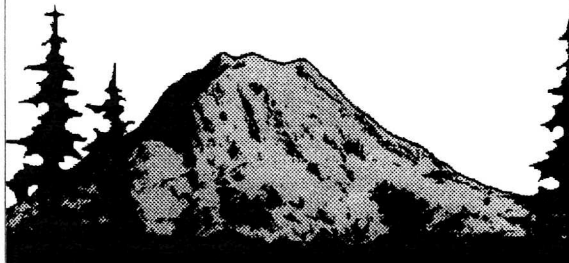


The Northwest Horn Society



Northwest Horn News

The official publication of the Northwest Horn Society

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER, 1996

Images from Eugene

HARRY BELL, RICHLAND, WA

Memorable was **Chris Leuba's** brilliant series of six lectures, "Eye-openers", covering the basics of horn playing in his inimitable way. Some of the topics are also addressed in his 1993 publication, *The Rules of the Game*. Leuba also was awarded the annual Punto Award, one of IHS's top honors, a fine choice indeed! [Ed. note: Similar well-deserved kudos to Doug Campbell!]

The **San Francisco Symphony horn section** made wonderful music including an original version of Rossini's *Le Roudez-Vous de Chasse* (done on valved horns but without pressing them down). Played in tandem formation. (The tandem, horn phalanx formation was also used effectively by the **Rogue Valley Horn Club** to help with blend and to vector the sound properly.)

One of the highlights had to be the extraordinary double recital of **Peter Damm** (Stadtskapell Dresden) and **Frank Lloyd** (English free lance, former English Chamber Orchestra, Philip Jones Brass Ensemble). Mr Damm's refinement of tone, control, and phrasing matched well with Mr. Lloyd's unbelievable technique, uniformity of tone color throughout the full range, and entertaining programming.

The natural horn scene at IHS seems to be growing albeit slowly. One full program was devoted to historical horn playing and a good performance of two movements of the Gally *Grand Quartet* took place the last night. Also, I arranged a casual read through of parts Dauprat's sextets by rounding up most of the natural horn players. Under **Rick Seraphinoff's** supervision, **Francis Orval** played the squeaky-high C horn part, **Jeff Snedeker**, and **Kristin Thelander** also played along with several of us amateurs. The mixing of pros and amateurs is fun and instructive -- a good thing to keep in mind when organizing musical activities.

(Continued on page 2)

Recent Northwest CD Releases

JEFF SNEDEKER

Corno Dulciana. Martin Hackleman and Dawn Haylett, horns, Jesse Read, bassoon. Bravura Discs CD-106, 1996. Contents: Anton Reicha *12 Trios for Two Horns and Bassoon*, Op. 93; Ludwig Leye *Suite for Two Horns and Bassoon*; Adam Joseph Emmert *Trio for Two Horns and Bassoon*.

All of this repertoire comes from around the turn of the 19th Century, which at first look might make one skeptical as to whether it would hold one's attention. I was quite pleased to find the opposite to be true for me. The variety and musicality of this trio of performers makes for an enjoyable listen. Excellent recording quality, enjoyable program, fine playing.



Though not a commercial release, I was the fortunate recipient of a recent compact disc recording of the 560th Air Force Band, Washington Air National Guard, titled *Skyward: A Musical Journey* (recorded August 1995).

The program includes an interesting variety of compositions and arrangements that show this ensemble to be of a high quality. The band is based at Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane, Washington, and is attached to the 141st Air Refueling Wing of the Washington National Guard. The ensemble also divides in various musical groups, performing all kinds of music, which have been heard throughout the United States, and in Germany, England, Guam, Spain, Australia, and Jamaica. Kudos to the horns for a fine showing (**SSgt Steve Minnich**, **SSgt Greg Cox**, **A1C David Volland**, **A1C Christopher S. Cornette**).

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NWHS Web Site in the Works

The NWHS staff is beginning work to put together a web site. Though no planned online date has been decided, we hope to have something up and running by the end of the year. Please contact Erik Svenson at eriksv@microsoft.com if you have any interesting ideas. Stay tuned!



The *Northwest Horn News* is a quarterly newsletter, published in September, December, March, and June

Send news or reports of events to NWHS Regional Coordinator:

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Images from Eugene

(Continued from page 1)

The **Army Brass Quintet** was unexpectedly virtuosic and even included a hilarious piece on home-made PVC tubing "natural horn" instruments (costing taxpayers a total of \$8).

Great exhibits and lots of them! Horns are all of extremely high quality these days, but still cost about as much as a good used car. I found a good book and CD, *Shared Reflections* (Summit label), on one of my former teachers, Philip Farkas, with lots of the stories I remember. Jim Decker's IVASI system was a big hit especially with students, who could play along with full orchestra recordings while viewing only a conductor on a large-screen television. Yamaha's Silent Brass practice mute was also a big hit among professionals and amateurs alike. It is an electronic mute with headphones that lets you sound huge to yourself while making only a whisper to the outside world.



ALLENE HACKLEMAN, VANCOUVER, B.C.

All my life I have been around the horn. As a young child I was dragged to countless rehearsals and concerts which seemed to me very overwhelming--and boring--compared to the comfortable simplicity of Sesame Street and my favourite dolls. Only after being subjected to the horn for years did I decide I actually liked it and might like to try it at the age of thirteen. So, you might say I have high "horn tolerance."

I had no idea what to expect from the IHS convention, but was told it would be a "once in a lifetime experience." Well, that did me absolutely no good. All I could do was hope that it would be an experience I would want to occur more than once in a lifetime. Little did I know who awaited me in Eugene...

Well, if the rainy weather and less-than-posh dorm rooms were not enough to impress me, the opening concert certainly was. To quote what my stepmother said while listening to Kendall Betts playing: "My face hurts just listening to him!" And the San Francisco section played more impeccably than I believed humanly possible. Already I was beginning to realize that when it comes to horn-playing, there are many ways to "skin a cat." And that about sums up what I learned first and foremost at the convention in Eugene: how many different approaches there are out there, all directed toward one goal-- playing the horn beautifully. I felt, however, that people sometimes became rather preoccupied with playing the horn and not the beautiful music which has been written for it-- not a difficult thing to do when you are being watched (and no doubt analyzed) by hundreds of horn players each time you put the metal to your face. I found that, as a spectator, I enjoyed most those performances in which music was first and foremost the performer's priority. Hearing Peter Damm, for instance: as I listened to his performance, I found myself listening less and less for inconsistencies in tone and note mistakes, and gradually I got lost in the music. After each piece he played, I picked my jaw up off the ground and tried to collect my thoughts: was it humanly possible to play *that* softly? Could that sound actually

come out of a *HORN*? What made Peter Damm's performance one of the most amazing I have ever heard was the fact that he was a tremendous musician who just happened to be a horn player. And those performers who stuck out in my mind, amidst a sea of recitals, were the ones who seemed less to be playing the horn than the music.

Where I think I learned the most at the IHS [workshop] was not (surprisingly enough) listening to all the fabulous recitals, but listening to all the *students* play. I heard people only maybe a year or two older than me who could play circles around me, or any of my horn-playing colleagues for that matter. I heard so many students who were not only gifted, but had such a complete and mature concept of the horn, the music, the hard work, and their own goals. They amazed me. They also discouraged me a little, by making me feel so incredibly below them. I was, however, inspired greatly by them. Listening to them made me realize how much I really do know about the horn, and how, if I listened to myself in the same fashion as I listened to them, I could be as good as any one of them--or better. It was just a matter of hard work--which I am fully capable of--so look for my name in the papers...

In Eugene, I not only learned about music and horn playing, but also about meeting new people and different cultures. I discovered that at a place like an international conference where everybody shares a trait like the love of music and the horn, it is much easier to meet people. And I did. Meet people, that is. I made some of the strongest friendships I have ever had in my fifteen years on this planet.

My experience at IHS '96 was indeed the "experience of a lifetime," even though I was recited (and modern music-ed) out by the end. It turned out to be all that I expected and more. Now I see (and hear) the horn in a whole new light. I always knew what a versatile and musical instrument it was-- I just had no idea (ital)how versatile and musical. The possibilities are endless. I also regard my own playing much differently now-- as something that can always be changed and improved upon-- and always has greater potential. I am reminded of something my father has always said to me about horn playing, but which I never really understood until I went to the convention: "Always be placated; Never be satisfied." Now I realize what he means. The possibilities are endless...

IT'S TIME TO RENEW!!!

Remember that the Northwest Horn Society fiscal year runs September 1 - August 31. If you haven't yet renewed your membership for 1996-97, there is a small, separate reminder enclosed with this issue. If you receive a reminder and believe you have renewed (or aren't sure), please contact Jeff Snedeker asap.



THERE IS A CHANGE IN THE MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL PROCESS. Christopher Cornette has regrettably resigned his Northwest Horn Society office as Membership Coordinator. While the society reconsiders the need for such an office, all membership renewals should be sent to *NWHN* Editor Jeff Snedeker. Financial/fiscal responsibilities will continue to be handled by Kathleen Vaught Farner.

Compact disc review

J. CHRISTOPHER LEUBA

Musique de salon: 19th-century French music for Horn and Piano.
Jeffrey Snedeker, natural and early valved horns, Marilyn Wilbanks, fortepiano.
Self-published, 1996. Available for \$12.50 (check or money order only) from
JS, 404 North Sampson Street, Ellensburg, WA 98926.

Jeffrey Snedeker has produced an excellent and enjoyable compact disc of music for Natural Horn and an early form of valved Horn, all by composers identified with 19th-century French performance practice.

I was first and foremost curious as to Snedeker's playing of the Rossini *Prelude, Theme and Variations*. It is a superb performance, both technically and musically. He plays with a refined sense of rubato, where called for in the lyric sections.

The entire recording comprises gems, each unique in its own way. Of particular interest is the only example, so far, of three vocalises played on a "transitional" instrument, a Natural Horn fitted with two piston valves, performed in the style of Joseph Meifred (1791-1867), the first teacher of the valved instrument at the Paris Conservatoire. The album notes explain the situation in detail.

Finally, mention should be made of Snedeker's facility, combined with sensitive recording which provides the listener with a realistic representation of hand horn sounds, compared with the unstopped, "open" tones, allowing the listener to hear a melodic line, and not merely an exercise in an obsolete method of playing. Not only has the Natural Horn been excellently recorded, but so has the Fortepiano, excellently played by Marilyn Wilbanks. The favourable acoustic of the Bezanson Recital Hall at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst obviously contributes to the excellent ambiance of this recording.

This CD is an important addition to the recorded legacy of our "Roots."

without the Thumb, Open (i.e., more open than Normal), Very Open, Very Stopped), some recommendations regarding utilization of crooks, and exercises and studies to aid in the use and memorization of the hand positions. The volume includes photos of the various hand positions, and descriptive charts and tables that serve as quick and easy resources.

What also makes this method useful to a wider audience is that the text is in German, French, and English; though my German is a bit rough, the translations seem quite consistent. In all, this is a carefully planned, well-produced method.

It is very important to note that the writers of this method assume that the person using it "is sufficiently versed in matters of lip technique, articulation, and general musical knowledge," and "that a high level of musicianship has already been achieved." The intent is to present a means of acquiring hand techniques that is faster and more efficient for the 20th-century player than the traditional 19th-century methods of Dauprat, Gallay, and others. As a result, they do not attempt to identify historical issues or delve into technical applications for works from the 18th or 19th centuries. Rather, this method is essentially a "how-to" book for today's players.

The exercises and studies are designed to focus on individual or specific combinations of hand positions, noted at the beginning of each, though not over individual notes in the exercises or studies themselves. The nature of the exercises is to isolate the different hand positions and, working from the middle of the range outwards, to show the player what notes are possible with each hand position. The studies, however, are longer and demand more musical and technical capabilities. As they progress, the combinations become more numerous and complex such that by the time one reaches the last, Study Number 10, all six hand positions are used. The studies are in a modern style and impose more interval gymnastics than their 18th- and 19th-century predecessors, but this is all in keeping with the goal of this method. Also in keeping with the tone of the book, the authors choose to avoid or ignore further reading or musical resources (including perhaps some examples of familiar horn music) associated with the current primary repertoire for natural horn, that of the 18th and 19th centuries. While 20th-century repertoire for natural horn is finally coming of age (and deserves much attention), it seems logical to me that most experienced horn players still want or need reference points and examples in the form of familiar solos, excerpts or other pieces to help in the crystalizing of a modern approach to this instrument.

In spite of some misgivings, I recommend this method to experienced horn players who desire a more precise technical approach to natural horn playing, especially those interested in pursuing the technical demands of modern natural horn literature. Mr. Orval and Mr. Reif have hoisted the natural horn onto a 20th-century footing, and, though the legs are a bit wobbly in directing where the interested hornist is to go next, the footing itself is secure.



Resources for Natural Horn study, Part 2

JEFFREY SNEDEKER

Francis Orval, assisted by David W. Reif. *Method for Natural Horn (Schule für Naturhorn, Méthode de Cor Naturel)*. Editions Marc Reif, Case Postale 308, CH-3963 Crans-Montana, Switzerland, tel. 41-27/431200 or FAX 41-27/434243. EMR 124, 39 pp. (This review first appeared in the *Historic Brass Society Newsletter* 6 (Summer 1994).

Francis Orval is an internationally-known soloist and recording artist, who brings not only a significant background of solo, chamber and orchestral playing, but also substantial teaching experience on both sides of the Atlantic, to this newly published horn method. His collaborator, David Reif, is also a horn player. Together, these two have developed a means of codifying six hand positions (first introduced by Mr. Orval in the *Historic Brass Society Journal* 2 (1990): 187-189), designed to clarify the basics of hand technique for experienced modern horn players who wish to study the natural horn. In this method, Mr. Orval and Mr. Reif discuss equipment, how the natural horn works (i.e., its harmonic series), the symbols and descriptions for the six hand positions they recommend (Normal ("slightly more closed" than typical current practice), Stopped with the Thumb, Partially Stopped

Horn Gathering!!

Bruce Dorsey is organizing a horn get-together on Sept. 29th from 1-4. For more information, call Bruce at 206-243-2590.

Articles Wanted

Reviewed a good horn-related book? Got an interesting horn-related story to tell? Have some advice to give? Have some comments about the newsletter? Don't keep it in! Let us know! Send all submissions to the editor.

Northwest Horn Society Charter

The Northwest Horn Society exists to promote the horn and horn playing in the northwestern region of North America, including Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Alaska, Hawaii, and the Canadian Provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. The Northwest Horn Society encourages concurrent membership in the International Horn Society. Membership information for the IHS may be obtained from:

Ellen Powley
IHS Executive Secretary
2220 North 1400 East
Provo, UT 84604

Washington, Idaho, Oregon: Jeff Snedeker
Alaska: Dan Heynen, 17420 Golden View Drive, Anchorage, AK 99516; email: AFDH@acad2.alaska.edu
Montana: Karl Overby, Department of Music, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717

Membership Information

Membership in the NWHS is open to any interested individual or institution at the following yearly rates:

Adult: \$15 (\$7.50 if a member of the IHS)

Full-time Student: \$7.50 (proof required) (\$5 if a member of the IHS)

Membership in the NWHS does not constitute membership in the IHS, or vice versa. Payment of dues entitles members to voting privileges for society business, receipt of the NWHS newsletter on a quarterly basis, publicity for horn-related events and performances, and reduced admission for society-sponsored or supported events.

Northwest Horn Society Membership Form

Name: _____

Check if renewal membership

Mailing Address: _____

Check if address change

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Affiliation (if any): _____ IHS member: _____ (Y/N)

Membership dues enclosed: _____ (Adult: \$15; \$7.50 for IHS members. Student: \$7.50; \$5.00 for IHS members)

The Northwest Horn News
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Northwest Horn News

The official publication of the Northwest Horn Society

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DECEMBER, 1996

MIDI Horn Accompaniments

DAN HEYNE, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Need a practice accompanist? If you have a MIDI set up and Internet access, you can log on to Sharon Zurflieh's "Obedient Accompanist" page (<http://www.emi.net/~zurfl/horn.html>). I was recently working with a high school horn student on the Hindemith sonata, wishing I could play the accompaniment to show the wonderful interplay between the horn and piano. And then I found Sharon's page and an amazing list of Standard MIDI Files that included accompaniments to many of the greatest solo horn pieces in the literature. The Mozart concerti, Beethoven sonata, Hindemith sonata, Gliere's works, Brahms trio, Dukas Villanelle, and many more.

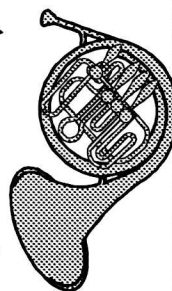
How does it work? I downloaded the first movement of the Hindemith in less than a minute by clicking on its title. Sharon works with Macintosh, and her files are self-extracting archives. Once they had unstuffed themselves, I loaded the Standard MIDI File into my Macintosh sequencing software and played it back through my synthesizer. These are not commercial products, and there may be some

mistakes to edit out with sequencing software, but that can be done as you put in your own tempo changes. For those of you who belong to the IBM world



(my sympathies), I'm sure there are programs available to convert the Mac files to IBM format just as Apple File Exchange works in the opposite direction.

Granted, there's nothing like having a real,
(Continued on page 2)



New Product Reviews: Yamaha "Silent Brass"

KATHLEEN VAUGHT FARNER, TACOMA, WASHINGTON

Incredible as it seems, not everyone appreciates hearing a horn player practice. There are times when we must turn to regular mutes, practice mutes, a pillow in the bell or anything else we can think of to get in some practice in a hotel, dormitory, apartment, or while visiting Aunt Sadie in Iowa. I own several practice mutes myself and have found them to be very unsatisfactory, so I was dubious when fellow hornist and Northwest Horn Society member Michael Houle suggested I try the Yamaha SILENT BRASS.

Consisting of a mute/microphone pickup, earphones and the paperback-novel-sized "personal studio" control unit, the Silent Brass allows you to keep the in-room volume (what someone standing next to you would hear) very low while you listen to yourself play at full volume through the earphones. The horn sound that you hear through the earphones is digitally enhanced and you can control your acoustic environment—changing the perceived acoustic from very dry to what Yamaha calls "cathedral." In addition to solo practice use, you can hook up the Silent Brass to a CD player, tape recorder or any other sound source that has input jacks and play along with a recording!

The stuffy restricted feel of conventional practice mutes is absent as the Silent Brass is relatively free-blowing, although I found the high register (B-flat on up) to be more resistant. The price—around \$300—makes you stop and think hard before buying, but Silent Brass is a one-of-a-kind product that really does work.

ANOTHER PERSPECTIVE BY CHRIS LEUBA, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

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