



The New York Flute Club

NEWSLETTER

January 2020



Past principal flutists of the NYC Ballet included (L to R) Frederick Wilkins, Frances Blaisdell, Andrew Loyla, and Paul Dunkel.

The Flutists of the NYC Ballet: A Retrospective Look

Concert introduction by Nancy Toff

In presenting this concert, we had a rich historical legacy to draw upon. Of course, we wanted to include works drawn directly from the ballet repertoire, but also music that paid homage to the past members of the NYCB orchestra.

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Current NYC Ballet flutists (L to R): Laura Conwesser, Scott Kemsley, and Tanya Witek

Meet the Current Flutists of the NYC Ballet

Questions from NYFC Newsletter editor Katherine Saenger

KATHERINE SAENGER: How did you get started with the NYCB?

SCOTT KEMSLEY: I auditioned for the NYC Ballet Orchestra in March 2018. There were four rounds of auditions, all behind a screen. This was quite unusual, since most orchestras (though not the MET Opera) remove the screen for the final round. At the time of the audition, I was 27 and living in North Carolina. Although I freelanced before

(Cont'd on page 5)



In concert

Flutists of the New York City Ballet

with Margaret Kampmeier, piano

Sunday, **January 12, 2020, 5:00 pm (not 5:30!)**

Engelman Recital Hall, Baruch Performing Arts Center, 55 Lexington Avenue
(entrance on East 25th Street between Lexington and Third Avenues)

Program

Minuet and Dance of the Blessed Spirits from <i>Orfeo ed Euridice</i>	Christoph Willibald von Gluck Scott Kemsley, flute (1714-1787)
Divertimento from <i>Le Baiser de la fée</i>	Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) Tanya Witek, flute
Sonata for Cello and Piano in D minor	Claude Debussy (1862-1918) Laura Conwesser, flute arr. Dunkel
Syrinx	Claude Debussy Scott Kemsley, flute
Valses nobles et sentimentales, Nos. 6 & 7	Maurice Ravel (1875-1937) arr. Heifetz
Solo de flute from <i>Namouna</i>	Edouard Lalo (1823-1892) Tanya Witek, flute arr. M. Moyse
Nocturne and Allegro scherzando	Philippe Gaubert (1879-1941) Scott Kemsley, flute
Quatre Visions	Paul Lustig Dunkel (1943-2018) Scott Kemsley and Rie Schmidt, flutes Tanya Witek, flute and piccolo • Laura Conwesser, alto flute

This concert is presented in honor of Frances Blaisdell and Frederick Wilkins.

Program subject to change

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 Jessica Yang, NYFC Social Media Chair

**Nancy Drew and the Archives:
 The Case of the Missing Programs** *by Nancy Toff*



From the President

Tis the season: *Nutcrackers* are a source of holiday pleasure for generations, but also a steady source of employment for flutists and other musicians. Much as I loved the *Nutcracker* as a child (I conducted it over and over to an LP called “Conduct Your Own Orchestra,” using the baton that came in the album), as the flute club’s archivist I don’t have visions of sugar plum fairies dancing in my eyes; instead, I have visions of flute club programs and music manuscripts surfacing in an archive.

In 1994, when we commemorated the 50th anniversary of Barrère’s death and celebrated the 75th anniversary of the club, I lamented to Frances Blaisdell that I had not been able to assemble a full archive of club programs in time for the occasion. Never mind, she said, you’ll get it done in time for the 100th, and I will be watching.

Frances, I am sorry to tell you that we are not quite there yet—it is still what I call a Swiss cheese archive, with a few holes in the middle—but we are a great deal closer than we were. The internet has helped a great deal, of course. For example, a Google Books search for “New York Flute Club” turned up a reference to a new piece by Quinto Maganini that he played at the flute club on February 26, 1928 and January 9, 1929. The source was the 1928 annual report of the Guggenheim Foundation, as Maganini was a Guggenheim fellow in 1928. I wrote to the foundation’s archivist, hoping that Maganini had submitted a copy of the program with his report. No such luck, she responded, but she did have a January 25, 1931 program played by Georges Barrère; would that be of interest? Indeed it would; not only did we not own a copy of the program, but we had no record of it, as it was not covered by the newspapers. Ms. Pennington provided a high-res scan that is now in our archives.

Other programs (see this space in the May 2019 *NYFC Newsletter*) have come from John Wummer’s papers, courtesy of Joel Behrens, who was organizing them in Pennsylvania; copies of a few came from Frances’s own scrapbooks, which I had photographed in California a decade ago. The *New York Times* concert listings told me that Paige Brook gave the premiere of John La Montaine’s Sonata for solo flute, op. 24 at the flute club on January 25, 1959, but we had no program. La Montaine’s papers are at Eastman, but that item was not listed in the online finding aid. However, I wrote to the ever-helpful David Coppen, the Eastman archivist, who confirmed my hunch that materials were added to the collection after La Montaine’s death in 2013, and he had the program I needed. A scan promptly appeared in my mailbox.

That said, there are still about 75 programs missing, especially from the 1930s and the spring ensemble concerts in the 1970s and ’80s. (We don’t know exactly how many concerts actually took place in some years; this guesstimate is based on an annual schedule of six regular concerts and one ensemble concert, which is just a hypothesis.) Curiously we don’t have the young artist concert from 1971—if anyone has a copy, please let me know.

In keeping with this historical orientation, our January concert is dedicated to the first two principal flutists of the New York City Ballet, Frederick Wilkins and Frances Blaisdell. By mid-January, the current members of the NYCB flute section will have recovered sufficiently from the *Nutcracker* season to play something different for the flute club. Their program draws partly from the ballet literature and also on the repertoire of their predecessors, including two pieces by Paul Dunkel, NYCB principal flutist from 1999 to 2017. Please dance your way to Engelman Recital Hall at 5:00 pm; note the earlier start.

Participants in the November 17, 2019 Gala Centennial Concert

Front row, L to R: Sue Ann Kahn, Patricia Zuber, Svjetlana Kabalin, Judith Mendenhall, Paula Robison, and Mindy Kaufman; Standing, L to R: Patricia Spencer, David Wechsler, Michael Parloff, Rie Schmidt, Robert Dick, Carol Wincenc, Jayn Rosenfeld, Wendy Stern, Nancy Toff, Robert Langevin, Linda Chesis, Bryan Wagorn, and Kaoru Hinata



Photo: Joe Melhado

Member Profile

Christian
Dorbandt

NYFC member since
2019



Employment: Officer in planned giving at the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)

A recent recital/performance: Performing Bloch's Concertino for flute, viola, and piano in an adult chamber music program at Kaufman Music Center ("The experience inspired me to take another look at *Suite Modale*—I disliked the piece in high school, love it now.").

Career highlights: From his 30 years in the publishing industry: positions as VP of consumer marketing for the magazine *Scientific American* and the journal *Nature* ("I've loved *SA* ever since high school, when I first read an article on acoustics. I really enjoyed my role in promoting scientific literacy through science journalism directed to a broad public, and later it was fun being part of the publishing industry as it made transformation to digital."). From his current job at the ACLU (after marketing and audience development posts at a variety of "glossy" consumer magazines): "I love people and human behavior and have always enjoyed influencing customer action through effective copy, evocative imagery, and a compelling offer. Now I use these skills to help people align their financial and estate plans with philanthropic interests. It's multidisciplinary and in some ways very much like playing the flute, in that it requires creativity, analysis, and interpretation."

Current flute(s): A c. 1970s open hole silver Haynes with a B foot that he's owned since college and a heavy-wall, silver Muramatsu DS with a C# trill and split E he purchased after getting back to flute playing a few years back ("It definitely has a more powerful sound."). At the urging of his friends in the Kaufman program, he recently acquired an Aulos replica of a one-keyed Baroque flute ("We'll see how successful I am in teaching myself Baroque fingerings!").

Influential flute teachers: Kenneth Fears, from age 12 through high school ("He started every lesson with the Moyses tone study and the effects can still be heard in my sound."); Philip Kaplan, during a few semesters at Boston University ("He made me understand that an ambitious flutist must be able to recite Taffanel & Gaubert as effortlessly as a person of faith quotes scripture."); John Solum, at Vassar College ("He helped me develop consistency in my playing."); and, more recently, Diane Taublieb ("A wonderful flutist, as well as a font of valuable and practical information from her studies with nearly every major flute pedagogue. While it's been a while since I've had a lesson, I hear Diane whispering to me whenever I practice.").

High school: Staples High School in Westport, CT.

Degree(s): BA in English with a concentration in Music (Vassar College, 1981).

Favorite practice routines: Chris starts with long tones (either Baker or Moyses), followed by 10 to 15 minutes of scales (typically T&G No. 4 or Patricia George's *Flute Scale Book*). He then works on an etude, usually whatever is being featured on Facebook's "Etude of the Week."

Most notable and/or personally satisfying accomplishments: His career switch to the nonprofit sector and getting back to playing the flute.

Other interests: Opera (he's a regular at the Met and at Glimmerglass and credits Stefán Höskuldsson's performance in Massenet's *Werther* for inspiring his return to the flute); travel (especially in Europe), walking ("I love the thrill of discovery I get from a long walk through a place I've never visited before."); biking ("Riding makes getting around NY and getting some exercise fun."); and hanging out at home with a good book, his husband, and their four cats.

Advice for NYFC members: Speaking as an ambitious amateur flutist who has to balance his love of music and flute with family and professional responsibilities, Chris says, "Try to make every flute-playing experience joyful, even if it doesn't turn out to be as productive as you'd like. Enjoy the process and don't obsess about the outcome."

FLUTE HAPPENINGS

JANUARY '20

Jan. 12 Sunday 12:30-3:30 pm

Masterclass with **CAMILLA HOITENGA** (now in town for *The Art of Change Opera* at the New School) on how to make old favorites sound fresh (and fresh music sound convincing).

• Jayn Rosenfeld's West Village home (details on request). • Admission: \$50 performer, \$35 auditor (preregistration required, space is limited). • Info, email choitenga@gmail.com or visit hoitenga.com.

Jan. 17-19 Friday-Sunday • All day

The Flute New Music Consortium (FNMC) presents a three-day celebration of new music for flute. Includes finals of the Flute Artist Competition and masterclasses by **CAROL WINCENC** and flutist/composer **VALERIE COLEMAN**.

• Staller Center, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY. • Admission/registration: \$40 regular, \$20 FNMC members. • Info, visit bit.ly/FNMCNMF.

Jan. 18 Saturday 8:00 pm

A Flute New Music Consortium (FNMC) New Music Festival recital featuring **VALERIE COLEMAN** works performed by students and faculty of Stony Brook University. **CAROL WINCENC** will premiere Coleman's new work for flute and piano, commissioned by more than 60 FNMC members.

• Staller Center Recital Hall, 100 Nicolls Road, Stony Brook, NY. • Admission: Free to FNMC New Music Festival registrants. • Info, visit bit.ly/FNMCNMF.

Feb. 12 Wednesday 8:00 pm

The Da Capo Chamber Players, with **PATRICIA SPENCER**, flute, celebrate Lincoln's birthday with a program of masterworks by African-American composers George Walker and Wendell Logan.

• Merkin Concert Hall, 129 West 67th Street, NYC. • Admission: \$20 general, \$10 students/seniors. • Info, visit da-capo.org.

Feb. 23 Sunday 5:00 pm

CAROL WINCENC performing world premieres by Robert Sirota (*Dancing With the Angels*, for fl, va, and harp) and Sato Matsui (*Goldenrod*, with pianist Bryan Wagorn). Also on the program: music of Debussy, Messiaen, and J.S. Bach.

• Merkin Concert Hall, 129 West 67th Street, NYC. • Admission: \$40. • Info, visit kaufmanmusiccenter.org/mch.

Flute Happenings Deadlines

Issue	Deadline	Mail Date
February 2020	01/16/2020	02/17/2020
March 2020	02/13/2020	03/16/2020
April 2020	03/12/2020	04/13/2020
May 2020	04/02/2020	05/04/2020

NYCB Retrospective (cont'd from page 1)

Founded in 1946 by the writer and impresario Lincoln Kirstein, with George Balanchine as its artistic director, the company began life as the Ballet Society. It performed at the City Center for Music and Drama, which had been founded by Fiorello H. LaGuardia, Newbold Morris, and Morton Baum. Baum, the chairman of City Center's finance committee, invited Kirstein to expand the company into the NYC Ballet, and according to the official history, he "made Baum a promise – that in return for his faith, he would give New York City the finest ballet company in America within three years." In 1948, the organization was renamed the NYCB and Jerome Robbins was hired as assistant artistic director. The company went on to set the standard for American ballet.

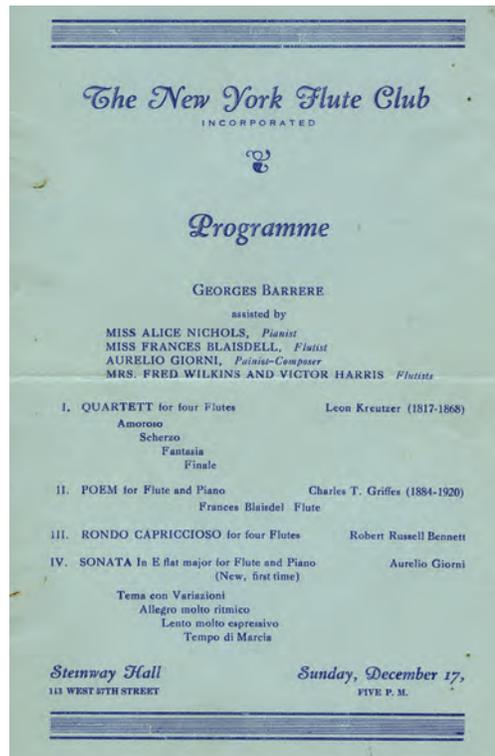
The makeup of the orchestra—the flute section in particular—has been equally outstanding. The personnel records in the archives are incomplete, but research by archivist Laura Raucher and former NYC Opera flutist John Wion provide the following roster of principals:

- Fred Wilkins, January 1947-March 1950
- Frances Blaisdell started 1950, as second chair; first chair 1951- ca. 1960
- Murray Panitz, 1960-1961
- Andrew Lolya, 1961-1999
- Paul Dunkel, 1999-2017.

All of these principals have played at the flute club, and Fred Wilkins served three years as president (1955-1957). This concert remembers these distinguished flutists through the repertoire they loved. I consulted Frances Blaisdell's daughter, Alexandra Hawley, who teaches flute at Stanford. She suggested *Syrinx*, her mother's signature piece, and the Gluck *Dance of the Blessed Spirits*, which was often played by both Frances and Fred Wilkins, her good friend.

Frances Blaisdell first appeared on a flute club program in February 1929, playing the Reicha quartet in D with Barrère and two other students. She returned about a dozen more times, culminating in her 1982 presentation, "First Lady of the Flute." in which she gave a spellbinding account of her career. By the time of her death in 2009, she had been a member for 80 years, holding the flute club record.

In 1964, Frances Blaisdell recorded an instructional record for Golden Crest Records, which included *Syrinx*. That performance was reissued on CD in the National Flute Association's Historic Recordings series, organized by Patricia Harper. *Syrinx* was also the piece she chose to play when



The New York Flute Club
Incorporated
Organized 1920

SUNDAY AFTERNOON
April 29th, 1956
FIVE-THIRTY P.M.

CARL FISCHER CONCERT HALL
165 West 57th Street
NEW YORK CITY

Program

FREDERICK WILKINS, Flutist
assisted by
Thomas Schumacher Pianist
Frances Blaisdell Flutist
Murray Panitz Flutist
Pat Capobianco Flutist

I
Sonata in G Major Giovanni Platti
Adagio Andante Cantabile Tempo di Minuet

II
Serenade Howard Hansen

III
Concerto in C Major (Two Flutes) Antonio Vivaldi
Allegro Molto Largo Allegro Molto

INTERMISSION

IV
Poem Charles Griffes

V
Sonata for Three Flutes Joseph Bodin de Boismortier
Allemande Allegro Lentement Gigue

VI
Elegie (Four Flutes) Joseph Jongen

VII
Jour d'Ete A La Montagne Eugene Bozza
Quartet
Pastoral, Aux Bords du Torrent, Le Chant de Forets, Ronde

the NFA's cultural exchange delegation performed at the Moscow Conservatory in 1989.

Frederick Wilkins studied with Barrère at the Juilliard Graduate School (1932-36). He was solo flutist of the Voice of Firestone on radio and television, the Radio City Music Hall Orchestra, the New York City Ballet, and the New York City Opera. He succeeded Barrère as first chair of the Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra and as flute instructor at the Chautauqua School of Music. He also taught at Juilliard, the Manhattan School of Music, and Teachers College.

After Wilkins retired from active playing in 1957, he was vice president and educational director of the Artley Flute Co., for which he traveled the country doing flute demonstrations, concerts, and clinics, and he was also associated with C.G. Conn Ltd. He wrote *The Flutist's Guide*, an instructional record and book published by Artley in 1957, and was the soloist in the historic 1956 CRI recording of Henry Brant's *Angels and Devils*, which the flute club re-released on the New World label. With Julius Baker he recorded the Bach *Brandenburg Concerto No. 4*, conducted by Fritz Reiner, on Columbia.

Wilkins played on some 14 concerts for the club, beginning in December 1933. Several times he was joined by his wife, mezzo Margaret Wilkins; and he collaborated with Henry Brant not only in *Angels and Devils* but also in *Ballad of Consequences* (Dec 17, 1950) and *Colloquy on a Quotation* (October 1949).

Murray Panitz was principal flutist of the NYCB in 1960-61, leaving to become principal flutist of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He appeared at the flute club only twice that we know of, a joint recital with Frances Blaisdell in November 1954 and again in 1956. He was succeeded by Andrew Lolya, who joined James Pellerite, Donald Peck, and others in a chamber music program in April 1951.

Paul Dunkel took over the principal chair in 1999 and held it through 2017, while also pursuing a raft of other musical activities, including co-founding the

American Composers Orchestra, founding and conducting the New Orchestra of Westchester (which became the Westchester Philharmonic), and playing in Music from Copland House. He was responsible for commissioning Melinda Wagner's flute concerto, which won the Pulitzer Prize in 1999.

A student of Kincaid, he had a great appreciation for the French tradition, which is reflected in his arrangement of the Debussy cello sonata. He also had a broad knowledge of the repertory and a fine sense of humor, both of which are amply on display in his flute quartet, *Quatre Visions*. Laura Conwesser, Rie Schmidt, and Tanya Witek played it with Paul at the flute club in October 2014; for the January concert, his NYCB successor, Scott Kemsley, takes the first flute part.

From the NYFC Newsletter Archives: Flutists of the NYC Ballet



Over the past 20 years, the New York City Ballet flutists have been featured in many NYFC newsletters as both subjects and interviewers. Listed here are some of my personal favorites. All are worth a visit to our online archives, but if you have to pick just one, I recommend starting with Tanya Witek's October 2014 interview of Paul Dunkel.

—Katherine Saenger

Frances Blaisdell

- *Frances Blaisdell (1912-2009)* (Obituary by Nancy Toff, November 2009)
- *Frances Blaisdell: Her Students Remember* (Hal Archer, Marti Lewis, Mardee Reed-Ulmer, and Eve Slater, November 2009)
- *Frances Blaisdell: Our Link to Georges Barrère* (Barbara Highton Williams, April 2005)

Gerardo Levy (a frequent sub)

- *Gerardo Levy: An 80th Birthday Tribute* (Biography by Jonathan Brahms, October

2004)

- *Gerardo Levy: Selected Anecdotes* (Livio Caroli, Jayn Rosenfeld, Susan Stewart Stolov, Virginia Schulze-Johnson, Miriam Lachenauer, Petina Cole, Suzanne Gilchrest, Karla Moe, Laura George, Bart Feller, Carla Auld, and Susan Lurie, October 2004)

Thomas Nyfenger (a frequent sub)

- *Remembering Tom Nyfenger (1936-1990)* (Ed Joffe, April 2011)
- *Tom Nyfenger Remembered* (Keith Underwood, Loren Glickman, Alan Cox,

Paul Dunkel, and Susan Palma-Nidel, April 2011)

Rie Schmidt (a frequent sub, with Flute Force)

- *Meet Flute Force* (Tamara Keshecki interviews Rie Schmidt, January 2001)
- *Flute Force: Flute Quartet Pioneers* (Interview by Tanya Witek, January 2014)

Paul Dunkel

- *Paul Dunkel: 61 Years of Trying to Play the Flute* (Interview by Tanya Witek, October 2014)

Current flutists (cont'd from page 1)

at other places, this is my first professional job. I was working a retail job and also doing some teaching. It was a very abrupt change of lifestyle as I was asked if I could start playing with the orchestra the week after my audition!

LAURA CONWESSER: I started subbing at NYCB in 1981. My calls were occasional at first and almost always last minute. Living on the Upper West Side gave me the sub's advantage of proximity. There was actually one occasion when I was called at 6:05 to play the 6:00 pm *Nutcracker*. I was there by 6:20. This could occasionally work to my disadvantage, like the time I had to come in at the last minute to play first flute on Stravinsky's *Orpheus*, never having heard the piece or even seen the music. It is definitely NOT sight reading material and was not one of my finest performances. Happily, times have changed. Subs are almost always given the opportunity to prepare and would never be asked to play a solo chair without a rehearsal. I did not have a regular position at the ballet until around 2004/5, but it has been a mainstay of my musical life. I've been incredibly fortunate.

TANYA WITEK: I subbed a few times before I won the audition for the section flute position. I had just turned 40



and had two little children at home. Up until this point, I had toured regularly as a guest with Orpheus and other NY groups; worked for the Lincoln Center Institute, New York Philharmonic, and Carnegie Hall as a teaching artist; and was on the flute faculty at Montclair State University, where I had a full studio and led the flute ensembles. It was a rewarding combination of jobs, but none provided health insurance or other benefits. After the birth of my second child, I was named the second flutist with the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra after placing in the finals of the principal flute audition. I loved playing with the group under the wonderful conductor Louis Langree. It served as a wake-up call for me. I realized that if I ever hoped to win an orchestral job, the moment was now. My violinist husband and I were settled in New York so I followed any openings in the area. After Renée Siebert retired from the New York Philharmonic, I applied to audition. My tape made it through and I ultimately made it to the final round of the super-finals

with one other flutist, but no winner was selected. It was difficult to move on from that situation, and it makes me very sympathetic to the many younger flutists currently on the audition circuit. It was incredibly motivating for me to come so close, however, and so when the opening in NYCB was posted, I began to prepare with great intensity and determination. In the end, I did my best and the stars were aligned for me that day. I am extremely grateful for the security which this job offers my family, as well as for the opportunity to make music regularly with such a wonderful group of colleagues.

KS: *What is your awareness of what is going on onstage behind you?*

LC and TW: It is usually impossible for us to see the stage from where we sit. However, when there are ballets that do not use flutes, we often watch from the front of the pit. Being up at Saratoga is especially fun because we can easily get out into the amphitheater and watch from there when we are not playing.

TW and SK: Sometimes the only way we know what's going on onstage is to watch a video of a past performance in the archive room.

TW: It is great to see the dance accompanying the music we play because it

(Cont'd on page 6)



can definitely inform our interpretive choices.

SK: We don't get to rehearse with the dancers much either, and when we do it is usually a run through. One exception was the ballet *Antique Epigraphs*, which takes music from Debussy's *Six Epigraphes Antiques* and *Syrinx* for solo flute. They asked me to come to a dance rehearsal so they could get a feel for my rendition of *Syrinx*. It was such a treat and so inspiring to get to see them dance up close and personal.

KS: *What make of instruments do you play?*

SK: I play on a heavy wall silver Brannen flute.

LC: I play a platinum-clad Muramatsu that I got just under a year ago. Prior to that, I played a gold-bonded Muramatsu (purchased in 1981) and a commercial model Powell (No. 1147, gotten when I was in high school). Clearly, I don't change equipment very often. My piccolo is a Powell, made in 1983, and my alto is a Haynes which was made for Georges Barrère in 1940. I bought it from Paul Dunkel about 25 years ago.

TW: I have two Brannen flutes—one is a heavy wall silver, and the other is 9k gold. They both have a convertible C/B foot which I love. I play either a gold 14k Lafin, McKenna silver, or 14k gold headjoints, depending on the repertoire. I play a Burkhart piccolo and have multiple headjoints with different cuts.

KS: *Any favorites in the ballet repertoire?*

LC: It has been a privilege to play the repertoire at NYCB. Balanchine's relationship with Stravinsky led to some of the greatest art of the 20th century. Learning all of that music informed my musical sensibilities and style. Of course there were other works that I enjoyed over the years, but Stravinsky had the biggest impact.

TW: I enjoy playing all of our great Stravinsky and Tchaikovsky repertoire. We have some great French music by Ravel, Fauré, and Lalo. In the upcoming recital, I wanted to honor our rich NYCB repertoire by including some ballet arrangements for flute and piano. I will be playing two movements from Stravinsky's *Fairy's Kiss* arranged for

Reflecting on 30 Years as a Sub with the NYCB

by Rie Schmidt

I was recommended to sub at the ballet because I had met and played with Paul Dunkel and Laura Conwesser in other jobs. Paul was one of the few principal flutists that I played with who played on an old Powell (as I still do), and it gave us a connection in our concept of sound.

I love the varied repertoire that the ballet plays and have accumulated a large pile of practice parts during my 30 years of subbing there. I have come around to loving Tchaikovsky, but would say playing Stravinsky is always a thrill. I have also enjoyed watching the dancers in the times when I don't play, since I was a serious ballet student as a child for about 10 years.

One of my first times subbing at the ballet was in 1988 when my son was just born (which is how it is so easily remembered). I had been asked to do the three-week season at Saratoga Springs. However my son came late and was only two weeks old when the season started. My mother came up with me for the first two weeks, as my husband Ben was in Spain working at a music festival. When he came back, he came up to Saratoga and my mother left. Ben's first night with our son was seemingly fine as they were both sleeping when I came back to the motel from work. I later learned that our son had cried the entire night and only stopped minutes before I returned. Ben said he was grateful no one called the police. Being new parents, we only later realized that our son had no way of knowing that Ben was his father!



violin and piano by Dushkin and the composer. From our French repertoire I will play two movements from *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales* arranged by Heifetz for violin and piano, and I will conclude the set with the colorful flute solo from the ballet *Namouna*, which was arranged for flute and piano by Marcel Moyse and is included as the last piece in Vol. 3 of his *Golden Age of the Flute* anthology.

KS: *Do you have any good anecdotes about your former colleagues?*

LC: When I first played at the Ballet, Andrew Lolya was the principal, Paul Dunkel was the associate, and Victor Harris was the piccolo player. Victor was a lovely man who played Murray system instruments. He had the most beautiful alto flute, which I coveted but couldn't play. Andy was a great colleague, always pleasant to everyone without being a Pollyanna, a truly honorable man. He also had a great sense of humor. Three favorite examples: (1) How is a trill like a great kiss? They're both hard to get out of; (2) Whenever he saw the category of sustaining member at the NYFC, he envisioned a group of people standing around playing long tones; and (3) You should either have your music stand up so high that you can't see the conductor or so low that the conductor was out of your peripheral vision. Paul was one of a kind, a brilliant musician with a mind that was always going at 100 mph. Most of my Paul stories cannot be shared in print. Suffice it to say that he was a major influence on my career.

TW: In addition to being an incompara-

ble flutist—in my opinion, one of the greatest in his generation—Paul was one of the funniest people I have ever met. There was never a dull moment when he was around, though most of his jokes cannot be repeated here. He was a vociferous reader, loved doing *Times* crosswords, and even placed bets on the racehorses he owned, all in the pit. I'll never forget one of the last times he played *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* with the ballet. Laura and I were in the pit warming up and getting very nervous because Paul's seat was still empty. Almost everyone else in the orchestra was already back in their seats after the intermission. Where was Paul? He was the last to leave the card table in the musicians' lounge. He waltzed into the pit at the last minute, sat down and played a fantastic Debussy solo.

KS: *Any advice for music students?*

SK: Play from your heart. Sometimes caring too much about pleasing your teacher can lead to a loss of your own authentic voice and the things that made your playing unique and beautiful. Take your teacher's advice, but don't be afraid to follow your instincts.

TW: The best advice I ever received was actually quite harsh. It came from a renowned performer who gave a masterclass at my conservatory when I was a teenager. He said, "If there is anything else besides music that might make you happy, don't go into music." That advice has echoed through my head countless times; for me, music is a calling, and there is no other way I could imagine spending my life.

Update on Flute Fair 2020 from Program Chair Deirdre McArdle:

2020 Vision: Looking back, moving forward

Guest Artists: Seth Morris, Stephanie Mortimore, Koren McCaffrey, and Maron Khoury, flutists of the Metropolitan Opera



This year we look back at our 100-year history and look forward to the next-generation flutists of the future. Please join us!

Concerts · Workshops · Presentations · Exhibits · Competition
Saturday, February 29, 2020 · 8:30 am-8:00 pm
W83 Ministry Center (150 West 83rd Street, NYC)

* Flute Fair Masterclass Participation

Applications for performer spots in the 2020 Flute Fair masterclasses with flutists of the Metropolitan Opera are now being accepted. All ages welcome.

- **Repertoire** with **Seth Morris**
- **Flute excerpts** with **Maron Khoury**
- **Piccolo excerpts** with **Stephanie Mortimore**

To apply, please send a recent recording of repertoire or excerpts you would like to perform to Jessica Taskov at jtaskovflute@gmail.com by **January 20, 2020**. Use YouTube or Dropbox links and include your name, address, email, phone number, and a brief bio. Participants will be invited by January 30.

Visit www.nyfluteclub.org/concerts-events-and-more/flute-fair for info, updates, and pre-registration

UPCOMING DEADLINES

Young Musicians Contest

January 24, 2020

NYFC Competition

February 1, 2020

(visit www.nyfluteclub.org for details)

Flute Fair masterclasses (see left)

January 20, 2020



NYFC president Nancy Toff & immediate past president Pat Zuber served birthday cake after the Club's December's concert by the flutists of the NY Philharmonic. Photo: Carol Wincenc

NYFC ENSEMBLES PROGRAM

UPDATE



Denise Koncelik



Mark Vickers

Twenty-one NYFC flutists (all returning, and not a bass flutist among them!) met at Studios 353 on West 48th Street on Sunday, December 15. Co-directors Denise Koncelik and Mark Vickers led the group through repertoire planned for the coming season, including a Rob Burns's Inca-themed *Tierra Del Gato* and Kelly Via's arrangement of Carlos Jobin's *The Girl from Ipanema*.

Answers to the intermission question ("Tell us about an organization or cause you support, or something you are grateful for") revealed many dedicated volunteers, several supporters of WNYC, and the existence of quite a few groups most of us had ever heard of (Asians on Film, Cure Violence, etc.).

All members of the NY Flute Club are welcome to participate. Questions? Contact Denise or Mark directly at ensembles@nyfluteclub.org. The next two rehearsal dates, all 2:00–4:00 pm at Studios 353, 353 West 48th Street (between 8th and 9th Avenues), are

Sunday, January 25, 2020 and
Saturday, February 22, 2020.



Participants at the December 15 NYFC Ensemble rehearsal: Front row, L to R: Monica Woods, Yiqun Zhao, Kathy Saenger, Cindy Lee, Elizabeth LaBarbera, and Denise Koncelik; Standing, L to R: Eric Thomas, Xiao (Lester) Yu, Doug Ramsdell, Ann Bordley, Frances Lenci, Roger Brooks, Karen Robbins, Ellen Isaacs, Blythe Bonnaffons, Samantha Ostrowski, Christiana Lehman, Erina Aoyama, Lauren Klasewitz, Anita Randolfi, and Mark Vickers. Photo: Brian Klasewitz



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



January 12, 2020 Concert

Sunday, 5:00 pm • Engelman Recital Hall, 55 Lexington Avenue (at 25th Street), NYC
Flutists of the New York City Ballet

100th Season

2019-2020 Concerts

October 20, 2019 • Sunday, 5:30 pm
The Legacy of Samuel Baron

November 17, 2019 • Sunday, 8:00 pm
GALA CENTENNIAL CONCERT*
Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th Street, NYC

December 15, 2019 • Sunday, 5:30 pm
Flutists of the New York Philharmonic

January 12, 2020 • Sunday, 5:00 pm
Flutists of the New York City Ballet: Scott
Kemsley, Tanya Witek, and Laura Conwesser

February 29, 2020 • Saturday, all day
Flute Fair with Flutists of the MET Opera
W83 Ministry Center, 150 W. 83rd Street, NYC

March 29, 2020 • Sunday, 5:30 pm
Flutists & Friends of the American Ballet Theatre

April 19, 2020 • Sunday, 5:30 pm
Competition Winners Concert (pre-concert
masterclass/mini-recital with Paula Robison)

May 17, 2020 • Sunday, time TBA
Annual Meeting & Ensemble Concert
Pearl Studios, 500 8th Avenue, NYC

Except as noted, all regular concerts will take place at Engelman Recital Hall, Baruch Performing Arts Center, 55 Lexington Avenue (entrance on 25th Street). All dates and programs subject to change. Tickets \$25, students and seniors \$15, only at the door; free to members. For more information, visit the NYFC website at www.nyfluteclub.org.



From the Editor

Greetings! On January 12, New York City Ballet flutists Scott Kemsley, Tanya Witek, and Laura Conwesser will be at the New York Flute Club performing a program designed to highlight the two organizations' intertwined history. **Please note the earlier start time (5:00 pm)**. Nancy Toff introduces the concert with a historical look at NYCB flutists who have played at the Club over the years (complete with a sampling of vintage programs, p. 1) and I provide an illustrated guide to the last 20 years of Newsletter content featuring NYCB flutists and subs (p. 5).

The current NYCB flutists (and their frequent colleague Rie Schmidt) were kind enough to answer a bunch of questions about how they got started playing with the group and some of their experiences with it. I loved Scott's audition story, Laura and Rie's crazy tales about their early days subbing, and everyone's stories about life on the job and their former colleagues. Former principal Paul Dunkel was fondly remembered both for his humor and his flute playing; readers can learn more about both from the interview of Paul that Tanya did for the October 2014 newsletter—and you can find it online in our newsletter archives.

In this month's From the President (p. 2), Nancy Toff recalls her childhood fascination with *The Nutcracker* and goes on to tell us about her "Nancy Drew" detective work hunting down missing NYFC programs (one of which, for a 1959 concert with a premiere by John La Montaine, was reproduced in last month's Newsletter).

Christian Dorbandt, one of the newer participants in the NYFC's ensembles program, is this month's member profile subject. I enjoyed learning about the skills he uses in his day jobs in marketing and development (most recently for the ACLU) and think that his journey back to the flute after a long absence will be inspiring to the Club's amateurs (as well as to their teachers).

Anyway, all for now. Hope to see you soon. Best regards,
Katherine Saenger (klsaenger@yahoo.com)