



# The New York Flute Club

## NEWSLETTER

May 2005

### NYFC ENSEMBLES TAKE THE STAGE

*In Concert*

#### NEW YORK FLUTE CLUB ENSEMBLES

*Rochelle Itzen, Coordinator*

Sunday, **May 15, 2005**, 6:00 pm

*CAMI Hall, 165 West 57th Street*

The Entertainer ..... Scott Joplin (1868–1917)  
arr. Bill Holcombe

*Merryl Newler, Jasmine Nixon, Jacki Rountree, flutes*

Duetto sur des Motifs

Hongroises ..... Franz Doppler (1821–1883)

*Ann Bordley, Ed Wolf, flutes; Ed Christie, piano*

Spirit of Ink ..... Alan Hovhaness (1911–2000)

*Ardith Bondi, Rochelle Itzen, TBA*

Trio Sonata in G Major ..... J.S. Bach (1685–1750)

*Maggie Lauer, Jessica Schmitz, flutes; Kyoung Eun Im, piano*

Concerto for Two Flutes ..... Domenico Cimarosa (1749–1801)

*Janice Caponera, Jesse Schiffman, flutes; Soyeon Kim, piano*

Quartett ..... Harald Genzmer (b. 1909)

*Craig Devereaux, Rana Boland, Dorothy Papo, Shoji Mizumoto*

How Lovely Is Thy Dwelling Place ..... Johannes Brahms (1833–1897)

Scottish Flute Stomp (piccolo, C flute, alto, bass) ..... A.A. Scott

*All flutists welcome to play*

*Conducted by Rochelle Itzen*

*Program subject to change.*

Post-Concert reception follows, coordinated by Beatrice Strauss  
(seen below overseeing the May 2003 reception).



*Photos from May 2003 Ensemble Concert by Ed Wolf*

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Please call Beatrice Strauss  
at 718-859-5280 if you can  
bring something on May  
15th (wine, soda, cheese,  
crackers, cookies, grapes,  
and other nibbles).



**THE NEW YORK FLUTE CLUB INC.**

2004–2005

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# My Last President's Letter

by Jayn Rosenfeld



Dear Friends:

My good pal Kathy Saenger says that this is No. 24 of my letters. And it is my last. It has felt like a dialogue, since many of you have responded to various of my musings, and I picture a Club membership feasting on the goodies in each month's newsletter. Even though I invariably missed my editor's deadline, I have enjoyed being president of this illustrious, historic group. Here are the sources of satisfaction:

- ❑ Contact with intelligent, disputatious, supportive, independent musicians and flutists who care about the same things I do.
- ❑ Involvement in important activities such as competitions, recordings, commissions (though not this year), concerts, great flute playing.
- ❑ Sociable, finger-on-the-pulse stuff: phone calls, emails, public and private wailing, crises, bits of good luck, new discoveries.
- ❑ Delving into and encouraging layers of amateurs, hopefuls, students, open-minded professionals, everyone with ideas more or less confidently proposed.
- ❑ Receiving help and support from many quarters.

I see I have used the word "support" twice above. That is so key. Was it Benjamin Franklin who said, "We must all hang together or we shall all hang separately"?

(And I wouldn't be honest if I didn't turn over the coin. What I haven't enjoyed is basically the nonproductive bed-tossing work one does at 3:00 am when sleep would be preferable.)

Thank you all for giving me this opportunity. I hand it on with a huge sense of relief and I hope a realistic sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. ❑

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING**

Sunday, May 15, 2005 at 6:00 pm

*CAMI Hall; 165 West 57th Street, New York City*

The annual meeting of the New York Flute Club, Inc. will be held on Sunday, May 15, 2005 at 6:00 pm. At that time we will elect officers and members of the board of directors. All current members are eligible to vote and encouraged to attend. The slate of candidates is:

PRESIDENT—David Wechsler      RECORDING SECRETARY—Jeanne Wilson  
 FIRST VICE PRESIDENT—Jayn Rosenfeld      MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY—Don Hulbert  
 SECOND VICE PRESIDENT—Ardith Bondi      TREASURER—James N. Blair

BOARD MEMBERS—Fred Marcusa, Karla Moe, and Stefani Starin, for 3-year terms; Katherine Fink and TBA, for two-year terms.

The following board members are retiring, and are warmly thanked for their generous contributions of time, brains, and involvement: Rochelle Itzen, Patti Monson, Patricia Spencer, Barbara Williams. Those remaining in place, for which we are eminently grateful: Svjetlana Kabalin, Seth Rosenthal, Rie Schmidt, Nancy Toff.

The Spring Ensemble Concert, featuring flutists who have participated in the NYFC ensemble program, will follow at 6:15 pm, with a reception following the concert. ❑

## Member Profile

### Seth Rosenthal

NYFC member  
since 1996

NYFC publicity director  
since 2004



#### Employment:

Flute teacher (in his private studio and as an artist faculty member of the Westminster Conservatory in Princeton, NJ) and freelance flutist (playing with the Metro Lyric Opera of NJ, the Edison Symphony, seasonal Nutcrackers, backup orchestras and concert bands, etc.).

**A recent recital/performance:** A joint faculty recital at Westminster Choir College with NYFC member Barbara Williams in January 2005, which included a piece for two flutes and piano by Anna Bon, a contemporary of Quantz; a “Women Composers” concert of music for flute, soprano, and piano in August 2004, which included Catherine McMichael’s *Mariko Suite*.

**Career highlight(s):** Playing principal flute in *Daphnis and Chloë* with the National Orchestral Association at Carnegie Hall in 1971.

**Current flute:** A c. 1940s silver Powell, with Powell head from the same period. He also sometimes plays the c. 1964 Haynes flute he’s had since he was 12 years old.

**Influential flute teachers:** Harold Bennett, Julius Baker, John Wion, James Pappoutsakis, Keith Underwood.

**High school:** Martin Van Buren High School in Queens, NY.

**Degrees:** BA in mathematics (Queens College); postgraduate work in math education (CCNY).

**Most notable and/or personally satisfying accomplishment(s):** Returning to music as a full-time career about four years ago after a 20-year detour with various

computer jobs. He says, “While I’ve learned how to work in a large complex political organization, become a pretty fair problem-solver, and acquired general computer skills that come in handy for a diverse range of tasks, I think the best is yet to come in terms of truly satisfying accomplishments.”

**Favorite practice routines:** Studies from *De la Sonorité* for tone warm-up, crescendo-decrescendo pairs, and Taffanel & Gaubert for scales, arpeggios, etc. He likes a Keith Underwood exercise learned from Tom Nyfenger: “You do the traditional *De la Sonorité* half step chromatic tone study (also in Wye’s *Tone* book), not by fingering change, but by stretching your upper lip out over the blow hole to flatten the tone one half step. Reaching your lip out like that improves embouchure flexibility and low register strength.” Also, “Every year I try to re-cycle through all the etudes I’ve studied. Some need work, some just click in. I try to add one new book each year; last year was Camus, this year is Damase (*24 Great Studies*).”

**Other interests:** First, family—his wife (a Rutgers senior who plays the French horn, and the other a high school senior who plays the flute). Second, collecting “American Art” pottery and vintage recordings (and the old phonographs on which to play them). In the pottery department, he is rebuilding a Vernonware plaid dinnerware collection from the 1950s (given to him by his mom) and developing a taste for Roseville vases. Of his recordings, he says, “Among the wax cylinders are many Sousa and other band recordings. Among my 78’s, I have performances by Melba, Maurel, Ravel (conducting Boléro), and a plethora of the more common Carusos, Galli-Curcis, Farrars, and Journets.”

**Advice for NYFC members:** It’s never too late to do what you really love. □

## 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.

### MAY '05

MAY  
8

Sunday 4:00 pm

Sextets by Poulenc, Heiden, and others will be performed by

**KATHERINE McCCLURE**, flute; Esma Pasic-Filipovic, piano; Melissa Bohl, oboe; Ken Ellison, clarinet; Ivy Haga, bassoon; Dan Wions, horn; and Tom Buckelew, alto saxophone, in a Westminster Performs: Kaleidoscope Series concert.

• Bristol Chapel, Westminster Choir College, Princeton, NJ • Admission: \$10 general, \$5 students/seniors • Info/tickets, 609-921-2663.

MAY  
11

Wednesday 12:00 noon

I Due Flauti with **CARLA AULD** and Miriam Lachenauer, flutes, and David Gotay, cello, will perform a Midday Artist Series concert of music by Haydn, Kohler, and Cambini.

• Wayne Public Library, 461 Valley Road, Wayne, NJ • Admission is free. Info, call 973-694-4272.

MAY  
13

Friday 8:00 pm

Avian Music presents **ANDREW STERMAN**, flute and saxophone, in a program featuring premieres by David Lang, Philip Glass, Stewart Wallace, Peter Flint and Andrew Sterman.

• St. Peter’s Episcopal Church, 346 West 20th Street, NYC • Info, contact info@avianmusic.com.

MAY  
14

Saturday 6:30 pm

**LINDA WETHERILL**, flute, performs American premieres of Klaus Ager and Fernandio Maglia, and flute/guitar works of Denisov and Takemitsu with the Adorno Project.

• Horace Mann Auditorium of Columbia Teachers College, 525 West 120th Street (between Amsterdam and Broadway), NYC • Admission: suggested \$10 donation.

MAY  
15

Sunday 7:30 pm

Da Capo Chamber Players with **PATRICIA SPENCER**, flute, in DA CAPO ELECTRONICA, a program of chamber music for instruments and electronics. Works by Steve Reich, Arthur Kreiger, Eric Chasalow, Judith Shatin, Mario Davidovsky, and Anna Rubin. Pre-concert “composers’ chat” on “The Delights and Dangers of Combining Technology with Sonic Art” at 6:30 pm.

• The Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard Street, NYC • Admission: \$15 general, \$10 students/seniors • Info, visit [www.dacapochamberplayers.org](http://www.dacapochamberplayers.org) or [www.knittingfactory.com](http://www.knittingfactory.com), or call 212-219-3006 (box office).

## FLUTE HAPPENINGS

### MAY '05

#### MAY 25

Wednesday 8:00 pm

The Sylvan Winds with **SVJETLANA KABALIN**, flute, in a program of music for winds and piano featuring music of D'Indy, Saint-Saëns, Mendelssohn, and Thuille.

- Weill Recital Hall, 154 West 57th Street, NYC
- Admission: \$25 general, \$15 students/seniors
- Info, 212-222-3569 or sylvanwinds@att.net.

#### MAY 29

Sunday 2:00 pm

"French Masterpieces for the Flute," a benefit concert for the Tsunami Disaster featuring music by Fauré, Poulenc, Bolling, and Dutilleux played by **CARLA AULD**, flute, and Tom Parente, piano.

- Montclair Art Museum, 3 South Mountain Avenue, Montclair, NJ • Admission: \$20 (proceeds to be sent to UNICEF) • Info, call 973-746-5555.

### JUNE '05

#### JUNE 4

Saturday, 8:00 pm

**STEPHANIE MORTIMORE**, flute and piccolo, will perform music by J.S. Bach, Barrère, Copland, Koechlin, Liebermann and Taffanel with Elizaveta Kopelman, piano, and other MET Orchestra members.

- Broadway Presbyterian Church, 601 West 114th Street (at Broadway), NYC • Admission: suggested donation \$15 general, \$10 students/seniors • Info, call 212-864-6100.

### JULY '05

#### JULY 25

Monday 8:00 pm

**LINDA WETHERILL**, flute, will perform world premieres of Cardnas, prize-winning pieces of the Salzburg flute competition, and an alto and bass flute anthology.

- University Center Ballroom, Adelphi University, 1 South Avenue, Garden City, NY • Admission is free. Info, visit [www.LindaWetherill.com](http://www.LindaWetherill.com).

## MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

**PATRICIA HARPER**'s residential flute class in Brownsville, Vermont, will take place June 19–25. Email for application and repertory list: [patricia@patriciaharper.com](mailto:patricia@patriciaharper.com).

*Pantasmagoria 2005* featuring Peter Lloyd and **ROBERT DICK** will be presented by "whoosh" and the Flute Studio of the Univ. at Buffalo's Music Dept. Events include an intensive techniques retreat (July 7-9) and daily masterclasses, workshops, and concerts focussing on Baroque, French school, 20th century and contemporary (July 11-15). Information/application contact **CHERYL GOBBETTI HOFFMAN** at [gabbycheer@aol.com](mailto:gabbycheer@aol.com) or 716-884-3062, or [gabcheer@acsu.buffalo.edu](mailto:gabcheer@acsu.buffalo.edu) or 716-645-2765, x 1257.

# The Vocalization of the Flute

by Jane Rigler

**W**hy are some musicians more captivating to listen to than others? What is it about their playing that makes them stand out from so many other musicians? Is it their interpretation? The way they sound? What defines their uniqueness? These are questions I ask every day, every time I hear music, and every time I play.

Though my own detailed answers fluctuate and change, I find that I'm most consistently drawn to playing that exhibits energy and vibrancy in the sound as well as in the silence. Certain instrumental sounds have a wholeness and completeness that can leave me mesmerized. What is the player doing? How can I, with my little silver tube with keys and holes, produce a sound that goes beyond the normal and mundane to become truly compelling?

In my personal quest to find out, I began to improvise, and with that, I naturally began to sing while I played the flute. At the same time, I began investigating the myriad of ways the voice can combine with the flute by listening to music from around the world where musicians blow into tubes and sing simultaneously. Only gradually did I come to realize that learning to sing while playing was giving me a whole new vocabulary of sounds unique to me, as well as making my traditional flute playing more resonant, better in tune, and more forward-projecting. Through many years of intense improvisation research and trial and error, I created my own kind of "language." Even at the beginning of this process, however, I realized the potential benefits of singing while playing for all flutists. This realization inspired my 1996 Ph.D. dissertation, *The Vocalization of the Flute*, a step-by-step manual on how to learn to sing while playing the flute. Since then, this manual has found its way into faraway corners of the world, used by flutists and non-flutists alike, since the benefits of singing while playing are obvious for all woodwind players.

The sound of the flute is constantly growing and evolving with the times. There are trends to flute sounds: each era brings in new ideas, new methods, new styles, new aesthetics. Each new generation is more knowledgeable, stronger, and more physically aware, and thus able to achieve richer, fuller, more flexible sounds on the flute. Of course, expanding flute technol-

ogy helps too. But without body awareness, all the technology and technique in the world will not create a great musician. Many late-twentieth-century flutists, among them Geoffrey Gilbert, Trevor Wye and Robert Dick, have written articles and books explaining embouchure control and flexibility, finger dexterity, breath control, posture balance and throat resonance. All of these elements together make playing the flute more efficient, and the goal of making beautiful music more accessible. Of all these elements, however, the last, throat resonance, is the least talked about. Also called "throat tuning" by Robert Dick, it creates a coupling resonance between the flutist and the flute which projects and enhances the sound of the flute.

This article could be considered a follow-up to Robert's "Flute-Voice Connection" article in the April 2004 Newsletter [now the sample newsletter posted on [www.nyfluteclub.org](http://www.nyfluteclub.org)]. In just a brief article he clearly explained the physics of how air and sound work with and resonate with the flute. He presented insightful exercises to open one's ears and body to throat resonance. Here I give you a few more in-depth exercises to work on, but first explain the benefits that I have both experienced myself and seen/heard in my students.

First, regarding student learning: the students who first sing their exercises and then play them on the flute have an extremely high rate of success in playing the corresponding passage correctly. It makes for really fast-paced progress! Those students who enjoy using their voices and don't "put up a fight" about it learn faster, play more, and ponder a lot less. They make fewer mistakes, have tones that are strong (yet flexible), sightread incredibly well, and quite frankly, play beautifully.

Next: when singing, breathing deeply is the natural thing to do. Singing also immediately improves posture. It's too hard to sing when you're slouched over. But somehow, mysteriously, it's easy to play the flute slumped over, or with the chin sticking out or the shoulders scrunched.

If I ask a student to sing, he/she immediately shifts and stands tall. Now, with posture and breathing almost automatically "fixed" we can begin focusing on embouchure control and finger dexterity, two skills that I consider to be the more direct (and easier to grasp) techniques of playing the

flute. Of course, one must take note of subtle changes in posture and breathing, but singing while you play brings you to the root of everything.

Singing is the source. No matter what your complaint is (e.g., “I can’t sing in tune,” “I have a ‘scratchy’ voice”), *making the effort to sing* and to resonate with the flute will only make your experience making music more fun and effortless. The music is you, not the flute. The flute is only a tool. But our bodies and minds control that tool. The way you approach that tool and prepare your body to use it determines how it’s going to sound. There is no mystery at all. Wherever your mind is, is where the music and the flute is. Just like anything else: if you’re not there, in the present moment, when you’re driving a car, you could drive into a tree; if you’re cutting a carrot, you had better be there with the knife and the carrot, or your finger will be the victim.

So, back to the basics: the source is the voice. How do we begin? Here’s an exercise that I still do, so it’s for the more experienced as well as for first-time singers. Let’s start with singing a note. What note is it? What note feels right in your vocal chords? Find the pitch that you like to sing. You can hum at first, if that’s more comfortable. Say an open vowel, like “ah.” Then open the space between your teeth. Feel the vibration on your lips? Drop your jaw even more. Do you feel any other part of your face, throat, chest, body vibrating? Where is your tongue? Gradually open your mouth. What note is it? Find out and then play it on your flute. It’s probably a lower note than the flute, so play the octave up. Once you’ve established the note, do this pattern:

1. Hold the flute up to your lips, like you’re going to play, but don’t. Finger the note that you will sing.
2. Hum the note and gradually open your mouth.
3. Create the embouchure that you usually do when you play, while you are still singing the note.
4. Now reduce the volume of the sung note.
5. Take another breath, and with a soft sung note, blow slightly.
6. Observe what you hear and feel. You should be fingering and singing the same note. Is the sound wobbly? Or overly vibrating? Do you hear the flute sound? Are you confused as to which one is sounding? Where is your tongue? What vowel are you singing?

FIGURE 1



7. Now just play the note on the flute, while imagining your voice singing that note.
8. Observe. Do you have a hard time quieting your voice? Do you feel any vibration in the flute itself? Do you feel any vibrations in your body or face?

OK. You did it! Now try the top exercise in Fig. 1 above. Next:

1. Sing and play the note you just did.
2. Now, adjust the sung note just slightly lower in pitch.
3. Observe. Are there more or fewer wobbles in the sound?
4. If there are fewer, then you are now MORE in tune with the flute note. Cool!
5. If there are more wobbles then you are more out of tune with the flute. Cool, too! Because the more aware you are of how out of tune and how in tune you are, the more control and the more fun you can have.
6. Have fun. Sing and play the note and glissando the sung note up and down SLOWLY, as shown in the second exercise above, so that you hear all the ins and outs of the wobbles. You’re getting in and out of tune. It should feel and sound buzzy. Go with it. Don’t fight it.

Hocketing is one of the most compelling and beautiful “techniques” of singing and playing. Hocketing is a fast alternation of two voices/lines to create a single melodic

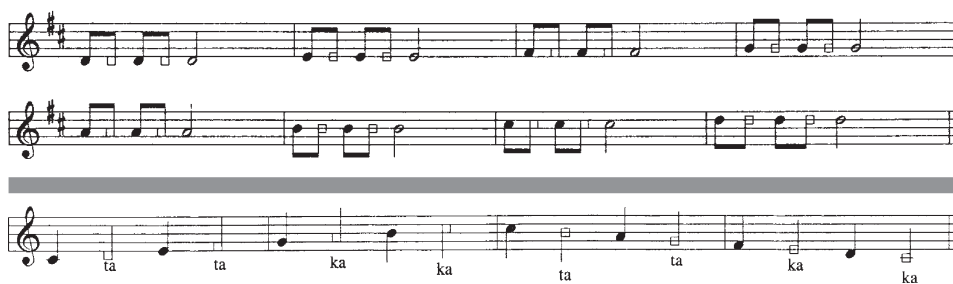
line. This is an ancient technique (used in medieval polyphony) and still incorporated in music performed all over the world (see the bibliography/discography in my manual, for example).

1. Play a scale, one in which you know you can sing all the notes, even if you have to sing an octave lower.
2. Alternate each note with singing/playing. Fig. 2 below shows two examples. The first is hocketing on the same notes. The second shows the scales. The open square notes are the sung notes. Once you get it slowly, try it fast. Try alternating octaves, various rhythmic patterns, do it in thirds...the variations are limitless!

Besides having fun and discovering new sounds, think about the following: what is it about this combination of voice and flute that captivates me? How can I make it more uniquely mine? What is it about my quality of voice that really makes the flute sound great? If I sing it first, then silently while I play, what sounds differently than before? Asking yourself these and other questions can lead you down artistic paths you may never have thought to explore before. □

**Jane Rigler**—flutist, composer, improviser, educator and producer—performs in contemporary and experimental music festivals throughout the U.S. and Europe. Details of her activities can be found at [www.janerigler.com](http://www.janerigler.com).

FIGURE 2



Last fall I was approached by a colleague at work who knew I was a flute player. Did I have any advice for his teenage daughter, a serious flute student about to get braces? Lacking any firsthand (or even secondhand) experience, I told him that I would ask around for some answers. I consulted two orthodontists—NYFC member Chip Shelton, and my children’s orthodontist, Neil Capolongo; two teachers with a lot of experience getting kids through their “braces years”—NYFC members Stefani Starin and Mary Schmidt (one of whom successfully bribed several young sources into responding with the promise of extra-credit English points!); and an advanced student—John Yi, familiar to many of us from his recent participation in Leone Buyse’s Flute Fair 2005 masterclass. Finally, I consulted Elisabeth Baseman, the student who started it all, who by this time was past needing advice and ready to offer her own. Here is what they had to say.

**CHIP SHELTON, DDS**

([www.chipsbelton.com](http://www.chipsbelton.com) and [www.acceleratedorthodontic.com](http://www.acceleratedorthodontic.com)) and

**NEIL CAPOLONGO, DDS**

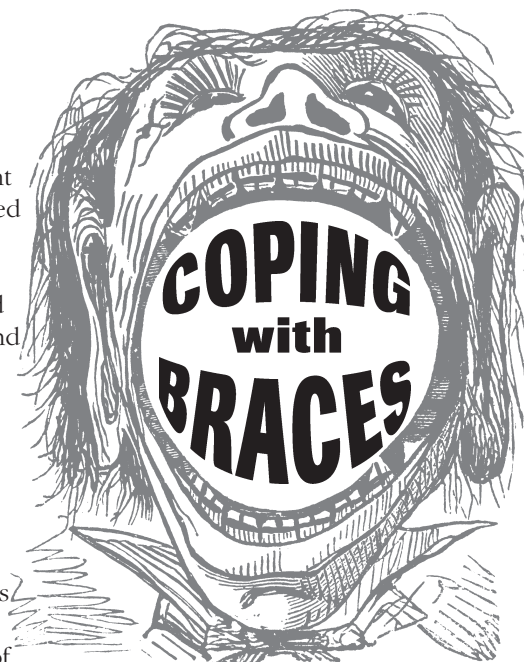
([kdsrgreat@aol.com](mailto:kdsrgreat@aol.com)) were in agreement that playing the flute should not be used as an excuse to avoid treatment, and that one should seek out a practitioner who is experienced, open-minded, and sensitive to your needs. Neil (not a wind player) agreed with Chip (the flutist) that, “...[conventional] orthodontic appliances almost always bode poorly for flute embouchures. However, with sustained persistence, the flutist’s embouchure can recover, in weeks or months.” Chip suggested looking into less invasive treatment methods such as Invisalign orthodontic therapy ([www.invisalign.com](http://www.invisalign.com)) which consists of a series of clear, computer-generated braces that can be removed for eating or fluting. However Neil thought that Invisalign (“quasi-orthodontics,” as he puts it) is useful in only a very small percentage of the population and not the panacea people might expect.

**STEFANI STARIN, teacher**

([starin@newband.org](mailto:starin@newband.org)):

I have seen MANY kids over the years. Each kid is different from the next, and I think it mostly depends on the particular orthodontist they have. Basically, I advise kids not to play for about five days after the initial installation, because it hurts. I tell them to tell their doctors they are flutists and to not tighten the appliance too much, too soon. The best scenario is for the orthodontist to put on the appliance during one visit and then tighten it on the next. For many reasons, most of them don’t do it this way. It’s more cost-effective and easier for the orthodontist to do it all in one shot.

The really good news is that braces bring your lips forward and that really benefits flute playing. And just having to think about what you’re doing helps as



## Advice for the Student Flutist

by Katherine Saenger

well. Most kids (90%) come out better and the other 10% usually quit anyway. Then there’s this adhesive tape thing you can do. Build up a layer or three of adhesive tape on the lip plate. Makes it feel better and puts the player in a better position.

**MARY SCHMIDT, teacher**

([macschmidt@aol.com](mailto:macschmidt@aol.com)):

Boy, have I seen a lot of braces in my career! I myself never had them (most kids from my generation didn’t) so I have always relied on info provided by the kids on what it feels like to get braces. My experience as a teacher is that they all lose a little of their tone quality but if they are practicing long tones every day and if they are patient with learning new ways to articulate, they will get through the “braces years” without too much anguish.

One thing to remember is that kids go through yet another great shift when the darn braces come OFF. But I tell my kids that getting braces gives them a BIG advantage over other flutists because they actually have to learn to play the flute three times: they learn it the first time, then they relearn when the braces go on, and finally they learn it a third time when the braces come off. This makes them feel better about a tough situation...The only thing I have never been able to get around is the retainer that some kids wear. I usually just tell them to ask the dentist if they can take the retainer out for practicing.

**ALEXIS KERESZTES, a sixth grader at the Community Middle School in Plainsboro, NJ:**

I’ve been playing the flute ever since fifth grade. I am in love with playing. Sometimes I make things up or I discover the fingerings to other songs. But this February I got retainers. At first I was excited to get them but they felt weird in my mouth. The screws in my bottom retainer are taking the place of my tongue and have started to cut it. [On top of] that, the placement of my retainers [interferes with how I want to] form my lips to play.

First you may want to get used to talking and swallowing with them. You’ll need to practice flute at home a LOT! You will never play well with them if you don’t practice. Find a new way to hold your lips on the flute and try different tongue positions while blowing. If you truly love playing you will find a way!

**SELENA PARK, another sixth grader at the Community Middle School in Plainsboro, NJ:**

I’m 11 years old and I’ve played the flute for about two and a half years. I practice about 40 minutes a day, and have had braces on the top and bottom since

about eight months ago. It was hard [at the beginning]. Blowing hurt and I couldn't really get the notes out. But after I got used to the braces and kept practicing, the notes did eventually come out.

One problem I encountered was that spit kept on coming out, [making it impossible to] play straight through a song. Stopping and swallowing was the only way to solve the problem for me. Another problem I encountered was not being able to articulate well, because the braces were pushing the teeth and it hurt when I pushed my tongue on the back of my teeth. There wasn't really a way to solve this problem. You just have to deal with it until your teeth and mouth get used to your braces.

**JOHN YI**, a freshman at Princeton High School and a NY Flute Fair 2005 master-class participant:

I am 14 years old and have been playing flute for about five years, the last three privately with Barbara Highton Williams. Currently, I am working on *Reverie and Petite Valse* by Caplet, and *Concertino* by Chaminade.

I wore headgear for about a year prior to getting the braces and rubber-band attachments I now have. When I first got my braces, playing flute felt impossible. The projections from the braces on my teeth made holding the flute up to my lips feel unnatural and very uncomfortable, and the sharp stinging I got on my lips when I went to play really discouraged me. Even more, I felt as if the airstream from my mouth into the flute was slow and insufficient, for the tone projected from my flute sounded very airy and had no tonal core.

It took about three weeks of daily practicing before I felt comfortable with my braces, but be careful: practicing too hard while trying to adjust only makes things worse. For the first three or four days or so I could only play the lower register notes on the flute. To still be able to practice tone and everything else, my teacher gave me some pieces with more of a lower register, so I could get comfortable playing where I could at the time. Then, I progressed into pieces involving the middle and high registers. One really helpful thing my teacher suggested was to try to develop a good sense of tone with the braces on. With her guidance, I started in the lower

register of the flute, note by note [gently!], until I felt that the tone I wanted had been accomplished. Then, I would progress up the chromatic scale, until all the notes were played with a good tone. Doing this daily really helped me find the way my mouth should be to get a good tone from my flute with braces on.

Strangely enough, I found some good in my braces while playing flute. Before, I had a habit of pressing the lip plate too hard against my bottom lip. With braces, I couldn't do that without pain. So adjusting to braces really helped me get rid of that bad habit.

Dedication to practice, even when you get discouraged or you don't sound very good, is hard to maintain, but trust me: with a couple of weeks of good work and persistence, you'll be over braces in a snap. When I felt discouraged or upset, my teacher really helped me to keep working at it, and sure enough, I was playing better than I did before braces. So when that time comes when you find yourself with some metal in your mouth, just work hard, be persistent, and who knows. Maybe you'll fix some bad habits along the way!

**ELISABETH BASEMAN**, a sophomore at Brewster High School in Brewster, NY, and a student of Alice Avouris:

I am fifteen years old, and I have been wearing traditional metal braces on my top and bottom teeth for about six months now. I started playing flute in fourth grade, and I've been taking private lessons for seven years. This year I will be going to NYSSMA on the All-State level. Before I got my braces on, I was very worried about how they would affect my playing, as I was worried about losing my first-chair seat in the school concert band. I had heard all

sorts of horror stories from other flutists, and I was terrified. However, it turned out that braces have hardly affected my playing at all.

The first few weeks that I had my braces on I had to adjust my embouchure a bit, because the braces tend to make you tighten your embouchure more than normal. Once you adjust though, there is only a minimal difference in tone quality and technical ability. Sometimes the pressure of the flute against your lower lip can become uncomfortable, but you quickly adapt. Supposedly, once the braces are removed your tone actually is better than before you had braces because you learn to play with very little pressure. For about a week after every time I get my braces "tightened" I have a little difficulty playing, but it always goes away. Since braces force you to gain better control of your embouchure, you can also use this time to work on flutter-tongue and multiphonics. In fact, braces can even help you to improve your embouchure control. From my experience, a flutist should not treat the decision to get braces as a death sentence. You'll experience an initial adjustment period, and then probably spend about a week after your orthodontist appointment every other month not playing very much, but overall you'll survive. □

**Katherine Saenger** is the editor of the NYFC Newsletter.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: More information on this topic may be found in an article in the November 2003 issue of Flute Talk by Carol Shansky (a former student of Leone Buyse and Tom Nyfenger): "When Students Have to Play with Braces."*

### **Paul Gray: New Address**

PAUL GRAY, a member of the NYFC since the early '70s and former president of the Long Island Flute Club, has moved back to the city of his youth. His new address is 640 Ratcliff Street #2, Shreveport, LA 71104. Paul was a NYFC Member Profile subject in May 2000. Five years later his profile is still one of my favorites (and one I regularly send out as a sample to prospective profile candidates) for its interesting yet modest depiction of his professional accomplishments and notable colleagues, inspiring service to the flute community, and slightly offbeat hobbies (chess, rock-collecting and writing flute quartet transcriptions). We all wish him the best in his new home. □

—Katherine Saenger, Editor



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



## May 15, 2005 concert

Sunday 6:00 pm • CAMI Hall, 165 W. 57th (across from Carnegie Hall)

## 2005 ENSEMBLE PROGRAM CONCERT

### 85<sup>th</sup> Season

#### 2004–2005 Concerts

**October 24, 2004** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
BOREALIS WIND QUINTET

**November 21, 2004** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
MARCO GRANADOS, flute  
*Latin American chamber music*

**December 12, 2004** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
KARL KRABER, flute  
*Chamber music with piano and strings*

**January 30, 2005** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
CARLA REES, alto flute  
*Contemporary music and Boehm transcriptions*

**February 20, 2005** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
STEFAN HOSKULDSSON and ELIZAVETA  
KOPELMAN, flute and piano duo  
*The new Met Opera Orchestra flutist and his wife*

**March 12, 2005** • Saturday, All Day  
FLUTE FAIR 2005—THE BARRÈRE LEGACY:  
Leone Buyse, guest artist

**April 17, 2005** • Sunday 5:30 pm  
2005 NYFC COMPETITION WINNERS

**May 15, 2005** • Sunday, 6:00 pm  
2005 NYFC ANNUAL ENSEMBLE PROGRAM  
AND ANNUAL MEETING

*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](http://www.nyfluteclub.org) or call (212)799-0448.*



#### From the Editor

**Greetings!** The May 15th concert will feature participants in the NYFC's ensemble program; the annual meeting of the club and a reception will bracket the concert. Please note the atypical CAMI Hall venue.

This issue features two articles. First, a collection of advice on how student flutists can cope with braces (p. 6). The bottom line (echoed by students and teachers alike): be persistent and don't get discouraged—your flute-playing will survive and maybe even improve. Jane Rigler's "The Vocalization of the Flute" (p. 4) is a follow-up of sorts to last April's Robert Dick article on the same topic. So far I have only *imagined*

doing the exercises she suggests, but I am planning to try them soon.

Seth Rosenthal, a new board member and the NYFC's publicity director, is this month's member profile subject. I found his "turning professional later in life" story quite inspiring (though not quite inspiring enough to make me consider any career changes of my own!), and am indebted to him for mentioning his interest in vintage American pottery, since it led me straight to the pattern name of my much-loved childhood dinner plates.

As this is the last of the newsletters for the 2004-05 NYFC season, I would like to thank the year's interviewers, article/feature writers, and proofers for their many contributions. This select group includes Jonathan Brahms, Ann Cecil-Sterman, Robert Dick, Kathy Fink, Jane Rigler, Jayn Rosenfeld, Nancy Toff, David Wechsler, Linda Wetherill, Barbara Williams, and Carol Wincenc.

Hope to see you on May 15th, and best wishes for a good summer.

Best regards,

*Katherine Saenger (klsaenger@yahoo.com)*