, then sing it and play the flute simultaneously, then play it. On the last repetition, concentrate on feeling the voice and hearing your voice in your inner ear.

- When playing and singing simultaneously, always sing softly and gently! When playing in the second and third octaves, still sing softly, so that the air moves slowly and easily through the vocal cords, then purse the lips forward to make the air go fast at the embouchure.

- Listen to your voice first, then the flute.

- No matter how out of tune your voice may be with the flute at the beginning of a note, don't move to another flute note until you have corrected the vocal intonation.

- If your lips are "buzzing" when you play and sing simultaneously, it means you're singing too loudly and are a bit out of tune. First reduce your vocal volume by half, then correct the intonation.

- Practice singing, and singing and playing, until the first signs of vocal fatigue. It may only be a minute or two at first, but you'll be amazed at how endurance grows! I often find myself sharing this koan: The voice will open like a flower when watered with the love of daily practice.

- Above all, explore the joy of expressing yourself with your voice! It is amazing how fast progress will come if we just give ourselves the chance, a few minutes a day.

© Robert Dick 2004

Direct route to connection with the spirit of music, all periods, all styles."

leading acoustics labs in the United States during that period.) For a lucid explanation of resonances in the flutist's body, see Arthur Benade's *Fundamentals of Musical Acoustics*, first published in 1975 and now available as a Dover paperback.

The flute, or other wind instrument, acts like a speaker, broadcasting its sound out into the world, and back into the player's body AT THE SAME TIME, ALL OF THE TIME. The sound flows both ways simultaneously. This is fact, not opinion.

The throat is a powerful resonator and makes a major contribution to the flute tone. If you hold the vocal cords ready to sing the note you're playing, either in unison or in an octave relationship (usually one or two octaves below the flute), then the throat will amplify that note, giving it richness, stability and depth. I was fortunate enough to be the person who connected the science and the art back in the late 1970s. I named this technique of silent (but physical and accurate) singing "throat tuning." For an explanation and a practice regimen, please see my book, *Tone Development through Extended Techniques*.

this is too difficult, play the passage, then sing it, then play it again.) To amplify on this idea, when you play the passage after singing it, be sure to feel your voice and to hear your voice clearly in your inner ear as you play. It has to be *your* voice to be effective—listening to someone else's voice won't change your body. That's why it is as important to have vocal technique as it is to have great breath control, embouchure and fingers.

2) *Why is it that if ten flutists were to play on one flute, they all would sound different—and if one flutist were to play on ten flutes, she would sound very much the same?*

The tone of the flute starts with the air oscillating in and out of the embouchure hole. The sound then passes back and forth through four primary resonators. These are the flutist's chest, throat, mouth and flute. There are secondary resonators too, like the sinus cavities. Since three of the four primary resonators and all of the secondary resonators are in the flutist's body, the sound goes with the flutist, not the flute.

3) *Why is it that flute teachers had no answers to these questions?*

Robert Dick's book *Tone Development through Extended Techniques* is available from MMB Music at 800-543-3771 or <http://www.mmbmusic.com>.

A Chat with Albert Weatherly

on Flute Mechanics and Repair *by Katherine Saenger*

I first met Albert Weatherly in the summer of 2003, at a dinner hosted by Jayn Rosenfeld at her home, immediately after our annual “newsletter planning” meeting. I had first *heard* of Mr. Weatherly in the mid-’60s. I was 11 years old, and John Jackson, my first private flute teacher (in the days when music teachers still made house calls) told me and my parents, “He is a wonderful man. You *have* to meet him.” Well time went by, lots of time, and we finally did meet. Dinner conversation ranged over many topics, and Albert expressed a willingness to provide a few words on flute mechanics and repair for the NYFC Newsletter.

I sent him a list of questions by email, and in mid-February met him in his favorite hotel lobby in midtown Manhattan to discuss his answers. During the course of our conversation he filled me in on some basic biographical facts. Born in 1924, he spent

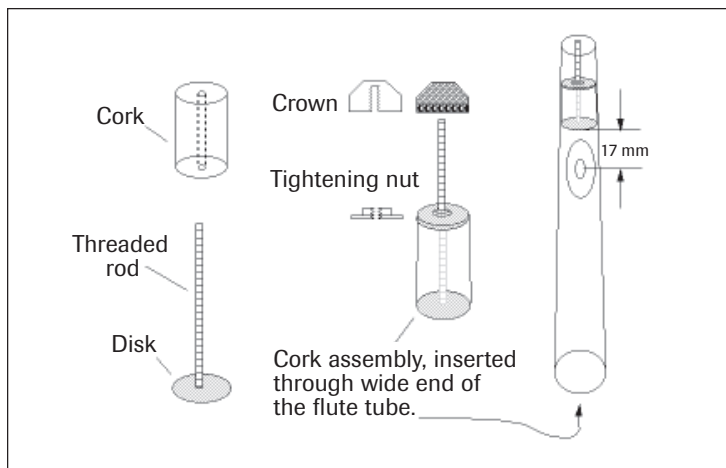
his early childhood in Coffeyville, KS (population 10,000). At age five he moved to Tulsa, OK, his home until young adulthood. Albert started playing the piccolo in the third grade, and took up the flute in his first year of high

school. He was at Juilliard from 1941–45 (with time out for a WWII stint with the Air Force Band), and studied with Georges Barrère. After several years as a professional flutist (playing with the orchestras of Leon Barzin, Sigmund Romberg, Lauritz Melchior, Erno Rapee, and Morton Gould, as well as the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra, the Ballets Russes Orchestra, and the National Symphony Orchestra in Washington, DC), he grew tired of the touring life. One day he walked into Verne Q. Powell’s (VQP’s) shop, needing a repair on his flute, and walked out with a job offer (conditional on performance, though VQP officially hired him before Albert finished his first week).

At the time (around 1950), Powell was a three-person shop comprising VQP, John Schwelm (a former Haynes employee), and Hans Haugaard (a Danish woodworking craftsman, also from Haynes, who taught Albert the essentials of flute repair). John Gilliam had just left, and Albert was his replacement. Albert says VQP was always pleased by the coincidence that both Gilliam and Albert were from Coffeyville, not far from VQP’s own hometown of Fort Scott, KS. Gilliam and Albert eventually met years later (after a flute repair lecture Albert gave at an early NFA convention), and still speak regularly.

After about three years at Powell, Albert moved to NY to set up his own shop, working at 74 West 47th Street for 30 years and at 56 West 45th Street the next 20 years after that. In the mid-’60s he helped the Sankyo factory get started with some materials and ideas, which led to a long association with the company as its exclusive US importer. And he remained on good terms with Powell, making about 25 headjoints for them one year in the early ’80s.

Albert has many interests in addition to flute repair. He’s micromachined prototype medical devices, studied mechanical drafting, and designed a special mahogany flute case (1,500 of which were built and sold with the help of his long-time friend and partner Ayako Uchiyama). He also enjoys the revelations provided by his two microscopes. Very quickly, I was charmed by his vitality and modesty, and impressed with the depth and breadth of his mechanical talents and knowledge.



KATHERINE SAENGER

KATHERINE SAENGER: How often does a headjoint cork have to be replaced? Some people do it every six months and swear that it is the single most important thing you can do for your flute.

ALBERT WEATHERLY: The simple answer is that a cork has to be replaced whenever it is no longer tight and not sealing well. But *this* will depend on how tightly it was inserted in the first place, and also on the quality of the cork. If you can move the cork assembly by overtightening the crown, or by bumping it with the cleaning rod when drying the inside of the headjoint, then it’s time!

[Albert says that he gets the tightest possible fit by doing the final corks-tightening after the cork is already fairly snugly in place at the correct position, 17 to 17.25 mm from the center of the embouchure hole. This tightening is done with the tightening nut (see figure), not the crown.]

Quality corks, inserted tightly, *can* and *do* function well for many years. If the flute plays better by changing the cork every laundry day, then I suspect the cork is too loose in the first place. Or there’s a big “power of suggestion” factor at work there.

If a player wants to move the cork around and determine a “best place,” two corks are needed: (i) a test cork, intentionally made smaller for an easy fit, to allow fooling around, and (ii) the permanent cork, to be inserted as tightly as possible at the position desired by the player. In any event, a loose cork defeats its purpose.

Which is better: the original cork plumped up in boiling water, or a new cork?

A new cork, of course! Good corks cost next to nothing, so why use the old one? And it won’t take longer than a couple of months for the boiled cork to shrink back to its original size.

Do you know of any synthetic materials that might be preferred for the headjoint cork?

Good cork is soft, pliable, has few imperfections, is lightweight, cheap, long-lasting, easily removable, and would appear to be a perfect material. What synthetic material can offer all of these advantages?

In VQP's early manufacturing days, Mr. Powell would solder a silver disk inside the tube at the right place, obviating the need for a cork and eliminating any possibility of experimentation. Unfortunately the soldered disk made it inconvenient to clean the inside of the tube thoroughly at service periods, so it did not become standard. But the concept proved his belief in a permanent "best" position and a perfect seal.

What are the most common problems people bring their flutes in for? The hardest problems to fix? The trickiest place you ever found a leak?

Most common: combinations out of synch, lack of lubrication, pads not covering well. Most difficult: bent tubing (either the main flute tubes or the mechanism tubing). Trickiest leaks: partially unsoldered embouchure plate, tiny holes in the solder around a tonehole.

What can customers do to make your job easier?

Keep the flute away from dust and heat; remember that tubing dents easily against anything harder than thin silver.

Any common misconceptions?

Yes. People seem to be surprised that flutes change over time, even when not being played. They've been away from the flute for a few years and expect the flute to be the same when they come back to it. But the pad skin dries out, pad felt loses its shape when not contacting the toneholes, and the lubrication dries up.

Do you have any advice for people starting out in the repair field?

Realize how difficult and tedious it often can be. Don't be frustrated with trial and error, and count on a lot of practice time. Remember, someone can tell you *how* to play the flute, but you learn only with practice. Do every job as well as you can.

Any advice for the do-it-yourselfer?

Don't do anything unless you really know what you are doing, and remember that it's very easy to make things worse.

What's the best pad?

The one that (i) seals the best, (ii) lasts the longest, (iii) is the quietest, both going down and coming up, and (iv) is the least subject to becoming sticky in humid weather.

Do you have a favorite pad type?

I prefer wool felt pads with good pad skin. When good pad skin is not available (most of the time) I use a proprietary synthetic skin.

What's the best home remedy for a sticky pad?

Baby cornstarch applied to the face of the pad (via a cigarette paper to deposit it there) *at the time the pad is sticky*. Later, swallow two aspirins, and apply more cornstarch to work overnight. In the morning, the moisture will be gone. It does require repeating, but it also works *and* causes no harm. *Do not* damage the pad skin by repeatedly wiping it!

What do you think about the trend of shortening older headjoints to get the flute up to a higher A? Are the results as bad as some people think? Does it really put the whole flute scale off?

This is answered logically. If the flute is flat, and you can't buy another up-to-date instrument, then it *must* be shortened or you will play *all* notes flat. So is it better to have all the notes flat, or only some notes off a slight bit because the tube is shorter?

To find out how much it actually will affect the scale and pitch, try this: Pull out 3 mm, test-play. Then, understand that *cutting off* 3 mm will produce only the same *degree* of change (though in the opposite direction). I've never found it to be a problem, especially compared to playing every note below pitch.

There's another foolproof solution: don't play that flute with any other instruments!

I studied with Harold Bennett for several years during the early '70s and my flute was regularly subjected to his vibrator/homogenizer treatments. Do you think his treatments had any good effect, other than to bring more business your way?*

* Mr. Bennett would apply a vibrator (a handheld, electric-powered device designed for body massage) to different parts of the flute tube for several seconds, claiming that it put the metal atoms back in order.

Homogenization and the like—forget about it. Voodoo works both better and quicker. And Mr. Powell felt the same.

What do you think about the old flutes vs. the new flutes?

The new flutes are much better mechanically.

Do you think that the material that the flute body is made from affects the sound of a flute? What about the wall thickness?

The material must have some effect, but I'm not sure the listener can *consistently* separate silver from gold, thin tubing from heavy tubing, and so forth. But to the player, they *feel* different.

It seems that thin tubing makes for a quicker response and thick tubing is slower to respond. But also thin may be difficult to control and heavy tubing difficult to get moving...like furniture!

What flutes are easiest to repair and why?

The better made the flute, the easier to repair it. What makes for problems? (i) uneven toneholes, (ii) posts too high, (iii) keys not coming down parallel to the tonehole, (iv) keys not centered precisely over the tonehole, (v) odd shape key cups that don't nest the pad comfortably, (vi) levers and arms made of material too soft to be stable, (vii) adjustment screws which are too loose to hold their adjustment position.

Could you describe some of the most interesting and/or best playing flutes you've seen over the years? What made them so good?

I appreciate the original Lot flutes for their beautiful sound, but all the major manufacturers today have some fine instruments. I usually *cannot* analyze why a few are especially outstanding.

Thanks so much. It's been a pleasure talking with you. □

Katherine Saenger is the editor of this Newsletter and a research staff member at the IBM T.J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, NY.



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



April 18, 2004 concert

Sunday 5:30 pm • CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57th (across from Carnegie Hall)

2004 NYFC COMPETITION WINNERS

84th Season

2003–2004 Concerts

October 19, 2003 • Sunday 5:30 pm
FLUTISTS OF THE NY PHILHARMONIC

November 23, 2003 • Sunday 5:30 pm
FULA FLUTE ENSEMBLE from West Africa

December 21, 2003 • Sunday 5:30 pm
CHRISTOPHER KRUEGER, Baroque Flute
Saint Peter's Church, 346 W. 20th at 8th Ave.

January 18, 2004 • Sunday 5:30 pm
ARIFE GÜLSEN TATU, Turkish National Artist

February 29, 2004 • Sunday 5:30 pm
HARVEY SOLLBERGER 65TH BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE
with Harvey Sollberger and assisting artists

March 14, 2004 • Sunday, All Day
FLUTE FAIR 2004 — A DAY AT THE OPERA
*LaGuardia High School of Music and Art and
Performing Arts*

April 18, 2004 • Sunday 5:30 pm
2004 NYFC COMPETITION WINNERS

May 9, 2004 • Sunday, 3:00 pm
2004 NYFC ANNUAL ENSEMBLE PROGRAM
Kaplan Space at Carnegie Hall

*Concerts are at CAMI Hall, 165 West 57th Street
(across from Carnegie Hall), unless otherwise noted.
All programs are subject to change. Tickets \$10, only
at the door; free to members. For more information,
visit the NYFC website at www.nyfluteclub.org or call
(212)799-0448.*



From the Editor

Greetings! Hope you all enjoyed the Flute Fair! April brings us a concert by our 2004 Young Artist winners: Leonie Wall (1st place), Philipp Jundt (2nd place), and Conor Nelson (3rd place). Congratulations to all!

A highlight of this issue is an article by Robert Dick on the flute-voice connection. Convinced you *can't* sing? Looking for an explanation of the “good day/bad day” phenomenon? Wonder how singing might help your flute-playing? Read the article. Even yours truly, a timid non-singer, was ready to pick up her flute and try singing

while playing...except I had to write this “From the Editor.” [Note added in proof: I finally *did* try it, and it felt weird, but fun and worthwhile.]

Also in this issue is an extended Q&A with Albert Weatherly, well known to many of our members from his 50 years in the NY flute repair business. I provided the Q's (including several suggested by Ann Cecil-Sterman), and Albert provided the A's. It was a delight to work with him. Readers with ideas for more questions should send them to me in case we decide to do a sequel.

Chip Shelton, a NY-based jazz flutist with a part-time day job as an orthodontist, is this month's Member Profile subject. Chip's advice to members on the virtues of tooth-brushing before playing is about the most authoritative and professional opinion any of us are likely to get on this subject, so take note!

Anyway, all for now.

Best regards,

Katherine Saenger (klsaenger@yahoo.com)