



You can have the mountains... but
I'll take a seashore vacation, any time.

Fay Savar

PRIVATE MUSIC, SHARED MUSIC

by Kok Heong McNaughton

Awhile ago, my daughter babysat for one of the neighbors. When she came home, she reported an interesting conversation to me.

The neighbor asked if she was the violinist. "No," my daughter answered, "My mom is."

"Tell your mom that her playing has improved."

When I heard this, I was mortified. All the while I had taken great pains to make sure my family has left for school or work before starting my practice, I had no idea that my neighbors may have been listening in. This was very embarrassing.

I thought about this and wondered why I felt this way. It occurred to me that given the environment I grew up in, to feel this way was illogical.

In my extended family, we grew up with noises all around us. We lived in one big shop-house in Malaysia in the middle of a busy, bustling town the size of Los Alamos. The activities began before dawn as hawkers brought in fresh vegetables from the countrysides and set up stalls right beneath our windows. Throughout the day bicycles clanged their bells, cars blew on their horns, hawkers hawked their wares, and the movie theater across the street blasted out the theme songs before and after every show, throughout the day. The noises didn't stop until well after midnight when the last show was over, the last hawker packed up, and everyone went to bed.

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PERFORMERS' NOTEBOOK: FUN MUSIC FOR STRING QUARTET

Three arrangements by Kenneth Stahlberg, published by New Boston Editions, P.O. Box 1086, Boston, MA 02146. Reviewed by Al Oliver

Domenico Scarlatti (1685-1757); *FOUR SONATAS*: K. 159, K. 544, K. 517, K. 525. 14', 1989.

Johann Strauss (1825-1899): *AN DER SHÖNEN BLAUEN DONAU* (On the Beautiful Blue Danube), 18'40", 1988.

FRÜHLINGSSTIMMEN Op. 410 (Voices of Spring) 10'20", 1988.

The arranger selected four from over 600 Scarlatti sonatas for harpsichord, choosing an early work and three later, more demanding pieces. The selections are rewarding enough to enjoy in any session of quartets, and the music is entertaining for the listener.

At a Chamber Music Day at St. John's Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, at the end of the lunch hour, I sight-read these four sonatas with a pick-up quartet in a corridor as everyone else in the workshop squeezed by, hurrying to their assignments, some patting us on the back. We were performing to a most appreciative audience. The music builds in energy, captures your attention and was a great joy. Recently I played the sonatas again with my regular quartet and we felt the same enthusiasm. The playing time is what I calculate for readings I have been comfortable with. With more experience we might take faster tempi and increase the excitement.

The Strauss arrangements pass the great melodies to all members of the quartet.



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NEWS & NOTES

CONVENTIONS AND WORKSHOPS

Collaborations '93, the National Flute Convention, will be held at the Boston Park Plaza Hotel and Towers, Boston, MA, August 19-22, 1993. Contact Phyllis Pemberton, National Flute Association, PO Box 800597, Santa Clarita, CA 91380-0597, 805/297-5287, fax 805/297-0753.

Bohemia Festival is to be a workshop for amateur and professional musicians of all ages. It will be held in Kostelec, Czechoslovakia, about 20 miles outside Prague, July 11-25. Faculty will include Vesselin Parashkevov on violin, Karel Dolezal on viola, Ivan Balushev on cello, Brigitte Buxtorf on flute, Liviu Varcol on oboe, Wenzel Grund on clarinet, Jaroslav Kubita on bassoon and Nicolai Popov on piano. The program will include master classes, piano accompaniment, chamber music, and free concerts by faculty members, as well as sightseeing excursions. Contact Bohemia Festival, PO Box 2023, CH-8033, Zürich, Switzerland.

Chamberre is an adult amateur summer music workshop for winds, strings and piano, to be held at Rocky Ridge Music Center, Estes Park, CO, August 26-30, 1993. The program consists of around-the-clock uncoached sight-reading sessions, some with assigned groups and some free-lance, plus an optional string orchestra. The Center is a historic inn with rustic cabins (some with grand pianos) and a splendid view of Twin Sisters Peak. Contact Craig Billings, 31 NW 22nd Place #19, Portland, OR 97210, 503/274-2756.

EARLY CHILDHOOD MUSIC

Introductory and advanced teaching workshops for early childhood music are being offered by Kenneth Guilmartin this summer in Princeton, Chicago, Glassboro, NJ, Boston, Palo Alto, CA and Los Angeles. The workshops present the *Music Together* parent/child music and movement curriculum model for early childhood and music professionals. Contact the *Center for Music and Young Children*, 217 Nassau St., Princeton, NJ 08542, 609/924-7801.

Music Time is another early childhood music curriculum intended for young children aged 1 1/2 to 8. Its elements include songs, instruments, movement, fingerplays and special activities designed to teach music theory and practice in an engaging manner. Founder Chris Cahill offers a teacher certification program. Contact Music Time, 310 Balboa St., San Francisco, CA 94118, or call 800/772-SING.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts provides free legal information and assistance to thousands of artists and arts organizations unable to afford legal counsel and representation. Over 800 attorneys in the New York area donate their time through VLA. They offer expertise in

contracts, copyrights, performing space problems, nonprofit incorporation, immigration, labor relations, small claims, taxes, wills, trusts and constitutional issues. Their legal hotline number is 212/319-2910. To learn more about their programs or to volunteer your services as an attorney, write Volunteer Lawyers for the Arts, 1 East 53rd St., New York, NY 10022, or call 212/319-2787.

MAIL ORDER MUSIC

Subscriber Lawrence Beck reports great success in obtaining unusual sheet music through Eble Music Company in Iowa City, and has been delighted with their quick response to his telephone requests. Proprietor David Hemple tells me the secrets of his success are a large stock of solo and ensemble music, plus good personal contacts with European publishers and distributors. Contact Eble Music Company, PO Box 2570, Iowa City, Iowa 52244, 319/338-0313.

DANICA DIXON MEMORIAL FUND

In memory of Danica Dixon, a clarinetist and long-time staff member of the Chico Chamber Music Workshop, the Chico State University Music Department has established a Memorial Fund that will be used to purchase new music for the Department's music library. Contributions may be sent to the Danica Dixon Memorial Fund, c/o Chico State University Music Department, Chico, CA 95929-0805.

NEW PUBLICATIONS BY FELLOW READERS

Publisher Merlyn Doleman has just released *Meditation and Capriccio* for oboe or clarinet and piano by Alexander Semmler, a very accomplished but little-known modern composer who worked in Germany and then the United States in the first half of this century. This is very serious 20th-Century music cast ironically in the form of an early Romantic Introduction and Allegro. Contact your music dealer or Merlyn E. Doleman, Music Publication, 464 Tahos Road, Orinda, CA 94563-2912, 510/254-5019.

Composer Daniel Waitzman's *Sonata for Flute and Harpsichord* is a "newly-composed, tonal, functionally-harmonic Sonata in three movements." Written in three real parts, the published set includes performance parts for flute, optional oboe and cello, and harpsichord (or solo organ). The first-page sample looks pleasant and very accessible. Contact your music dealer or Seesaw Music Corp., 2067 Broadway, New York, NY 10023, 212/874-1200.

STAFF CHANGES

Marion Rust has left her position of associate editor to devote full time to her Ph.D. dissertation. We gratefully acknowledge her formative contributions to the style of this periodical, and her talent for crafting clear, graceful prose. Janet Telford has taken over as our copy editor and Lorie Brillinger joins us as proofreader.

NEW MUSIC CLEARINGHOUSE

The following new pieces are available to interested musicians from their composers. Please see previous issue (April 1993) for additional listings and suggested procedures. Composers are invited to send information about works they want performed, indicating the instruments and level of proficiency required.

Abbreviations. Voice: S=soprano; A=alto; T=tenor; B=bass; H=high; M=medium; L=low. Instruments:vn=violin; va=viola; vc=cello; db=bass viol; rec=recorder; fl=flute; ob=oboe; ca=English horn; cl=clarinet; bh=basset horn; bcl=bass clarinet; hn=horn; fg=bassoon; cb=contrabassoon; pf=piano; hf=harp; hps=harpsichord.

Arpad Elo, Jr., RR 3, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|
| Var. on "Muss i' denn" | cl, vla, pft | moderate |
| Sonata, D minor | vla, pft | moderate |
| Love Song in F (text by John Donne) | M, pft | easy |
| Quartet, D major | cl (A), vl, vla, vc | moderate |
| Twelve Sonatinas | cl, pft | easy to moderate |
| Divisions on a Ground by Mr. Purcel | Rec, hps | easy |
| Song of Devotion [from Song of Solomon] | S, 2vn, va, vc | moderate |
| (Also alternate version for soprano and 3 celli) | | |
| 5 Deutsche Angstlieder | L, cl | difficult |
| Serenade "Die Fagotterwartung" | fl, ob, cl, hn | difficult |
| Serenade "Die Violoncellerwartung" | 2 vl, vla | difficult |
| Partita | fl, cl, hn | moderate |
| Phaedra | S, cl, pft | difficult |
| Song of Fulfillment | L, bh, pft | easy |
| Four Movements on Transcendental Themes | cl(A), vl, vla, vc, pft | difficult |
| Six Songs from "Pills to Purge Melancholy" (arr) | S, recorder, pft | moderate |
| Hungarian Rondo (Includes alternate parts for fl, cl, fg) | Pennywhistle, 2 bh | moderate |
| Trio | fl, cl, vla | moderate |
| Three Songs on Poems by Robert Burns | S, vn, pft | moderate |
| Variations on an Air by Henry Clay Work | fl, vn, dulcimer | easy |
| Sonatina | pft 3 hands | moderate |
| Elegy | 2vn, va, vc | moderate |
| Stanley Grill, 68 Pine St., Haworth, NJ 07641 | | |
| To a Child | S, 2vn, va, vc | moderate |
| As Easy as 1,2,3 | vn, va, vc | easy |
| Civil War Songs | va, pf | difficult |
| Preludes | S, vn, vc | moderate |
| 6 Contrapuntal Pieces | 2vn, va, vc | moderate |
| For Laura | 2vn, va, vc | moderate |
| Distant Music | 2vn, va, vc | moderate |

A PSYCHIATRIST'S EAR TO SCHUMANN'S VOICES

SCHUMANN: THE INNER VOICES OF A MUSICAL GENIUS by Peter Ostwald. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1985. Reviewed by Carol Benet, Ph.D.

Robert Schumann and his wife Clara Wieck were a fascinating pair. Biographies of each came out simultaneously in 1985. *Schumann: The Inner Voices of a Musical Genius* by Peter Ostwald, and *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman* (Cornell University Press) by Nancy B. Reich remain the best works to date on the lives, loves and music of this couple. For this issue of *Music for the Love of It*, I review Robert's biography and for a future issue, Clara's.

Psychiatrist Peter Ostwald, a professor at the University of California, San Francisco and the Langley Porter Psychiatric Institute, is also an amateur musician. He plays violin with a string quartet that performs two or three times yearly. Ostwald strongly believes, "We have more fun being amateurs." Ostwald is also the founder and medical director of the Health Program for Performing Artists, in which, doctors and therapists of various disciplines such as orthopedic surgery and psychiatry work together to solve the problems that plague musicians.

Ostwald begins in the time of Schumann's first mental crisis in 1854, when the composer was 43 years old. The author then reverts to a chronological ordering starting with the artist's birth on June 8, 1810. He places the events in their historical settings, showing that the time of Schumann's birth was chaotic as it coincided with Napoleon's conquest of eastern Europe.

Ostwald weaves personal events in with those on a larger scale. He calls on theories of authorities from all fields, but particularly medicine, music and history, and is generous with his footnotes. The documentation of this book is scholarly with at least 1/5 of it devoted to footnotes, bibliography and two indices, one for the book and the other for the musical works.

This all makes for interesting reading, especially Ostwald's descriptions of Schumann's long relationship with Clara, whom he met when she was only 9 years old. The 12 years they knew each other before their marriage were followed by a rather brief marriage of 13 years, during which Clara was almost always pregnant, ending with Schumann's death. The problems with her father (Schumann's teacher), the composer's complicated love/jealousy relationship with his talented wife Clara, and his anxieties and genius are all the stuff of this engrossing biography.

continued on back page

FROM THE HEART *by Helen Spielman* A MUSICAL MIRACLE

When Donna, a 44-year old beginner, first came to me for flute lessons, she took beta-blocker drugs to subdue her extreme anxiety. She didn't share this information until a year later, after deep trust had developed between us. What she did say, that first day, was that she had been traumatized musically during her youth. She started studying piano as a college student, making a late decision to become a music major. Donna continued "My teachers treated me kindly, but the same as the other students who had studied for years. No one realized what it was like for me to come into it with so little knowledge. I felt I had to make up for lost time and that I was unable to live up to my professors' expectations." The sensitive person and musician inside Donna was not nurtured. Being required to play at recitals filled her with dread, and she described two such occasions when she "fell completely apart." Donna gradually lost her love of playing; the music inside simply couldn't come out because she became too focused on technical perfection. She eventually dropped music as a career goal, and became a successful, respected psychiatrist instead. For the next twenty-five years, although she continued to enjoy listening to music, her desire to play was stifled.

I often reflect on how even our most suppressed longings find a means of expression, and how when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. Donna found me, and started to study the flute. She often showed signs of tension during lessons. Her palms would be sweaty, she'd laugh nervously, and would mention tightness and discomfort in her hands, upper back and legs. I acknowledged her fear, let her know that I understood, and shared with her some of my own fears about performing and taking lessons. I reminded her, over and over, that the beauty of her music was not dependent on perfect playing, and that I respected her as a person and as a musician, no matter how many wrong notes she might play or how long it might take her to master a particular technique.

Donna, like many of my adult students, was hard on herself. When she miscounted a rhythm, she'd stop and say "No!" She'd listen to James Galway's recordings and become discouraged at how "awful" she sounded compared to him. If I complimented her on a particular passage, she'd respond, "Well, it needs more work." I gently but persistently encouraged her to focus on the positive. Donna practiced her flute conscientiously, and I knew that she would keep making progress. The communication of my steadfast faith in her allowed her to know that no matter what she did musically, I would believe in her, respect her, and love her and her music.

The thought of playing in our recital literally gave Donna nightmares. I don't require my students to play at recitals, but she did choose to attend and listen. She left the minute the last note was played, not stopping to chat and have refreshments, because it had made her too anxious simply to sit there and watch other students perform.

Gradually, this healing journey that Donna and I had undertaken began to enter more fruitful regions. She became more relaxed at lessons. Occasionally, instead of a harsh "No!" she would say, "I can do this." A new acceptance grew in Donna's heart, as she dropped the notion that she had to sound like Galway to be good, and embraced the possibility that her music was lovely.

When Donna told me, after two years, that she wanted to participate in our Christmas recital, I rejoiced, not because that is my goal for my students — it isn't — but because that was her goal for herself. She selected a piece that was difficult for her. Although my students choose their pieces, I suggest alternates when there is a good reason not to play a particular piece. In Donna's case, I said, 'You can perform this one if you like. However, because of your history, we want to program

The thought of playing in our recital literally gave Donna nightmares.

for success, and another piece would be less demanding on your breathing. What's important is that you feel good about yourself and have a satisfying experience." Donna selected a different piece. We spent months preparing her piece, and even more deeply processing her fear of taking such a big step. Donna had asked me if she could back out at the last minute, and I had agreed. So on the day of the recital, I wasn't sure if she'd actually show up.

But show up she did. When it was her turn, I said a special silent prayer for her. Donna played her piece beautifully, with composure, musical expression, and almost flawless technique. No one else in the room knew what an incredible struggle it had been for her to come to that point in her life. No one else knew of her courage, persistence and determination. But I was watching and hearing a miracle, an expression of nothing less than the mystery of the human spirit.

After the recital, Donna said, "Thank you, Helen, for helping me heal twenty-five years of pain. I feel wonderful and free. Do you know what helped me as I performed? From the corner of my eye, I noticed your foot moving in time to the music I played. That small gesture made me feel so supported and comforted and as though you were with me all the way."

Last week Donna signed up for our spring recital.

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The author wishes to express gratitude and appreciation to Donna for her permission to share this story.

ALL SERIOUSNESS ASIDE *by Sam Savar*

THE CAT'S MEOW

Within everyone's lifetime, at least once, there happens the Stroke of Genius. It could have been your clever repartée, something you made, or an idea that you acted upon. It's something that makes you feel good about yourself.

I have had my Stroke of Genius. But it didn't make me feel as good as I expected.

I was invited by Sylvia Leon, a popular concert pianist, to come play violin sonatas with her in her home. I was beside myself with self aggrandizement and pride knowing that none but the most talented of musicians cross the Leon threshold.

Mrs. Leon seemed glad to see me, and I was extremely flattered by her warm reception. After putting a tape on to record our music, we beautifully played the Beethoven Spring Sonata No. 5 for our first selection. We were both amused to notice that her outsized cat, Minnie, who was seated comfortably on the piano, had been staring unblinkingly at me throughout. Mrs. Leon told me about the previous violinists all of whom had suffered under Minnie's feline criticism. In every instance, Minnie had flung herself headlong into the violinist's music stand knocking it to the floor. Then she'd jump on his lap and hiss, scratch, and spit at his face, after which she would claw several music sheets to death before she could be successfully shooed out.

"Not one of these violinists will come back here ever again as long as I have Minnie. That's why I asked you, Sam" Mrs. Leon said matter-of-factly, giving me the most lopsided compliment I have ever received. "You're obviously the only one she likes." Minnie sat at my feet and purred throughout all our playing for the rest of the evening.

Jascha Heifetz is a genius all of the time. I was a genius this once.

If I ever give a recital, it may be for a company of cats.

I'd be the cat's meow.

DICK BEEBE'S BASEBALL STORY

Enough about me. Thanks to Dick Beebe of Litchfield, CT for contributing this classic groaner:

"It seems there were a pair of bassists who adored bourbon as much as they did Beethoven.

The orchestra of which these bassists were members was this night playing one of its standard pieces, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. The music calls for them to come in at the very beginning of this long piece, and then return only at the end.

So they would frequently slip out after the start of the symphony, dash across the street to a saloon for about half an hour, then slip back to finish out Beethoven in undeniably high style.

Now, to make sure that the symphony would wait for the finale even if they were a little tardy returning, the bassists would tie the last part of the score with a string so that the conductor couldn't turn the page.

The performance began. The bassists played the opening. Then, they ducked out. In the saloon they belted down one drink after another. More than usual. They quickly lost all track of time. Beethoven drew closer and closer to the end. The bassists, meanwhile, got drunker and drunker.

This dramatic moment had soared to a classical pitch: It was the last of the Ninth, the bassists were loaded and the score was tied . . ."

VIOLA JOKES DEPT.

Definition of semi-tone: Two violists playing in unison.

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LETTERS

Editor:

I work with deaf and blind children and for many years we have tried to keep our children interested in current events with articles from local and out-of-state papers.

Last week one of our parents brought your paper, *Music for the Love of It*, to class. Imagine my surprise to find an article by Sam Savar on your front page! Our class has had an article by him on our bulletin board for years.

I am sending you a copy of this piece, to show you how compassionate and understanding this gentleman really is.

Ralph Morrine
Carmichael, CA

The piece referred to in this letter was a guest editorial against hunting from the Philadelphia Daily News. Readers who want a copy may write to this periodical with a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Editor:

Thanks for running my note about earthquake sounds. The South Tahoe Symphony is interested and a composer is evaluating the tape. If it happens, it will be performed next spring.

Katherine Frohberg
Earthquake Engineering Research
Center Library
University of California
Richmond, CA

ON THE PLEASURES OF INFORMALITY:

THE SUNNYSIDE MUSIC SOCIETY *by Tom Frenkel*

It's easy to remember how long my family and I have lived in Sunnyside, New York. My daughter Jill is about to have her seventh birthday; she was just a babe in arms when we carried her around, house-hunting in our neighborhood-to-be. And for most of these seven years, I have been an enthusiastic participant in the Sunnyside Music Society.

The Society meets roughly once a month, usually on a Friday evening, rotating among members' homes.

We have had everything from music written by our members . . . to Broadway show sing-alongs around the piano . . .

Although the core of the group is in Sunnyside, we are open to interested parties from anywhere and often meet elsewhere in the greater New York City area, or even, occasionally, out of town. Our members have ranged from college music professors and professional performers to the rankest of beginners. Any kind of music is welcome; we have had everything from music written by our members, to Mozart piano quartets, to Broadway show sing-alongs around the piano; from sight-reading to meticulously prepared performances. Our active membership is rather modest right now; sometimes only four or five of us show up. But since a couple of the regulars are pianists, we can always spend our time playing solo and four-hand piano music, and (with my participation) violin sonatas — and this amounts to a virtually inexhaustible repertoire. Sometimes we will have a surprise guest. Several months back, we met in Manhattan, and were serendipitously joined by a neighbor who heard us through those flimsy New York walls. She came down to sing, and a fine musician she was.

It can be strange how one meets new musical friends, and it can never hurt to tell everyone you may meet about your musical activities! For instance, last summer I bought some books from a fellow at an outdoor table in our neighborhood. It turned out that his roommate was a clarinetist, who worked in a nearby health-food store. When I chatted with the clarinetist in the store, he mentioned a friend of his who was a pianist. This pianist has become one of the mainstays of our group; he's a fine player and a terrific sight-reader! (As it turned out, the clarinetist dropped out of sight — rumor had it that he moved to Brooklyn — and I never got to play with him at all.)

A (different) pianist friend and I are the de facto leaders of our Society. I maintain a list of members' names,

instruments or voice ranges, addresses, and phone numbers, which we distribute to our members. Before each meeting, we call the membership to remind them of the upcoming get-together. This gives us a tentative count for the next meeting, and more importantly, it helps us keep current with activities in the neighborhood and elsewhere. When a member had a baby recently, she was markedly late in sending out announcements; but by means of my phone call to her, I found out in quite a timely manner — and, of course, so did the rest of the Society!

Besides conversation and recreational music-making, the Society can provides its members who want to perform publicly the chance to try their wings in front of a small, informal audience. Then again, we have a member who is a beginning violist. Between meetings, she learns her part to a couple of short pieces, perhaps violin-violu duets or viola with piano; and then at the musicale, she gets to play this music with whatever other instru-ment(s) she needs. She has also shared a music stand with me in a more difficult chamber piece that she had not seen before, doubling the viola part — which is good practice for her and fun for me.

Though our group has never had any serious problems, annoying things will happen. The one most bothersome to me is talking in the same room where others are trying to make music. I am certainly not opposed to conversation at our meetings; in fact, I think that socializing is a major part of what our Society is all about. The best solution seems to be to have an additional room available, where the conversationalists can talk away to their hearts' content.

In the course of my musical life, I play in many pre-arranged groups, and for me nothing will ever replace a concentrated, serious evening of string quartets or piano trios. But for meeting new friends, encountering unexpected music, or just catching up on all the latest neighborhood happenings, I take great pleasure in belonging to the Sunnyside Music Society!

Tom Frenkel is a computer programmer in New York. Aside from playing violin and viola, he enjoys reading and listening to blues, reggae, rock, and pop music.

PRIVACY

continued from page 1

Shop-houses in Malaysia, like those in most crowded cities in Chinese communities around the world, afforded a very different way of life than we are used to in suburban America. The houses were typically two stories high, with the ground floor made up of a shop that opened to the streets at the front, some sort of community dining room in the center and a community kitchen in the back. The ground floors were public

rights-of-way, with the front and back doors usually kept opened, locked only at night. Breezes would blow right through, insects and birds would fly straight through, and people would walk in and out while we were all sitting down to dinner. The private living quarters were upstairs, but even that arrangement didn't guarantee any privacy because no one would have his own room. Typically, a family of eight would share one room, and you could stare into your neighbor's eyes because he would be only 10 feet away. People talked across the low, separating walls to one another as they hung out the laundry or cooked their meals. They would shout the daily news bulletins across the back streets to one another.

**A marching
harmonica band?
You bet!**

Amidst these normal daily noises, there was my uncle who played blues on his saxophone two rooms down the hallway, a cousin who twanged on his guitar learning Beatles songs by ear in the next room, another uncle downstairs who tooted Chinese opera music on his bamboo flute, and numerous kids with harmonicas in the neighborhood. In addition to this cacaphony of sounds, there was an old, upright piano, pitifully out of tune, with cracked ivory keys and many broken strings that all the kids in the neighborhood would bang on whenever they were anywhere near it. Somewhere around the time I turned 8, my father added a violin to this confusion. He was a self-taught musician who played the piano, the violin, the ukelele, the guitar, and the clarinet. He also organized and conducted a neighborhood marching harmonica band and a choir that sang Western classical songs translated into Chinese.

A marching harmonica band? You bet! Kids as young as ten would participate. When there was a festival, we would all be out in force blowing and sucking on the instruments. They came in different sizes: soprano, alto, tenor, bass and those that played only chords for accompaniment. Besides, they were cheap. Everybody could afford one. They were easy to carry around, and you could march a long way without getting tired.

The first time I was awakened to the difference between fun music and serious music was a few weeks after I came to America. I went to a church potluck and wandered into a side room. Two young men were practicing. One was playing the synthesizer and another the drums. There were some percussion instruments that nobody was using. As I felt the beat, I started playing the percussion. The music stopped. One of the men gave me the coldest look and said in an icy voice, "Excuse me, lady. We are trying to practice here." Boy, was that a cruel awakening!

In my own search for musical growth and excellence, I've found that learning to play an instrument well

demands a lot of very lonely practicing, the kind that goes over the same phrases again and again, driving my family and neighbors crazy. My father's harmonica band had been fun for me. The music was simple and the repertoire was small. But with Western classical music, it's a different story. The road to excellence is fraught with loneliness, hard work, and frustration. Only dedication and perseverance can overcome these stumbling blocks.

I tell my children that the most beautiful sound I hear is when they are having fun with an instrument. It doesn't matter what. They can sing, they can sit by the piano and bang out any combination of notes. They can pluck, hammer, strum, saw, blow, twang, or tinkle on any one of a dozen folk instruments around the house and I'll love every minute of it.

Following the footsteps of my father, I am learning to play another instrument. Every morning, I do tone exercises on my flute, setting my dog howling, which in turns sets off the Canyon Road Canine Choir. In the summer, I toot my flute for my tomato plants. I swear, my tomatoes are bigger and sweeter than most.

This article previously appeared in the Los Alamos Monitor. Kok Heong McNaughton plays violin and Scottish fiddle, and works as a computer programmer in nuclear physics research.



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(MUSIC SCORE: *IN MEMORIAM J. A.*
SONG BY DAVID GOLDSTEIN
TEXT BY EMILY DICKINSON)

(IN MEMORIAM J.A., PAGE 2)

The author deals with large existential questions as well as minute ones. For example, because of a stiff finger, Schumann had to give up performing and concentrate instead on composition. Ostwald describes the "animal baths" that were prescribed to cure his stiff finger. People with stiffness were to purchase a slaughtered animal and stick the ailing portion of their body into the animals "moist belly" with its warm "entrails, blood and feces." Fearing surgery above all, Schumann tried this folk remedy, writing afterwards that indeed he felt strengthened by the procedure, only later to worry that he might have caught some illness from the carcass. Ostwald sprinkles his account with similar anecdotes from Schumann's highly charged life.

One of the most delightful aspects of this book is the discussion of Schumann's encounters with Brahms, Wagner, Mendelssohn, Paganini and other luminaries. This was the time of high German Romanticism, whose ethos was to do all — the working, loving and emoting — to excess.

Ostwald offers many theories on the state of Schumann's existence based on relationships with his powerful and wealthy mother and with the lovers, associates and competitors who were part of his world. He leaves no doubt that Schumann lived on an emotional roller coaster ride. Schumann's moods were ever changing and his depressions became more and more serious as time went on, leading finally to total incapacity. Clara also suffered depression, but as for her story, we shall turn to *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman* in a future issue.

Frequent contributor Carol Benet is a free-lance writer and amateur pianist. She lives in Tiburon, California.

Mr. Stahlberg suggests permissible omissions where the numerous repeats might tax audience attention. Performers, however, will need to agree on a roadmap beforehand.

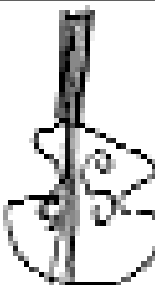
This isn't the kind of music an amateur quartet often puts out on the stands for their own enjoyment, but it's great for performing as an encore or as an unusual opener, as the arranger suggests. And it's great party music. My quartet enjoyed reading both works.

Retired physicist and lifelong musician Al Oliver lives in Livermore, CA. He plays in the Livermore-Amador Symphony and in summer chamber music workshops at Chico and Humboldt, California.

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