

My Papa Haydn, The Ultimate Therapist

A story of healing and recovery

by Basil Porter

I had actually worked on myself. Not crying, not depressed, just repeating like a mantra, "You were really lucky to survive, you managed to play the first and second violin and viola parts for a lot of the chamber music repertoire over thirty years of chamber music playing. From now on, you will just enjoy listening." It felt okay, not even very sad. I had suffered a spinal cord injury, had major surgery to remove a broken vertebra in my neck and fixate the remaining ones, and looking at some of the other survivors of the train accident who were either dead, paralyzed or with other major injuries, I really was wondering how I was still around to even think about music. In the first days after the accident my right arm had been completely paralyzed, a flaccid piece of meat hanging at my side, my left arm weak and moving weakly.

Now some weeks later, as my brain began to function again, I started to read a little, listen to a little music and think about the rest of my life that lay ahead. I was beginning to walk and use my arms, with terrible posture due to various pains all over my body. My right arm was still very weak, my hand muscles were wasted and I had chronic pains in my arms, not responding to any known treatment. I started the slow process of trying to return to my previous world, starting with eating with a knife and fork, showering and shaving without help and then returning to part time work. Playing the violin or viola was not on the agenda.

Then a cellist friend, who herself had suffered a stroke and returned to playing, suggested I start playing again. Try, ten minutes at a time, no more. I lifted the violin out of the case, went through the familiar routines of placing the shoulder rest, putting rosin on the bow, tuned the strings and launched into some Mazas scales. The noise was awful, a whining thin tone, no vibrato, with fingers moving like lumps of lead, the brain and fingers in supreme dissonance. Then came the invitation to try playing some Haydn quartets, leisurely, just a movement or two. I said I would try – my chamber music friends knew that using my passion and addiction to the Haydn quartets was like a piece of steak in front of a greyhound. I lasted through one quartet, allegros played as adagios, my body aching, my arm feeling as though it was holding a double bass, my bow refusing to produce any sound that resembled music. There was a limit to the support that I could expect from my friends.

I returned to persuading myself that I had entered "listening mode" for my remaining years.



Reading the Mozart Oboe Quartet.
From L: Bernie Gondos, Basil Porter,
Ted Rust, Anne Brown

grabbed a late night threesome and launched into Haydn *Opus 76 #1*, followed by *Opus 33 #1* with its pleading, recurring theme in the slow movement. It was not the standard of the pre-accident years, there was quite a bit of cheating in the Presto, but it was working – I was embracing the master again, my ultimate rehabilitation goal. My Papa Haydn, the ultimate therapist.

Basil Porter (Vn/Va) is a pediatrician practicing in Tel Aviv, Israel. He suffered a severe spinal cord injury in a train wreck in 2005, on a train journey from Tel Aviv to Beersheva in the south of the country.



Basil Porter

In This Issue

Page 1

My Papa Haydn, the Ultimate Therapist

Page 2

The Quartet Project

Page 3

Letter from the Executive Director
ACMP Reception at the Longy School

Page 4

New Advisory Council Members

Page 6

A Summer of Music for ACMP
A Musical Blind Date
The Barn Concert

Page 7

Across the US with the Directory
Southwest Soliloquy

Page 8

Summer Music in Europe

Page 10

A Coach on Home Coaching

Page 11

From the Mailbox
Cadences

Page 12

Bulletin Board

ACMP Foundation News

The Quartet Project

The Quartet Project is a group of graded pieces for string quartets – very much on the order of the Bartók *Mikrokosmos* – composed by **Geoff Hudson**. The most elementary of the pieces are quite short, contemporary in sound and technique (i.e. they include the use of glissando, pizzicato, and modern harmonies) and are meant for beginning ensembles. The ACMP Foundation provided supporting funds toward expenses involved in composing and printing the quartets.

Geoff Hudson was trained as a cellist, receiving his undergraduate degrees at Oberlin College, where he studied American history and composition (with Richard Hoffmann) and earned a Master's in composition at New England Conservatory, where his principal teacher was Malcolm Peyton. His many compositions for strings include quartets, a string quintet, a string sextet, a piano quartet, duets for viola and cello, and chamber music combining strings and winds.

Although Geoff devotes his focus to composing, he still enjoys playing chamber music and says, "I can never forget the excitement with which I explored the classical quartet repertoire. As a young cellist, I hungered for the great composers of the early 20th century but it was years before my musical growth allowed me to try Bartók or Shostakovich, and other masters—Carter, Ligeti, Shapely—remained permanently out of my reach. I thought how exciting would it be if that first discovery of chamber music could include music of today? And so the inspiration for the Quartet Project was born."

Geoff continues, "I aim to offer beginning chamber music players a chance to taste the harmonies, textures, and rhythms of today's music. I want to bring newer sounds into the tradition, offering an alternative to the 'classical' virtues of balance and restraint prized by Haydn and Mozart. The music of the Quartet Project will embrace the rhythmic grooves of popular music and include the folk-based music of Ireland, India, Latin America, and the Balkans, thus bringing the diversity of today's musical world into the reach of string players from the outset of their studies."

North American Advisory Council member, Sally Bagg (Vc, Hatfield, MA), Director of the Junior Greenwood Camp, <<http://www.greenwoodmusiccamp.org/junior.php>>, Coordinator of Instrumental Music at Smith College Campus School, and chamber music coach at the Northampton Community Music Center, says, "That is all true of Geoff Hudson's graded quartets, as we discovered at Greenwood over the past two summers with our young kids. They all, every one of them, liked working on these pieces. In the summer of 2009 we had 16 students who played some of the easiest and some of the quite advanced pieces in performance. Geoff is currently working with a number of music schools and their students to receive feedback for the music and its availability to players, as well as what they think about the experience of playing this kind of contemporary music. The music is not exclusively for young people, but for anyone at all who would like to have access to graded literature for string quartet; in other words, members of ACMP. Several adult amateur quartets already have been playing selections from the Quartet Project; and they find this music a refreshing complement to the standard quartet repertoire."

"Hybrid Vigor Music is the organization that sponsors The Quartet Project. It accepts donations from people who wish to sponsor a quartet, much as Prince Esterházy sponsored Haydn's compositions which were then dedicated to him. Recently an anonymous donor chose to honor our Northampton Community Music Center by commissioning a quartet from Geoff Hudson. Now the Center will have its very own quartet dedicated to it, to use with its string students."

Board Member **Jenny Stirling** (Va, Newton, MA), comments on the project from a teacher's point of view: "I really like that a lot can be quickly learned/accomplished and (importantly) felt good about in a very efficient, musically gratifying way because the works are mostly brief and have a focal musical, stylistic, and technical point."

And finally, a father in Iowa, whose daughter took part in a Quartet Project workshop at Drake University's Community School of Music in Des Moines last year says, "Hearing the music of different levels all together in the concert makes one appreciate even more the quality of the compositions, and get a glimpse of some of the scope of the composer. Everyone played really well, and the pieces had a coherence and tightness that was delightful. Geoffrey's passion is contagious, igniting a similar passion that our family had only dreamed of for our children."



The front page of the score of
Forest Waltz

by Geoffrey Hudson
(The tempo is marked "Shady")

Scores and parts may be downloaded from
<http://www.hybridvigormusic.org>



Geoff Hudson working with students
at a Quartet Project workshop
run by
the Greater Grand Forks Symphony Orchestra
at the
North Dakota Museum of Art
in December 2008.

Letter from the Executive Director

It's a pleasure to fill in for ACMP's Chair, Roberta Goldman, who is away on a six-month adventure to Asia, Oceania including Australia and New Zealand, and even California—a world unto itself. She and husband Jerry were given this trip by their children in celebration of their 50th anniversary,* and they expect to make many musical connections along the way. They're ideal ambassadors for ACMP: indomitable chamber music players ready at a moment's notice for any small ensemble experience.

ACMP concluded its most recent fiscal year in July on a positive if somewhat subdued note. While the number of new members has increased significantly since implementation of direct online joining, renewals have declined, possibly in part because we are all too busy and simply overwhelmed with "stuff"—so membership renewals just get lost in the shuffle. Please help: it's very important that you maintain up-to-date records with ACMP.

The Board of Directors has spent an enormous amount of time over the last half-year reviewing all aspects of ACMP's operation. The Foundation's endowment, like everyone else's, was seriously affected by economic conditions during the year, but, due to prudent management, careful planning, and ongoing monitoring, we have thus far not had to abandon our grant programs, which as you know provide chamber music opportunities for hundreds of people all year long. That said, there is no question that we will scale back the scope of our grant-making. While 103 community music schools and youth orchestras with chamber music programs received ACMP support in the 2008-09 academic year, this year the number is 62. The most difficult part of reviewing grant applications is acknowledging that in good times we would act positively on almost every request. Having to decline so many clearly worthwhile projects and programs takes some of the joy out of the process. Nevertheless, a little belt-tightening every so often isn't the worst thing in the world, and we can certainly take satisfaction in noting that since 1993, when the ACMP Foundation first opened for business, \$3.9 million has been disbursed just for chamber music activities benefitting amateur players. That's something to be proud of.

Seeing that date in print serves to remind me that the end of October marked the completion of my fifteen years of service to ACMP. When Bill Selden, long-time member and at the time on the Board, called me in June of that year and asked if I knew about ACMP and about the newly chartered ACMP Foundation arising from the Clinton B. Ford bequest, my reply was that I vaguely knew that such an organization existed but really hadn't any idea about it. Well, since then I've learned a great deal about it, and while I don't believe that another fifteen years would be good for either me or ACMP, I do know that being part of this unique organization has been a gratifying and rewarding experience. After all, where else could one go off in the middle of the work day to play Brahms's Op. 40 and not find a pink slip on return?

Daniel Nimetz

* In a lovely gesture of friendship, two of their friends, not even members of ACMP, made a very generous contribution to us in honor of Jerry and Roberta's 50th wedding anniversary.

Reception for Boston Area Players

Following the Annual Meeting on September 1, 2009
The Board hosted a Play-In and Reception at the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA

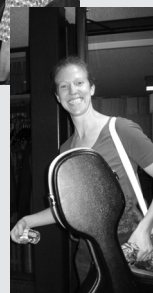


Top: Board Member Ivy A. Turner on stage, Board members Gwendoline Thornblade, Franz Marcus, Chair Roberta Goldman, Marc Furth, Doris Preucil.



At L: Ivy A. Turner ingeniously assigns groups, holding up music and inviting players of matching ability to step forward, handing out parts until the group is formed

At R: Cellist Jen Dobson sets off for her group,



who welcomed her to the elegantly paneled Wolfe Wolfinson studio



At L: Board Member Susie Ikeda leads a string quartet to an upstairs studio

Below: A wind group gathers on stage



Above: Some of the 60 area members who attended enjoying refreshments and conviviality to end the evening.



Ed Klein

New Advisory Council Members

Four new members of the Advisory Councils were elected at the annual ACMP Board Meeting, held September 12, 2009 in Cambridge, MA.

New North American Advisory Council (NAAC) Member

Ed Klein (Vc/Gamba), Gainesville, FL

Ed Klein, originally from Sharon, MA, moved to Florida in 1998. Ed says that he has known about ACMP all his life, and joined shortly after attending Greenwood Music Camp (in 1953 and '54). There he met **Helen Rice**, but comments, "Not that she noticed me!"

Ed writes, "I turned down Curtis Institute and elected to attend Swarthmore College so that if I hurt my hands I would have a more general education. I subsequently elected to earn my living with a day job so I could continue my music as a part time professional and private teacher." During his education years he also spent four years in the Naval Academy Band in Annapolis, MD, playing cello, oboe, baritone horn, string bass, and, he says, 'bad piano.' As well as lots of chamber music."

He has served on the board of the Kinhaven (VT) Music School, where he knew many other ACMPers. He writes, "I was a very active member and played constantly while traveling on my day job (often on unbelievably awful cellos!) When I retired and moved to Florida, I became a full time professional and love every minute of it, but sorely miss the chamber music 'zilching.' If I am successful at marketing ACMP in the Gainesville area, I will be the first and primary beneficiary!"

I consider being asked to participate in the ACMP North American Advisory Council a very great honor and will endeavor to make North Central Florida a more vigorous bastion of chamber music playing."

New International Advisory Council (IAC) Members

Marjana Rutkowski (Vc), Porto Alegre, Brazil

Marjana is descended on her father's side from a family with many amateur musicians including a grandmother who was the silent-movie pianist of the first movie theater in her city! Marjana's mother is a professional pianist, and, as a choral conductor, represented Brazil in international competitions. Marjana began cello lessons at age 6, being fascinated by the sound and look of the cello at youth concerts.

She says, "My family loves music and animals. I grew up surrounded by both. I admire the subtle musical education that my mother gave us right from the cradle. The classical music radio was on a lot, and I remember her tiptoeing while my younger sister napped in the living room to change sides of a Baroque music LP. Even our dogs and cats were always included in the musical scene. Just as today my dogs always stay close to me and my students during cello lessons. Sometimes I take little Kolja, my sweet Bichon Havanese along on trips."

Today Marjana teaches and concertizes, and says, "A performer's life can be eventful! Once, during a performance of Tchaikovsky's *Symphony Pathétique*, a huge spotlight caught fire, fell from the ceiling and crashed 3 feet away from me, still burning! My body instinctively jumped up to protect my cello, but a second later I saw the equally fiery stare of our Toscanini-like conductor and immediately sat down as if nothing had happened. The smoke and fire continued and so did the *Pathétique*!" She concludes, "Well, it was a cold theater in a wintry evening!"

Marjana loves to play all kinds of chamber music, especially when no professional commitment is attached. She also enjoys reading, swimming, ballroom dancing, traveling, and inviting family and friends over for a lingering dinner. She comments, "I believe that the more activities we like, the more likely we will feel contentment. It is a matter of election—do one or two activities superbly, and allow a bunch to be done with some facility to inject joie de vivre! Life is short!"

Marjana concludes, "No matter how we do our music — either professionally or not, either for love or vanity or any agendas — always remember (humbly): music is a gift and must be appreciated as such. And we should be grateful for its presence in our lives. The 'shared togetherness' of chamber music is precious. I feel honored to belong to an institution with the importance and scope of ACMP. May it continue to expand successfully."



Marjana Rutkowski

Ronald Ling (Vn), Singapore, Singapore

Ronald Ling has been playing the violin since the age of 7 in London, where he grew up. Although he studied both violin and piano, he preferred the violin since he says, "I could not cope with having to read multiple lines at the same time!" Ron adds "I was fortunate to have been sent to a school which would nurture my musical as well as academic interests."

Ron discovered chamber music at a relatively early age and remembers his teenage years being filled with Mozart, Brahms and Beethoven. While at University and Medical School he continued to play with various ensembles although music had take a back seat in the early years of his career as a doctor, and then later, during his studies at Business School, as he underwent a career change to pursue his interest in management.

In 1996 Ron returned to Singapore, his birthplace, where he now works as a private equity fund manager specializing in health care investments. Although his job is demanding, he still keeps up an active musical life. He played with the Braddell Heights Symphony Orchestra, Singapore's largest amateur orchestra for a time, but his real passion continues to be chamber music. He plays with the Chamber Players, a smaller amateur group that performs mainly string orchestra works without a conductor. The Chamber Players have included various performances – some in collaboration with prominent local professionals who act as coaches and mentors to his group.

For the last several years Ron has been attending chamber music workshops in California, France and (most recently) at the Verbier Festival, where he played the Brahms Clarinet Quintet with fellow-IAC member, **Franz Marcus** (Vc, Brussels, Belgium.)

Ron says, "Appreciation of the diversity of chamber music, and interest by amateurs in playing, is still at an early stage of development in Asia which I find particularly striking given my earlier musical life in London. It is noticeable, for example, that ACMP has a very limited membership in Asia – which implies that there is a lot of work to be done in building this appreciation and involvement!" One approach, which Ron is currently exploring, is to establish a chamber music workshop based in Singapore (in collaboration with the Chamber Players and Singapore's Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music) aimed at amateurs. He concludes, "If such efforts prove fruitful, hopefully this will be of interest to ACMP members from Asia and even worldwide."

(At this writing the planning is to hold the workshop sometime in 2010.)



Ronald Ling

Elfriede Artinger (Va/Vn/Alto), Graz-Andritz, Austria

Elfriede writes: I was born in 1935 in Graz, and first studied violin at the Conservatory and then viola at the High School of Music in Graz. But I did not pass the final exams so I continued to play viola as an amateur.

In 2001 I retired from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Austria, where I had been serving as vice-consul of Austria in Frankfurt and in Strasbourg.

When I was stationed in different countries it was always a great pleasure to find musicians for chamber music, although sometimes it was not easy to find contacts. In Ankara I had the chance to play piano quintets and quartets (Brahms, Schumann, Fauré) with professional musicians, but in Poland contacts with the population were forbidden. So while there I followed the development of modern music such as the composers Witold Lutoslawski or Krzysztof Penderecki. In Paris, where I lived for nine years, I played in an orchestra, meanwhile continuing to play quartets, sometimes sextets with members of the orchestra.

In Geneva, 1984, I attended chamber music courses given by Steven Airton, who influenced a big number of amateur chamber music players, at the Conservatoire Populaire and in Blonay at the Hindemith Foundation, and it was from him that I heard about ACMP. I also participated in workshops in Saint Croix and Blonay and twice played in orchestras in Dorchester and Blonay, formed by ACMP members. When I was next posted in Frankfurt, it was easy to meet chamber music players through ACMP.

In 2008 I took advantage of the Home Coaching Program, and organized a successful chamber music workshop of octets. In 2009 I participated in a Home Coaching session of nonets and convinced some of the these musicians to join ACMP. I also participated in a nonet session with a coach of ACMP. Thus I came to know many ACMP members who have become friends and still play regularly.

This network is an important organization and I will continue to convince musicians to join this big family.



Elfriede Artinger

A Blind Date

by Pat Addis (NAAC/Vc), Iowa City, IA



From L: Pat Addis, cello, Bill Preucil, viola, Don Haines, violin, Melisander Wildberger, piano, and Miera Kim, violin.

A blind date can be a wonderful thing! In mid-June **Karen Vincent** (Va) and **Mel Wildberger**, (Pf) were traveling from their home in Salem, OR, through the Midwest and were seeking some chamber music playing opportunities in Iowa City, IA. Former Board member, **Doris Preucil** (Vn/Va, Iowa City, IA), and I quickly gathered some players. The group included a lovely mix of retired string quartet professionals, teachers, students, and amateurs, ranging in age from a high school student to players in their mid-seventies.

The delightful evening began at the spacious Preucil Music School with a rousing Bach *Brandenburg #3*. We then split into smaller groups, two quartets and a piano quintet, grouping players differently in three sessions separated by pot-luck munchie and wine breaks. Mel and Karen had brought with them an amazing library that included many lesser-known pieces from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Mel was an eager guide through piano quintets by less familiar composers, so the evening included the buzz of sight-reading as well as the satisfactions of familiar Mozart and Mendelssohn.

It's clear that string chamber music aficionados can have a grand time on I-80!

A Summer of Wonderful Music for ACMP

The Seventh Annual Barn Concert

by Adwyn Lim (ACMP Advisory Council member/Vn/Va, Berthoud, CO)

Saturday, June 27th, the chamber music gods bestowed a wonderful sunny day (after a week of torrential rains) for the Seventh Annual Barn Concert in Berthoud, Colorado. Initially in 2003 a concert was held in celebration of the completion of my barn. The success of that initial concert led to the successive years' concerts and now the Barn Concert has become a major cultural event in the small farming community of Berthoud, Colorado.

The concert is informal; anyone is invited (even dogs and horses – yes people ride over to the concert) and people supply their own chair (there is a variety from dining room chairs to outdoor loungers). The Barn Concert is always the last Saturday in June for those interested in upcoming years.

The format of the Barn Concert is to have various chamber ensembles play one or two movements of a piece. Those who are not in an ensemble but wish to participate are invited to play in the final orchestral works which bring the ensemble musicians and the non-ensemble musicians together to play as one big group. The final works are determined on the day of the event and read at sight without prior rehearsal, a fact that amazes many members of the audience.

This year's program showcased a series of sextets, septets and octets with an unusual performance of a double bass quartet. We started with the Bruch *Octet* (second and third movements), using 4 violins, 2 violas, and 1 cello and 1 double bass. This was followed by the Beethoven *Sextet* for 2 horns and string quartet (the first movement), this time replacing the second horn part with the bass clarinet which really added a wonderful color to the piece. We were honored by having Dr. Kearns (retiring horn professor at University of Colorado) filling in as the horn player. The rest of the program included the Raff *Octet* (third movement) an unfamiliar work but obviously popular shown by many inquiries about it; a performance of the very bold Reger *Sextet*, which, despite its complexity, the group played very enthusiastically and again introduced the audience to a rarely performed work.

The Glen Shannon (American composer) *Septet* for three recorders and string quartet exhibited a nice blend of instrumentation. The concertante solo parts were played by soprano, alto, and tenor recorders with a string quartet as the *ripieno*. A classical sextet by Haydn, the *Echo* (consisting of two string trios) was the next group. The work does exactly as titled; one group echoes the other. Originally the piece is to be performed with one group in another room, but for this performance they opted to seat the trios back to back. Finally, a double bass quartet performed a transcription of the infamous adagio movement from one of the Barber quartets. To conclude, all the musicians joined together and read through Mendelssohn's *Sinfonia 4* and Warlock's *Capriol Suite*.

A party followed the concert but that did not prevent musicians getting together to play additional chamber works. Luckily, I have an extensive library for string ensembles which allowed players to assemble and continue the fun and bless the barn with more wonderful sounds.



The final tutti at Adwyn Lim's Barn Concert, Berthoud, Colorado, June 27, 2009

Across the USA with ACMP

by Hazel Cheilik (Vn, Mountain View, CA)

Last summer, I moved from my home of 40 years in Washington D.C. to Mountain View, CA. When one of my former violin students, **Sarah Kendall**, offered to drive with me my problem of transporting my violins, viola, and cello as well as my car, was solved. We hatched an ambitious plan to drive all day for seven days, enjoying the scenic highways rather than turnpikes, and play music in the evenings. Out came the maps and, of course, my trusty ACMP Directory, the *sine qua non* of such an expedition. We plotted a course averaging 400 miles a day through Cleveland, Chicago, Lincoln/Omaha, Denver, Salt Lake City, and Reno/Northern California, planning our music with E-mails to members at each stop.

We started off on August 13. At our first stop in Cleveland we went to **Jon Lass's** (Vc, Pepper Pike, OH) home where a beautiful and newly tuned grand piano awaited **Bob Kraig**, an old friend magically transformed from the wonderful violinist he was in high school into an equally wonderful pianist, who joined us for this leg of the trip. The next day after dropping Bob off at the Cleveland Airport, we continued on to Chicago for viola quintets with **Ray Silvertrust** (Vc/Vn, Riverwoods, IL) and his son **Skylar**. When Ray suggested viola quintets I thought I knew what to expect – but no. We started with Mozart K 406, not the usual choice. We then went on to Mendelssohn and then a quintet by Hans von Koessler, a composer hitherto unknown to me. We finished with the short Bruckner *Intermezzo*. Ray is a very knowledgeable musician who shared much historical background about these pieces. He also has three German Shepherds, one of whom sat quietly through the entire evening. In Lincoln, Nebraska, we played trios for two violins and cello, (a repertoire not often explored) with **Dick Wolters**. He also has three dogs, but they are apparently not music lovers. A philosopher by profession, Dick has an ideal library, serene and well-appointed, with an atmosphere conducive to thought.

From the time we left Chicago until we crossed into Colorado we saw only corn (how do they harvest it – the rows are so close together?) and soy beans. We passed three wineries and wondered whether they made the wine from corn or soy bean since no grapes were in sight.

It was a scenic relief to arrive in Denver, where we could see mountains in the distance! We played at the home of **Mike and Shirley Marecak**, both fine cellists despite their modest B rating. We started with quartets and ended with the Schubert *Cello Quintet*. The evening was a real delight, made more so by the many works of art by Mike's parents, both professional artists, that surrounded us and enhanced the music. The next day we reached Salt Lake City and stayed with **Bernice Guertler** (Vn, Salt Lake City, UT), who drove us to the home of **Dick Fox**, the cellist, who lives high above the city. The night-time view is spectacular! His home, too, is filled with art. He encourages many young artists from the area and shows their work. Beatrice and Dick both play with the Salt Lake Philharmonic and are looking forward to premiering a new work for cimbalom and orchestra.

Continuing on (through beautiful country—but it was a long trip!) and reached Nevada City, CA, where we played with **Donald and Joanne Alworth** (Va/Vc, Nevada City, CA). Remarkably they turned out to be friends with Bernice – our hostess of the previous night. What a small world we chamber musicians occupy! We ended with the last two movements of Haydn *Opus 54 #2*, a piece I always enjoy when I am playing with a fine cellist.

The trip, which originated as a sort of quixotic dream, came true with the help of my old friend Sarah and many wonderful new ACMP friends. I thank all with whom we played not only for their fine hospitality and friendship, but also for being so encouraging to Sarah, a fine violinist but a novice chamber music player. I hope to repay the hospitality by hosting many evenings of chamber music in my new home of Mountain View for old friends, new friends, and friends yet to be made.

Southwest Soliloquy

by Adrienne Cannon (Cl, Alexandria, VA)

The flight from Baltimore to Albuquerque has been a long one, and now I must drive over the Sandia mountains to Santa Fe. Tomorrow I will register in the Kammermusik Woodwind Workshop. I am excited, yet hesitant. Playing chamber music will be a new field for me. My experience is as a concert band musician playing in sections of multiple clarinetists. This week I will be the only clarinetist in a wind quintet. I am intrigued by the thought—and I am quite nervous as I try to visualize the adventures in store for my clarinet and me.

Our coach is a clarinetist with the Dallas Opera Orchestra. I am in awe of him, but he is calming and gentle, putting us at ease with stories of his musical adventures and practical advice on techniques to handle pressure. We sight read lots of music and then, on the third day, he assigns us the *Finale* of Anton Reicha's *Quintet*, Opus 88, to perform in the final concert, just three days away.

"My nerves are going to get the best of me!" I exclaim as I once again miss an entrance and finish one beat behind the others. On the fringe of a "meltdown," I steel myself, breathe deeply—as a flatlander, the altitude has starved me for oxygen.



Everyone comforts me, assuring me that I will find the strength to perform well—there is no penalty for mistakes— and we are all among friends who are struggling equally to play at the best of their ability.

Before the concert I pace in the back room telling myself that I will do well even if I am not as perfect as I want to be. I walk on stage in a trance, set up my music, glance at the flautist for the downbeat—and begin to play. I see nothing but the score; I focus on the beat; I pay careful attention to my colleagues as they make their entrances. My favorite passages are those with the hornist as our dark and sultry tones combine to sound out a hunting theme. We end—all at the same time! Applause, bows, and, as I leave the stage, a friend grabs my hand and squeezes it in warm recognition of my efforts. I rush backstage shaking with pent up tension and then let go with tears of relief that become sweet tears of pleasure. "You did it!" I tell myself. My first attempt at chamber music, hesitant yet successful, is now part of my resume as a musician.

Bursting with pride and satisfaction, coaches and colleagues hug each other because we have tucked an unforgettable week into our memories. Tomorrow I will fly home to be a flatlander once again, but never, I reflect, will I be quite the same person as before my days as a chamber music player.

Summer Music In Europe

Three successful summer workshops

by Franz Marcus

This summer three major amateur summer workshops were held in Italy and Switzerland in cooperation with ACMP. This implies that there is – or has been – an exchange of views on the way each of them is organized to achieve the most satisfying results.

Ischia

In May the fourth annual workshop took place in Ischia, in the beautiful bay of Naples. This was organized by International Advisory Council member **Aldo de Vero** (Pf, Pozzuoli, Italy), a continuation of a series that was started in Procida six years ago.

Reggio Emilia

In June The Amateur Musicians' Workshop in Reggio Emilia (a beautiful quiet town not far from Cremona in northern Italy, and home of the Quartetto Italiano) was held simultaneously with the International String Quartet Festival. A participant writes: The old sits comfortably alongside the new, in this charming town, and the center, with its huge squares, is dominated by pedestrians and bicycles, where the pasta is the best in Italy, and where for a whole week in June string-playing holds sway.

The Artistic Director of the Festival, **Mario Brunello**, and **Francesca Zini** run the workshop. The coaches are all members of well-known quartets, and the staff is very helpful and multilingual. Reggio Emilia's huge museum was opened for rehearsal space. Each of eight amateur groups was assigned a special space there with stands and comfortable chairs amongst the paintings, archaeological finds and natural history exhibitions.

Daily coaching sessions were followed by master classes, and workshops such as a "Minus One" event in which one of the amateurs could replace a member of one of the four young professional quartets who had come for master classes with the Artemis Quartet, and the visiting quartets performing in the evenings.

Verbier

In July the fourth annual Verbier amateur workshop took place just before the big Verbier festival in the Swiss mountains, taking advantage of the presence of two orchestras as well as the Verbier Academy. The latter welcomes future professional soloists (up to 25 years of age), and they are surrounded by high-level coaches. The small Verbier village "breathes" chamber and orchestral music during this period, and all active participants are recognized by the badge they carry around their neck and lets them feel part of the music community – whether highly professional or "just" amateurs. The intense work of **Christian Thompson**, himself a devoted pianist, has made this workshop a great success. Participation is limited to 40, mostly string players, a few wind players and no more than 6 pianists. All participants should be equal to the ACMP-level A). Each participant prepares two works, and may come separately or with a pre-formed group.

There are four daily sessions of 75 minutes each. The morning is devoted to the first piece, one coached and one studying session. After a lunch at which everyone is present, the afternoon sessions rehearse the second work.

Should a last-minute problem leave a group without one of their players, Christian invites conservatory students to Verbier for the week (they are not paid except for travel and lodging), to join the amateur players. This turns out to be a positive learning experience both for the amateurs and for the conservatory students.

There is a "meeting place" at the hotel where everybody gathers at 7.30 before the evening "free play" sessions and where people who live apart can always locate other workshop participants so that they don't feel isolated. Groups are arranged during lunch one day in advance and on some evenings participants have the opportunity to play with members of the orchestra or with academy students: this is advantageous to all – many of the professionals are not as experienced in the chamber music literature as the enthusiastic amateurs. A concert, announced in the Festival program and open to the public, is given by the participants (each group plays one movement) to end the week.



Photo Roberto Masotti

Master Class in Reggio Emilia

First IAC Topical Seminar



From L: Floryse Bel Bennett (IAC/Vn, Switzerland), Stephan Schwarz (Va/Denmark), the principal author, Stéphane Fauth (Db, France), Board member Franz Marcus (Vc, Belgium), and Harald Gabbe (IAC/Vn/Va, Germany).

In early October, Stéphane Fauth hosted the International Advisory Council's first topical conference at his beautiful Chamber Music Center in the French mountains.

The goal was to develop a set of guidelines for string players who want to improve their quartet playing.

The guidelines would be suitable for beginners as well as more experienced players. It will be edited in several languages before making it available to all our members.

Music in Hungary and France

Kőszeg/Güns (Hungary)

It happened more than 20 years ago ...

by Nelly Serpi (IAC/Vn/Va), Switzerland.

More than 20 years ago, an English conductor had the brilliant idea to organize a workshop in England with a European orchestra and so he searched ACMP Directory and contacted people from all over Europe.

After this workshop took place one of the musicians offered to organize a similar workshop in Holland the following year, and this is when I first joined the European Orchestra. We had several concerts and played chamber music for hours and hours. After a session of Schubert's *Quintet*, the viola player, **Hans J. Dehning** (Va/Vn/Pf, Bremen, Germany) said to me "I have never played so well." It was absolutely fantastic.

The following year **Martin Donner** (IAC/FI, Vienna, Austria) organized the workshop at Esterházy in Fertőd (Hungary), and the year after I offered to organize it in Switzerland (Blonay). There was a last workshop in England and after that we never heard from the conductor again.

But because Martin Donner was keen on continuing this venue and knew how to do it, he started the Camerata Pannonica at Esterházy with an Austrian conductor and after 12 years at Esterházy, the orchestra now meets each year at Kőszeg/Güns (Hungary).

This year was the 17th anniversary of this happy reunion and the third anniversary of being led by the renowned conductor **Nicolas Radulescu**. Our musicians come from as far as the USA, Canada, Israel and even New Zealand. The performance took place at the Franz Liszt-Zentrum, Raiding (Liszt's birthplace) in Burgenland, Austria's easternmost province, about 1 hour south of Vienna. The program included Haydn's *Overture II Distratto*, *Cello Concerto #2* by Shostakovich (with soloist Orfeo Mandozzi) and Bruckner's *Symphony #4*.

Are you interested in playing with us? Please have a look at <<http://www.camerata-pannonica.com>> and, who knows, maybe you feel like joining in to play with us next year!

France

String Quartet Workshop, Croscendo, in the French Haute Provence

Peter Fröh (IAC/Vn, France), writes:

During the third week of April this year 24 amateur musicians gathered in the Region de la Drôme in Southern France to enjoy playing string quartet music. Including the six coaches, they came from 13 countries, a fact which may have contributed to make this a most lively and cheerful week.

Every participant was active in two different quartet groups, playing two of the proposed works: H. Villa-Lobos, *Quartet No. 4*, Ravel, *Quartet in F Major*, Mendelssohn, *Opus 44 #2* and Beethoven, *Opus 18 #6*. The evenings were of course open to free playing of quartets, quintets and octets, with the active participation of the coaches, until late at night.

The excellent food served by Thierry, manager of the ancient monastery in which we were located, and the wonderful weather in the second part of the week certainly also contributed to the outstanding mood.

To me it is particularly worth noting that we had four participants who flew in for this event from Japan. I enjoyed very much playing and chatting with them, since I usually only encounter Japanese musicians when listening to professionals on stage.



Camerata Pannonica rehearsal at Kőszeg/Güns



Ancient Monastery in French Haute Provence
Site of Croscendo Workshop

Home Coaching

"Home Coaching is an awesome use of ACMP Funds. We worked hard and had fun at the same time. The inspiration we got is thrilling." Marion Richter (Vn/Va, Olney, MD.)

Home coaching is open to all dues-paying members at all levels. Form your own group, choose your own repertory, your own schedule, your own coach, and your own location at your own convenience. The ACMP Grants Program subsidizes half of the cost.

To take advantage of this program, all you have to do is complete your application and submit it to the office. Include the names of all the members of your group, the work you will study, the prospective coach, the dates of your coaching sessions, and the amount that the coach will charge.

Download the application from our web site, <www.acmp.net>, or telephone the office (212) 645-7424, to receive one in the mail.

After the application is approved and the sessions begin, you pay your half directly to the coach, who then submits a bill for the remainder to ACMP.

Members may apply for one course of home coaching each year, and all members of the group must be members of ACMP.

Home Coaching from the Coach's Point of View

Interview with coach Maxine Neuman, (Vc, New York, NY)

We thought our members would be interested to hear about the program from a coach's point of view, and invited Maxine Neuman, a cellist who coaches in the New York City area for her comments on these questions:

Perhaps there are some funny or touching or inspiring anecdotes about some of the groups. Perhaps you could comment on interaction between the players, too. What do you do when skills and temperaments vary widely? What do you do when people get nervous while being coached? What do you do if they choose a piece you don't know particularly well? Are there some basic principles for playing any music that you emphasize? What are some of the things that give amateurs the most trouble? And finally, why do you enjoy coaching?

Maxine responded: There's no doubt about it, chamber music is intense: it's no wonder that the relationship between chamber musicians is often equated to marriage. A string quartet, for example, contains six one-on-one marriages, and each is sometimes harmonious, sometimes discordant. The Budapest Quartet was famous – among other reasons – for requiring separate hotels while touring. Amateur groups bring the same passion to their music-making, and I have over many years seen how ACMP's home coaching program enables an experienced professional to share methods for helping groups to grow together, both musically and personally.

To be sure, playing for an outsider – especially a respected professional – can be daunting. If someone is initially diffident or anxious I diffuse the focus of my comments, covering a myriad of details without giving too much weight to any one person, until everyone feels at ease. This means that one of the most important goals in home coaching is to foster confidence. I encouraged one group with which I'd worked over several years to perform the slow movement of the Debussy *Quartet* in a highly demanding venue. After initial incredulity, they accepted my suggestion as a genuine vote of confidence. These four musicians, playing within their group dynamic, captured the soul of the piece, and they created a performance which was magical, deeply moving, and memorable for the entire audience.

Effective coaching must provide valuable information to each player as well as assisting the development of the group as a whole. The goal is to bring everybody up to their potential. This is not dependant on a group's level of technical proficiency, because we are all passionate about music.

Groups' skill levels are usually compatible, since these are people who play together regularly. However, temperaments sometimes differ. Perhaps one player wants to demonstrate what s/he knows, or tries to turn the coaching into a lesson on their instrument: this is not the right focus and the coach needs to ensure good balance. I aim to give each musician something personal, and to simultaneously contribute to the knowledge of the whole ensemble.

It's not just up to the coach: when people examine where their problems lie, it helps the session. Specific objectives yield more focused coaching. Of course I hear trouble areas, but it's easier to help with clear information and it's more rewarding. In coaching sessions on Schubert B-flat Trio, the violinist was able to identify where he wanted help: he kept repeating a short closing phrase too many times until in a whimsical outburst he said, "It's like the word 'Banana.' I can spell it but I don't know when to stop!"

Issues facing amateur players are not very different from those of professionals. We all tackle the same challenges. What's difficult in chamber music is coordinating the personal technical side while developing a well-balanced ensemble: you're on your own and you can't hide, but you're not a soloist.

What do I find most satisfying as a coach? In the process of working, I have to some degree become part of the "marriage." What I offer is assimilated into the group's own achievement, so when they play together without me, my contribution is part of their music. The ensemble's own sense of accomplishment is the best gift.

My guiding principle for playing chamber music is "Practice your part and follow your heart."

Cellist Maxine Neuman's chamber music career spans North America, South America, Europe and Japan. She is a founding member of the Claremont Duo, Belmont Trio and Crescent String Quartet. She has recorded for Deutsche Grammophon, Columbia, EMI, Albany, and many more labels. In New York, she can be heard in the Orchestra of St. Luke's, Westchester Philharmonic, American Composers Orchestra, American Classical Orchestra and many other fine ensembles. A distinguished educator as well as performer, Maxine teaches at Mannes, School for Strings and Hoff-Barthelson Music School.

From the Mailbox

Counterpoints

Gaining Experience

Albrecht Zumbrunn (Vn, Wellesley, MA) writes: In response to the letter about the inexperienced person who considered quitting ACMP (Newsletter, Spring Summer, 2009 issue) I'd like to add the following points/suggestions: I am not particularly inexperienced, but I can see the problem this gentleman has.

For many people (very much including myself) it is very hard to call strangers and ask them for a favor – which is what all your recommendations amount to. Here is one more that worked for me: Call a coach and ask him/her if it would be possible to help find partners for you. Obviously this will cost coaching fees, but that is also the reason why it is easier to phone: nobody has a problem calling a professional to ask for a service. And coaches often know people who will match your skills.

I'd also add that your progress as a player will be accelerated by playing ensemble early rather than "waiting" until you are "good enough." A good coach will even teach you technique – not technique per se, but the stuff you actually need to be up to the task, particularly if the coach is playing your instrument (or one of the same family).

Next: if you think you are a C player (see below) do not shy away from A's and B's: some may be snobs but the vast majority are not: Take any chance you get to play with anyone willing to partner with you.

Finally – for new members – there is some "grade inflation" in the self grading. Which is why a coach may want you to audition in order to find suitable partners for you.

Contemporary Music for Amateurs

Roy Oser (Fl, Montclair, NJ) writes: I love the newsletter, it's very well done, and look at that beautiful trademarked design! One little complaint: The headline on Lucy Miller Murray's fine article (Spring/Summer, 2009), *Is Modern Music Ever Playable by Amateurs?* reinforces an unfortunate myth that I think discourages amateur players from being more broad minded about what they are willing to learn to play – and understand and appreciate. My chamber music group has already performed a contemporary piece and we're planning on taking on two more. For flute players (and others), the important but fiendishly difficult Sonatine of Pierre Boulez helped usher in an era of some very difficult chamber music. Even Jean-Pierre Rampal, for whom it was written, declined to take the time to learn it. But all contemporary chamber music is not by Pierre Boulez!

Instrument for Visiting ACMP Members

James Higgins (Vn, Wissembourg, France) writes: I now have a cello that completes the string quartet of instruments available 'for use by visitors'. (But understand that I play one of them myself.) In preparing for friends coming from Australia, an Anglo-Swiss couple, with many people to visit elsewhere and wishing to play quartets here, borrowed a cello from a luthier friend in Strasbourg: and Suzanne liked it so much that I bought it after they left!

Cadences

We are saddened to hear of the deaths of the following members



Carleen Hutchins working on a violin
(photo from the Hutchins Archive)

Carleen Hutchins, (Va, Wolfeboro, NH), a charter member of ACMP died at her home, August 7, 2009.

She was a renowned acoustician and violin maker whose famous octet of stringed instruments is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. She was celebrated as a venerable member of ACMP in the August 2008 newsletter (available on the web, <www.acmp.net>) That article retold the famous story, that was also included in many obituaries, of the curly maple violin and viola made from a telephone shelf at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital. For the full story of her life go online to read the The New York Times obituary, published August 8, 2009.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/09/arts/music/09hutchins.html>.

And to get a sense of her "voice" you can go online once again to read her own words describing her wonderful friend, Dr. Virginia Apgar (for whom the famous instruments are named).

http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu/news/journal/journal-o/archives/jour_v14n3_0025.html.

We are also saddened to have lost

Antemann, Dr Richard W. (Pf),
Johnstown, PA

Rifkin, Sheldon (Cl), New York, NY

Wray, Albert (Vn), New York, NY.

Bequests

In these difficult financial times we are especially grateful to those who wish to honor the memory of their musical friends with a bequest or contribution in any amount.

The Winter 2009 issue of the *Newsletter* included a list of our grantees in four categories:

- Community Music
- Workshops
- Home Coaching
- Special Initiatives

Your generous bequests and contributions will help us to continue to support the playing of chamber music for pleasure, and as well to nurture the next generation of chamber music players.



THE CHAMBER MUSIC NETWORK
1123 Broadway, Suite 904
New York, NY 10010-2007
Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization
US Postage
PAID
Staten Island NY
Permit #169

ACMP Bulletin Board

WANTED

MUSICAL CONTACTS IN SEVILLE,

I will be living in Seville, Spain Jan-June, 2010, while my husband is on sabbatical. I would like to play flute with chamber music groups and/or community orchestras. Suggestions of contacts in Seville welcome! <monica_choca@yahoo.com>

AVAILABLE

STEINWAY UPRIGHT PIANO FOR SALE

1999 ebony Steinway 1098 upright piano and bench for sale by the original owner. Bought new Oct. '99, used at Marlboro Festival summer of '99. Mint condition, well maintained, regularly tuned by Stephen Drasche of A.C. Pianocraft. Distinctive Steinway tone. \$7,000, negotiable. Audrey Melkin: at 917-744-7500 or at <audreymelkin@yahoo.com>

CELLO FOR SALE

1985 Pygmalus cello (used in Santa Fe orchestra) for sale. Amber reddish hue, excellent condition, soft case. \$7000. contact Peter, 212-226-8047, or <magnetix@ix.netcom.com>

CELLO ARRANGEMENTS

Five Glinka songs arranged for cello and piano. Brahms' "Wie melodien zieht es mir" for 3 cellos, available for free download on my website: <<http://www.shounaholiman.com>>. (It is primarily a fine art website. To get to the music portion, enter the site, click on CONTACT page, click on the red Chinese chop and choose Glinka songs.)

HOUSES FOR RENT TO MUSICIANS

1. Le Marche, Italy: grand piano and extensive music library available. Available by week, month, or longer term starting mid-October until spring.

2. Andalucia, Spain, pueblo blanco townhouse in rustic, authentic Spanish village convenient to Malaga, Gibraltar, Jerez airports.

For further details please contact Jane M. Carhart <carhartjm@aol.com> Calle La Loba 19, Jimena de la Frontera (Cadiz), E-11330, Spain. Phone: +34 956 641 273. Cell: +34 687 88 4791. <www.MusicalPassages.org>

COMPOSER OFFERING SCORES AND PARTS AT NO CHARGE

Free scores and parts (full-size: 12.5" x 9.5") for string quartets that I compose, style similar to Antonin Dvořák. Perfect engraving, layout, printing, binding and careful attention to detail; every page turn preceded by rests. Available without charge. Read, rehearse, perform, enjoy. <davideyoungmd@hotmail.com>

ROWE VIOLINS FOR SALE

Take advantage of the low Australian dollar. Handcrafted concert grade violins and viola, including an Australian timbers violin, as advertised in the Marlboro Music Festival 2009 program book. Free fully insured delivery by Express Courier International to the address nominated by the purchaser.

Please visit my website or contact me at <www.roweviolins.com.au> or Email <malcolm@roweviolins.com.au>

Volume 2009 No. 3

ACMP—The Chamber Music Network Newsletter is published by ACMP Associated Chamber Music Players, Inc. 1123 Broadway, Suite 904 New York, NY 10010-2007 USA Tel: 212 645-7424 • Fax 212 741-2678 www.acmp.net

Roberta Goldman, Chair
Richard Weinert, Foundation President
Daniel Nimetz, Executive Director
Kitty Benton, News Editor
<ACMPnewseditor@aol.com>

It's easy to update your info on the web, so please let us know of any changes to your information, especially if your E-mail address changes.

Members are reminded that a copy of ACMP's last annual report may be obtained from the New York Office of Charities Registration, Department of State, Albany, NY, 12231

News To Share

Letters from members wishing to share news, musical experiences, comments, and/or opinions are welcome.

Photographs may be included and should be in jpeg format as separate attachments. Please be sure to include: **Who** (is in the photo), **Where** (it was taken), **What** (the event was), **When** (it took place).

Send to <ACMPnewseditor@aol.com>