

The Northwest Horn Society



Northwest Horn News

The official publication of the Northwest Horn Society

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 1

SEPTEMBER, 1997

From the Editor

Greetings! Welcome to the new school year. I hope your summer was as fruitful as it could be. As we move into the new fiscal year for NwHS, there are several things to remember:

1. It's time to renew!! On the newsletter's mailing label panel, I've tried to indicate to those who ARE paid up for 97-98 (or beyond) of their current status. If you find no handwritten message from me near your address label, then **this could be your last issue** (Oh no, not that!!!). Please renew your membership to support our activities, which serve *only* to support activities related to the horn in the Northwest. Also, be sure to check out the new dues amounts, especially to take advantage of the new multi-year discount.

2. Enclosed on a separate sheet of paper is a survey for you to respond to. This is a result of society action at our business meeting at CWU last May, and serves to gather member information and opinions relevant to future events and society business. I hope it is self explanatory. If you have any questions or do not find one enclosed, please contact me or Kathy Farner. I would appreciate it if you would

send your responses along with your membership dues; I'll try to publish the results in December, if possible, in March at the latest.

3. It's time for my annual plea for contributions: **please** send reports, ideas, reviews, questions (remember "Ask-the-Pro"?) to me or call me if you need help. I'll be happy to help or work with you. This newsletter will only be as interesting as our combined efforts make it.

4. Finally, many have expressed concern regarding attracting new members to our ranks. Kathy and I will be happy to listen to any suggestions you have, and we already plan to do some strategic mailings to address this concern. I think, however, we all know what works best—personal contact. In this spirit, I hope you will volunteer yourself to make copies of this newsletter or at least of the membership form to distribute information to people you know. You don't have to "hard-sell" it—hopefully the quality of what we do and the interest and enthusiasm we show will be enough to at least attract attention.

I look forward to another year of serving as Editor, and look forward to hearing from you.

Seattle Symphony News

In the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* on June 7, 1997, P-I Music Critic R. M. Campbell reported that members of the Seattle Symphony failed to qualify John Cerminaro, Guest Principal Horn for the past two seasons, for appointment as Principal Horn. No appointment was made for the upcoming season. Orchestra members refused to bypass auditions for the position, a post vacated by retiring Principal Horn Robert Bonnie and requiring Cerminaro to audition for the opening. Final auditions were held during the first week of June, the SSO's orchestra committee deemed only one of eleven finalists "qualified," not Cerminaro. According to the article, the qualified person's appointment was subject to Music Director

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The 13th Annual Early Brass Festival

JEFF SNEDEKER

The 13th Annual Early Brass Festival, sponsored by the Historic Brass Society, took a major step, going "on the road" for the first time in its history. The site chosen was Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana, and the festival took place July 11-13, 1997. The event was very successful especially for horns. 50 participants were treated to lectures, concerts, informal playing sessions, and social activities, which attracted some of the top figures in the field of historic brass instruments. For horn players, there were several events of special interest. John Ericson presented further evidence of Heinrich Stozel's actual intentions for the early valve applied to the horn. John's recent work has done much to dispel cer-

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Seattle Symphony News (cont.)

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Gerard Schwarz' approval, which apparently was not received. According to the SSO's Personnel Manager Ron Simon, new auditions will be announced soon, and the orchestra management is currently negotiating with Cerninaro to stay on as Guest Principal for 1997-98.

Early Brass Festival (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

tain myths about playing technique in the early days in Germany, showing clear evidence that while some players may have chosen to use valves as crooking devices, Stoezel himself valued the chromatic range of even, open tones the valves allowed. Lisa Emrich, a doctoral candidate at IU, presented a lecture-recital on the life and works of Jacques-François Gallay. Her lecture and performance, including several Gallay works, were well received.

The highlight, however, was the Saturday evening program, which featured nothing but music for horns. The program included works by Oestreich, Gallay, Schubert, Saint-Saëns, Snedeker, and Gounod, performed by Kristen Thelander, Johnny Pherigo, Rick Seraphinoff and Jeff Snedeker. The quartet then joined forces for all of Gallay's *Grand Quartet*, Op. 26, for horns in different keys. In the future the EBF will continue to venture to other sites to encourage interest and increase accessibility to scholarship and activities in the field of historic brass instruments. Next year's festival, however, will return to Amherst College in Amherst, Massachusetts. Watch for updates!

with Mahler, and he is a superb orchestra trainer. By the final concert, everything was under control, the tempi flowed smoothly and naturally, and Mahler's unsurpassed orchestral palette shown through in vivid color. Simon also understands that there is humor in this symphony, especially in the inner movements, and he made the most of it. The absurd "false" brass entrances and crazy oompahs in the second movement had just the right comic effect. And for the first time, I heard the "laughter" that GM surely had in mind for one of the motives in the Burleske - those places where the violins have five short descending eighth notes. After several hundred bars of wild counterpoint, themes thrown together backwards, inside-out, upside-down, the last few pages were driven to the point where it sounded like a train about to leave the rails. The excitement was almost unbearable. The ending of the symphony was the best part of the concert. Simon took lots of time on that miraculous last page, and the leader of the second violins did a magnificent job, putting every ounce of tenderness into it.

The first part of the program included a Stokowski transcription of Debussy's *Sunken Cathedral* and Strauss's *Don Juan*. The Strauss was quite dazzling, and I particularly enjoyed Alex DeJarnatt's sensitive oboe solo and Robin Miller's fine horn work. In fact the entire horn section was brilliant and noble. The Strauss and Debussy were well done, but I can't help thinking that next year I would prefer to have the whole program devoted to our beloved Gustav. If one must have more than a symphony on the program, why not try some of the orchestra songs? One never gets to hear these often enough in live performance. There is something special about music making that comes from the heart, and I think everybody was touched by it. I leave you with this thought: the next time you are close to any Mahler event, beg, bribe, or bluff your way into the rehearsals if you possibly can. One rehearsal will teach you more about Mahler's way with an orchestra than a hundred hours of CD's.

CD reviews

JEFF SNEDEKER

I WILL. JOHN CLARK, HORN, WITH GUESTS.

Postcards 1016, 1997. Postcards, Inc., Dept. JC, 225 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012, or visit <http://www.postcds.com>. Recorded October 7-8, 1996, Sony Studios, New York

This latest recording by John Clark comes across as much more personal than his previous efforts. The program is

1997 Northwest Mahler Festival

DAVID LAMB, SEATTLE, WA

The final event of the 1997 Northwest Mahler Festival, a concert featuring Mahler's *Ninth Symphony*, was one of the most emotional musical experiences I have had for some time, and not only because the orchestra played my favorite symphony. I was lucky enough to attend all the rehearsals, score in hand, to hear how it all went together. The players were all volunteers who play in many different community and school orchestras in the Seattle area. Conductor Geoffrey Simon did an incredible job of inspiring this group of amateurs so that they truly became an orchestra capable of producing this brutally demanding work. All the musicians stretched themselves for the occasion, and I would guess that most of them surpassed what they thought their limits to be. I would also guess that many people in the audience were amazed at the level of excellence demonstrated by the people on that stage. The emotional thrill really came from the fact that the orchestra played straight from the heart; you could feel that they deeply loved this music and served it with passion.

Mahler always offers us lots of challenging solos, and the concert gave plenty to the wind section leaders. I have to mention one among many. From a horn player's point of view, the 9th must seem like an 80-minute concerto. The principal horn, Deane Mathewson, was equal to the challenge. He played with great authority and with a rich, virile tone that seemed to color the entire orchestra. His solos, especially in the outer movements, were exceptional. Simon was an ideal choice to conduct the Festival. He obviously feels at home

quite varied, with the primary emphasis on collective improvisation, what some call (or at least used to) "free jazz", and what Clark himself calls "open aesthetic". That being said, however, don't let it scare you off!! There is plenty to be said about approaching music with open minds and open ears. The performers on this recording are obviously experienced in this genre and do an excellent job "playing off" of one another, which makes for a coherent and interesting recording. If, however, your taste is more conservative, requiring clear

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Raves from Rochester: The 29th Annual International Horn Workshop

KATHLEEN VAUGHT FARNER

On June 8th, 1997 the Eastman School of Music Horn Choir and Eastman Brass opened the 29th Annual International Horn Workshop with a brilliant gala program that set the standard for the following six days of recitals, lectures, concerts and masterclasses. There were so many examples of superb artistry and virtuosity throughout the week that by day six, workshop participants found themselves firmly ensconced in Horn Heaven!

As well as for the week's keen organization and smooth running, host Peter Kurau deserves high praise for presenting such widely diverse sessions. There was literally something and something very good-for everyone.

New music was highlighted on a regional artist recital and on three separate concerts that featured works of Bernhard Krol, who was present throughout the workshop, Verne Reynolds, and Alec Wilder. Jazz enthusiasts filled the hall for a recital by John Clark and friends.

Jim Thatcher represented the Hollywood music industry with special assistance from harmonica player Tommy Morgan. Naturally, the natural horn resounded throughout the week, in particular on Monday's artist recital on which Lowell Greer performed his own works.

By Wednesday everyone was ready for a change of pace. Several busloads of hornists boarded the canal boat Colonial Belle for a trip down the Erie Canal and a picnic and old-fashioned band concert at Ontario Beach Park. The West

Point Band did a spectacular job as Soichiro Ohno, Froydis Ree Wekre, Harry Ditzel, Shelly Showers, Lisa Bontrager, and LaDonna Swetnam took turns soloing. The program's highlighted work, Schumann's *Konzertstück*, featured the killer quartet of Kendall Betts, Charles Kavalovski, Soichiro Ohno, and Froydis Ree Wekre.

Not surprisingly, each of the many participants I spoke with chose a different aspect of the workshop as his or her personal favorite. For me there were two in particular—Bill Vermeulen's lecture "How to Fix Virtually Any Problem on the Horn in Three Easy Steps", and just being inside the Eastman School of Music. That institution is a major piece of living music history; attending the workshop there was both impressive and inspiring. Special mention must be made of the stage manager in Kilbourn Hall and his pre-concert instruction on emergency exit procedures, which certainly brought an immediate sense of history and humor to every performance!

The 30th International Horn Summit will be June 2-6, 1998 at the Banff Centre for the Arts (Alberta, Canada). Northwest horn players are once again fortunate to have this world class annual event held in our own "back yard". Mark the dates on your calendar. More information is available by contacting The Banff Centre for the Arts, phone 1-800-565-9989 (toll free). E-mail: arts_info@banffcentre.ab.ca or visit the website: www.banffcentre.ab.ca/Music/horn/html

CD reviews (cont.)

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structures, standard melodies, etc., the majority of tunes tend toward the "outside" and may not be to your liking. There are several gems on the conservative side, though, and throughout Clark obviously plays from the heart, which one cannot fail to appreciate. The arrangements range from two to eleven players, and whether composed on the spot or carefully structured, the overall effect comes across well.

There is a wide range of instrumental colors (e.g., the use of sitar on Coltrane's "India") and interesting ensemble combinations (e.g., horn, tuba and drums on Sonny Rollins' "Airegin"). There are some tunes that more conservative tastes will appreciate, particularly for Clark's passionate and heartfelt performance—his version of the standard "My One and Only Love" is one of my personal favorites on his recording. For the more adventurous, there is Clark's "Now You Start," a very humorous and entertaining "conversation" between Clark, trumpeter Stanton Davis and trombonist David Taylor, and "Bad Attitude," a growling, dissonant, satiric, "out" piece that showcases a full range of extended techniques. The title cut, another tune by Clark, is another heartfelt composition and performance featuring beautiful extended tenor sax work by Alex Foster. Clark, likewise is warm, spontaneous and flashy. At last report, Clark was using a Bb/high Bb instrument, and it sounds like it here, with a range of horn colors from trombone-like lows to a flugelhorn-like highs. Clearly, Clark is fluent in the style and finding and clarifying his own voice.

CORNUCOPIA: FRENCH CHAMBER MUSIC FOR HORN AND STRINGS. Richard Seraphinoff, natural horn, Judson Griffin, Cynthia Roberts, violins, Andrea Andros, viola, Allen Whear, 'cello, with Jesse Watras, bass. Focus 942, 1996. Early Music Institute, School of Music of Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. Recorded May 24-26, 1995 in the chapel of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, NY, in collaboration with the Genesee Early Music Society.

(An excerpt from a review in the upcoming *Historic Brass Society Newsletter*)

This eagerly-awaited recording features an interesting program of chamber music that demonstrates a range of styles from early 19th-century Paris. Seraphinoff and his colleagues give a fine, sensitive performance of three pieces that show off the horn in a very attractive and historically-accurate context. The three pieces are Frédéric Duvernoy's *Quartet No. 2 in D minor* (horn, violin, viola, 'cello), Louis François Dauprat's *Quintet Op. 6, No. 1, in F major*, and Antonin Reicha's *Grand Quintet in E major*, op. 106 (with added bass ad lib.). For this recording Seraphinoff uses his own copy of a French Classical orchestral horn after an early 19th-century instrument by Antoine Halari, while the string players use 18th-century Italian instruments (original and copies), which is a likely combination of instruments for this music at the time. The result is a live, balanced sound, with a clear separation of timbres such that the horn is heard clearly throughout the range and in all hand positions, even in the most intricate stopped passages.

This recording has a wonderful, elegant feel, that is presented without pretense or overstatement. The performers clearly have a strong affinity for this type of music, and

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CD Reviews (cont.)

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Seraphinoff in particular is smooth and musical over deceptively difficult passages. He is one of the most elegant, polished performers on the natural horn today. On the whole,

this is one of the most tasteful, sensitive, and thoughtful recordings I have ever heard. I think the ease and elegance with which the music is presented belies its significance-- with instruments likely to have been used at the time, this really is an historically-accurate performance.

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:

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Membership Information

Membership in the NWHS is open to any interested individual or institution at the following yearly rates (year begins each September 1):

Adult: \$15 (\$10 if a member of the IHS; \$5 discount for three-year adult membership)

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: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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

Email: _____ Affiliation (if any): _____ IHS Member?: _____ (y/n)

Check if renewal membership

Check if address change

Amount enclosed: _____

Adult (\$15/year; \$10 if IHS member; \$5 discount for 3 yr mbrshp)

Student (\$7.50/year; \$5 if IHS member)

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The official publication of the Northwest Horn Society

VOLUME 3, NUMBER 2

DECEMBER, 1997

Northwest Horn Society to Sponsor Workshop Scholarships

The Northwest Horn Society will sponsor two scholarships to the Banff IHS workshop June 2-6, 1998. Each scholarship will cover registration fees only; room and board and travel to the workshop must be covered by the recipient. One scholarship will be awarded to a current high-school student, a second to a current undergraduate college student (age limit 25). Here are the details:

- Application will consist of the following:
 - a) Cassette tape of two contrasting pieces from standard horn repertoire (live performances preferred).
 - b) An essay of not more than 100 words describing how the Banff workshop will benefit the applicant's future plans and musical growth.
- Application deadline: March 1, 1998 Send to Professor Kathleen Vaught Farmer, Music Department, Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA 98447-8669. Any questions should be directed to prof. Farmer at 253-535-7607.
- Applicants must be current members of the Northwest Horn Society (membership dues may be submitted with the application).

Winners will be notified by April 1, 1998

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Survey Reminder

About half of those sent out have been received. If you have sent yours, thank you! If not, please try to remember to give us this input, which will be summarized in the March newsletter.

Amateur or Professional

DAN HEYNEN, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

I was filling out the survey that accompanied the last Northwest Horn Society newsletter, and once again had to define my identity. I don't make my living playing horn, but I usually do get paid when I perform. Maybe you're in the same situation, and wish there was another check box in between "Amateur" and "Professional."

Some of us come out of college with a life that revolves around the horn, but with a career that may be unrelated. At some point, we have to decide if we are "hornists" or merely play the horn. In my own case, I reached a point where my work as an Elementary Music Educator was being negatively impacted by my night life as a member of too many performing groups. I consciously made the decision to change my identity from a hornist who taught school to a teacher who played horn. After a span of 20 years as principal horn with the Anchorage Symphony, I quit. I became more involved in professional associations affiliated with music education, and completed a Masters Degree in Liberal Arts.

I still perform from time to time, teach horn, run our local horn club, am active in the IHS and have started a state Horn Newsletter. I do miss some aspects of all the playing I had been doing, but not the tedious rehearsals. I think I made the right decision - I'm playing less and enjoying it more. When the phone rings with a minor gig, I'm happy to accept. When we have horn club meetings, I have the time to attend, unlike some of the busier symphony players, who are "played out."

Are you a hornist first and foremost, or do you just play the horn? It's a weighty decision that shouldn't come lightly but can make a difference in your approach to your day-time job. It's possible to move in either direction, and as I complete my last year of teaching elementary music before retirement, I toy with the idea of moving back toward more playing. I love the horn, and I love playing, but there is more to life, and it all takes time. Meanwhile, I still wish there was a check box for "Semi-professional" and I'll keep my vanity license plate, "Horn 1," thank you very much.

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