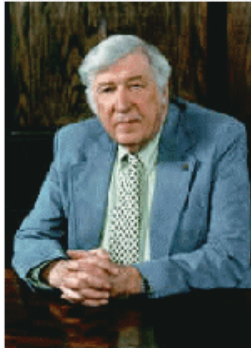


Cornucopia

News and articles for anyone interested in the horn

February 2006



Gunther Schuller

Cornucopia

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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Horn New England site

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International Horn Society

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

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www.hornsociety.org
previewyoursite.com

Composer, conductor, hornist ... Schuller at 80

Gunther Schuller started his musical career as a horn player but hasn't played horn since 1963 and is now better known as a composer, conductor, author, and music publisher. Yet when he got together with former BSO second horn Harry Shapiro recently, "What did he want to talk about?" asks Harry, "horn playing!"

Gunther has been in the news recently because he turned 80 on November 22, 2005 – St. Cecilia Day. He was feted in Boston with concerts of his compositions at NEC (where he was president from 1967 to 1977), a panel discussion on the state of contemporary composition at Harvard, an evening-long program of his jazz recordings on a Boston NPR station, and performances of his composition *Spectra* by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

In 2000 the IHS named Gunther an Honorary Member because of his contributions to music and especially the horn. He was principal horn of the Cincinnati Symphony at 17 and of the MET at 19, and he performed jazz with Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, and John Lewis, later coining the term "Third Stream" to describe the union of jazz and classical music. Oxford University Press published his book *Horn Technique* in 1962 (later reissued).

As the IHS stated, "His compositions have covered a full range of musical genres and he has found ways to include or feature the horn in almost every one. In addition to his large ensemble works, there have been numerous

chamber works including horns in traditional settings (e.g., brass quintets) and innovative combinations." He features the horn in two horn concertos, a horn sonata, *Perpetuum mobile* for four horns and bassoon, *Lines and Contrasts* for 16 horns, and *Five Pieces for Five Horns*.

A review of a recording by Barry Tuckwell and the NFB Horn Quartet in Cornucopia in 1999 comments: "*Five* was published in 1952, at a time when there was little new music written for horn ensemble. It takes advantage of the new techniques that were being developed in the fifties, both compositional (serialism) and instrumental (valve tremolandos, glissandos, quarter tones, and the like)."

At the 2005 Northeast Horn Workshop, Gunther gave a lecture on interpretation of the opening horn solo in Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel*. He went into meticulous detail, backed up by references, the same sort of analysis applied in his book *The Compleat Conductor*.

The honors showered on Gunther are too numerous to list completely but include a Pulitzer Prize, MacArthur Foundation "Genius" Award, BMI Lifetime Achievement Award, and ten honorary degrees.

Gunther is still busy conducting and lecturing. The horn continues to be dear to his heart, as shown by his compositions, his participation in the horn workshop, and his delight in the IHS Honorary Membership. ❖

Improvising Repercussions

I love this CD! *Repercussions* is by the duo of hornist Jeffrey Agrell and pianist Evan Mazunik. Jeff is known for his columns on creativity in *The Horn Call*, and here he puts his creative suggestions to work with his colleague. They improvise together a lot and it shows.

The liner notes explain that the two often work with short composed fragments that are jumping-off points for their free improvisations. Free improv isn't based on a set of chord changes and a rhythmic bed, which you would expect in jazz improvisation. Instead, the musicians listen to each other and develop, vary, and create contrasts with what they hear in the moment, building a logical structure for their compositions as they go.

The musicians explore textures that suggest pointillist, chant, popular, pretty, new age, jazz, funk, experimental. They range widely, but it all hangs together. The title track starts off with a catchy three-note hook that kept me riveted for the whole nine-minute title track. The horn sound is really cool on a gritty funk bass line on "Diminished Intelligence."

I like the five "Haiku" but I thought the reading of the poems set the wrong mood for some of the pieces, particularly the music for the waterdrops haiku. The *pp* sound

effects that introduced "Oddio" and the chromatic and tone-quality shifts and final sliding horn melody in "September Elegy" are quite effective. For me, the whole CD was exciting to listen to, but the more experimental moments were the highlights.

Technically the recording quality produces a great chamber-music sound. The horn sounds warm, not dry, and the blend is good, without evident reverberation to blur detail. The dynamic range is large. I don't recommend listening in a car because you'll miss the fun in some spots.

The duo has a great sense of pacing with lots of rhythmic energy. They use and reuse their source motivic material with great flair to give these off-the-cuff compositions coherence.

Repercussions is available from Wildwind Records, PO Box 5443, Coralville IA 52241 or wildwindrecords@mchsi.com.

Jeffrey Agrell is on the faculty of the University of Iowa and will be a featured artist at the 2006 Northeast Horn Workshop in March (see page 2). ❖

Pam is a composer and horn player and a member of the Concord Orchestra. See her works at www.spindrif.com.



Review by Pamela J. Marshall

News and Events

Your hard-working editor now has a [fast] cable modem (and new computer) to serve you better. This might be a good time to consider getting on the email list to help save money. (If you prefer the paper copy, that's okay too.) Send a message with "Cornucopia" in the subject line to mbk@world.std.com or the new address in the masthead. And don't forget the Horn New England web site run by Bill Muth (address in the masthead).

Sue Spaulding (North Haven CT) and her husband, Anthony DeQuattro, are proud parents of Frank Min Sung DeQuattro. "He is a joy and a wonder, and is already making 'raspberry' sounds, so I know that buzzing can't be too far off."

Gus Sebring (Wayland, BSO associate first) along with other BSO players, free-lancers, and groups from the Wayland schools played a concert in October to benefit rebuilding on the Gulf Coast. Gus was soloist in the Mozart 3rd concerto and wrote a piece for all forces.

Lydia Busler-Blais (www.boblyd.com) performs in the Brunch with Bach series at Norwich University Feb 19th at noon. Price includes a huge, lovely brunch. Email bennett@norwich.edu for reservations. Lydia also performs with Elizabeth Metcalfe in a concert titled "Calling the Night" on April 8 at 7 p.m. at the Unitarian Church in Montpelier VT.

John Aubrey (Boston) and Arcadian Winds gave concerts at the Community Music Center of Boston and King's Chapel in November, including new works by Greg Hopkins, Daniel Pinkham, Owen Underhill, and high school hornist Kelly Csillian.

Mary Jo Neher (former BU student) writes: "The Kallima Quintet was formed over a year ago at DePaul University's School of Music. This year we have undertaken a residency at Midwest Young Artists, where we are coaching wind chamber music, hosting open rehearsals, and playing a concert series. See www.kallimaquintet.com for the latest news and schedule."

Dolores Beck-Schwartz (845-528-1612 hornfun@optonline.com) offers Sunday afternoon music participation classes for school-age and special needs children in Briarcliff Manor NY.

Dale Camara (Peacham VT dalehorn@kingcon.com) has recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and starts treatment soon. She is positive about beating it. She writes, "I feel fine, which makes it even more frustrating to have to say that I am sick. I'm hoping that it will help my recovery to have the rest of my health in pretty good shape.... My good news is that I now have an adorable granddaughter who will be one year old soon. My son and his family live close by."

Jean Rife (jeanrife@mit.edu) is performing the Brahms and Harbison trios at the Midwest Horn Workshop (March 24-26) in Oklahoma. Jean will also give a harpsichord recital in Boston in the spring.

Barbara Chinworth (Tucson, publisher of *Home on the Range*) writes: "To Triple or Not ... informative column. Also about Mark Louttit, who is a former Tucsonan. I enjoy your paper and find its conciseness a shot in the arm." **Lorraine Fader** (Western Kentucky University) writes: "Thanks for the work you do! I enjoy the newsletter." **Betsy Rowland** (moving to Melrose) writes: "Thank you for bringing Cornucopia to my home - I really enjoy it!"

John Welch (Concord NH), **Greg Hustis** (Dallas), **Andrew Seacord** (Bowie MD) and **Cindy Carr** (Newark DE) have sent contributions. John writes, "The work and effort you do to keep the horn community in touch is just great and much appreciated, even by the 'silent majority.'" Greg sent his two new CDs, one featuring him in new works by Ewazen, Beckel, and Sargon with the Dallas Philharmonia, and the other featuring composer Joseph Schwantner (Greg plays his "Beyond Autumn"). Andrew and Cindy both write, "Thank you for your work on Cornucopia."

Lost: David Miller (Brooklyn NY).

New members: **Kelly Csillam**, Tyngsborough, plays in GBYSO; **Krehe Ritter**, a biological researcher in Crested Butte CO; **Bill Gross**, Dallas (actually was a member in the past); **John Saxelby**, Lowell, plays in the Lowell Philharmonic; and **Andrea Barbrie**, Blackstone, a public school teacher in Harvard. ❖



Northeast Horn Workshop 2006

March 25-26, 2006, University of Vermont, Burlington
Host: Alan Parshley (802-656-3040) maestrodicorno@aol.com
Vermont Wind Ensemble, D. Thomas Toner, Conductor
Patricia Evans (Winnipeg), John Boden (Portland ME)
Jeffrey Agrell (University of Iowa), Lydia Busler-Blais (VT)
David Kaslow (author), John Clark (NYC, jazz)

Kelly Drifmeyer (Crane, Potsdam), Priscilla Douglas (Audiologist)
Laura Klock (UMass Amherst, solo competition organizer)
Green Mountain Horn Club, Crane School Horn Choir
Recitals, lectures, panel discussions, choirs performing at churches
Exhibits, guided warm-ups, mass choir, social events
www.northeasthornworkshop.org



IHS International Symposium

July 21-29, 2006, Cape Town, South Africa
Steve Horwood, steveh@iafrica.com, www.sahornsoc.com
American Horn Quartet, Barry Tuckwell, Frank Lloyd, many others
Tours are being organized for before and after the symposium,
also Table Mountain, gardens, and winery tours mid-week.
South African Horn Society needs horns for students;
please consider donating an instrument.

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