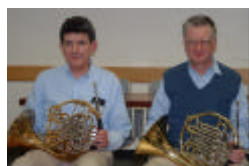


Cornucopia

News and articles for anyone interested in the horn

September 2004



Whispering Hill Wind Ensemble; Vic and Jim

Sunday Evening Whispering Hill Wind Octet

One Sunday evening every month for over ten years, Vic Godin and Jim Whipple have joined oboe, clarinet, and bassoon players in traditional octets. Vic and Jim met at a chamber music conference at Bennington, Vermont in the summer of 1990. When they returned to Boston, they started organizing chamber music readings, first with string players but evolving in 1992 to a wind octet, the Whispering Hill Wind Ensemble.

The octet has been fortunate. Personnel has been fairly stable; the horns, one oboe, and one clarinet are founding members, and turnover in the other positions has been low. "None of us make a living from music, but none of us could live without it," says Vic. A list of dependable substitutes helps keep rehearsals on schedule.

Rehearsal space has also worked out well. Vic, Northeastern University Professor Emeritus of Business Administration (recently retired after 28 years), was able to arrange space at Northeastern's suburban Burlington campus. The land on which the campus is situated is known as Whispering Hill.

Each year since its founding, the ensemble has given one public performance, the music for the graduation

exercises of the Northeastern University Paramedic Program (about 30 graduates). The venue is outdoors in July at a stately mansion in the suburbs. Once in a while other performance opportunities come along.

"We primarily play music written for traditional wind octet," says Vic, who is also the librarian. "Often there is an additional part for contrabassoon. On occasion, we play music for sextets (horns and bassoons with either oboes or clarinets) or larger wind groups (9 to 13 players). There have even been times when we permitted violins or other unusual instruments to join us. Without a doubt, our most memorable evening was when we were joined by Douglas Yeo, bass trombonist of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, playing a serpent." Currently the group is rehearsing with a flutist for Gounod's *Petit Symphonie*, Gouvy's *Petite Suite Gauloise*, and other works.

Jim, who retired after 29 years as a lawyer at Liberty Mutual Insurance, and Vic have played in various other groups, separately and together, but the octet, as Jim says, "has been a constant pleasure over the years." ❖

This article first appeared in a larger article in the May 2004 issue of The Horn Call.

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is published four or five times a season. It is free, although contributions are welcome.

For further information, to add your name to the mailing list, to send a contribution, or to submit material, contact:

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NEHS encourages membership in IHS (\$35/year). For further information, contact:

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Broken Embouchures

Review by Peter Iltis

In her book, *Broken Embouchures: An Embouchure Handbook and Repair Guide*, Lucinda-Lewis has taken on a vitally important but daunting task. In a single volume, she has undertaken to describe the entire scope of embouchure difficulties encountered by brass players, to provide exercises to increase muscle awareness and remedy the disorders, and to provide insight into specific medical conditions that adversely affect playing.

I concur with Dr. Steven Frucht in his endorsement of the book as a valuable read for brass players as it provides helpful information from a qualified teacher and performer that will doubtless touch many points with those who have experienced what Cindy terms "embouchure malaise." On the other hand, from the perspective of a reader with a particular problem – and even perhaps from a scientific perspective – I have a few comments.

One of the strengths of the book is its emphasis on muscle memory, or "kinesthetic sense." Cindy explains and illustrates ways of developing this attribute and emphasizes its importance in overcoming many embouchure disorders. Research on focal task-specific dystonia shows a link to altered muscle control and supports heightened muscle awareness through retraining in remedying the disorder. However, though Cindy's approach to developing the kinesthetic sense is thorough, the reader may get so lost (not to mention fatigued) executing the numerous recommended exercises that the rationale for each exer-

cise becomes buried in the details of how to. Missing is the clear link between the specific problem, the exercise, and the mechanism by which the exercise may help.

Broken Embouchures is organized in two sections: (1) performance and overuse, and (2) a compendium of clinical manifestations of embouchure problems. However, readers must work to focus, particularly as the book transitions into the exercise chapters. I would prefer an organization that begins with embouchure mechanics (including anatomical structure) and then organizes disorders by their functional cause. Specific exercises for the appropriate muscle retraining would then follow logically. As it is, readers may find it difficult to zero in on a particular problem and the proposed remedial training.

Nonetheless, I applaud Lucinda-Lewis for her efforts. The perspective she provides is valuable, and the information represents an important step toward helping sufferers. The author has given those of us in the sciences important material to consider as we seek to explain the mechanisms behind embouchure problems and how they can best be remedied. ❖

Broken Embouchures is available from Oscar's House Press, ©2002, \$39.00. Peter teaches horn and is a professor of movement science at Gordon College in Wenham MA. He described his research into focal dystonia in the November 2003 issue of Cornucopia.

News and Events

Jeanne Traphagen (Harvard MA) died suddenly on August 3rd. Jeanne had worked for Digital Equipment for many years and was also active as a professional and enthusiastic horn player in the Boston area. Contributions in her name can be made to the Thayer Symphony Orchestra, 14 Monument Square 4th Floor, Leominster MA 01453.

Jason White (white@bwh.harvard.edu) writes that Vento Chiaro's concert in April featured Jamie Sommerville as a conductor for Richard Strauss' Serenade Op. 7, Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*, and Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks* with hornists Roslyn Black, Linda Campos, Maria Harrold, and Yu-Mien Tsao.

Jamie Sommerville's performance of John Williams' Horn Concerto at Tanglewood in August drew these comments in the *Boston Globe* by Richard Dyer: "The Horn Concerto responds to the history and tradition of the instrument – we hear it in the hunt, invoking the pastoral, leading prayer. The solo part requires an awesome virtuoso, and it found one in the BSO's James Sommerville, who played with character, imagination, and poetry, especially in the pastoral movement, which also featured the oboe."

Amy Daigle (Steep Falls ME), originally from Fitchburg, went to school in Maine and "never came back," according to her mother. Amy is a firefighter, working as a dispatcher.

Erin Amendola (San Antonio) was a guest clinician and coordinator for the Texas Horn Camp, with 150 students.

Esprit de Cor gave its annual concert at the First Parish Church in Lexington in June, including new works by Pamela Marshall.

Adam Friedrich (Budapest) still teaches at the Academy of Music, and also takes a two-hour train ride to Miskoc every Wednesday to teach at a teacher-training institute. Several years ago Adam was told by his doctors not to travel by plane because of heart problems. Recently he learned that the diagnosis was probably a mistake – now the doctors have cleared his heart.

Paul Harrison (Port Washington NY) writes, "A surprising number of Cornucopia have reached me over the past five years, despite a peripatetic life on the run. I have been settling into a new job at Open Link Financial in Long Island and have recently played with several orchestras. Trying to hunt up a WWQ."

Anne Howarth (Somerville), **Paul McElligott** (Latham NY), **Janice Hessney** (Cape Coral FL), **Tim Allport** (Tarrytown NY), **Jim Emerson**, and **Jean Rife** have sent contributions. Anne writes, "Thank you for the mention of the Desjuncta premiere." Paul writes, "Love Cornucopia, wish I could make some of the Boston events. You're doing a great service."



Osmun Music Horn Choir

Saturday, October 30, 2-4 p.m.

Conductor/coach Jean Rife. Everyone welcome.

Bring your horn, a stand, and music (optional).

5 Forest Street, Arlington, www.osmun.com

Call 781-646-5756 for reservations (requested) & directions.

Jean Rife Classes

Jean is preparing for a fall schedule of class horn lessons, natural horn lessons, and yoga classes beginning in mid-September.

Contact her at jeanrife@mit.edu or 617-738-6093

or check out her web site at www.jeanrife.com

IHS International Symposium

June 5-10, 2005, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa AL USA
Outstanding international artists in recital, competitions, coaching

Warm-ups, masterclasses, exhibits, lectures, choirs

Host: Skip Snead ssnead@bama.ua.edu

School of Music, UA Box 870366, Tuscaloosa AL 35487-0366

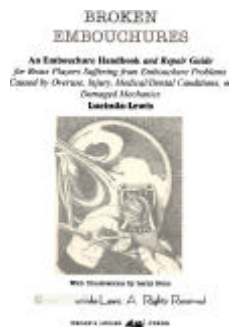
www.hornsociety.org/news_info/events/2005-symposium.html

Janice writes, "I moved to FL a couple of years ago, but Cornucopia still finds its way to my mailbox. Thanks so much." Tim writes, "Just a little something to help out."

New members: **Sandra O'Connor**, Lexington, Air National Guard, Boston Civic and Wellesley orchestras; **Cathy Ryan**, North Andover; **Nina Parrott**, Acton, a 12-year-old student of Helen Lukash; **Jason Davis**, Waltham, a software engineer starting to learn horn at age 29; **Sheerin Hosseini**, Malden, a student of Tim McFarland (piano) and Dick Greenfield (horn) at UMass Boston; **Nicholas Hartman**, a student whose father is trombone professor at Crane, Potsdam; **Char Kasprzak**, Jamaica Plain, an administrative assistant; **Larry Purdue**, Army Band in Germany, previously lost, but found in Valencia, and his colleague, **Kira Kamensky**; others at the Valencia symposium; and several from Erin Amendola's Texas Horn Camp. ❖

Cornucopia by e-mail

To receive the newsletter by e-mail in PDF format rather than by regular mail, send a message to mbk@world.std.com with "Cornucopia" in the subject line.



Andrea Lynch's students (Kate Kemp, Amy Saffer, Kevin Cox, Sarah Johnsen, and Katrina Vary) played a concert at Bates College



Cornucopia, New England Horn Society

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