

AMATEUR CHAMBER MUSIC PLAYERS

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Newsletter Supplement, February 2000
Susan M. Lloyd, Editor

PLAY-INS COMING UP

Lucretia Harrison will celebrate her usual Brandenburg Sunday at her home in honor of J.S. Bach and Helen Rice, on March 21, 2000. Call or write her if you can come: 99 Bayview Avenue, **PORT WASHINGTON, NY 11050**; 516/767-1316.

This year's **TORONTO PLAY-IN** will take place on Sunday, March 12. All are welcome. For further information, call Jane Wilson at 905/834-5661; e-mail: <j.wilson@canoemail.com>.

The annual **NEW ENGLAND PLAY-IN**, co-sponsored by ACMP and the Appalachian Music Club, will also be held on Sunday, March 12 from 1-7 PM. Thanks once again to the generosity of the Phillips Academy (Andover) Music Department, it will take place at the Academy's Graves Hall off Main Street in Andover, MA. Those who know the Appalachian Music Club's ways will not be surprised that there will be a chance for singing and hiking, as well as ensemble playing in the building's many rooms. For spouses, the Addison Gallery of American Art is a five-minute walk away.

Bring a dish for a potluck supper, or \$5.00. Your friends are welcome too, whether or not they are AMC or ACMP members. If at all possible, let us know ahead of time if you are coming, mentioning your instrument or voice part—or both. Contact

Martha Ann Jaffe

31 Parker Street, Newton Center, MA 02159
617/244-0955 (home), 603/881-2384 (work)
e-mail: <jaffe@rtl.enet.dec.com>.

A SIGHTREADING WEEKEND FOR STRING PLAYERS

This yearly event takes place on June 24th and 25th, 2000
at

NEEL'S CABIN in MILLARVILLE, CANADA

Site 7, Box 1, Toliko

Primitive facilities to stay overnight, or bed and breakfast nearby. Located in the foothills of the Rockies. Congenial atmosphere, low cost. Register with Neel De Wit-Wibaut by phone before June 1: 403/931-3640 or 403/270-7522.

Roberta Goldman found this punny stuff on her e-mail. It is entitled *A COMPOSER LETTER: A Composer Makes Himself Perfectly Glière* (there seems to be a conductor or singer or two in here too). Here are a few lines:

You can Telemann by where he likes to live. I just Toch a trip Orff into one of the Wilder areas Fauré Wieck, and to be Verdi Franck, the countryside nearly drove Menotti. I know opinion Varèse, but even Vivaldi urban noises, the Bizet traffic, as well as knowing there are Mennin the streets Callas enough to knock your Bloch off, I couldn't resist the urge to Galuppi home early Satie.

I Haieff to say I Still prefer the Mitropoulos. The Boyce were Sor that I had Gibbons up and succumbed to the Reger of the Field so easily, but I don't give a Schütz...

You get the idea.

MUSIC HEALS

Our last newsletter brought letters describing the aches and pains that instrumentalists tend to suffer as the result of intensive practicing and rehearsal. Time for the other side of the story: Music heals.

John Levine, M.D., *Fl-D*, is a psychiatrist who teaches his Harvard Medical School students to use literature in releasing and clarifying their own understanding and that of their suffering patients. All his life a singer, and now a devoted flute player, John is exploring the uses of music in the treatment and prevention of illnesses both physical and mental.

John admires the work of Crispin Spaulding, M.D., Professor of Physiology at the Music Conservatory of Trondheim, Norway, whose students "learn elements of physiology, ergonomics, kinesiology, and even psycho-immunology (the relationship between stress and the body's immune response, including inflammatory reactions) so that they may work out an "informed synthesis" of pain prevention techniques. The music, the instrument and the musician's understanding of her or his body become together a means by which fears and muscle tensions are released. Equipped with an "alertness to discomfort" and "an enthusiasm for adapting to change," the musician is ready to **PLAY** or to **SING**.

And some of the most magical playing and singing goes on in the rehabilitation wards for sufferers of stroke and Parkinson's disease. Samuel Wong graduated from medical school but soon returned to music, his first love; when he is not conducting in Hong Kong, Honolulu or New York, he is volunteering at Beth Abraham Hospital's Institute for Music and Neurologic Function in the Bronx. As Wong writes in the Summer, 1999 *Harvard Medical Alumni Bulletin*,

On a Tuesday afternoon, I am leading a music session with six patients. After starting with some simple harmonies and a slow rocking rhythm on a Yamaha key-board, I invite "Molly," a 76-year-old aphasic from Dublin, to improvise a little. "Oh Danny boy, how I miss you, my Danny boy," she sings, her voice strong and eloquent. Just a moment ago she could not speak the simplest words. Next Rosita, briefly lucid and coherent from her dementia, sings in Spanish, "How much pain and suffering we must forget, my love, after all these years." And then, as he stares down at his confining wheelchair, Robert, a rotund black man, joins in, "Oh yes, how I miss my Emily, and my son in Alabam'—how I wish I could walk again, then I could walk to them."

And so the musical improvisation goes, stitching memories, yearnings, and sorrows together.

An hour later, Wong is beating on a xylophone, surrounded by patients sitting or lying by IV poles, who strum, drum, rattle and sing. They are finding music within themselves that had seemed long lost. "No infirmity is too great for this chamber music," writes Samuel Wong.

In Austin, Texas, women had a decreased need for anesthesia during childbirth when listening to music. In Provo, Utah, ba-

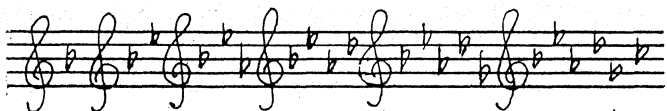
bies who regularly heard live singing gained more weight and were released from the intensive care unit three days earlier than those who didn't. The list of Wong's research findings goes on and on.

Love of music and desire to return to active playing make musicians superb patients, maintains Fred Hochberg, a neurologist at Massachusetts General Hospital who has treated hundreds of musicians for overuse injuries and dystonia. Hochberg was interviewed at length for the *Bulletin* by Phyllis Fagell, who concludes that the single-mindedness of dedicated musicians can greatly help them focus their "talent and drive on the reorchestration of their bodies and techniques."

Among the healers and the healed are many ACMP members. Eugen Okenka of Slovakia plays regularly in a Florida shelter for the homeless, as well as for Alzheimers patients. Brenda Alony of Israel, who volunteers frequently as instrumental teacher and choral assistant in a home for autistic people, describes in the October *Music for the Love of It* her wonderment at the power of group music-making to calm even the most tense and isolated of her charges. She adds, "I have watched myself changing over the past two years, and being pulled into this new world."

Finally, music has helped our International Advisory Council member David William-Olsson to recover from a dreadful bicycle accident in Central Stockholm that almost ended his life. "Many angels helped me" (David wrote last year), beginning with an ambulance driver who got him to the hospital within 12 minutes. This was in July of last year—but by mid-August he was practicing cello again, re-tuning muscle and nerve to the music. He began to join in chamber music sessions with visiting ACMP guests. "After the Mozart C Major String Quintet, K. 515 I had no more pain in my left shoulder," he wrote, telling also of his revived plans to take care of seven young musicians from Vilnius, who had been invited to Stockholm to perform a septet by Franz Berwald.

Music heals.



ACMP Members at the October Workshop, Beit Daniel, Israel:
Brenda Alony, Itzik Dekel, Marian Wilk, Roland Wilk, Linda Rand

MUSIC RECOMMENDED BY MEMBERS

comes to us for this issue through subscribers to the Chamber-Music-Players-list. Al Ball had been searching for a Suk quartet, and since he had found it successfully through CMP-list, "Marie" wrote with a plea:

I really need to know if there are any other PIANO QUARTETS than Brahms, Dvořák, Mozart, Beethoven, Fauré, Schumann, and Schnittke?!.. I am sure there are...

Another subscriber immediately responded, "And you're right! Some of them are first-rate music, too." His recommended list follows:

Frank Bridge: *Fantasy Quartet*
 Aaron Copland: *Piano Quartet*
 Hermann Goetz: *Quartet*, Op. 6
 J.N. Hummel: *Piano Quartet* in G
 Vincent d'Indy: *Piano Quartet*, Op. 7
 Bohuslav Martinů: *Piano Quartet* No. 1
 Mendelssohn: 3 *Piano Quartets*, Opp. 1, 2, & 3
 Vítězslav Novák: *Piano Quartet* in C minor, Op. 7
 Robert Palmer [NOT the rock critic] *Piano Quartet*
 Camille Saint-Saëns: *Piano Quartet*, Op. 41
 Carlos Surinach: *Piano Quartet*
 Alexander Tansman: *Suite-Divertissement*
 Carl Maria von Weber: *Piano Quartet*, Op. 8

"There are others, but these fifteen should make a pretty good start for research & reading." Many of the others are listed in the Helen Rice Collection Catalogue of the Hartford Public Library, whose website home page (www.hartfordpl.lib.ct.us) and large collection of scores to loan can be reached through any public library, or your home computer.

The World Cello Congress III, May 28-June 4, 2000 at Towson University in Baltimore, MD

All amateur cellists, at all levels of playing can attend the 63 events featuring more than 400 performers, guest artists, speakers, and master artists/teachers. The events include concerts, recitals, master classes, symposiums, exhibitions, and receptions.

Specifically for chamber players, Paul Katz will present a session on "The Chamber Music Cellist." All full-time participants may join in the 200+ massed cello ensemble where amateur and professional cellists rehearse and perform side by side. Conducted by David Lockington, the group will perform a world première composition selected from the International Composer's Competition, in addition to works by Davidov, Villa-Lobos, Casals, and others. This concert will be held at the Joseph Meyerhoff Symphony Hall in the cultural center of Baltimore.

The registration fee is \$375 (\$325 for students with proof of age and school where enrolled) and includes tickets to all the events. For information, contact

Dr. Helene Breazeale, Executive Director
 World Cello Congress III - Towson University
 8000 York Road, Baltimore, MD 21252-0001
 410/830-3451, Fax. 410/830-4012

hbreazeale@towson.edu
www.towson.edu/~breazeal/cello.htm

A VETERAN ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER...

whom we have never properly introduced is *Leon Hoffman, Vc-A*. Born in Brooklyn, Leon started cello when he was 4 years old at the Third Street Music School Settlement. At this extraordinary community music school, renowned professionals such as Leon's teacher Liess Rosanos offered lessons for 50 cents each, as well as chamber music coaching and two orchestras. He was allowed to study theory at 6, and by age 8, had become first cellist of the senior orchestra, joining many first desk children who (unlike Leon) went on to be professional orchestra players or composers. Leon took the same position in the Stuyvesant High School orchestra, becoming a protégé of conductor Walter E. Stoffreten. He says now that he feels blessed by the help and encouragement of all these generous, highly talented adults.

Among them were several Third Street teachers who had themselves studied with Casals, were involved with the Kneisel Quartet, were teaching at Blue Hill, or all three. Two of his earliest and most exciting chamber music experiences were being coached by the Paganini String Quartet, in residence at Third Street, and by Maria Romanos, who taught her string quartet students to learn every part in a quartet in order to see the music whole; also to perform chamber music by heart whenever possible. As he remembers walking up Third Street toward the Settlement on a spring day, hearing chamber music wafting from its open windows, Leon realizes how bountiful was his neighborhood's cultural life during the 1940s and '50s, and how fortunate he was. This was the rich mix that is New York City at its very best.

After high school, Leon went to study with Hermann Busch in Miami, where he played in the Miami Symphony; there he attended the University of Miami on a full music scholarship. It was at this time that he first came to know ACMP members in both New York and Miami. Friends of the New Hampshire Music Festival happened to hear him perform a newly composed cello work on WNYC, and arranged for him to play there for two summers under Leopold Stokowski. It was a key turning point in Leon's life. He realized as he came to know the lives of his fellow professionals that he wanted to make music his passionate vocation rather than his sole profession. He began to concentrate on studies in psychology.

First there was a post-graduation stint in the army, which offered, surprisingly, many a chance to play with ACMP members, most of them Fort Knox commanders' wives such as Louise Ripple, who introduced Leon to new and profoundly exciting approaches to Beethoven's Rasoumovsky quartets. Once discharged, he moved to Chicago to finish his career preparation, studying cello with Janos Starker while involved in a doctoral program and internship. He married an enthusiastic amateur violist and started a family. He has continued to play and coach professionally, but has also become devoted to his work as a psychotherapist with both individual patients and groups.

Leon is often asked how he came to value group therapy in an era when most treatment was individual. "I was a chamber music player 20 years before I became a group therapist," says Leon. "A therapy group is an *ensemble*," in which every member's contribution is needed to bring life's health and life's beauty to all. Similarly, "the Creator speaks through Bach or

Beethoven,"—and through their performers—to give us MUSIC. Leon's father had wanted him to become a rabbi, while his mother hoped he would be a physician. He feels he is, in his way, both.

Leon's recollection of the many selfless people who have encouraged his efforts has him cheering on the ACMP Foundation's commitment to fostering chamber music in dozens of community music schools and youth orchestras around the United States and now, abroad as well. He travels all over the country and the world, watching this progress, and bringing professional lovers of music and other amateurs together. We hear frequently of his role in spreading word of ACMP through far places unaccustomed to hearing an amateur cellist play so beautifully. ACMP is lucky to have him on board.

USE IT OR LOSE IT?

A FOLLOW-UP ON ABSOLUTE PITCH

Ted Rust writes the following in the December (European Workshop) issue of *Music For the Love of It*:

The news on absolute ("perfect") pitch, a rare trait in Western populations, is that it was recently shown to be widespread among non-musician native speakers of tonally inflected languages such as Cantonese and Vietnamese, even though those languages convey meaning with relative, not absolute pitch. Is it possible that all children are born with the potential to develop absolute pitch, but most Western babies never realize this potential, because tone is not made sufficiently meaningful during the critical early years of language formation? Should solfège start in the cradle?

♪ NON-PLAYING HOSTS

Every so often we see a letter which shows how important the role of the non-playing host can be. One appeared on the CMP e-mail list: a member of a piano trio, looking for a place about halfway between the players' homes to rehearse one Sunday each month: "someone whose piano is in need of exercise."

We are happy to have our veteran members continue to be part of ACMP, even when they can no longer play with those to whom they open their homes—or if they are temporarily out of action.

Note: We have changed the symbol for non-playing host from ♫ to ♪ because many *playing* hosts signed up for this role by mistake.

NEEDED:

TEACHING MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN

Jack Clausen, MD, writes:

As part of efforts to enhance music education in our local elementary school, I am interested in receiving information about resources that promote and facilitate children's learning to play musical instruments.

Such information could include relevant websites, books, videos, recordings; descriptions of innovative music programs in schools, summer music camps, and youth orchestras, etc. This information could be especially helpful for parents who do not have a music background but want to provide their children with optimal opportunities to learn to play and enjoy music.

Please send suggestions to me at 7404 Monte Vista, La Jolla, CA 92037; E-mail: <105023.3335@compuserve.com>.

THE ON-LINE BEAT

The free-access Chamber-Music-Players-list has allowed some 300 ACMP members and others to continue their conversations about music and musicians with as much energy as they gave to the old <acmp-list>. One subscriber speculates as to why it might be that string players don't like to play in keys with two or more flats that are so convenient for wind players. The string players write back protesting that they LIKE flats, even though more little-finger action is required to master them. (Multitudinous sharps, they say, are another matter.) Another amateur has become confident enough in his quartet's proficiency to want to offer short concerts to elder communities and nursing homes, and asks how others have gone about arranging and bringing off such performances.

Two violists who started out as serious clarinetists meet on the web. Both still play clarinet, but the plethora of string music has drawn them to this mid-life choice—and their love of the tenor voice within four-part harmony caused each to settle on the viola. They'll know (with no further study) what florid arpeggios Brahms expected of the players in those two sonatas he composed for either clarinet or viola!

There are now two independent e-mail lists which may interest members, in addition to the monitored communications that can take place with a much larger group through the ACMP website: the more general CMP-list mentioned above and a list for those interested mainly in conversations about string quartets—their interpretation, rehearsal and performance. Here are the addresses to e-mail for those wishing to subscribe to either or both lists:

<CMP-list-subscribe@onelist.com>

<quartet-playing-list-subscribe@onelist.com>

Subscribe, and you're on! To get off again at any time, simply substitute "unsubscribe" for "subscribe."



AS THE HORSE CROSSES
THE SHEEP UP AND DOWN,
THE WOOD RETURNS
A MELLIFLOUS SOUND,
HAIL THE PLAYING
HAND!

*Latin Inscription on ribs of
a Lira da braccio by
Francesco Linarol, Venice, 1563*

THE SHRINE TO MUSIC MUSEUM, VERMILION, S.D.

Calligraphy by Franziska E. Jaeger

Our website at www.acmp.net has channeled many calls and chamber music plans to those listed, but up to now, it has been complicated to keep announcements and links up to date through volunteer effort. Your Board has come up with a system that should work. All members who would like us to list links to their websites should send the pertinent information to Alvin Wen, <wen@netgravity.com>.

Alvin is one of three Board members who will be checking each link and deciding on its appropriateness. Non-commercial links likely to interest our chamber music playing membership are the easiest to welcome, but proposals for commercial links will also be considered, so long as they come from ACMP members. In special cases, non-members' proposed links will be added to the list.

Bulletin Board announcements, commercial as well as non-commercial, should be sent to ACMP's Executive Director, Dan Nimetz, electronically at <office@acmp.net>, or in printed form to the New York office.

Both the links and the Bulletin Board will be updated at least twice a month. Please let Alvin or Dan know if you have comments or concerns about either the links or Bulletin Board—or about the website as a whole.

And write us any comments and ACMP news you may have on your Update form, which you should have received (and returned) by now. We can't print everything in the Newsletter, but we are certainly glad to hear from you.

EAST MEETS WEST

We keep hearing about Directory connections that only ripen with the years. Albert Ball of southern California writes us that he met one of his favorite sonata companions and first violinists when she came Directory in hand from Pennsylvania.

Once a year now, she and her husband hibernate in Palm Desert, and we arrange at least two all-day sessions, often with other musicians. This has been going on for six years now and (God-willing!) will continue until our fingers atrophy.

Much longer distances confront our new Lithuanian members, but one writes to begin closing the gap.

Please accept my best greetings and wishes for a Happy New Year. I wish you every success in continuing a wonderful career of rallying musicians from all over the world.

—Ivona Krapikaitė

BAY AREA MEMBERS: SAVE THE DATE

In a departure (literally) from their usual east coast meetings, the ACMP and Foundation Directors plan to hold their annual fall gathering in San Francisco, on the weekend of September 22-24, 2000. Over 250 of our members live within 60 miles of San Francisco; we hope that others may be visiting the area that weekend as well, because we will be inviting all to a reception Saturday, with music-making afterwards at members' homes, or some nearby public space, or both. If you are NOT listed as a member in the San Francisco area but would like to come to this ACMP evening, please be sure to let our office know, giving your instrument and self-rating.

San Francisco members will hear details in May.