

# A M E R I C A N R E C O R D E R

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RUZZIER





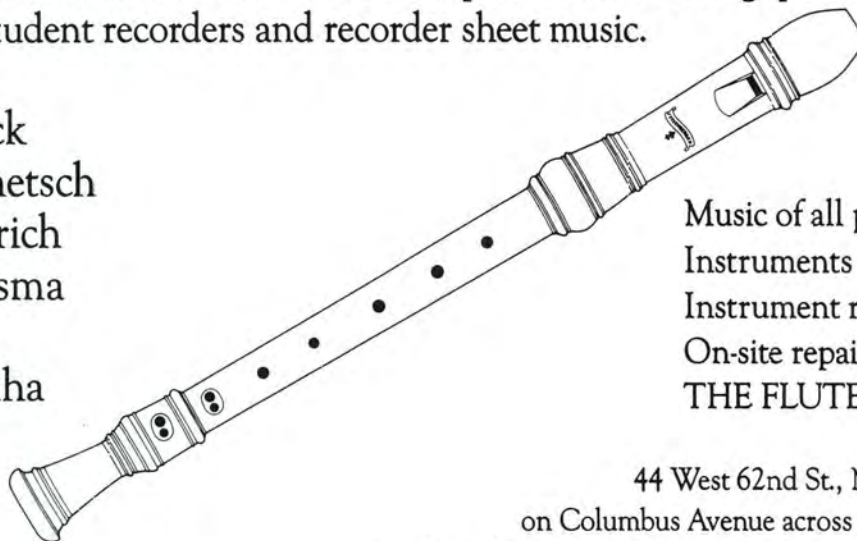
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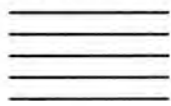
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# EDITOR'S NOTE



If you're like me, you probably find it more satisfying to think of subjects like outer space and human development as continuums or networks without clear lines of demarcation, defining "on-off" buttons, or hierarchical taxonomy. Even music history seems to be organized in incrementally evolving inter-relationships that have more to do with Einstein than with Webster or Dewey.

But this notion is challenged by the one moment in time when some imaginative duct-flute maker or maker-player had the idea of carving a hole in the back of his or her tubular instrument in order to help the instrument kick into the upper octave without the surge of air previously required. That really was a breakthrough—and think of the exciting developments in musical literature, education, and even industry that have followed! Where explorers a century ago trekked off to find the source of the Nile, seekers today look for the edge of the Universe or, in the case of modern recorder researcher Anthony Rowland-Jones, the moment of transformation that created the instrument that still brings music into our lives 600-or-so years later (page 10).

This sense of interconnectedness is only strengthened by the report of vertical flutes found in a 9,000-year-old burial site in China (page 6), by the efforts of chapter members in central Arkansas to bring high-quality recorder music to radio listeners in their area (page 15), by an American recorder player coaching an early music ensemble in Cuba (page 5), and by the Monterey Bay Recorder Society program in which members bring the sounds of recorders to area schools (page 29).

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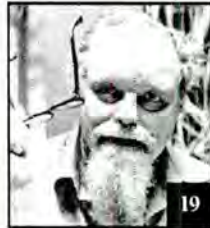
As we went to press, we learned two sad pieces of news: the crash of EgyptAir Flight 990 claimed the lives of ARS-member Gloria Berchielli and her friend Anne Soernssen; and on November 4, ARS past president LaNoue Davenport, a seminal figure in the American recorder movement, died at the age of 77. More about these individuals who gave of themselves so generously to our field will appear in the January AR.

Benjamin Dunham

# A M E R I C A N RECORDER

Volume XXXX Number 5

November 1999



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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## Bad guys, good guys



Have you seen "the movie" yet? You know which one. Every few years, the industry produces a film with a music education theme. The current offering is *Music of the Heart*, about the phenomenal success of a Suzuki-method violin teacher in an East Harlem grade school. I went to see it as soon as it was released last month.

The first such movie I saw, many years ago, was *The Music Man*, about replacing the sins of the pool hall with 76 trombones. In more recent times we've had *Tous les Matins du Monde* and *Mr. Holland's Opus*. I applaud any favorable treatment of music education in the mainstream media, and I liked all of these efforts.

The formula is alive and well. The original title for *Music of the Heart* was "Fifty Violins," no doubt resonating with those 76 trombones. None other than Meryl Streep plays the leading role, while superstar Latin/pop singer Gloria Estefan fills a cameo role that will broaden the film's appeal. Our own beloved instrument has a cameo role too, but, I'm sad to say, in what may be perceived as a most negative light.

The story is about Roberta Guaspari, recently abandoned wife and mother of two young children, who talks herself into a much-needed teaching job at Central Park East elementary school in the East Harlem ghetto of New York City. She happens to own 50(!) student violins, and therefore can create a special enrichment program for the children that becomes a great success. Of course, everything is oversimplified. Central Park East is depicted as a stereotypical ghetto school with problems of racial tension, violence, and incompetent teachers, saved by Ms. Guaspari's innovative program.

In fact, Central Park East has been one of the most acclaimed public schools in the country for years, with a long waiting list of applicants (including many middle-class families outside the district), thanks to decades of hard work by principal Deborah Meier, its founder, and her dedicated staff. Ms. Meier complained to *The New York Times* that "the movie turned a chance to tell a complex story of a good school nurturing a fellow risk-taker into a simple tale of good guys versus bad guys."

Among the bad guys is the full-time tenured music teacher. To illustrate just how bad he is, he is shown at the head of a class of listless, bored kids tooting away on soprano recorders. It's painful and awful. Just a few seconds of film, but the damage is done.

Of course, I went ballistic. I thought of all the creative, dedicated recorder teachers working miracles in schools around the country. I recalled the energy and excitement of the participating teachers in the Orff conference sessions I've attended, and the enthusiasm attending the new rapidly-growing Suzuki recorder movement. I nearly yelled out, "What about Jody Miller's incredible recorder program at the McCleskey Middle School in Georgia!"

On the practical side, I started doing the math. How much does it cost to purchase 50 student violins? How many elementary schools could afford it? What about the other 100, 200, 300 children, even if the instruments could be found? What would the school have done if Ms. Guaspari hadn't owned the instruments?

In my view, the recorder can be a magic wand in music education. Very good quality, nearly indestructible instruments are available for just a few dollars, making it possible for any school to provide hands-on music making experiences to every student, drawing from a rich solo and ensemble literature spanning nearly all genre.

Of course, almost everything depends on the teacher, and I only hope that talented prospective elementary music teachers aren't put off by this movie's cheap shot. In the resulting climate, our Society's commitment to children, as expressed in the enrichment materials and programs offered by our Junior Recorder Society, becomes even more important. Please take this opportunity to spread the word of the educational power and accessibility of the recorder, and of the life-long pleasures it can bring. Support local recorder teachers, and help us build our JRS programs.

Don't let school life imitate stereotyped art.

Gene Murrow

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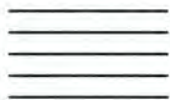
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# TIDINGS



*"Han Tol is a fantastic player," says Spanhove. "The collaboration has turned out extremely well. Most important is that we agreed on a musical level—and that the talks about wine have become more frequent."*

## Han Tol Joins The Flanders Recorder Quartet As New Member

The concerts given this past spring by the **Flanders Recorder Quartet** on the Cambridge Society for Early Music series in Massachusetts marked the American debut of Dutch recorderist **Han Tol** as a new member of the ensemble.

In September 1998, Fumiharu Yoshimine told his colleagues that he was planning to return to Japan and would have to leave the ensemble. Although Yoshimine didn't know at that point when exactly he would leave, the ensemble members felt that they shouldn't delay in seeking a replacement. They realized that it wouldn't make sense to continue playing together, because new projects couldn't be followed-up and that repertoire that worked well on stage couldn't be recorded with the same personnel.

"It is always hard to have to replace someone," says Bart Spanhove. "As a group you have a particular style, a trademark blend of quality, creativity, and originality. This style is the result of years of work and hours of talks and rehearsals with the people closely involved with the ensemble—and there are many more people involved than merely the playing members."

"Of course, there was a lot of searching and pondering involved for Paul, Joris, and myself, the remaining initial members of the ensemble," Spanhove continues. "We didn't see a solution within Belgium, although that would have been the easiest solution in terms of organizing rehearsals, etc. Since Fumiharu was willing to stand by, we didn't have to decide under time pressure. This gave us the chance to have tentative talks with some internationally renowned recorder players. Eventually we choose to work with Han Tol, who had a lot of experience both as a soloist and as an ensemble player and who reacted with enthusiasm to our offer—80 concerts a year, management in Japan, the States, South



Africa, France, and Belgium, as well as a contract with the French CD firm Opus 111."

Tol is currently a professor at the Musikhochschule in Bremen, Germany, and member of the Balthasar Neumann Ensemble. Because of the busy calendar of the Flanders Recorder Quartet, he had to bring his engagement with the recorder ensemble "La Fontegara" to an end. He also stopped teaching at the Rotterdam Conservatory, and limited the number of his master classes.

"Han Tol is a fantastic player," Bart Spanhove continues. "The collaboration has turned out extremely well. In some ways, our training was pretty much alike. The Belgian music world was and is highly influenced by musicians such as Kuijken brothers, Paul Dombrecht, and Jos van Immerseel. In The Netherlands, there was a similar development with Brüggem, Leonhardt, and Koopman. Moreover, in Belgium there were a few of Brüggem's students teaching recorder, so that we were aware of what happened in the north.

"Tol is about five years older than the three of us, and in the recorder world that is considered an older generation. Han could have been our teacher since his generation (with Kees Boeke and Walter van

**The new conformation of the Flanders Recorder Quartet, left to right: Joris Van Goethem, Han Tol, Bart Spanhove, and Paul Van Loey.**

Hauwe) used to teach students who often were only a few years younger than they were. I did, in fact, have a few ensemble lessons from Han at the Rotterdam Conservatory."

The new impulse proved to be very beneficial and inspiring to the other members. After 12 years of playing together, there was new feedback, which forced them to question their usual way of working. "Most important," says Spanhove, "is that we agreed on a musical level—and that the talks about wine have become more frequent..."

The year 2000 will be a very busy year for the ensemble—concerts in Japan, Australia, Canada, Mexico, South Africa, Singapore, France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, The Netherlands, and North America. The group has come here annually since 1993. In 2000, they plan to make three separate trips—in March (to Vancouver and Milwaukee), June (for the Texas Toot and the Berkeley Festival), and August (for the Amherst Festival)—and to return at the beginning of 2001.

## Bits & Pieces

Two recorder players were among the recipients of Early Music America's summer 1999 scholarship program: **Risa Kawabata**, newly graduated from Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, where she was a student of Gwyn Roberts, attended the Amherst Baroque Academy at Tufts University in Massachusetts, and **Alicia Kravitz**, a student at John Jay High School in Katonah, New York, attended the Indiana University Recorder Academy in Bloomington. Each workshop received a \$500 grant from Early Music America toward the tuition and expenses of the respective winners. There were 10 entrants from the U.S. and Canada, including high school, undergraduate, and graduate students. Judges were Mark Kroll, Sarah Mead, and Russell Murray.

**Marilyn Boenau** is the new associate director of Amherst Early Music, a position that will succeed to the directorship upon the retirement of **Valerie Horst** after the 2000 season.

**Cléa Galhano** was a recipient of a Jerome Foundation Travel Grant, which enabled her to spend 10 days in Amsterdam to develop a recorder repertory program with Marion Verbruggen in preparation for a tour in the U.S.A. during the current season. Galhano was also a finalist in the prestigious McKnight Artist Fellowship program for Minnesota performing musicians.

**Ardal Powell** has been awarded a grant by the Society of Authors, a British writers union, to support continuing work on a history of the flute and flute-playing addressed to general readers as well as to flutists and music teachers. The book, to be published in a new series on musical instruments by Yale University Press, traces threads in the heritage of the modern flute and flute-playing that stretch from ancient times up to the present.

Six American recorder players—**David Bellugi**, **Elissa Berardi**, **Deborah Booth**, **Judith Linsenberg**, **Gwyn Roberts**, and **Pete Rose**—are participating in the annual "American Recorder Soloists" advertisement placed in the *Musical America International Directory of the Performing Arts* for the year 2000. The ad (shown on page 35 of this issue of AR) is prepared and subsidized by the American Recorder Society to make it possible for member professionals to market themselves at reduced cost in the "bible" for concert presenters.



PHOTO: TIMOTHY MERTON

Left to right, at the recorder workshop with members of the Renaissance ensemble *Ars Longa* in Havana, Cuba: **Alain Alfonsc**, age 24, recorders, crumhorns, voice; **Alond Lopez**, age 23, vihuela, lute, percussion; **Teresa Paz**, age 31, director, recorders, voice; **Taylis Fernandez**, age 17, viola da gamba, vielle; **Sarah Cantor**; and **Jennifer Vara**, age 18, cornetto (in training).

## Recorderist Sarah Cantor Works with Early Music Group in Havana, Cuba

In April 1999, I received official permission from the U.S. Government to go to Cuba and research the early music scene there. Looking for manuscripts by Cuban composer Esteban Salas was interesting, and hearing the story of how each early instrument had found its way to Cuba was very touching.

But the climax of my visit was giving master classes to the Renaissance ensemble *Ars Longa*. The nine members of the professional ensemble each receive the equivalent of \$10 a month from the Cuban government, which is the average salary for Cubans.

*Ars Longa* was founded by 31-year-old singer and recorder player Teresa Paz who studied choral conducting at the conservatory level. Teresa was introduced to the recorder in a solfège class, using a plastic instrument with German fingering. In 1995, she was inspired by an Austrian recorder ensemble that performed in Cuba. As a follow-up to their visit, and in support of Teresa's nascent sense of an early music mission, they sent her a set of Moeck recorders, which *Ars Longa* has put to good use. The group also has three Renaissance recorders made by Peter Kobiczek; these were commissioned by the Cuban government in an effort to enrich Cuban cultural life and teach people about their musical roots through *Ars Longa*'s performances of early Latin American music.

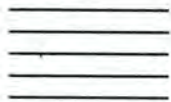
All of the members of *Ars Longa* are

conservatory students or graduates that Teresa has auditioned and carefully trained. They have very little access to recordings, books, instruments, and of course, other players. The 17-year-old gamba player has only seen someone play a gamba once, and the rest she has taught herself through a treatise. She went to a guitar maker with a postcard of a gamba from a museum in Belgium, and from this alone, the guitar maker constructed a nice sounding, but very heavy instrument that she plays with a cello bow. The cornetto player has been instructed by Teresa to play only long tones for a few months. She comes to all the rehearsals and goes to Teresa's house daily for supervised long-tone practice.

In the master class, the ensemble played some very spirited villancicos and divisions by Diego Ortiz with well-informed Ganassi articulation, gleaned from their one treasured treatise on recorder playing. The recorder players had developed a technique of ending notes by closing the throat rather than with the tongue or by opening the mouth and stopping the wind flow. They were very skilled at this throat technique, but were thrilled to learn and experiment with other methods. I left with a deep respect and appreciation for what they have done with so few resources, and I found their love and hunger for early music tremendously inspiring.

Sarah Cantor

# TIDINGS



*"It's a reedy, pleasant sound, a little thin, like a recorder," said Dr. Harbottle, not a player himself.*

## End-Blown Flutes Made of Crane Bone Found in China at Neolithic Site

Recorder players were intrigued in late-September by reports of a story in the scientific journal *Nature* about flutes discovered at an archeological burial site in China. Based on carbon-14 dating performed at the site by Garman Harbottle, a chemist at the U.S. Department of Energy's Brookhaven National Laboratory, the article indicated that the flutes might be the oldest playable musical instruments—perhaps 9,000-years-old.

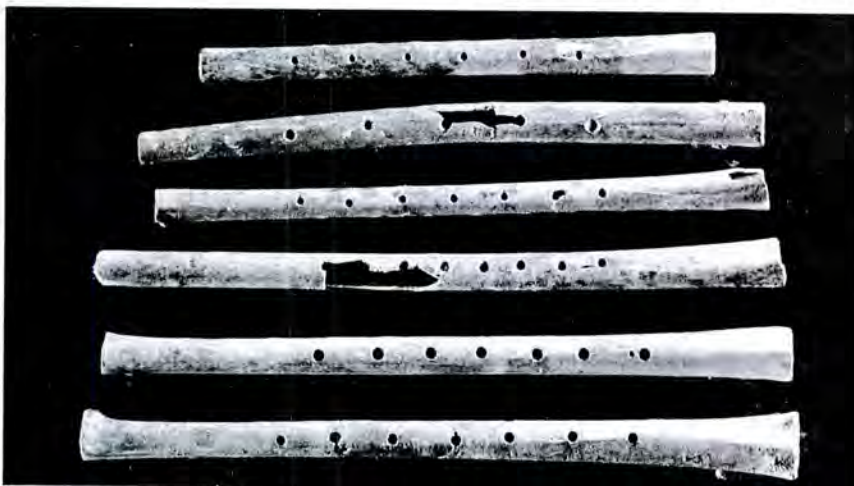
"It's a reedy, pleasant sound, a little thin, like a recorder," said Dr. Harbottle, not a player himself.

Excavations in 1979 at the early Neolithic site of Jiahu in the Henan province had yielded six complete flutes, and fragments of approximately 30 others, all made from the wing bones of the red-crowned crane (*Grus japonensis* Millen). The intact flutes have five, six, seven, or eight holes and are not fipple flutes, like the recorder, or transverse, like the modern flute, but rather of the open end-blown variety, like the Japanese shakuhachi or South American quena. The best-preserved of the flutes (second from the bottom in the photo) may be heard on the web at [www.bnl.gov/bnlweb/flutes.html](http://www.bnl.gov/bnlweb/flutes.html); Taoying Xu plays part of "Xiao Bai Cai" (The Chinese Small Cabbage), a pentatonic folk song. This flute has seven main holes plus a tiny hole near hole 7 (for tuning?).

It has been analyzed using a stroboscope in tests supervised by Huang Xiang-peng at the Music School of the Art Research Institute of China. Data were recorded for two players blowing twice each with their embouchures angled at 45° up and 45° down, across the mouth of flute. According to the *Nature* article, the number and spacing of the holes produce intervals similar to the Western diatonic scale, suggesting that the Neolithic musician of the seventh millennium B.C. was interested in playing melodic music. On the web site, the flute sounds less like a recorder and more like someone whistling.

The authors of the *Nature* article describing the Jiahu findings are Juzhong Zhang, from the Institute of Cultural Relics and Archaeology of Henan Province in Zhengzhou and the Archaeometry Laboratory at the University of Science and Technology of China; Changsui Wang, also from the Archaeometry Laboratory; Zhaochen Kong, from the Paleobotany Laboratory, Academia Sinica in Beijing; and Dr. Harbottle from Brookhaven.

**Six of the flutes discovered in Jiahu, China. The second one from the bottom, measuring about 9 1/2 inches, may be heard in a Chinese folk song at [www.bnl.gov/bnlweb/flutes.html](http://www.bnl.gov/bnlweb/flutes.html).**



## Winery Workshop Held in Sonoma, California

An innovative collaboration between the Sonoma County Recorder Society (SCRS) and the Bartholomew Park Winery brought Northern California recorder ensembles together for a first-of-its-kind recorder event in Sonoma, California, on September 12—the "Wine Country Recorder Workshop and Concert."

The workshop took place in the winery's museum building, constructed in 1922 on the grounds of the 400-acre Bartholomew Park. Surrounded by artifacts of the Sonoma Valley wine industry dating back to the 1800s in the winery's museum of wine country history, the thirty participants first enjoyed a picnic lunch and wine tasting. Then they began a four-hour workshop conducted by Frances Blaker, an intensive playing session that included the Badinerie from Bach's Orchestral Suite No. 2 (arranged by Blaker), Jakob Arcadelt's "Il Bianco e Dolce Cigno," and Glenn Miller's "Moonlight Serenade."

The post-workshop concert, held that afternoon on the park's outdoor stage, featured (in addition to the workshop orchestra) the Blue Oak Consort from Grass Valley, the River City Renaissance Band from Sacramento, the Hayward Consort, the Bona Speranza consort from Berkeley, and the Santa Rosa Recorder Trio, all of whose members also participated in the workshop. The consorts introduced many



## In memoriam J.M. THOMSON (1926-1999)

The editor and writer J.M. (John Mansfield) Thomson died September 11 in Wellington, New Zealand, at the age of 73. John was a great friend to the recorder movement. He edited the *British Recorder and Music Magazine* from July 1966 to May 1967 and again from June 1971 to September 1974. When his attempt to turn it into a journal of wider interest for early music was aborted, he founded *Early Music* in 1973 and edited it until 1983. Thanks to John's taste and wide musical and artistic connections, that journal became noted for its high standards, wealth of illustrations, and ability to appeal on several levels to scholars, performers, and music lovers. At Barrie and Rockliff, then at Faber & Faber, John encouraged the publication of books on early music as well as Faber Music's recorder series. He wrote *Your Book of the Recorder* (1968; 2nd ed., 1974) to introduce young adults to the instrument and collected fourteen of his insightful biographical sketches of modern recorder players, originally written for *Recorder and Music Magazine*, into a book entitled *Recorder Profiles* (1972). Later, he edited the landmark *Cambridge Companion to the Recorder* (1995) as well as a companion *Companion to the Flute* (still awaiting publication). His interest in the visual arts led to his compiling *Musical Delights: A Cavalcade of Cartoon and Caricature* (1984), drawing again on articles originally written for *Recorder and Music Magazine*.

Although John seemed a fixture in London, he eventually returned to his native New Zealand, where for the last fifteen years of his life he wrote about the country's music and cultural history. For his services to New Zealand music, John received an honorary doctorate from the Victoria University of Wellington in 1991. For his services to the recorder and early music he received no such award, yet he was equally active and influential in that sphere. Beyond his significant editing and writing, he served on the editorial board of *American Recorder*, became the founding president of the National Early Music Association (U.K.), edited the study *The Future of Early Music in Britain* (1978), encouraged and mentored young performers and schol-

ars, and ceaselessly promoted the music and its musicians.

\* \* \*

Let me add a personal note. I first met John in 1966 when, as a chemistry student, I had translated Hotteterre's *Principes de la flûte* for my own education, and my recorder teacher, Edgar Hunt, told John about me. As the music books editor for Barrie and Rockliff, he saw the value of the project and snapped it up. John also commissioned me to write for *Recorder and Music Magazine*, and later for *Early Music*. Without his mentoring, I might never have become a researcher of woodwind instruments. John was fatherly towards me: kindly but firm. He praised my ideas, but couldn't stand my youthfully critical attitude towards the scholarship of others and repeatedly told me to always be positive and compassionate. I noted, however, that he often had severe things to say about certain people in the London music publishing business, and I understand that his career suffered because of his bluntness.

Time and again John invited me over to his flat and introduced me to important figures in the early music world such as Walter Bergmann, Howard Mayer Brown, Frans Brüggem (of whom he was an early champion), Kees Otten, and Hans-Martin Linde. When I complained that Gustav Scheck, with whom I had studied during summers, had never performed in England, John promoted the concerts and master classes himself.

Even in his forties, John was having severe health problems, and he later had a series of heart operations. Miraculously, he hung on and continued with an amazing productivity into his seventies, when he was recognized as a prophet with honor in his own country. A connoisseur, a scholar, and a gentleman, he loved all art music, anything from New Zealand, wine, the decorative arts, good prose, and good companionship. He did his level best to raise the consciousness of the recorder movement in England, which tended to be provincial. Working behind the scenes, he did as much as anyone to move us towards the educated internationalism of today. Down Under or This Side Up, we shall all miss him.

David Lasocki



Above, Frances Blaker conducts attendees at the "Wine Country Recorder Workshop" sponsored by the Sonoma County Recorder Society and the Bartholomew Park Winery.

BARTHOLOMEW  
PARK WINERY



in the audience to the wide spectrum of music in the recorder repertoire, playing American popular music of the early 1900s Shaker melodies, Welsh folk tunes, and contemporary compositions in addition to Renaissance and Baroque fare. Recorders were augmented by sackbuts, crumhorns, and other "loud" instruments when the River City Renaissance Band performed selections by Holborne, Coreccio, and Susato. In addition, oboe soloist Daniel Celidore, who is the permanent conductor of the SCRS, performed a Telemann Fantasia on oboe.

Based on the enthusiastic response to the event, SCRS president Stan McDaniel stated that the workshop and concert combination will likely become an annual affair adding a bit of the "Wine Country ambience" to the rich workshop schedule already found in Northern California.

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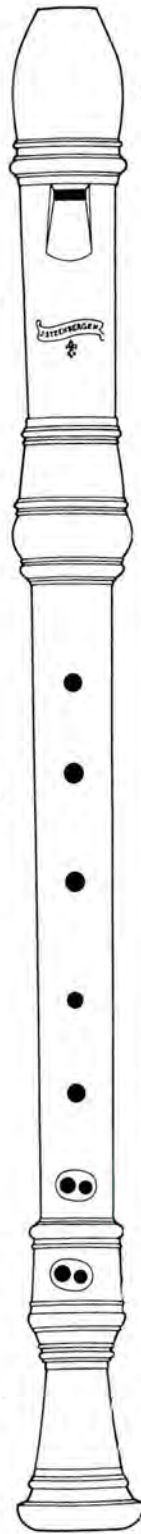
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# THE FIRST RECORDER: HOW? WHY? WHEN? ...AND WHERE?

*The search for the first recorder appears to be a "Euro-Contest," with Germany, Holland, France, Spain, and England competing for the prize*

*How, why, when and where did the recorder come into being?—four questions of increasing complexity. And they need to be asked in this order as the continuing process of innovation in instrumental design is nearly always the result of changes in musical taste, style, and performance practice.*

*by Anthony Rowland-Jones*

**H**ow? Duct flutes—this is the term favored by the organologist Jeremy Montagu for tubular aerophones with finger-holes where the sound is produced by blowing through a windway onto a labium edge—exist from as long ago as Iron Age and Viking times. Some are sophisticated instruments carefully crafted to produce a range of an octave or more with three finger-holes. In this, they resemble tabor pipes that can produce two octaves with three stages of overblowing. The six-holed pipe, however, known as "flageol," flageolet, or just tin-whistle, produces two octaves with only one stage of overblowing. The recorder has eight holes (counting double-holes as one) including the thumb-hole, which acts as a "speaker" hole to facilitate production of the upper octave. Before the 17th century, recorders, being unjointed, had paired little finger-holes, one on each side, to accommodate players wishing to play either right-hand down or left-hand down, the unused hole being sealed with wax. Angels in carvings and paintings are about equally divided as to which hand to have lowermost, and Virdung's illustrations in his 1511 tutor show both ways. So, the Renaissance recorder had nine holes.

**W**hy? The recorder's speaker thumb-hole not only facilitates the production of notes in the upper register but enables them to be articulated gently and held softly. The overblowing required to articulate and sustain the upper register notes of the flageolet causes them to be louder. On the flageolet, if a note is played in the second octave and breath-pressure is gradually dropped, it will slip back down across the register break to the lower octave. In theory, it would be possi-

ble to avoid this by using the first finger in partial venting as a speaker hole, but this technique is tricky. On the recorder, with the right thumbing, an upper-octave note can be articulated softly or played loud followed by decrescendo. As breath-pressure decreases to bring about this change in volume, the note will of course go flat, but it will not break downwards until pitch has dropped considerably and the note has become tonally undernourished.

The recorder, therefore, offers greater dynamic flexibility than the flageolet. Many players of the six-holed flageol or pipe in Medieval times would not, however, have felt that this mattered, since the smaller pipes were mainly used to accompany dancing, often in the open air, just as six-holed pipes are used today in folk-music and country dancing. The strength and penetration of the pipe's upper register is well suited to this role. Moreover the pipe's fingering system is much easier than the recorder's, provided it stays in or close to its home key; and pipes are made in a variety of keys and are seldom played from written-out music. Their nimble-fingeredness would be seen as a considerable advantage, especially for playing divisions on an oft-repeated tune.

As a boy, rather to my violin-teacher's disgust, I enjoyed playing what was then called a penny-whistle. My elder brother thoughtfully gave me a wooden recorder (an Adler) for my tenth birthday, but, though grateful for his generosity, I thought it was an inferior instrument, since the fingering was far too complicated and the top notes much harder to get. This personal experience probably reflects the attitude of many 15th-century pipe players to the newfangled recorder. I was, however, beginning to play tunes that used several accidentals, and I then realized that, away

from its diatonic scale, the recorder's notes were much more satisfactory in tone-quality, intonation, and ease of fingering than those of the six-holed instrument. So I became reconciled to the recorder as my musical aspirations developed. In "The Medieval Recorder"—by far the most thorough and interesting consideration of the subject yet embarked upon—Dr. Nicholas Lander, quoting Tuschner's 1983 article in *Tibia* 8 (3), pp. 401-6, on the development of early woodwind instruments in the light of the Medieval modes and the Guidonian hexachord system, regards the greater versatility provided by the recorder's cross-fingerings as the main reason for its coming into being. (The article is posted at Dr. Lander's web site, *The Recorder Page*, <[www.iinet.net.au/~nickl/medieval.html](http://www.iinet.net.au/~nickl/medieval.html)>.)

Dr. Lander also comments that most wide-bored cylindrical recorders, the usual pattern, it seems, in the late Medieval and early Renaissance period, have a range of only an octave and a sixth. However, up to the end of the 16th century, parts in written music that may have been played on recorders, mainly vocal in origin or at least in conception, rarely exceed such a compass, although we know little about the range used by players in the process of extemporization. Nor is there much use of chromatic tonalities in late Medieval vocal music. The ability of the recorder to play softly in its upper register must surely have been an innovation as welcomed as its ability to play accidentals accurately.

During the Medieval period, instruments were categorized as "loud" (*haut*) or "soft" (*bas*). *Haut* and *bas* did not generally play together until the later Renaissance. Except for ceremonial occasions, including banqueting and dancing, indoor music was provided by the soft instruments, which included plucked strings such as lutes and harps, bowed strings such as fiddles, and wind instruments such as portable organs and flutes (both duct flutes and transverse flutes), generally in combination with that most important of all instruments, the human voice. As far as their inferiority to the voice allowed, melody instruments were expected to imitate singing (see, for example, Ganassi, *Fontegara*, Chapter 1).

If the evidence of Conrad von Zabern's 1474 *De modo bene cantandi* (found in Carol MacClintock's *Readings in the History of Music in Performance* [Indiana University Press, 1982]) can be applied more generally, we know how a singer in this period was expected to perform. Middle notes were sung with moderate strength, and high

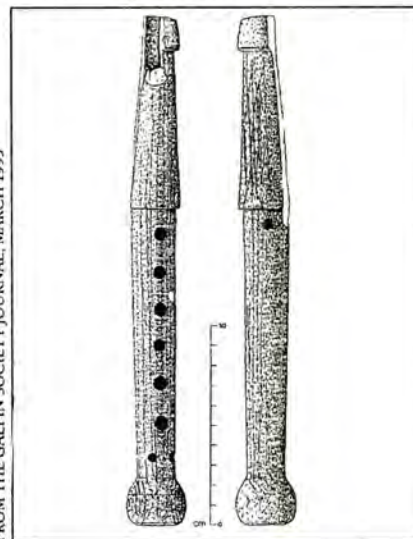
notes with a soft voice, thinner and more delicate, like the small high pipes of an organ. Changes between these registers should be gradual, according to the movement of the melody, which should be sung with life and emotion. Fifteenth-century composers tended to set words of sadness or sweetness in the higher softer register. The eight-holed duct flute could come close to this singing style, which persisted throughout the Renaissance (e.g., see Finck, 1556, in MacClintock, pp. 62-3) and even into Johann Mattheson's time in the 18th century. The six-holed instrument, because of its overblown upper notes, could not play in this manner. In England, at least, the two instruments were seen as being so different in their capabilities and purposes that the former was known by a different name. The Latin "recordari" means to recollect, think over or dwell upon, and the English verb "to record" meaning "to get by heart, to commit to memory, to go over in one's mind or to repeat or say over as a lesson" dates from as early as 1225 and was so used by Chaucer in his *Troilus* (c.1374). It therefore seems likely that the recorder derived its name from the role for which it was primarily intended, that is to say, in soft music with the voice as recollecting or musing upon a melody or phrase enunciated by a singer, imitating vocal inflections, and weaving a gentle decorative line upon a singer's verbal expressiveness. This is exactly what appears to happen in music by composers such as Dufay and Dunstable. Sensitive playing of their three-part music with a recorder, voice (vibrato-less), and a plucked string instrument could well be the most effective

way of understanding why a need was felt at the time by cultivated music-lovers for the "invention" of a duct flute with the capabilities of the recorder.

**WHEN?** Dufay was born in 1400, and by the time he was composing, the recorder appears to have been in the process of establishing itself in Western Europe as an instrument for courtly music-making. There is good, though not as yet irrefutable, evidence that the recorder actually existed well before 1400, taking us back to the time of Landini and Machaut. The strongest evidence is the discovery of a recorder (illus. 1)—thrown away in a deep latrine because its head had cracked, making it unplayable—in a town that by happy coincidence is also associated with Handel, the composer of the finest recorder sonatas. This is Göttingen in Lower Saxony.

Details were published in *The Galpin Society Journal* (XLVIII, March 1995) by Dietrich Hakelberg (for fuller references, see Nicholas Lander's article already referred to); it was discovered in 1987, but dating it is difficult—Hakelberg describes the problems—and it is therefore simply said to be "of 14th-century origin," a timespan in changing musical tastes and performance requirements equivalent to that between Haydn's late Masses and Richard Strauss's *Salome*. The only other nearly complete Medieval recorder is the one excavated from the moat of a large fortified manor-house near Dordrecht, Holland, in 1940, and now in the Gemeentemuseum in The Hague (illus. 2). The castle was lived

**Illustration 1:**  
**The Göttingen Recorder**



FROM THE GALPIN SOCIETY JOURNAL, MARCH 1995

**Illustration 2:**  
**The Dordrecht Recorder**



PHOTO: GEMEENTEMUSEUM, THE HAGUE

in from 1335 but was severely damaged in a siege in 1418 and finally rendered uninhabitable by floods in 1421 and 1423. This time-span is only a little less than a century, but scholars have tended to suggest a late dating for the instrument, c. 1390 or early 15th century. Apart from what might have happened at the siege, it is difficult to imagine why an unbroken instrument was, like other garbage, thrown into the moat. It could not have been highly valued. Was it perhaps out of tune? (There are signs, apparently, of attempted re-tuning.) Had it been found too difficult to play in relation to a six-holed pipe, or less versatile than the transverse flute?

It is interesting that, while both the two Northern European archaeological discoveries are clearly recorders, they differ substantially in design, as can be seen from the illustrations. In particular, the Dordrecht recorder has a cylindrical bore, and in this respect belongs to the category of instruments generally represented in early recorder iconography. The Göttingen recorder has an inverse conical bore. This suggests that both finds might be isolated examples of experimentation in duct-flute design, rather than representatives of an established genre.

While surviving specimens must nevertheless be given pride of place as evidence for the early history of the recorder, linguistic evidence is also important, at least in English, the one language that has distinguished the eight- (or nine-) holed duct flute from other duct flutes by according it a single-word name. But linguistic evidence is even more sparse than archaeological evidence; only one use of the word “recorder” has so far been found from before 1400. If, however, we can feel reasonably sure that this use refers specifically to our instrument, this one piece of linguistic evidence becomes very significant, since it is securely dated to the year 1388.

Detailed consideration of this early use of the word “recorder” appears in an article I have written for the German journal *Tibia*, but briefly, it occurs in the household accounts of Henry, Earl of Derby, later Henry IV. The entry was described by Brian Trowell in a Note in *The Galpin Society Journal* for 1957 (pp. 83-4), but Trowell relied upon a reference from a historical work of the 1890s. With the kind help of my wife’s cousin, Christopher Whittick, a county senior archivist who is skilled in reading English Medieval court hand, I have now discovered that Trowell’s source transcription was a misreading, and in-

complete. Trowell supposed that the word was “Ricordo,” which he suggested meant a “keepsake” or “souvenir,” and that the *fistula* (flute) referred to in this accounts entry was therefore a gift, possibly from an Italian. Several later scholars, however, have made the assumption that the word “Ricordo” does refer to our recorder, even though Carter’s Middle English dictionary does not list it as ever having been spelt with an “i.” In fact, the word in the accounts entry is “Recordour” (“-our” being a common spelling of our “-er”), and the instrument was purchased on Henry’s behalf in London, almost certainly for his own or household use. The way the entry is worded—*fistula nomine Recordour* (note the capital R)—suggests that this was a new and unfamiliar kind of flute, something quite different from the six-holed pipe played by shepherds, peasants, and jongleurs. And it was expensive at “three shillings and four pence,” the modern equivalent of around a thousand dollars. But Henry is described by Trowell as “a keen amateur musician”; he “brought up his sons to appreciate music and the arts,” and his wife, Mary de Bohun, played the gittern. Later literary and iconographic evidence shows that the recorder was predominantly an instrument for the enjoyment of well-bred amateurs, often in company with plucked-string instruments. The recorder’s innovative capabilities as an expressive instrument must have appealed to Henry’s musicianship.

Very thorough work has been done on references to the recorder in works of literature; there are also two early lexicon entries (c. 1359 and 1280-1306) referred to in Christopher Welch’s 1911 *Six Lectures on the Recorder* (p. 19) that need further specialist research. The earliest dated literary references in Henry Holland Carter’s *Dictionary of Middle English Musical Terms* (Indiana University Press, 1961) are to 1431-8 and c. 1450. The word “recorder” does not appear in Chaucer, nor in other 14th-century English poems that describe musical occasions in considerable detail. Many types of flute are listed in two romances by Guillaume de Machaut from around 1330, including “fleustes dont droit joues quand tu fleustes,” i.e., played straight, not transverse, but none as specific as the much later 16th-century terminology, “flaute a ix neufte trous,” which is descriptive of the Renaissance recorder.

**Illustration 3: Carving from inner west porch (c. 1230) of the Frauenkirche, Nuremberg**

To the question “when did the recorder come into being?” we can, from the little archaeological and linguistic evidence that has so far emerged, only answer “probably some time during the second half of the 14th century.”

**WHERE?** Although the evidence of surviving instruments puts Germany and Holland in the lead in our “Euro-Contest,” iconographic evidence for the existence of the recorder is not in their favor; rather, it reveals other contenders. Nevertheless, scanning the chronological list of illustrations in Dr. Lander’s “Medieval Recorder” article (in print-out this list runs nearly 50 pages) shows that before 1400 there are very few unambiguous representations of the recorder, but that there is a gradual increase in frequency during the 15th century. Taken overall, therefore, iconographic evidence tends to support the rough dating suggested by the archaeological and linguistic findings for the coming into being of the recorder, although it is the least reliable of the three types of evidence.

A two-dimensional representation of the recorder, cannot—unless it is diagrammatic, like Virdung’s illustrations—show the instrument’s finger-holes and the thumb-hole underneath at the same time, and both are necessary to establish the recorder’s identity. Nor can a carving do so, and no sculpture I know of. Furthermore, artists rarely have a reason to show instruments with the accuracy needed to distinguish one form of pipe (shawm, cornett, flageolet) from another. Although some artists did enjoy painting detail, the paramount artistic effect of a picture, in which musical instruments may be there mainly for symbolic or decorative purposes, might



ARCHIVE MOECK, PHOTO: ASTRID NEUMANN

be better achieved by rendering details in impressionistic brushstrokes or showing instruments half-hidden or even distorted. Artists are just as unknowingly unkind to organologists in depicting the positions of the player's hands, fingers, lips, and cheeks (not puffed out for a recorder), the player's stance, and the placing of the finger-holes (especially the paired offset little finger-holes) and the shaping of the mouthpiece and the labium/window area without which the identification of a recorder is in doubt. Even when other features are clear, the presence of seven or eight holes, and of paired holes for the little finger, may not clinch identification, since small shawms and bagpipe chanters also sometimes had paired holes for the little finger, and Virdung refers to flutes with seven, eight, and sometimes more holes that may not necessarily be recorders. So iconographic identification of recorders, especially in late Medieval and Renaissance art, often involves inspired guesswork, and inevitably evokes controversy.

Like literary evidence, iconographic evidence has important negative value. For example, the van Eycks, in the earlier 14th century, painted musical instruments, including groups of the family of *bas* instruments to which the recorder belongs, with minute care, yet no recorders appear in their work, even in subjects such as Nativity scenes or the Coronation of the Virgin where they may quite often be found in 15th-century art. Howard Mayer Brown catalogued several hundred Trecento Italian paintings with musical instruments without locating any unambiguous recorders, although there are many representations of double pipes, and some of single duct flutes. In particular, Italian paintings that were probably intended to display a complete instrumentarium of the period,

such as the 14th-century frescoes in the apse of San Leonardo al Largo in Siena, do not include a recorder. None of the entries in Lander's list of possible recorder representations from the 14th century is from Flanders and Holland, although this may be partly because there was considerable iconoclasm in the Low Countries during the Reformation when Catholic churches were transformed into Calvinist temples; the first Netherlands entry in the Lander list is dated c. 1450 from Antwerp. Is, therefore, the Dordrecht recorder an isolated phenomenon tried out but discarded?

There is little evidence that would preclude the same question being asked about the Göttingen recorder, though there is a possible recorder in a carving among the many angels on the inner west portal archway of the Frauenkirche in Nuremberg, a city famed for its instrument-making (see Illus. 3). This is a whole century earlier, as it is dated c. 1230. Lander points out that its blowing end is somewhat reminiscent of the Göttingen recorder, but it could easily be interpreted as the head of a small shawm. The hands are too widely spaced, with three holes showing between them, to give us any useful clue. Rather later, around 1320, what is clearly a single duct flute appears in the hand of one of nine minstrel-jongleurs in the page of the Manesse manuscript in Heidelberg University Library depicting the great Minnesinger Heinrich von Meissen (known as Frauenlob), but the pipe only shows two finger-holes. No recorders have emerged from my searchings among works by Stefan Lochner and others of the great late-Medieval "Cologne School" of painting, nor in several other important German artistic centers in this period. The strongest evidence from Cologne, rather oddly, may be found in southern Spain where one, possibly two, instruments that could well be recorders may be found in scenes from the life of the Virgin in the fine embossed bronze entrance doors to the Monastery church at Guadalupe in Estramadura (see Illus. 4); the doors are inscribed "Paulus de Collonia" and "Alleman fecit." It is possible that they were ordered from a Cologne master and were in place around 1389. The subject is *The Coronation of the Virgin*, who is surrounded by aristocratic *bas* instruments—harp, lute and por-

*To the question "when did the recorder come into being?" we can, from the little archaeological and linguistic evidence that has so far emerged, only answer "probably some time during the second half of the 14th century."*

tative organ. The soft recorder belongs naturally to such an environment. It is only the nature of the bas-relief medium, which makes it necessary for the artist to show all four fingers of both hands on the instrument, that prevents us from telling how many finger-holes they cover. Attention was drawn to this artifact in a groundbreaking article by Angelo Zaniol on "The Recorders of the Middle Ages and Renaissance," translated in *Continuo* (November and December 1984 and January 1985).

The first German painting that is widely assumed to represent a trio of recorders also comes from early Renaissance Cologne. It is by the Master of the Lyversberg Passion, is dated c. 1463, and is now in the Alte Pinakothek at Munich. The lower part of each instrument is occluded by angels in front. But by the second half of the 15th century there is enough iconographic and literary evidence to support the belief that the recorder was by then becoming well established as an instrument for courtly music-making in all countries in Western Europe.

Evidence from Byzantine art shows that single duct flutes were known in Eastern Europe, especially played by shepherds. A shepherd plays such an instrument, of tenor size, in a mid-11th century mosaic in the southeast squinch of the dome of the Katholikon Monastery of Hosias Lukas in Greece. Mosaic is not an easy medium for precise detail, but this representation is very recorder-like, de-

PHOTO: BARBARA SELLA AND GUILLERMO PEÑALVER SARAZIN



**Illustration 4: Detail from bronze doors by Paulus de Collonia (?c. 1239) of the Monastery Church of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Estramadura, Spain**



**Illustration 5:** Detail from fresco, "The Mocking of Christ" (after 1315), church of Staro Nagoričino, Macedonia

spite some curious fingering. Even more tantalizing is a fresco in the church of Staro Nagoričino in present-day Macedonia showing "The Mocking of Jesus" (Ill. 5). It is known to have been painted from 1315 onwards. The recorder-like instrument is intended partly to be a phallic symbol of lechery and partly to add to the noise of mockery made by two enormous horns, a drum, and cymbals, a function unsuited to a soft recorder. It is important to the symbolism that the instrument should be blown and fingered, and showing the three holes may be intended to put beyond doubt that the sly-looking woman has a symbolic duct flute in her hands; the length of the instrument between the lower hole to the bell-end, however, although there is no flare, is characteristic of shawms. The artist has made his point extremely well, but it is doubtful whether he has shown us the first recorder. Nevertheless, it is worth recalling that the suggestion has been made that the recorder "migrated" eastwards across Europe in the Medieval period. But it has also been suggested that it found its way to Europe by a Moorish route, possibly via the court of Valencia in Spain, where the viol came into being. The recorder had to appear first somewhere and a native origin in Western Europe to meet the needs of its art-music is, in my view, a stronger possibility.

If iconographic evidence were given as high a rating as actual recorder finds, the odds in the Euro-Contest would favor Catalan Spain (the Kingdom of Aragon), France, and England. The entries in the Lander list for the first half of the 15th century are dominated by Catalan items, al-



**Illustration 6:** Bourges Cathedral, Chapel, Ste. Solange (bay 26), angel in upper tracery stained glass window (1303-09)

though as a compiler, the list may not yet present a balanced picture. Dr. Lander and I agree that the earliest painting in his list to which the words "clearly a recorder" can be applied is the center panel from Pere Serra's Tortosa altarpiece now in the Museum of Catalan Art in Barcelona. This was illustrated and discussed in my article in *American Recorder* (November 1997, pp. 7-13), and a reference back to that article will show the strength and extent of the Catalan claim in our Euro-Contest. It has to be said, however, that the identification of some of the duct flutes illustrated in that article as recorders could be questionable, and that the unambiguous Pere Serra recorder is only dated c. 1390 on stylistic grounds, although it cannot be later than 1399 if that date marks the end of Pere's artistic activities (he died about 1405).

At the end of the 14th century, the refined culture of the court of the Kingdom of Aragon in Barcelona was, like the court of Richard II in London, much influenced by France. The main centers there were Paris in the north, Avignon in the south, and in the east Dijon, the cultivated capital of the powerful Duchy of Burgundy. Avignon, under the last anti-Popes, was cosmopolitan and innovative in its music, an environment conducive to the development of instruments, yet I have not so far been able to discover any evidence for the existence of the recorder there in the 14th and early 15th centuries. Altarpieces from the Nice School show no recorders, although there is one in an altarpiece by a Nice artist in Genoa. Recorders may have existed in Paris by 1400, but again I have not yet discovered hard evidence to sup-

port this. After 1400, however, French recorder "possibles" begin to be recorded in the Lander lists. The earliest is, by good fortune, datable by neighboring armorial bearings to 1408/9. This is an angel recorder player in unrestored stained glass in the upper tracery of a window in a chapel of Bourges Cathedral (Illus. 6). Bourges, as capital of Berry, was an important cultural center, and the glass painter seems determined to tell us that the instrument he is painting, and has presumably seen, is an unfamiliar duct flute with more than six holes. He misunderstands the instrument to the extent of making the lower hand finger it from underneath, reaching around the body of the instrument. Nine or ten holes are visible. This confusion, and the desire to depict a new and fashionable instrument worthy of its propinquity to the arms of Alexander V, a Pope who came from Berry itself (but he was Pope for only a year), is reflected in an altarpiece in the Diocesan Museum at Tarragona. Here the painter, the Master of Secuita, shows a duct flute with at least ten holes; but he gets the paired little finger-holes right, and since the altarpiece is no earlier than 1425, he was perhaps rather more familiar with the puzzling new instrument played by the local aristocracy who may have been among his patrons. In 1410, only one year later than the Bourges angel, a tenor recorder is shown played by a king in Guyart Desmoulin's *Bible Historiale*, illuminated in Paris but now in the Royal Library in Brussels (MS.9C02, f.223). That the recorder was well established in France by mid-century is attested by the Nine Muses

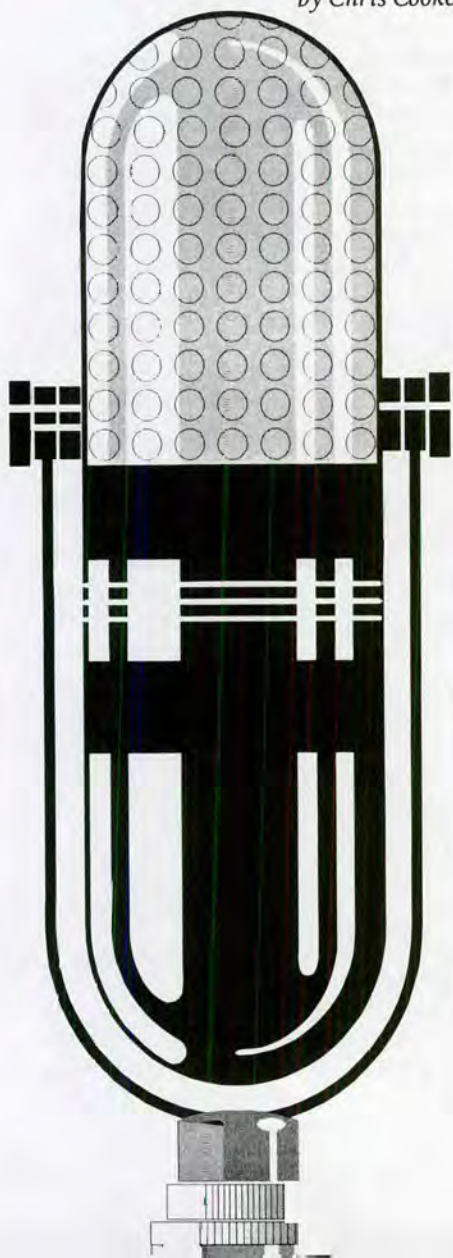
*Continued on page 33*



# Recorders “On the Air”

*How one ARS chapter enriched the programming of its local radio station and introduced the recorder to thousands of people*

by Chris Cooke



## TAKE ONE

The Aeolus Consort is a small group of diehard recorder players in central Arkansas who manage to attract just enough people every year to squeak in as an ARS chapter. Although we get out and play in public and receive many compliments, we don't often attract new players. We decided that more people needed to hear about us and about the recorder. One of our members, Shelley Wold, approached our local Public Radio Station, KLRE, and wangled an invitation for us to be interviewed by Ann Nicholson on her weekly arts program, "The Art Scene." The program would be aired during "Play-the-Recorder Month."

We sent information about the recorder, the American Recorder Society; and our local chapter to Ann ahead of time. Bearing in mind that we're a group that performs so much better with rehearsal immediately prior to performance, we met ahead of the interview and drove to the radio station together, going over our material so it would be at the forefront of our minds: Laurine Williams, our musical director at the time, would discuss the history and technical aspects of the recorder; Shelley Wold, long-time treasurer of our local chapter and current board member of the American Recorder Society, would talk about these groups; and I would discuss the joys of making one's own music and starting recorder at a mature (sigh) age.

Ann Nicholson is a skilled interviewer. She put us at our ease while showing us how the equipment worked and organizing the technical side. We were fairly relaxed by the time we started; the interview seemed like a continuation of the general chit-chat. Also, it was reassuring to know that we were not live and that Ann could edit if needed. But when Ann asked us what music we were currently working on, we realized with a simultaneous gulp that we had omitted to consider this one point.

Our group had only had a couple of sessions playing through unfamiliar music to decide which pieces to work on that season. There was a pregnant pause before Laurine leapt in to the rescue.

All that remained was a short performance from the now slightly unnerved trio. Sensibly, we had chosen a piece even I could play from memory. When the interview was aired in March, Ann included announcements of our play dates.

A highly enjoyable time was had by all. Did we get any new members? Well...no. Hmmm.

## TAKE TWO

Although playing the recorder in public and doing an interview on Public Radio had not netted us new players, our members were not discouraged. They decided that the public might not have realized the full potential of the recorder. We needed more recorder music aired, and professionally played at that! If our group could donate a selection of outstanding recorder CDs to KLRE, we thought, perhaps our favorite instrument would get more air time. I went down to the station to review the CDs already in their library so that we would not duplicate what they owned. After going through their vast collection of CDs, we found only three that featured the recorder. It would be easy to triple or quadruple their recorder holdings, but I began to wonder if adding another 10 or even 20 recorder discs would be noticed in their overall programming. Perhaps a more direct approach was needed.

If there are programs featuring guitar, choir, church music, and organ, why shouldn't there be a program featuring the recorder? The answer, of course, was clear. Now that we were broadcasting "veterans," Laurine Williams and I must present a program ourselves. The response of KLRE's program director Taylor Lewis? "Fine,



KLRE's Ann Nicholson interviews Chris Cooke and Laurine Williams (right) for "The Art Scene" program.

For the past three years I have contacted our PBS station and asked them to play at least one selection every day featuring the recorder during Play-the-Recorder Month. They have always agreed, and they've also mentioned P+RM. If all chapters did this, we could saturate the airwaves with our message. It would be even more effective if the contact person was a supporting member of the station.

Below is the message I sent to our PBS affiliate:

As you may remember, March is designated as Play-the-Recorder Month by the the American Recorder Society. We really appreciate your cooperation in past years, when you played at least one selection featuring the recorder each day during the month. We do hope you will be willing to do it again this year! We could provide you with a live group if you wish. We are always thankful that we live within range of KUAF, which we have supported since moving to this area—we listen to it many hours every day. Keep up the good work!

Bill Rees, Music Director  
Bella Vista Chapter, Arkansas

show me a play list and script."

Fine! O.K. No problem! We can do this! First, what approach to take? We could safely assume that the general public knew next to nothing about the recorder beyond remembering the little "pipsqueak" they played in school. So we thought a "Re-

recorder Sampler" was in order—to educate as well as to entertain, and probably surprise, the audience.

We collected all the recorder CDs from the libraries of our members. Six! Time to shop. Our greatest help in the whole process was *American Recorder*. The ad for the ARS CD Club lists many discs, some hard to get, along with a little caption describing the content. The service is fast and easy. Going through back issues and reading the Recorders on Disc department gave more in-depth information and also described other vendors (ARS members, for instance, receive a 10% discount by ordering through Public Radio Music Source at <[www.75music.org](http://www.75music.org)>; 800-75-MUSIC).

Another source of information came from the CD listings on the Barnes & Noble web site by searching under "recorder." (The Barnes & Noble bookstores have been among the most generous nationwide in hosting Play-the-Recorder Month events.—Ed.)

Time to listen to the music. What a pleasure! Habit-forming, too. I actually enjoyed the forty-minute drive to work as I auditioned different CDs. As a plan for the script, we simply used the history of the recorder, illustrating it with musical excerpts that gave as much variety as possible. We used SATB recorder consorts and those with lower instruments, broken consorts, and of course, solos for soprano, soprano, and alto with many different accompanying instruments and orchestras. We even found one piece played by five tenor recorders. We wanted a variety of performers, but when some CDs weren't available, we had to repeat a few.

In adopting an historical approach, we had inadvertently chosen a complicated way of beginning our broadcasting experience; we needed to fit 17 examples of music into one hour. That meant that every piece had to be short! When writing the

script, we tried to avoid saying "Next we hear..." too many times. We varied the dialogue; sometimes we introduced one piece of music and other times two related pieces. Because of the concentrated format and short pieces of music, we did not repeat the title of the previous piece after each one was played.

Time to go on the air. It's a good idea to move the jaw, tongue, lips, and hard and soft palates around as much as possible before recording. Pre-reading the script out loud several times is a wise precaution. Practicing "Non perch'i spero, donna" is helpful, and how many times each day does one say "accompanying" and "anonymous"? We take these words for granted, but they can come as a shock to one's vocal equipment when the red light is on.

During the recording session, Taylor Lewis was infinitely patient, and fortunately, we were not live; editing was not only possible but essential. I settled down when I started pretending I was reading a story out loud. The music was not there, though, to guide us through the story. After recording the script straight through, you leave the CDs behind; the music is edited in later by computer. I think Taylor was pleased that our playlist included times and track numbers. We did the same with each CD, labeling it with the source, the play order, and the track number. After this promising beginning, ill health and staff turnover prevented the program from being completed until 18 months later. By the time the project got back on track, two CDs had been lost, but fortunately, they were easily replaced from the ARS CD Club. We re-read the script, and Taylor was able to finish assembling "Recorder Sampler."

Time to listen. Laurine and I were both critical of ourselves and thought the other sounded great! I've listened to the tape now several times and have to admit that it's not too bad for amateurs. The program went "On the Air" earlier this year and is to be repeated in March (in connection with Play-the-Recorder Month).

Taylor's comment? "It changed (favorably) my point of view on what the recorder and recorder consort is capable of."

This was a challenging but educational experience (my playing has improved by listening to the experts). The best news is that we have been asked for further programs! According to Taylor, they will be made available for broadcast by other Public Radio affiliates.

Did we get any new members? Well, no. Hmmmm. But I feel sure that something good will come from our effort.

Vote for....  
“Recorder Player  
of the Century”

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Martha Bixler      | <input type="checkbox"/> Friedrich von Huene |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frans Brüggem      | <input type="checkbox"/> Edgar Hunt          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Howard Mayer Brown | <input type="checkbox"/> Erich Katz          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ferdinand Conrad   | <input type="checkbox"/> Bernard Krainis     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LaNoue Davenport   | <input type="checkbox"/> Hans-Martin Linde   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arnold Dolmetsch   | <input type="checkbox"/> Kees Otten          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carl Dolmetsch     | <input type="checkbox"/> Michala Petri       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shelley Gruskin    | <input type="checkbox"/> Gustav Scheck       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walter van Hauwe   | <input type="checkbox"/> Marion Verbruggen   |

Or, my write-in candidate is: \_\_\_\_\_

Mark your choice and return to:

American Recorder, 472 Point Road, Marion, MA 02738.

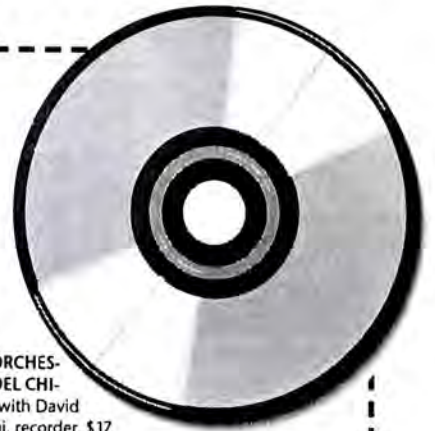
If you wish to be entered in a drawing for an outstanding recorder CD,  
please fill in the blanks below. Otherwise, you may vote anonymously.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

# Order your recorder discs through the ARS CD Club!



The ARS CD Club makes hard-to-find or limited release CDs by ARS members available to ARS members at the special price listed (non-members slightly higher), postage and handling included. An updated listing of available CDs may be found at the ARS web site: <<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/recorder>>.

## FOR THE HOLIDAYS

\_\_\_ **CHRISTMAS MORNING** David Young, recorders; Lisa Franco, celtic harp. Well-known Christmas music played on recorders and harp with other Renaissance instruments, recorded in 3D Surround Sound. #2 Christmas recording in Canada in 1994. Universe Music. \$17 ARS/\$20 others

## RECENT ADDITIONS:

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\_\_\_ **BAROQUE RECORDER CONCERTI** Scott Reiss and Hesperus. Golden Apple. \$17 ARS/\$20 others.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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*Books about two important recorder composers, Bach and Harrison, and a valuable reference work on the Baroque*

**LOU HARRISON: COMPOSING A WORLD.** BY LETA E. MILLER AND FREDRIC LIEBERMAN. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. 385 pp. Includes audio CD. Hardcover, \$35.00. ISBN: 0-19-511022-6.

Lou Harrison (born 1917) has composed more music intended for the recorder than Machaut, Dufay, Josquin, Lassus, Byrd, and Corelli combined. This important and prolific composer's body of work has been shaped by an eclectic array of passions: East Asian music, dance, improvisation, tuning and temperament, percussion instruments, and gamelan have been important influences. Harrison has been particularly fascinated with unorthodox instrumental timbres, including early instruments such as viol, clavichord, and psaltery. While a student at San Francisco State University in the 1930s, he regularly played recorder and harpsichord and sang in a madrigal ensemble. Miller and Lieberman, in this wonderfully readable study of Harrison and his music, list eight known compositions that include recorder in their comprehensive catalogue of Harrison's works. Two are lost. One was a controlled improvisation for accompaniment of a modern dance. Three are youthful works not authorized for performance. Of the two that remain, only one—*Serenade for Three Recorders* (1943)—has been published (by Provincetown Bookshop Editions/Laureate Music Press) and is readily available for performance. This small three-movement piece, written to be played by Harrison and his friends Henry and Sidney Cowell, is lyrical and charming, and leaves one hungry for more Harrison recorder pieces.

Both Harrison's music and his life story are like a whiff of pure oxygen in the world of twentieth-century classical music. As a composer, Harrison, above all, is interested in producing sonic beauty and melodic expressiveness. In pursuit of this,



he studied Gregorian and Amerindian chant, Medieval dance tunes, and explored the music of Handel, as well as Korean, Chinese, and Javanese music. He has collaborated with dancers throughout his career, and many of his compositions reflect his keen interest in French Baroque dance music, particularly the music of Rameau. His enthusiasm for building instruments, best exemplified by his gamelans and "found" instruments, led him to design and build two clavichords for his own use. An avid interest in tuning and temperament, fed partly by deep study of music treatises from the Middle Ages through the Baroque, pervades much of his music.

While Harrison could not be called a major character in American early music, his life story has a familiar feel for early musicians. The number of his compositions involving early instruments or styles is relatively small among his total output of 300 works. But the openness, the desire to collaborate with those in other fields (such as dancers, instrument builders, and musicians of other cultures), the lack of fear of the unusual, the circumventing of the expected and the academic, and his sheer collegiality were all hallmarks of the American early music scene during the same period (from the 1930s onward). Over and over, Harrison set out to digest what a new mentor had to teach him about music so that he could incorporate these new ideas in his own compositions. Important influences on Harrison included Cowell, Charles Ives, Arnold Schoenberg, Harry Partch, and Korean musicians Lee Hye-Ku and Liang Tsai-Ping. Harrison was, to some extent, self-taught as a composer and

scholar, and his life-long curiosity for new areas of music may stem from his early need for self-direction.

The book's inclusion of a CD sampling Harrison's works is a terrific extra. Discussions of Harrison's compositional techniques and influences are fascinating and thorough, although most of the book could be read pleurably by someone with no knowledge of music notation. General overviews of related issues, like tuning, temperament, and the gamelan are complete and understandable. One comes away from this monograph eager to hear more of Harrison's music. Indeed, Miller and Lieberman are perhaps a bit too uncritical of Harrison's music; it would be hard for a newcomer to his *oeuvre* to get a sense of what his major pieces are and which pieces are less successful. Overall, though, this book is a compelling portrait of a non-conforming composer who invented his own world of music.

Wendy Powers

**J.S. BACH (OXFORD COMPOSER COMPANIONS).** EDITED BY MALCOLM BOYD. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. 656 pp. Hardcover, \$45.00. ISBN: 0-19-866208-4.

This reference work devoted to J.S. Bach falls somewhere between the traditional "life and works" approach and that of a specialized dictionary. The book is primarily comprised of hundreds of alphabetically-listed individual entries by 43 different scholars and performers. Although Bach is naturally the focus of most these articles, the subjects covered radiate out widely from the central subject. A "The-

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**BOOK REVIEWS  
(cont.)**

matic Overview" section at the beginning of the book lists the following five broad categories of articles: "Biography and Background," "The Music," "Performance," "Scholarship, Reception, and Influence," and "Technical Terms." Further sub-categories list more specialized subject areas, from individual works (including articles on each of the 200-plus cantatas) through places and buildings association with Bach to significant Bach interpreters and festivals (Gustav Leonhardt and Nikolaus Harnoncourt receive entries along with other such seminal figures as Wanda Landowska and Glenn Gould). Even P.D.Q. Bach gets an entry!

Supplementing these short articles are several photographic illustrations and a handful of extended treatments of especially important topics such as the life and career of J.S. Bach himself, compositional forms such as the concerto and the fugue, and the history of Bach's music on recordings. Finally, appendices present a complete works list, a list of text incipits for vocal movements (including information on instrumentation), a chronology presenting the events of Bach's life alongside other musical and cultural events, a list of performance dates of the cantatas, a Bach family tree, and a glossary of technical terms not otherwise covered in the main body of the book.

While there is no attempt to be completely comprehensive (even at 656 pages, the book is much too short for that), the breadth of topics covered makes the book very helpful and in many ways a unique resource. The book's arrangement makes it difficult to put together a detailed, sequential picture of Bach's career and musical development, and the brevity of most of the articles makes it difficult to do justice to complex topics such as tunings and temperaments (although Bruce Haynes does an admirable job of concisely explaining the varying pitch standards of Bach's day).

However, in compensation it allows some important topics to come to the fore which do not normally receive emphasis. This is most notably true of the detailed treatments of the individual cantatas, one of which seems to appear every couple of pages. These works are still little known but they were the central focus of Bach's musical life for a substantial portion of his career and they contain some of his most glorious music, especially in regard to the

recorder. It is fitting that they should hold a central place in the discussion of Bach's life and work, as they do here. Bibliographical references are attached to many of the individual articles and are right up to date, even including some web page references.

The article on the recorder by Michael Marissen is extensive and knowledgeably treats of such technical topics as Bach's use of the upper register and the implications of varying pitch standards. The article on the Brandenburg Concertos, also by Marissen, identifies the *fiauto d'echo* of the Fourth Brandenburg as normal alto recorders, but the article specifically devoted to the *fiauto d'echo* by David Lasocki also presents the alternative theory that the instrument was a special type of recorder, flageolet, or flute, perhaps even a double-recorder of some kind. Recorder players without easy access to scores or recordings will appreciate the amount of detail provided in the articles devoted to the cantatas in which the recorder has a part.

This book by its nature is not really suited to providing a fully rounded picture of Bach's life and achievements. For that one must turn to a standard full-length biography. However, as a reference book to

be kept beside the music stand or the stereo, it will provide much ready assistance and enlightenment.

Scott Paterson

**COMPANION TO BAROQUE MUSIC.**  
**COMPILED AND EDITED BY JULIE ANNE SADIE.**  
 Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998. 565 pp. Paperback, \$24.95. ISBN: 0-520-21414-5.

This is the paperback edition of a volume which was first issued by Schirmer Books in hardcover in 1991 (and reviewed in the September 1993 issue of *American Recorder*). It is just the sort of book one would like to have in softcover, the more easily to have it ready to hand for reference. At 565 pages, the book could easily have taken the form of a standard chronological survey of the music of the Baroque. However, editor Sadie and her 12 fellow contributors have used an innovative combination of narrative and dictionary-style elements to present a great deal of information as effectively as possible.

The bulk of the book is comprised of concise overviews of the musical, cultural and political scene in each of seven different geographical areas of Europe (with a section also on the New World), each fol-

lowed by an extensive biographical dictionary of musicians associated with each area. There are also thought-provoking chapters on vocal and instrumental usage, national styles, forms, and genres, ornamentation, and even the aesthetic issues surrounding the use of period instruments and performing styles. A year-by-year chronology of musical events, a short but useful bibliography (brought up to date to 1998) and an extensive index round out the work. This arrangement makes information easy to find and gives a well-rounded context when it is tracked down.

The recorder only receives passing mention, but there is a wealth of pertinent and accessible information on the major figures in the history of the instrument (composers, makers, and performers) and the background to their work.

The only major drawback to the book is that it is frequently necessary, despite many cross-references, to associate a given musician with a very specific geographical area (say, Lombardy rather than Tuscany) in order to find his or her biographical entry. This is a minor quibble, however, about a book which is a mine of useful information in an easy-to-use format.

Scott Paterson

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# MUSIC REVIEWS

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*Music for the Christmas season, suites from the French Baroque, hits from the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the 19th century, Scottish folk tunes, and a new work by Matthias Maute*

**GOOD TIDINGS**, ARR. JOSEPH A. LOUX, JR. Loux Christmas Collection No. 21, 1997. Voice or melody instrument with kbd, and/or recorders, flutes, viols, or string or wind quartet, sc 8 pp, pts 3 pp. \$11.95.

**THYMUS VULGARIS (THE SHEPHERDS' CAROL)**, ARR. JOSEPH A. LOUX, JR. Loux Christmas Collection No. 24, 1998. Voice or melody instrument with kbd and/or SAA(T)TB recorders, viols, or string or wind quintet, sc 3 pp, pts 1 p. \$6.75.

The Loux Music Company has presented several practical and effective arrangements of Christmas music over the years, and these two new editions are in keeping with those previous offerings. *Good Tidings* includes straightforward arrangements of five different carols: "Come to the Manger," "Als ich bei meinen Schafen wacht," "Wassail, Wassail," "Past Three O'Clock," and "Dame, Get Up and Bake Your Pie," while "The Shepherds' Carol" is presented in a slightly more elaborate setting.

Both volumes feature the same rather unusual layout. The music is set for ensemble in score and parts (four voices for *Good Tidings* and five voices for "The Shepherds' Carol") with alternate parts, when necessary, for instruments other than recorder. The music is also presented as a melody line (with text underlaid) accompanied by a keyboard reduction of the ensemble parts. As a result, the keyboard part is sometimes somewhat awkward to play, while performance directions in *Good Tidings* involving the alter-

nation of verse and refrain are not clearly spelled out in the ensemble parts.

These problems are not insurmountable, however, and are well worth sorting out in order to enjoy the melody-centered yet full-bodied effect of Loux's settings. "The Shepherds' Carol" uses the most advanced harmonic language, and it and "Dame, Get Up and Bake Your Pie" feature short instrumental interludes, but all the settings could easily be used as sing-alongs for those who know the carols. Each setting would also work nicely in its purely instrumental guise even for a beginner group, although some patience may be necessary in working out the changing time signatures in "The Shepherds' Carol."

The presentation is clear and error-free. String players will want to note that the string quintet referred to for "The Shepherds' Carol" is comprised of three violins, viola (or fourth violin) and cello. Also, wind players should note that the wind quintet is comprised of C instruments only (flutes and/or oboes and bassoon) and that in the *Good Tidings* settings the three flutes will need to be accompanied by a bass instrument.

**3 CHRISTMAS HYMNS (1597)**, BY JOHANN ECCARD, ED. BERNARD THOMAS. London Pro Musica Early Music Library 321 (Magnamusic), 1997. 5 voices or instruments, 5 sc, 4 pp each. \$5.00.

Johann Eccard (1553-1611), who earned a special reputation for his chorale settings, was a student of Orlando di Lasso. The three works presented

in this LPM edition are Christmas chorales: "Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich," "Vom Himmel hoch da komm ich her," and "In dulci júbilo." Editor Thomas has presented the music to allow some flexibility of performance, providing full texts (though no translations) with the first verse underlaid in all parts, but also printing the alto parts an octave up for easy use by recorder players. As is usual with the Early Music Library editions, clearly legible scores are provided for each player. Consorts can experiment with different instrument assignments (highest and lowest notes are shown at the beginning of each part), the only small difficulty being the need for an alto player to read up an octave on the top line of "Der Tag, der ist so freudenreich."

Eccard deserves his reputation, as these three settings are simple enough for a beginning ensemble to tackle, but sophisticated enough in their effect for an advanced ensemble looking for unfamiliar music for a Christmas program (Eccard's setting of the ever-popular "In dulci júbilo" will be especially welcome in this regard). It would be nice to see more of Eccard's work brought forward in modern editions.

Scott Paterson

**THE LITTLE DRUMMER BOY, HALLELUJAH**, BY V. YOUMANS, ARR. HEIDI BRUNNER. Universal Edition UE 30458 (European American). SATB, sc 8 pp, 4 pts, 2 pp each. \$ 10.95.

Universal Editions offers recorder players a broad selection of publications in various styles and accompaniment formats including jazz, folk, and Latin American repertoire. These new works by Heidi Brunner expand her list of popular tunes arranged for quartet. "The Little Drummer Boy" begins with a melodic duet between the soprano and alto while the tenor and bass provide the repetitive drum part. The latter players are required to articulate low D and low G respectively throughout the first 28 measures of the piece. Brunner allows

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***Johann Eccard deserves his reputation, as these three settings are simple enough for a beginning ensemble to tackle, but sophisticated enough in their effect for an advanced ensemble looking for unfamiliar music for a Christmas program (Eccard's setting of the ever-popular "In dulci júbilo" will be especially welcome in this regard).***

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the tenor melodic material the second time around, but the bass player rarely gets to jump up to the dominant and plays only one short melody in unison with the soprano and alto. "Hallelujah!" is an arrangement of a sprightly foxtrot. It offers more variety for all players with good contrast between the bass and rhythmic inner parts against the soprano melody. Individual parts have large print on a single page per work. Both selections are in suitable recorder keys and are playable by young ensembles.

**A CAROL CONCERT, ARR. GEOFFRY RUSSELL-SMITH.** Universal Edition UE 17350 (European American), 1997. SS, sc 30 pp (2 copies), pts 12 pp each (6 copies), word sheet 2 pp. \$ 29.95.

Geoffry Russell-Smith has arranged this set of seven well-known carols for unison choir, two-part soprano recorder group, and piano accompaniment, with indications for optional audience participation. "Away in a Manger" is scored for choir with piano doubling the vocal part throughout, making it a good option for inexperienced singers. The arranger suggests omitting recorder parts if they are too dominant or confusing for young voices. "Oh Come All Ye Faithful," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Holly and the Ivy," "Good Christian Men Rejoice," and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" all indicate optional audience participation, although sometimes only for a final verse. The piano accompaniment is sensitively written to enhance vocal and recorder lines and rarely just doubles them. Characteristic of Universal publications, print quality is excellent, and the edition is user friendly. In addition to two full scores for conductor and accompanist, the set contains a word sheet with all verses, and six recorder scores. No vocal score is provided, presumably because the melodies are traditional. Some teachers at the middle school level may prefer that students have the option of reading a score, particularly because "Away in a Manger" and "Little Town of Bethlehem" use the English melodies!

The recorder parts are well-written in

KEY: rec=recorder; S'o=sopranino; S=soprano; A=alto; T=tenor; B=bass; gb=great bass; cb= contra bass; Tr=treble; qr=quartet; pf=piano; fwd= foreword; opt=optional; perc=percussion; pp= pages; sc=score; pt(s)=part(s); kbd=keyboard; bc=basso continuo; hc=harpsichord; P/H=postage and handling. Multiple reviews by one reviewer are followed by that reviewer's name.

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## MUSIC REVIEWS (cont.)

a pleasing duet format. They stay within the low C to high C range in comfortable keys with limited chromaticism. Performance suggestions are innovative, giving the conductor many options for tutti versus solo or smaller group playing. Middle school/junior high recorder ensembles will find this unique arrangement of carols well worth the investment and a versatile addition for the holiday season.

Leslie Jane Timmons

**ILLUMINATIONS: A COLLECTION OF MEDIEVAL MELODIES, BOOK I**, ED. ZANA CLARKE. Orpheus Music OMP 017 (available from Boulder Early Music Shop), 1998. Various instruments, sc 32 pp. \$22.00.

This edition grew out of Zana Clarke's years of experience with Cantigas, a Medieval instrumental ensemble in Australia. Many of the selections in it are also included on three recordings made by the ensemble, which are available for purchase from the publisher.

The collection consists of 16 single-line song and dance melodies and 10 duets and trios, secular and sacred, from 12th-, 13th-, and 14th-century England, France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. While most of the selections are anonymous, some familiar composers, including Machaut and Landini, are represented. Also included is the earliest known piece of three-part polyphony (c. 1140) and a troubadour song by the Comtesse de Dia, one of the earliest-known women composers.

An introductory section provides helpful suggestions for performing the monophonic selections. It includes information about the use of drones and parallel perfect intervals as well as ideas for orchestrating the melodies and improvising or composing solo passages and counter-melodies. Sample orchestrations are given for a short song and a multi-sectional dance. Since rhythms are not always clearly indicated on Medieval manuscripts, some of the melodies have been transcribed in free rhythms, while others are strongly metrical. This provides a good deal of rhythmic variety.

The seven duets and three trios comprise various compositional styles—simple melody over moving drone, note-against-note writing, voice exchange,

florid melody over a simpler accompaniment, etc. Some pieces have two or more parts in the same register, while others show a clear separation of voices. Ensembles would need to experiment to determine the best instrumental combinations for each piece.

This collection of accessible melodies is well suited to a mixed ensemble (bowed and plucked strings, winds, and percussion) interested in exploring Medieval music. Either early or modern instruments could be effective. Players attempting historically informed renditions would, however, prefer a more scholarly edition that includes *incipits*, clearly marked editorial changes, and a complete list of original manuscript sources. Obvious errors were found only in the last piece (top line in measure 4), and a few places in the duet and trio scores require *musica ficta*. Printed on yellowish, glare-free parchment paper, this book is easy on the eyes, and it is attractively decorated with miniatures of Medieval musicians. It would make a most enjoyable introduction to music of the Middle Ages.

**MEDIEVAL & RENAISSANCE MUSIC FOR RECORDER**, ED. ROBERT BANCALARI. Mel Bay MB96330, 1999. S and guitar, 29 pp. \$7.95.

This fake book, consisting of single-line melodies and chord symbols for eleven Medieval and twenty-nine Renaissance selections, is presumably intended to introduce popular and folk musicians to the world of early music. One would, therefore, expect to find a fairly detailed preface, including some historical background and something about early music performance practices. Instead, the editor has provided one page of "performance notes," which are merely brief definitions, and they are so full of errors as to be confusing rather than helpful. "Trouvere," "ballade," and "rondeau," for example, are defined as "three Medieval French song forms," but the two musical selections entitled "Trouvere" are subtitled "Ballade" and "Virelai" respectively. "Lied" is defined as a "Medieval German song," but the five musical examples are all from the late Renaissance, and the word "lied" is misspelled twice. "Pavane" is defined as a "slow, solemn Spanish dance," and "paduan" as a dance in "quick 6/8 meter." Horrors!

The Medieval section consists of French and Italian song and dance

## Two Sets of Suites from the French Baroque

**COMPLETE DUOS (1708, 1712, 1717, 1722)**, BY JACQUES HOTTETERRE, ed. David Katz. Dolce 706 (Magnamusica), 1997. AA, sc 47 pp. \$12.50.

Gathered together here in one volume are all three of Hotteterre's suites for two unaccompanied melody instruments (Op. 4, 6, & 8), all of which have been previously published separately. This edition also contains two unaccompanied duet pieces that Hotteterre included at the end of his suite (Op. 2) for flute and continuo.

Each of the above-mentioned suites, transcribed from the original printed version, is a set of six to ten dance movements. Suites I and II were originally designated for transverse flutes, recorders, or bass viols, Suite III for flutes, recorders, oboes, or musettes. (All have been transposed up a minor third to fit the range of the recorder.) Most challenging is Suite II in B-flat major, which is highly decorated with fixed ornaments in the typical French Baroque manner and has one movement in B-flat minor. The sarabande in that work is an excellent example of Hotteterre's use of free ornamentation as a variation technique. Suite III is also highly ornamented. Suite I, however, is much more modestly embellished, and although some modern editions of that suite have a great many ornaments, the editor believes those editions are based upon a different copy of Hotteterre's original print with manuscript additions. One of the pieces from Op. 2 is presented in two versions—one from the original (1708) print and the other from a method book published in 1750.

An effective performance of these duos requires a working knowledge of French Baroque performance practices. This music is, therefore, best suited to professionals or advanced amateurs. (For those unfamiliar with *notes inégales*, *flattement*, and the proper execution of fixed ornaments, Betty Bang Mather's *Interpretation of French Music from 1675 to 1775* (McGinnis & Marx, 1973) would be a useful guide.)

The print in this edition is easy to read, and, except for two avoidable bad page turns, the layout is good. A helpful page at the end contains a brief discussion of sources and other modern

editions and includes Hotteterre's own table of fixed ornaments along with his rules for using them. This volume would make a welcome addition to the serious recorder player's library.

**4 SUITES (1731)**, BY PHILBERT DE LA VIGNE, ed. Reinhard Matthias Ruf. Schott OFB 178 (European American), 1997. AA (flutes, oboes, violins), sc 31 pp. \$17.95.

Although recorder editions of works by Philbert de La Vigne (his Op. 2 sonatas and Op. 4 duos) have been commercially available for some time, very little is known about that composer other than his approximate dates (ca. 1700 to ca. 1760) and the fact that he was a French court musician and a musette teacher. He isn't even mentioned in *New Grove*!

The easy duos in the present edition were selected from La Vigne's Op. 1. (No information about sources or editorial procedures is given.) Each suite is a set of six to nine dance movements, most of which are short with little rhythmical diversity, no notes above high D, and few ornaments other than trills. Because these suites were intended to be playable on hurdy-gurdies, which have C and G drone strings, all these pieces are in the key of C or G major, with modulations only to the parallel minor keys. Yet, despite those limitations, the pieces possess a good deal of charm when played tastefully. They could, therefore, be used to introduce intermediate-level players to French Baroque performance practices. The challenge in playing them lies in making them sound interesting rather than repetitious and boring by varying the articulation in contrasting sections and playing the passages of *notes inégales* flexibly (i.e., with varying degrees of inequality). (For guidelines, see "First Steps in Applying French Polish" by Anthony Rowland-Jones in *American Recorder*, Vol. XXXII, No. 3, September, 1992, pp. 9-13.)

The large dark notes and uncrowded pages in this volume are easy on the eyes, and there are no bad page turns. I would recommend this edition for a first excursion into French Baroque music.

Carolyn Peskin

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## MUSIC REVIEWS (cont.)

melodies from the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries. Performance instructions are minimal. Drone chord symbols are included with the melodies, and the guitar player is merely told to leave out the thirds. The main trouble with such music played on only one melody instrument and one drone instrument is that the rendition soon becomes boring. This book would have been much more effective had the editor suggested adding an electronic keyboard, which could produce a variety of melody and drone timbres as well as percussion sounds.

For the Renaissance selections, Bancalari chose homophonic songs and dances from the late 15th through the early 17th century. The results might have been fairly good had he retained the original chords, but he often strays from the composers' harmonies, substituting his own, including many dominant seventh chords, which were never used in the Renaissance. Where rapid chord changes occur in the original, he often omits symbols above whole groups of notes, and symbols are sometimes placed over the wrong notes. There are also some gross errors. One melody clearly in G minor is harmonized in C minor—bitonality 300 years too early!

Another problem with fake books is that they make correct voice leading easy to ignore. They allow, for example, parallel fifths and octaves, which Renaissance composers were careful to avoid. This book would have been considerably better had the editor arranged the Renaissance pieces for recorder and keyboard, with the keyboardist playing the original non-melody lines. A guitar could then, perhaps, double the bass line.

Bancalari's goal of attracting folk and popular musicians to early music is an admirable one. Whether he can achieve that goal with this book is, however, questionable.

Carolyn Peskin

**KLASSIK-HITS FÜR 3 SOPRAN-BLOCKFLÖTEN, VOL. 1, ARR. RAINER BUTZ.** Schott Edition 8758 (European American), 1997. SSS, sc. 24 pp. \$14.95.

Klassik-Hits is a collection of chestnut melodies such as Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" and thematic excerpts from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and Bizet's

*Carmen*. Butz indicates that they have been arranged for group music teaching (ages 10-11) to open up the richly varied world of classical music to the inexperienced player. He says that as these pieces are played, musical principles such as "standard music notation, elements of musical composition, and theory can be learned." He indicates that the first and third parts can be mastered quickly by all players, while the second part is more difficult and not always suitable for beginners. For a complete musical experience, he suggests following up with information about the composers and then listening to the original compositions.

These arrangements are well done, with a lot of possibilities for teaching phrasing, staccato, accents, and other musical elements. The ensemble of three sopranos sounds full and the chordal structure complete. Complementary rhythmic lines make many of the parts interesting, and the players must develop independence in performing their parts in addition to mastering ensemble attacks and releases during the tutti sections.

Supposedly, these compositions are graded according to difficulty, but I found no such indications available. While the score is well marked as to interpretation, the varied dynamic suggestions seem out of place for the recorder. The third (lowest) part seems to me the hardest for young players because of the continual use of low C. Several of these tunes could be played by those in the 10-11 age group; I would, however, extend the age designation upwards.

This is a very good collection, and it can be fun for any age player who wishes to have a collection of classical themes for three descant recorders.

**AULD SCOTS SONGS FÜR DREI BLOCKFLÖTEN, ARR. RONALD J. AUTENRIETH.** Meeck Edition 712 (Magnamusic), 1998. SAT, sc 7 pp. \$5.00.

Ronald Autenrieth was born in 1959 in Weingarten, Germany. He is a teacher, reviewer, and critic for newspapers. He has composed a number of works for recorders, organ, piano, and choral music.

These six tunes, including "Comin' Thro' The Rye," "Annie Laurie," and "The Piper O'Dur.dee," have no expression

markings, allowing the players to develop their own interpretations. There is definite opportunity for romantic interpretation, as well as *poco vivo* and *animato* playing. It is through such individualistic interpretation of the score that the musical nature will come forth and the tunes will come alive. In "Annie Laurie," we liked the use of running thirds between the tenor and alto and the many contrary motion figures between tenor and soprano, since this provided musical interest.

The pieces are short but can be played as a group on a concert. Autenrieth indicates they are suited for pupils and talented amateurs, and we found no technical difficulties that were unmanageable. If you are looking for something with a "Scottish" flavor, I am sure you will enjoy Autenrieth's arrangements.

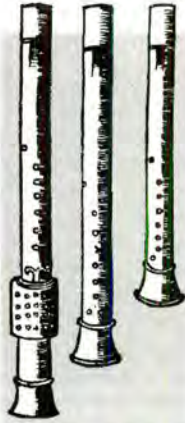
Fred Kersten

**IT'S SUMMERTIME**, BY MATTHIAS MAUTE. CARUS 11.606 ([www.carus-verlag.com/cvcat.phtml](http://www.carus-verlag.com/cvcat.phtml)), 1998. S and bass instrument, sc 8 pp., pt 3 pp. \$8.50.

This composition for recorder and bass instrument (bass recorder, bassoon, viola da gamba, cello, string bass, or trombone) was written as an homage to American composer George Gershwin during his centennial year, 1998, and was inspired by Gershwin's song "Summertime" from his opera *Porgy and Bess*. The first movement of Maute's composition, "Don't you cry," is based on a theme from the flute partita by J. S. Bach. The second movement, "Living is Easy," in which the bass instrument is tacet, is a more jazz-oriented movement but makes allusions to the flute music of Telemann. The third movement, "It's Summertime," paraphrases the material of the first two movements and brings in a transformed version of the Gershwin tune. The recorder part is moderate in difficulty and calls for some extended techniques including glissandi, sputato, flutter-tonguing, and playing and singing a tone simultaneously. A "swing" feeling is required throughout. The work contains no dynamic markings, so much interpretation is left up to the two performers. As well as its allusions to other music, this composition demonstrates the infrequently explored "jazzy" side of the recorder. The score is well-printed, although what is called the "full score" contains only the recorder part; there is no actual score that shows the two parts together.

Carson P. Cooman

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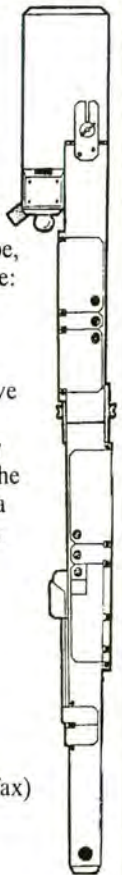
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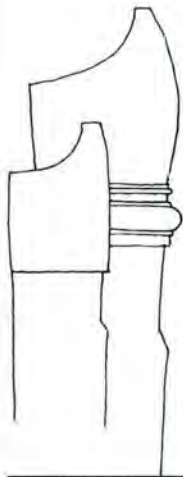
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# CHAPTERS & CONSORTS

*A new recorder orchestra planned in Chicago, educational chapter meetings, workshops, and websites*

Those attending the October 17 meeting of the **Chicago (IL) Chapter** heard a presentation by Louise Austin about prospects for the formation of a "Chicago Recorder Orchestra" to rehearse and perform the newly devised repertoire for large recorder ensemble. Other members of the formation committee include Mike Becker, Nancy Chabala, Dave Fitzgerald, Kim Katulka, Roberta Sweet, and Mary Ann Wolff Gardner.

Addressing the ability levels of its members, the **Sacramento (CA) Recorder Society** now meets in two groups—a "more advanced group" led by Frances Blaker and a "less advanced" group led by Letitia Berlin—allowing the advanced players to do more difficult music, while the others are also appropriately challenged (members place *themselves* in the appropriate group). Both groups join up to conclude the evening by playing together. The Society reports attracting new players and welcoming back "lost" members. It has also benefitted from a website designed by a member, Kathryn Canan, that has proved successful in recruiting new members (<[www.lanset.com/ddcanan/kccanan](http://www.lanset.com/ddcanan/kccanan)>).

In connection with his appearance with the Atlanta Baroque Orchestra, the **Atlanta (GA) Recorder Society** is planning to present a master class on December 4 with Aldo Abreu. Members of the Society have priority for being chosen to play in the master class. (The Atlanta Chapter also has a new web page at <[www.atlema.org](http://www.atlema.org)>.)

The September 10 meeting of the **Austin (TX) Chapter**, organized by Chapter president Susan Page, was an especially festive occasion. Invited to the program were nine singers assembled by past music director Frank Shirley and a number of local gamba players. After the vocal ensemble had sung some unaccompanied Renaissance music, the Chapter members and the gambists joined forces for three double-choir pieces led by current music

director Ruth Bracher. The music was followed by a send-off reception for member Steve Hendricks, who was relocating to Washington, DC.

October began with a bang for the members of the **East Bay (CA) Chapter** when talented percussionist Peter Maund introduced techniques of historical drumming at their meeting on the first of the month. In addition to learning basic techniques, they explored the application of percussion instruments to the repertoire and how to improvise parts.

The September meeting of the **Monterey Bay (CA) Recorder Society** focused on Celtic and other examples of "living" modal music and the relationship to traditional early music repertoire. The leader, Shira Kammen, in addition to performing with a number of Bay Area early music groups, also appears with Trouz Bras, a band devoted to the dance music of Celtic Brittany.

The October 30 workshop of the **Orange County (CA) Recorder Society** explored the world of "The Expressive Recorder Player." Janet Beazley, director of the Collegium Musicum at UC-Riverside, demonstrated how to add emotion to one's playing without distorting the pitch or adding too much vibrato.

At the September meeting of the **Tucson (AZ) Recorder Society**, members had the revealing experience of reading a work



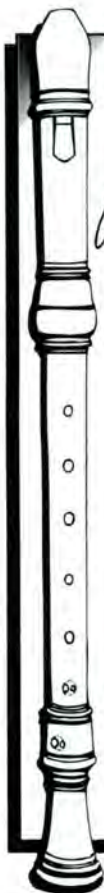
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*Members of the Austin Chapter at their large-scale September meeting.*

by Josquin from an edition without barlines. The exercise in historical playing was led by Liz Greenberg.

The board of the **Seattle Recorder Society** honored its long-time Hospitality Chair, Doris Borrusch, with a Recognition, issued August 24, "for her years of greeting visitors at meetings, encouraging new members and thereby furthering the cause of recorder playing, and for faithfully teaching the recorder at the Kirkland Senior Center. Ms. Borrusch died October 6 after a two-month battle with brain cancer.

After his visit to repair and revoice instruments at their May workshop, Dale Taylor was invited back by the **Greater Denver (CO) Chapter** to lead members at the September meeting in Purcell's *Funeral March for Queen Mary* and a canzona, "La Zambaccara." Formerly supervisor at Levin Historical Instruments, Taylor prefers now to lead a peripatetic lifestyle, visiting ARS chapters and workshops to provide musical and repair services. On November 14, the Denver Chapter and Augustana Arts co-sponsored a concert featuring Linda Lunbeck with the Musica Sacra Chamber Orchestra.

Five members from Oahu's **Hawaii Recorder Society** traveled to the big island for the **Hilo Recorder Society's** workshop, November 5-7, at the University of Hawaii. The classes emphasized musicality and ensemble playing and included a master class given by Han Tol as well as a late-night jazz session complete with backup from the Bossa Nova Boogie Band. As a special treat, a quintet of instructors—Han Tol, John Tyson, Miyuki Tsurutani, and Andrea and Richard Lee—performed at the final concert.

The **Toronto Early Music Players Organization (T.E.M.P.O.)** raised over \$500 from its third annual Silent Auction. Donated items like new and used CDs, note cards, gift certificates, concert tickets, etc., were in demand.

Last February, with the help of a grant from the Viola da Gamba Society of America and the Tucson/Pima Arts Council, the Southern Arizona Society for Early Instruments staged the first annual Tucson International Early Music Workshop at the Casas Adobes Congregational Church in Tucson, Arizona. Attending were 35 participants from Colorado, Texas, Washington, California, New Mexico, Michigan, and Arizona. A second workshop will be held next February 25-26 with an emphasis on rebecs, vielles, krummhorns, kortholts, and shawms in addition to viols, recorder, and voice.

## Taking Recorders To the Schools

"The single best thing you can do is to let the kids see some recorder players having fun making music together because they want to." That's what one elementary school recorder teacher said to us.

Members of the **Monterey Bay Recorder Society** in Santa Cruz, California, took her at her word and sent trios of players to ten elementary schools last year. Here's how we did it.

The County Board of Education sent a list of 27 elementary schools, public and private, and we called them to find out where recorder was taught. In about 15 schools, almost 1,000 children were learning to play recorder, mostly third- and fourth-graders. We added the teachers to the chapter newsletter mailing list, and asked them to contact me if they wanted players to come to their schools.

Meantime, I contacted experienced players in our chapter and asked if they would like to play at schools. We started with about seven players; the group grew to 12. First, we identified 25 easy, lively pieces, which I arranged in black binders for each player (with some "yellow stickies" for making notes), numbered the pages, and made a table of contents.

When a teacher contacted me, we worked out a couple of possible dates and specific times to play. Once three of our players agreed on a date and time, I confirmed this with the teacher. The players met on that date at one of our homes. Dress was casual. We chose five or six pieces from the book, decided who would say and play what, played the pieces a couple of times, and went to perform. As you can see, the music needed to be easy, because there wasn't much practice time and we were mostly sight-reading.

Here's a typical 20-25-minute program:

Go in, greet the teacher, smile at the kids, set up music stands, instrument stands, and so forth.

Play something lively, like a march or a procession, to get their attention.

One player introduces the group,



telling a little about our chapter; then we each give a little personal history, telling how long we've played, which instrument we like best, what kind of music we like, favorite composer, etc.

Play another piece.

Answer questions from the audience.

Play a piece by Henry VIII and tell a little about him. They might have discussed him in school.

Each player shows an instrument and plays a little of "Merrily We Roll Along" to demonstrate the sound. Demonstrate S'noSATB, showing how the instruments relate to each other in size. Sometimes we even have a garklein to show off, secretly hidden in a purse!

Play another piece, maybe a round.

Questions.

Play a last piece.

We've played in classrooms for about 20 children as well as in an auditorium holding 100. The program works the same way in either case.

Depending upon the piece being played, we sometimes asked the kids to clap softly with two fingers or to identify the theme by raising their hands, etc. Getting them involved helps keep their attention. We include a piece or two that's familiar to children, such as "Hot Cross Buns" or "Jingle Bells," or a common folk song or round. One teacher suggested that we display pictures of the composers as young children. This year we will include "La Cucaracha" in our binders, since we have many Spanish-speaking children in our community.

This turned out to be a rather easy project, once it was organized. Who had more fun, the players or the kids? We're not sure. The teachers were very appreciative, and we're doing it again this year.

Sandy Ferguson

# ON THE CUTTING EDGE

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## *The relationship of the conventional modern to the avant-garde as revealed in two CDs (Part II)*

This is the second edition of *On the Cutting Edge* devoted to examining what is happening in modern recorder music at the end of the 20th century. In this column the overview will continue with a look at the various compositions performed on the recently released CD *Weeds in Ophelia's Hair* (Cadenza CAD 800-911) by the relative newcomer, **Julia Whybrow**.

Whybrow studied recorder with Michael Schneider and Rainer Lehmbrook at the Hochschule für Musik in Frankfurt-am-Main (where she now teaches) and with Walter van Hauwe at the Sweelinck Conservatory in Amsterdam. Her accomplishments are quite remarkable: she placed second in the 1994 Gaudeamus competition—a world-famous contest for the performance of 20th century music, where she had to compete with pianists, violinists, etc., and she won first-prize in the 1995 International Recorder Competition at Calw, Germany, probably the toughest of all recorder competitions. She now performs widely throughout Europe.

As one might expect, her playing is rather spectacular and her program of music is thoroughly uncompromising. Whybrow's repertoire on this CD includes three pieces from the now standard avant-garde literature, four recently composed works, and two compositions written especially for her. With the exception of John Casken's *Thymehaze*, which has piano accompaniment, all the compositions are for solo recorder.

The CD begins with Luciano Berio's *Gesti*. Written in 1966, it is the oldest of the pieces on this recording but also the most

severe. Whybrow's intent may simply be to use it as a calling card, but for our purposes it will be necessary to understand its significance both in relation to the other more recent works on the CD and to what was generally happening in its own time. To do that we must take a step back from it and look at the avant-garde music scene in the 1950s—the period before *Gesti*. Serialism (i.e., methods of strictly controlling all or most of the elements of a musical composition) became the dominant musical language, its appeal being that it insured the generation of new musical shapes virtually unaffected by the influence or memory of anything pre-existing. This was seen as a method of speeding up the progress of musical development and was also a reaction to the regressive neo-Classicism of the previous era. The composers who used serial methods were not interested in appealing to the emotions of their listeners but rather to the unemotional creation of musical objects. The music of Anton Webern with its atonality, wide interval jumps, irregular rhythms, avoidance of repetition, and color pointillism became the prototype for this post-Webern school.

By 1966, the year *Gesti* was composed, this school was in a state of revision. The new shapes created by serial methods had become part of the musical memory. Music in a post-Webern "style" could now be improvised by a good musician without reference to its "language" of control systems, so that strict organization was no longer necessary. There was also at the time a shift from very austere writing to very dramatic music, with the performer(s) as the center

of visual as well as aural attention (*Gesti*'s composer Luciano Berio was an important leader in this development). With this change, the impact of small events within a piece took on greater importance. Two other challenges to the primacy of serialism came from the concepts of American composer John Cage (indeterminacy) and from performing musicians who were exploring new sound possibilities with their instruments and voices. Both of these led composers to allow performer input (choices) to an unprecedented degree in European classical music.

*Gesti* boldly exemplified all of these ideas, but only a trace of them can be found in the majority of more recent compositions on this CD. The exceptions to this are *Wind in the Channel*, by Stuart Saunders Smith, and *Weeds in Ophelia's Hair*, by Rolf Riehm—the two works specifically written for Whybrow. *Wind* initially introduces range and color pointillism in a diatonic context working it into chromaticism. *Weeds* uses this style only in certain sections. Of all the recently composed works, only *Wind in the Channel* strives for a deliberately dramatic performance in visual terms, since it requires the player to sing, speak, play crotals, drum, and various metal objects. I will discuss these pieces in more detail below.

The two other compositions on this recording that may be considered classic—*Thymehaze* and Roland Moser's *Alrune*—were written in the late 1970s. They reflect what was in the air during that time and present a point of reference that is different from and in many ways opposed to *Gesti*. The post-Webern style is merely a trace element in *Thymehaze*, limited to fast passages that serve mainly as connecting tissue. In *Alrune*, there is no reference to post-Webernism at all. Choices left to the performer are minimal in *Thymehaze* and completely nonexistent in *Alrune*. Both were influenced by Japanese shakuhachi music (especially *Thymehaze*), and *Alrune*, with its high degree of repetition and small gamut of pitch material, bears the influence of American minimal music as well.

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***Though this CD provides only a small and limited sampling, it nevertheless demonstrates that there is no central direction—no main stream—in today's recorder music. There exists a multitude of possibilities, and the trick for the composer is to draw things from that reservoir and weave them into compositions that are unique and of high quality.***

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Julia Whybrow

These works differ not only from *Gesti* but from each other in their form: *Gesti* has a unique ongoing form during which its initial, timbre-oriented sounds gradually evolve into pitch-oriented ones by the end of the piece; *Thymehaze* offers a long chain of moments, each to be savored for its unique details and quality of sound; *Alrune* has a form that resembles the traditional theme-and-variations, albeit with the theme appearing in the middle of the composition.

The two 1970s works point the way for most of the present day compositions on this CD to a far greater degree than *Gesti* (I'm stating a common ground, not implying a direct influence). Like *Alrune*, Caliope Tsoupanaki's *Charaygi* and Gert Janssen's *Largo* feature slow melodies that are enhanced by color/dynamic changes but, unlike the earlier example, the melodies in these more recent pieces are a constantly ongoing and evolving feature. They are also highly ornamented, though differently: in *Charaygi*, the ornamentation is virtually inseparable from the melody, while *Largo*'s ornamentation runs on a separate track. Both have an improvisation-like character, though they are completely written out. Like *Thymehaze*, they have a strong world music bent, with Greek music providing the example in the case of *Charaygi* and Scottish bagpipe music for *Largo*. *Nidi II*, a powerful work by Franco Donatoni with lots of rhythmic dynamism, is much less like the low-energy *Alrune* but may nevertheless be conceptually related to it because of its variational form and use of coloration and articulation as variational procedures. The same may be said of *Ausser Atem*, an exciting work by Moritz Eggert

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## CUTTING EDGE (cont.)

that requires the performer to play two recorders at once. It is quite repetitious and its form is variational.

*Wind in the Channel* and *Weeds in Ophelia's Hair* not only relate more to *Gesti* but to the central-European tradition in general. *Wind* features isolated pitches (and/or sound gestures), range and color pointillism, and *sprechstimme* type speech/singing. Its form—at least if you discount the very beginning and end, which feature vocal sounds and drumming—suggests a kind of *Gesti* in reverse: diatonic to atonal to noises. *Weeds in Ophelia's Hair* provides a succession of indefinitely pitched whimpers, sighs, squeals, and slides in some of its sections, in others a barrage of definite-pitch notes in range-pointillism *à la* the post-Webern school. The alternation of flexible-pitch and definite-pitch sections is its only audible formal design, but Whybrow's comments on this piece in the CD booklet suggest that the work is highly structured.

### Summing Up

Though this CD provides only a small and limited sampling, it nevertheless accurately demonstrates that there is no central direction—no main stream—in today's recorder music. There exists a multitude of possibilities, and the trick for the composer is to draw things from that reservoir and—no matter how similar or disparate they may be—weave them together into compositions that, while not necessarily new in concept, are at least unique and of high quality. That is what today's virtuoso players are looking for. The best works from the immediate past—for a young *enfant terrible* like Whybrow that means the 1960s through the 1980s—are still of great interest and may now be masterfully presented as classics.

If we now add to our sampling the generally lighter and more humorous repertoire on John Turner's double CD (examined in the September Cutting Edge) that is rooted in the neo-Classicism of the 1930s and whose composers have progressively absorbed ideas from the avant-garde, popular idioms, and minimal music, we can see that the range of expression available for our instrument is quite broad. It will take talented composers and performers to fully realize this expressive potential in the future.

Pete Rose

## THE FIRST RECORDER (cont.)

illustrations from Martin le Franc's *Le Champion des Dames*, showing absolutely unambiguous representations of recorders in both the 1441-2 and the 1451 versions.

In the perhaps unexpected absence so far of any pre-1450 evidence from Italian artists, we now look back to England, the source of the 1388 linguistic reference. In

their recent book on carvings of musicians in Medieval English churches called *Minstrels and Angels* (Berkeley 1998) based on photographs by the American enthusiast Robert Nicewonger, Jeremy and Gwen Montagu locate only two definite examples of a recorder. One is the Nativity Shepherds in the Lady Chapel at Exeter Cathedral. This has an uncertain background—it could have been a bench end from the Cathedral, but it has also been thought to be of Flemish origin. The earliest date now accepted for this beautiful carving is c. 1430. The other recorder, also of tenor size, is in the splendid angel roof of St. Nicholas, King's Lynn, and is dated c. 1415 (Illus. 7); it has probably been subject to restoration. It is interesting that early English representations of recorders are of tenor size, whereas the earliest Catalan examples are cantus instruments. This might suggest that King Henry IV's expensive purchase was of a tenor recorder, and he may have played the tenor lines of chansons, which are often not texted. But there

are two earlier misericords, both unfortunately damaged, that could include recorders. One is at St. Botolph's church ("the Stump") at Boston, Lincolnshire (Illus. 8). It shows a siren trying to lure sailors to their doom (but they have put their hands over their ears!) with, perhaps appropriately, an instrument that may be a tenor recorder. It is dated c. 1390. The other is in Chichester Cathedral, Sussex; it is much earlier, c. 1330. A section of the tenor-size duct flute and the player's right hand have unfortunately been broken off; otherwise the instrument might perhaps have been recognizable as a recorder, especially as the misericordia shows a duo with plucked strings (see Illus. 9). Damage again prevents certain identification of an instrument in one of the wall paintings (1390-1404) in the Chapter House of Westminster Abbey, although its dating, and that of the Boston misericord (as well as Pere Serra's angel), are all suggestively close to the 1388 accounts reference. This, and a few subsequent possible recorder appearances around the mid-15th century listed by Dr. Lander, at least declare England to be a qualifier in the "first recorder" contest.

The two countries in possession of actual surviving recorders must, however, remain favorites, especially Germany. But if the question of the extent to which the recorder became established as an instrument of courtly music-making during the early years of the 15th century is added to the rules of the contest, then France, Catalan Spain, and possibly England become close contenders, although the iconographic evidence that supports this is sparse and circumstantial—a few representations of the recorder, some doubtful, in altarpieces and church carvings do not necessarily indicate the extent to which the instrument was becoming used in courtly music-making in various parts of Europe. Declaring an outcome of our contest must therefore wait until further more conclusive evidence, especially datable archaeological discoveries, becomes available some time in the new millennium.

The author, a retired university administrator, is active as a writer and researcher in the field of recorder performance and history. In addition to numerous articles in *American Recorder* and other journals, his work includes *Playing Recorder Sonatas: Interpretation and Technique* (Clarendon Press, 1992). He wishes to thank Anglia Polytechnic University for financial assistance towards the research involved in the preparation of this article.

PHOTO: ANTHONY ROWLAND-JONES



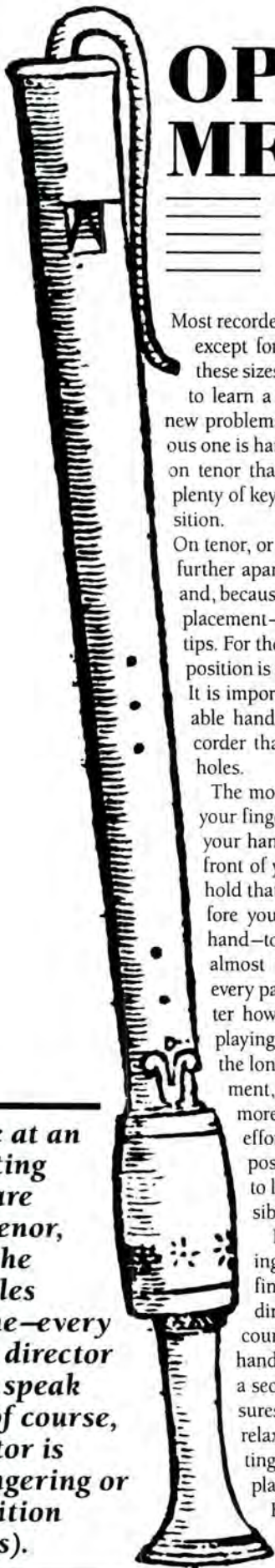
**Illustration 7 (top):** Angel playing recorder, roof-beam of St. Nicholas Church, King's Lynn (c. 1415)

**Illustration 8 (above):** Siren luring sailors, misericord in St. Botolph's Church, Boston, Lincolnshire (c. 1390)

**Illustration 9 (right):** Chichester Cathedral, misericord (c. 1330)



PHOTO: EDWIN SMITH



# OPENING MEASURES

*Playing large recorders:  
hand, blowing, and articulation concerns*

Most recorder players begin on soprano or alto, and, except for those with the smallest hands, both these sizes are comfortable. When a player begins to learn a new, larger size of recorder, however, new problems may be encountered. The most obvious one is hand position, and it is more of a problem on tenor than on bass, because most basses have plenty of keys that allow for a comfortable hand position.

On tenor, or Renaissance basses, the holes are both further apart and larger. They are harder to reach and, because of their larger size, need precise finger placement—unless you have huge, broad finger tips. For those with narrow fingers, a flatter finger position is needed to completely cover a large hole. It is important that you devise the most comfortable hand position possible when playing a recorder that requires you to stretch to reach the holes.

The more you stretch, the harder it is to move your fingers, because more tension and effort in your hands is required. Hold your hand out in front of you, palm up. Spread your fingers and hold that position. How many seconds pass before you begin to feel an urge to relax your hand—to let go? I can feel a small urge to relax almost immediately. It grows stronger with every passing second. You can see that, no matter how good your hand position, if you are playing an instrument that requires a stretch, the longer you keep your hands on the instrument, the more tired they will become. The more tired a hand is, the more tension and effort is required to maintain a particular position. Therefore, it makes a lot of sense to let go of a large recorder as often as possible.

For instance, if you are at an ARS meeting and you are playing tenor, let go of the finger-holes every time—every time—the director begins to speak (unless, of course, the director is giving fingering or hand position directions). Or if you come to a section of rests in your part—several measures of rest—let go of the finger holes and relax your hands for a moment before getting your hands ready again to continue playing after the rests.

Hold your hand up again and spread your fingers apart. What shape are your fingers in this position? Probably

straight. Obviously, it would not be easy to move your fingers freely in this kind of position. Now, rather than spreading your finger tips, spread your hand. What happens? Your finger tips still move away from one another, but the fingers remain somewhat curved. It is much easier to move your fingers up and down freely in this position.

(I have just tested my wording in these two exercises using a couple of children who happen to be having their recorder lesson nearby even as I write. Children make great guinea pigs for physical exercises because they have no preconceptions about what they are supposed to do. These children would like to see their names in print in a national magazine, so here they are: Thank you Mia K. and Janet G. Claire C. is absent today, but Mia and Janet feel sure that she also will enjoy seeing her name in print.)

When you pick up your large recorder, think of spreading your hands rather than spreading your finger tips. This should help you to cover the holes while keeping your hands somewhat more relaxed and give greater freedom of movement.

The greater weight of a larger recorder can also cause hand position problems. If you are trying to hold up the instrument and are gripping more than normal, you will have even more difficulty covering the holes.

Proper angle can help by distributing the weight better. Hold the recorder out, so that it creates somewhere between a 45° to 60° angle with your body (this angle will also improve your tone). Don't "hold the recorder up"; just push your elbows a little forward (not out to the sides). It is a very simple movement that automatically will lift the bell of your recorder, without added effort. A thumb rest of some sort can also help with a heavy recorder: if you are no longer having to "hold on," your fingers will be able to move more freely.

There are several types of thumb rest. The most important thing is proper placement. A thumb rest should be positioned so that your right thumb is opposite the

**If you are at an ARS meeting and you are playing tenor, let go of the finger-holes every time—every time—the director begins to speak (unless, of course, the director is giving fingering or hand position directions).**

area between your first and second fingers when holding the recorder. If your thumb is above your first finger, it is too high. If your thumb is below your second finger it is too low. (Each of these bad positions causes different hand problems that I will not go into now.) I suggest experimenting with a movable thumb rest. You can buy plastic clip-on thumb rests (sand off any plastic burrs using fine grit sand paper before you begin sliding such a thumb rest around on your nice recorder).

Be sure to specify recorder size when buying one of these. Once you have found the ideal position you can put on a permanent thumb rest, or continue to use a removable one. I suggest sticking to a movable thumb rest, because hand position undergoes minute changes over time, and should be free to do so as long as your hands remain relaxed and free to move. Thumb rests are not to everyone's liking. It's up to you—if it helps, use it.

Large recorders require more air than smaller ones, and greater air speed to achieve good tone. Practice blowing exercises on your large recorder.

Arcs, long tones, etc. (see Opening Measures, AR, November 1997) done on different notes throughout the range will teach you a lot about your recorder and your own blowing, and will improve your tone.

Practice high notes, too, both without tonguing and with tonguing. (For high notes, you should also practice left thumb exercises because those positions will be different with a larger thumb hole. Playing octaves is a good exercise.) Practice slurred notes, both pairs of notes (any interval, including large leaps) and scales. Play a simple folk tune or minuet all slurred, first piano, then forte, then at your ideal dynamic level. I think you will be surprised at how beautiful your playing will sound if you do these exercises at least a couple of times a week.

Finally, you will need to articulate more clearly on a large recorder. Use more "t"s than on a smaller recorder. The larger the recorder, the longer it takes for the sound to emerge. A crisper tonguing helps the recorder to speak sooner. Practice a chain of Cs (for example), beginning staccato and moving gradually to legato. Do this on many different notes (it will really help you, especially on high and on low notes). Do it on any note that you find persistently difficult to play. Soon you will discover how firm a tonguing to use for any degree of articulation you want to hear.

Frances Blaker

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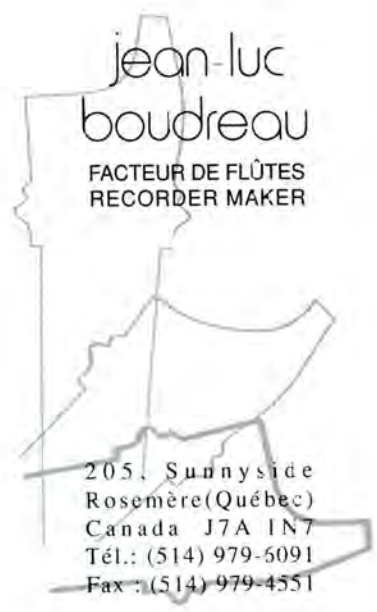
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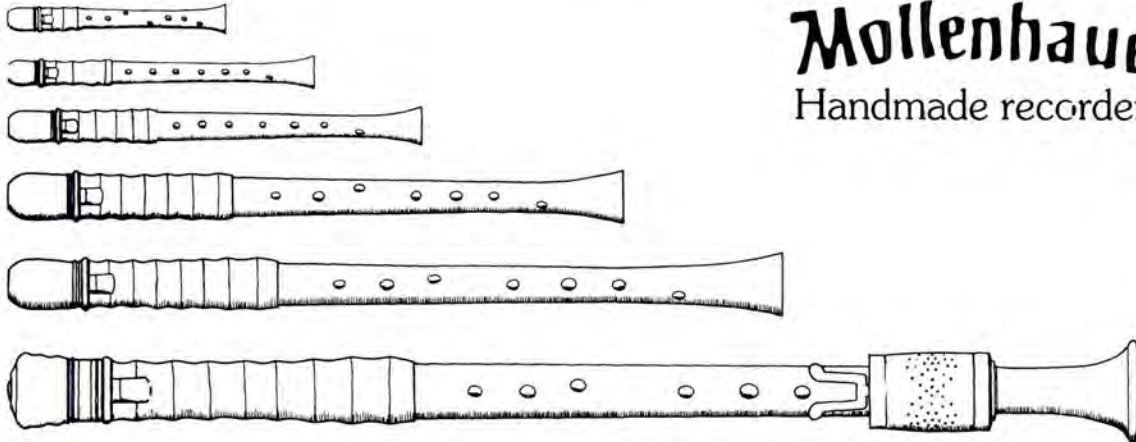
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