

PLAYING IN THE BAND

by Kok Heong McNaughton

After nearly two years of flute lessons, I decided it was time to join the community band. After all, that was the incentive for taking lessons in the first place.

So, with my teacher's blessing as she left for an extended vacation, I took the plunge.

WHERE TO SIT?

By then, I had been playing violin in the community orchestra for four years. I knew that you don't just walk into an already established orchestra and sit in the concertmaster's seat. So I expected to play in the back of the second flute section, and unobtrusively, if I could.

When I walked into the rehearsal room, the first thing I noticed was the chairs were set up differently from that of an orchestra. I had no idea where to sit.

Luckily, I saw a friend who played clarinet. So I asked her quietly, "Where do the flutes sit? I'm new at this, and not very good."

To my horror, this "friend" called out at the top of her lungs, "Hey guys, where do the bad flutes sit?"

I thought I would die!

Someone at the opposite end of the room waved a flute in the air and called out, "Flutes over here!" I walked across the room, right in front of everybody. There were 3 rows of chairs set up in semi-circles so I chose a seat at the back row, behind the flute-waving person.

As I was settling down to take out my instrument, another flute player in the front row called to me, "You play flute? You'll have to sit in front!"

Horror of horrors! That was right under the conductor's nose. So much for unobtrusiveness.

WHAT NOTE IS THAT?

There was chaos as music was handed out. When I saw my part, I added an audible gasp to the noise. I had thought second flutes, like second violins, play mostly in the middle register. Boy, was I wrong! There were notes way up there, with umpteen leger lines, notes I nickname Hi-Q because I'm never

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PERSPECTIVES ON VIBRATO

by Ted Rust



Elisabeth Schwartzkopf

Elisabeth Schwartzkopf sings "Dove sono i bei momenti" from *La Nozze di Figaro* with heartbreaking intensity. Tension builds in her voice as the melodic line rises, the throat vibrato growing in speed and breadth, the inner conflicts of a jilted Countess seething within. In Pamina's dignified aria, "Ach, ich fühl's" from *Die Zauberflöte*, Schwartzkopf sings a similarly rising line with lustrous purity, the vibrato relaxing to a barely discernible pulsation of breath pressure within the highest notes. Her vibrato is always there, but never the same.

Elizabeth Blumenstock, Baroque violinist, performs an exquisite recital of Bach sonatas, all their joys and sorrows clearly revealed. The athletic joy of agile passagework comes across in a tone so light and clean, the intervals so precisely tempered, that it seems impossible to imagine the music with the omnipresent vibrato of a modern violinist. She uses a big, beautiful vibrato on some prominent notes, but never, it seems, in ways that distract from more interesting material in the continuo line.

VIBRATO THROUGH THE AGES

Vibrato seems to have been part of music from the very beginning. First-century Chinese scholars described 26 kinds of vibrato to be performed on the Chi'in, a sort of Chinese zither. Early Christian chant notations, probably reflecting earlier Greek practices, called for what scholars interpret as vibrato on certain notes (Bauer & Peyser). And since the singers had to be told where and by implication where not to vibrate, there must always have been musicians inclined to abuse it. Much Western writing on the subject from the 12th century onwards consists of diatribes, often humorous, against the overuse of vibrato.

Wolfgang Mozart wrote of admiring the natural "quivering" of the human voice. In 18th-century vocal music, however, it

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LETTERS

Editor:

Your newsletter must be right on! Two readers have already contacted me about pieces listed in the August New Music Clearinghouse. Yesterday, I mailed out the following:

a) to the Taffanel Woodwind Quintet in Toronto, my two standard quintets, plus a short sarabande for flute and bassoon, and also my Suite Slave for oboe and bassoon

b) to Mary Alice Mote in California, my Op. 19, which consists of two vocalises and two art songs for soprano with piano or wind ensemble.

Thanks again, very much, for all your work on behalf of good, solid contemporary American music.

Gilles Yves Bonneau
Burlington, VT

Editor:

I'm looking for parts for the string quartets of George W. Chadwick, especially #5. Maybe some of your readers can help me — it has worked in the past. *Please reply c/o this publication, 67 Parkside Dr., Berkeley, CA 94705.—ed.*

Hanna Eichwald
Kew Gardens, NY

Editor:

I've given a good deal of my music to the Helen Rice Memorial Collection at the Hartford Public Library, 500 Main St., Hartford, CT 06103. I assume they are now available.

Years ago, I played the Mozart Clarinet Quintet with Helen Rice at the home of a friend. She was quite a lady — unwed, famous for chamber music parties in her apartment in New York. As I recall, she played first violin and did very well.

Dick Beebe
Hartford, CT

Editor:

Good to see a list of Cummings poems set to music in the latest issue. It should be pointed out, however, that the list may be far from exhaustive. There are plenty of "bootleg" ones out there, which are unpublishable because the estate's permission has not been obtained.

This is a general problem with 20th-century text, and not always due to composer negligence. Many holders of the rights to deceased writers' work are very choosy—often far more so than the writers themselves when living—about who may be allowed to touch the canonized words. While I approve, on the whole, of the revised copyright law of 1976, I also believe that in a just world, once words are published they ought to be fair

game for any composers willing to pay nominal fees for performances of works in which they are set.

Meanwhile, settings of good poems by Cummings and others languish in composers' file cabinets.

The late classicist J. P. Sullivan gave me permission at no charge to set his Petronius translations. "Property is theft," he said, quoting Prud'hon. A healthy and all-too-rare attitude!

Nick Humez
Portland, ME

RESPONSES TO SAM SAVAR'S "CONFESSIONS OF A (MUSIC) THIEF" (AUGUST 1993)

Dear Mr. Savar:

I have a propensity for loving people who can make beauty. I tend to think they are messengers from heaven and pure, wise and beautiful people. But once, years ago, I was given to doubt my perception of beauty.

I was happy to lend my living room to a struggling young violinist and teacher for lessons. For a couple years little children (and their parents) trooped in with muddy feet. At some point, this concerto and orchestral violinist decided to take up chamber music. Coincidentally several of my first violin parts and even the entire Opus 18 were missing. I could sympathize with the violinist but since all my chamber music was given to me as Christmas and birthday presents from my family, I took to locking the music cabinet.

Your article renews the sorrow I felt at that time. It seems to me your message should have been that stealing (even from the rich — who are also real people) is an ugly way to get ahead and could result only in soulless music.

Sue Goodman
Berkeley, California

Dear Sam Savar,

I have often thought that high morals and goodness is often just the result of not being bright enough to think how to cheat. I had the same experience of being used when I had no money by people who did have money and wanted my ability as a pianist. Or my ability in any other way for that matter. You did something about it.

I concluded that somehow in a past life I had been so bad, or was so bad now, that I was being cured of my big ego and made to bite dust without taking revenge. I knew these people who used me often had never been broke or else in their present comfort never once thought about it, but my reaction was to feel both taken advantage of and depressed at feeling angry about it, begrudging them my efforts. I notice neither one of us ever thought of telling the people what we thought, and trying to get them to understand. Only when you were caught did you finally let them know. I wonder if you

had talked to them earlier if they would have seen the light. Obviously too the school should have made it plain that students coming to donate their services were to be paid car fare, and food if over a dinner time, whatever else they might think to give.

I did take my revenge once and feel nothing but delight over the whole business. As usual I had been called to play for a church women's group. This meant taking the streetcar and spending an hour to 4 hours total before I was done. (Even the dancing class teachers never thought of beginning to pay me until the class began no matter how long I waited and at 50¢ an hour at that.) This time I arrived at the church and waited for their boring meeting to reach the time of program and began to play. I was burned to hear some woman talking loudly through the music. This was too much. At least they could listen. I planned my revenge and it worked perfectly. I built up the piece louder and louder and at the peak of loudness when she was forced to almost shout I suddenly dropped to pianissimo and she was caught bellowing in the silence. The rest of my program was rewarded with total silence from by audience. I also discovered that for the first time I was not dying of nerves.

Since in all your visits none of the doctors seemed to suspect you, I wonder whom they did suspect? How you could keep that up for two years and not be suspected seems impossible. Certainly impossible for me. The first attempt would have been discovered and tongue tied I would have burned in my own fire of embarrassment on the spot and disintegrated.

Hopefully some of the amateur musicians will take a lesson from your article. Church people have been forced to pay their ministers and hired musicians better, but women's groups are the same as ever.

Jean Autrey
Santa Barbara, California

NEWS AND NOTES

Barbara Jeskalian's article on the Glazounov Archive in the August issue prompted Louise Olson of Bethesda, MD, to reminisce of her time as a student in Paris, when she lived in a pension where other apartments were occupied by Glazounov and several music students. Glazounov was very kind to the young people, she said, and sometimes came to listen to them playing chamber music, complimenting the more talented ones most graciously. Louise claims he was tactfully silent about her playing.

Also inspired by Barbara's article, J. Hugh Herring of Baltimore wrote her for help in finding any piano trios Glazounov may have written.

The 1994 National Convention of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC) will be held in Cincinnati, Ohio April 6-9, 1994. The theme of the conference will be national standards in the arts and their implementation at the state and local levels. For more information contact David Showers at MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 22091, 703/860-4000.

Strings 1994 Resource Guide is a worldwide classified directory of businesses and individuals offering products and services of interest to string players. Copies are available for \$9.95 from The String Letter Press, 412 Red Hill Ave., Suite 16, San Anselmo, CA 94960, 415/485-6946.

The Amateur Chamber Music Players, Inc. (ACMP) has received a major bequest from Clinton B. Ford, with which they intend to establish a grant program to foster chamber music in schools and for promoting in other ways the goals of the organization. ACMP is also seeking an executive director to manage its expanded activities. Interested persons may contact ACMP at 545 8th Ave., New York, NY 10018, 212/244-2778.

CONSORTING, the newsletter of the Vermont Consortium of Composers, appears three or more times a year. The July issue includes "An Introduction to the Performing Right and ASCAP" by Pamela G. Massey, explaining ASCAP's services in collecting performance fees on behalf of member composers, and tells how to join and register one's compositions. (ASCAP is the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, One Lincoln Plaza, New York, NY 10023, 212/621-6239.) It also has a column of user comments on music software, thoughtful short essays and lively correspondence. Memberships, which include a year's subscription, are \$15/year. Write Gilles-Yves Bonneau, Treasurer, 104 South Cove Rd., Burlington, VT 05401.

QUOTES FOUND BY READERS

"What makes us feel drawn to music is that our whole being is music: our mind and our body, the nature in which we live, the nature that has made us, all that is beneath and around us, it is all music. We are close to all this music, and live and move and have our being in music."

—Hazrat Inayat Khan (found by Helen Spielman)

"The performer must accept the responsibility of being an artist and not simply an implementer of rules. Our increasing awareness that an infinity of rules purport to 'govern' the performance of baroque music has sometimes obscured the essentially playful spirit of the age, replacing the exhilarating quest for novelty that often dominated the Baroque with a drive for precision and exactitude."

—Eleanor Selfridge-Field (found by Lee McRae)

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Julie Lyonn Lieberman, author of *You Are Your Instrument: The Definitive Musician's Guide to Practice and Performance* (reviewed July 1991) will give a teacher-training certificate program, "the nation's first technique rehabilitation training seminar," November 13-14 at the Unison Arts and Learning Center in New Paltz, NY. The seminar is intended to develop a core group of professionals equipped to work with musicians who are developing or have sustained muscular injuries. Contact Julie Lyonn Lieberman, 212/724-3256

THE KOLIKA

by Sam Savar

KOLIKA: Scornful Russian word for a disabled person. An inept performer.

The violinist opened his \$3,000.00 case and gently removed the \$250,000.00 Stradivarius. Then the \$15,000.00 Tourte bow. Took his seat at the first violinist stand, and proceeded to lead Opus 127 by Beethoven. And killed it.

"Yet each man kills the thing he loves
...the coward does it with a kiss,
The brave man with a sword."
— Oscar Wilde

"The kolika with a bow."
— Sam Savar

The kolika always wants to play first violin. Even if the other violinist may be Itzhak Perlman.

The kolika, making like a conductor, points out the mistakes of others, decides tempos, etc.

The kolika plays badly. Very badly. And with an accent.

Kolikas are pretentious. They pretend to be what they are not. They pretend to know, and they know not.

Still, it takes one to know one. I was a kolika until I was 30 years old. Some people are naturals, they just do well with or without good instruction. I was not one of them. I was lucky to find a great teacher, Max Aronoff, who turned me around completely, from the worst kolika to being King of the Amateurs and the Despair of Professionals. Every week there is an orgy of chamber music in my house. These consenting adults are the finest musicians accessible to me. I do not seek my equals, I seek my superiors. I can learn from them; they improve me.

Kolikas do not do this. They go on their merry way, killing the thing they profess to love - hey! the thing I love. I never invite them. Are they angry with me? Sure. But I am not guilty. They are. The one who wrongs, is wronged.



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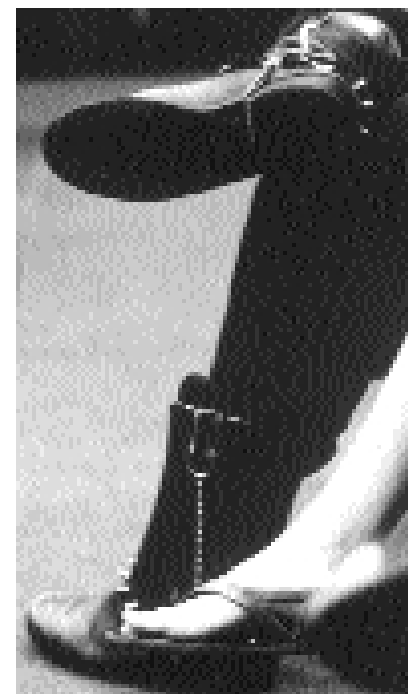
Lon Rosen and Sherry Jakey play Dvorák at Chico Chamber Music Workshop, William Lundin looks on

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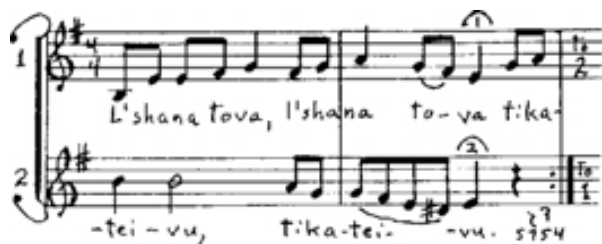
CHICO FAMILY ALBUM Summer 1993, Week 1

Clockwise from left: Helen Dole, Frankie Bates, Bob Stern, Maria Reeves, Nancy Fowler, Elizabeth Siqueira, Joanne De Phillips, Helen again, William Lundin, Nancy again, Joan Garvin, Katie Gilbert, Mary-Mignon Dawber, Elizabeth Martin, Erik Andersen, Jennifer Rapada, Ron Brickman, Felicia Oldfather, Ted Rust.



HAPPY NEW YEAR

by David Goldstein



VIBRATO

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was regarded as a cliché to apply vibrato to every long note. Leopold Mozart may or may not have despised the practice, depending on the subtleties of German translation of his letters to Wolfgang, but if so he was carrying forward a venerable tradition among European teachers of struggling to tamp down the vital energies of their students. (Paul Hindemith was quoted by Jacobson, "I don't know how, with no vibrato, Bach could have had so many sons.") Spohr wrote in 1732 that violinists should avoid frequent use of vibrato, but Geminiani wrote in 1751 that at least a small vibrato should be used "as often as possible" to make the tone more pleasant. The Geminiani school seems to have prevailed to the extent that a continuous small vibrato is present in string music on the earliest records of 19th-century players like Joseph Joachim. On the other hand, a 1907 recording of the renowned French bass Pol Plonçon "displays a tone which, while full-blooded, is as near to being without the disturbance of vibrato as any healthy voice can be" (Steane). And Cecil Forsyth's 1914 classic, *Orchestration*, states it as dogma that woodwinds can only produce vibrato by beating a finger over an open hole below the note.

Western musical taste seemed to reach a major turning point towards a more continuous use of a broader vibrato at the start of the 20th century. The playing of violinist Fritz Kreisler and the singing of Caruso, both extensively recorded, were enormously influential in spreading acceptance of this practice. Greta Moens-Haenen connects the development with the soloists' need to be heard in larger halls, over bigger orchestras, and with the diminishing demands for agility and virtuosity in the operas of Wagner, late Verdi and Puccini. In the twentieth century, the *absence* of vibrato has become a special effect in both operatic singing and orchestral string playing. Orchestral wind technique remains more conservative but also more individualistic. A variable but nearly continuous vibrato is frequently encouraged in the flute, oboe and bassoon. Vibrato is still rarely used in the clarinet and the brass, except in jazz-influenced music. There are differences in national style among woodwinds, with most French

musicians now treating vibrato as an integral part of playing, and some older Eastern European players avoiding it entirely (Jooste).

HOW TO VIBRATE

The human neuromuscular system is characterized by a slight, continuous tremor of about seven to ten cycles per second. In most voices and variable-pitch instruments, this tremor causes a slight but audible variation in both volume and pitch. A natural-sounding vibrato approximates this rate, even if it is voluntarily produced. Happily, a pitch that is fluctuating seven or more times a second will generally be perceived as a single pitch, even if the actual pitch is fluctuating a large part of a semitone, so that a spontaneous vibrato at the natural tremor rate does not confuse the listener. A too-slow vibrato, however, is perceived as a wobble, and too fast is an intensely irritating sound. Just where the main pitch lies is a more difficult matter, however: violinists are often taught to vibrate below the pitch, whereas many woodwinds and singers tend to vibrate above it.

"On string instruments, vibrato is produced by rocking movements of the finger on the string, with the help of the wrist sometimes aided by the forearm." (Donington) Sam Savar (see box, page 7) offers a set of exercises to develop this technique. A two-finger vibrato was sometimes recommended by writers in the Baroque era, especially for fretted instruments like the lute and viol.

Wind players and singers can produce vibrato in at least three ways: by rhythmic movements of the muscles of the abdomen, throat or jaw. Fanie Jooste has clearly demonstrated that any one of the three can work quite effectively on the bassoon, and has measured the specific muscle movements involved with each technique as well as the changes in amplitude and pitch produced by each method. Jooste showed that all three methods can cause similar fluctuations in pitch on the bassoon. Both abdominal and throat vibrato result in significant amplitude fluctuations as well, whereas jaw movements, which disturb the embouchure more than the air supply, cause little change of amplitude. Some teachers advocate a combination of techniques, while others insist on cultivating the abdominal vibrato alone. Oboist Joe Robinson is particularly emphatic in warning wind players against using throat (or diaphragm) muscles to modify the air flow. He feels that using these muscles in opposition to the main abdominal muscles used for exhalation creates unnecessary tension that inhibits fluent playing and can lead to injuries.

VIBRATING TOGETHER

The lush, vibrant tone of a large orchestral string section or chorus is probably a mixture of out-of-phase vibratos and the welter of resulting beats caused by the small dissonant intervals among the voices. When these go

away, the starkness of a pure unison can be hair-raising, as in the traditional *senza vibrato* openings of Debussy's *La Mer* or Vivaldi's *Winter*.

In chamber music, vibrato presents special problems because the ensembles are not large enough to allow the plush, happy randomness of a "Philadelphia Sound" to emerge. In ensemble passages, players must coordinate the speed, breadth and direction of their vibrato, or they simply don't blend, and will usually sound out of tune as well. A fascinating conversation among the members of the Tokyo String Quartet is quoted in *Strings*, (Winter 1988) in which Peter Oundjian confesses "Even the four of us, though we play together constantly, have to jump on these things every few weeks or months. Otherwise our vibratos start going in different directions. . . . When I first joined the quartet, I used to vibrate above the pitch. . . . In 1981, Kazu (Isomura) said: 'You know, you could try to practice pulling your vibrato back. It's not that you're putting your fingers down too high, but when you vibrate, it sounds high.' . . . Well this morning, we were playing some chord, and it wasn't in tune, so we played the notes without vibrato, and it was in tune, and we found Kazu was vibrating above the note and I was vibrating below it."

Vibrato has the potential for great refinement and profound expressiveness in musical performance. Once an "underground" movement, its use has become widespread and respectable. Now it deserves far more attention in music teaching and research.

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YOU CAN LEARN VIBRATO. I DID.

by Sam Savar

I was shown how to do it. Now let me show you.

Jascha Heifetz performed his first recital at age 5. Before that he was a bum. Was Heifetz a violinist of such great renown because Leopold Auer, teacher of Elman, Milstein, Zimbalist, et al. instructed him? Did he learn vibrato from Mr. Auer? According to the story of Auer's teaching of vibrato, it was like this:

The great teacher was presiding over his famous master class. He stopped the pupil presently playing, saying, "I don't like your vibrato. Start again." The pupil played again, was stopped again. After the third try, the noted teacher said pontifically, "I told you I don't like your vibrato. Don't use it."

That's a teacher? Max Aronoff, a truly great teacher and exquisite performer, told me, "Sam, I don't like your vibrato. I'll teach you." Below is his method. IT WORKS.

THE VIBRATO CONCERTO

Practice this "music" faithfully, and you'll be surprised how it can soon become as natural to you as breathing. Use your fingers and wrist, not your arm.

Play all the notes with the first finger. You approximate a half tone higher, then a half tone lower. The finger bends like mad. You are learning to vibrate, by the numbers so to speak. This procedure is to be done by each of the other three fingers, individually. (C, D and E, of course.)



It's not Beethoven, but you'll play Beethoven better.



quite sure what they are. I hadn't yet learned to play notes in the third register, where the fingerings are all different from their counterparts in the middle and lower registers.

WELL, AT LEAST I COULD COUNT

Given that handicap, I did the best I could. About the only thing I could do was to keep strict timing. I did a lot of waiting and very little playing. Wait, wait, wait. Ah, here comes a note I know. Blow. Oops! Got to skip that one. And that one. Here's another one I know. Finger it right, get ready to blow.

More than half the band members were high school kids who must have been tooting on their instruments since they were in diapers. These kids were playing them like they did this every day of their lives. They even had time to talk to each other between notes.

Back home, I spent hours studying the music with the Rubank finger chart taped to the wall. Every time I came across a note I didn't know, I would study the finger chart and commit the fingering to what I hoped would not be short-term memory. It was a slow process. By midnight, I was still at it. My lips were numb, my back and neck were sore, and I had barely gone through half the music.

Rehearsals were every day during lunch break, so that working parents like me could participate. After a week of rehearsals, I was playing much better, and was actually not afraid to be heard. In addition to the daily rehearsals, we began, after the first week, playing three weeks of twice-weekly concerts in the park, culminating in the July 4th extravaganza before the fireworks. After that, the band would disband. So, it was four weeks of commitment and intensive practice. I could survive that.

WHAT TO WEAR?

Before the first concert, I asked about dress code and was told, "No dress code. Wear anything you like." When I showed up wearing a blouse and skirt, I was overdressed. All the kids were wearing cut-offs, jeans with holes, and bandanas around their heads. I've never seen a more raggedy band.

The first concert was exciting. People were sitting on lawn chairs or blankets picnicking next to the pond, with ducks, geese, children and dogs running around. It was a bit windy, but we all came prepared with clothes pins to keep the music in place. The weather was just right and everybody was in a good mood. I could see the faces of the audience, many of whom were my friends and neighbors. I could even wave back to them between numbers.

The next concert didn't go so well. I had a hard day at work and as 5 o'clock rolled around, I felt the beginning of a headache. I thought of not playing the concert, but since there were only two of us playing second flute that evening, I couldn't let my stand partner down. Half an hour before the concert, I took a couple of pain-killers.

It was disastrous! During the concert, I found to my horror that I couldn't remember even the simplest fingerings. I was playing so many wrong notes that my stand partner became confused and kept asking the conductor to retune because she was sure we weren't in tune to begin with. I told her I was playing in tune. They were just wrong notes.

The conductor was throwing warning looks in my direction. Even the ducks were quacking their disapproval. At the next rehearsal, I sat on pins and needles waiting for the conductor to fire me. But he didn't. Instead, he checked the tuning of each and every flute player, approving me quickly while spending more time with others. He probably never realized this, but he had completely restored my confidence.

AEOLUS' REVENGE

July 4th was festive with most of the town out to see the fireworks. There were hot-dog and hamburger stands playing loud, recorded music of various types. Our conductor somehow managed to get people to turn off their radios and tape-players before we played.

Everything went well until a strong gust of wind knocked down several stands and music flew all over. The audience was cooperative in helping to retrieve stands and music. I kept my legs wrapped around my stand like a cello player around his instrument and was spared the embarrassment of having to chase after flying music. However, strands of my own and other's hair kept getting blown into my face. I would play my notes and spit out hair during the rests. It was a hair-spitting concert.

But everybody took it in good spirit. The band kept playing through the chaos. People were having fun chasing after the conductor's hat and escaped music. Musicians were laughing at themselves and each other. We played a rousing finale of "America the Beautiful" to thunderous applause.

My teacher returned from her vacation and asked how it went. I told her I loved playing in the community band. I would do it again next summer.

Violin and flute player Kok Heong McNaughton is a regular contributor to Music for the Love of It. She lives in Los Alamos, NM, where she works in nuclear physics research.

NEW MUSIC CLEARINGHOUSE

This department will reappear whenever composers inform us of additional pieces they would like to have played. See this month's Letters for one composer's results. Listings should identify the title, instrumentation and level of difficulty of each piece.



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MONARCH

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lot of time. I see myself as part of an educational partnership, responsible for knowing the *tools* of education and providing them to the teachers who use them to communicate to their students."

I observed that Victor must stay extremely busy from the 50 calls he handles every day plus the walk-in business. He responded, "Yes, I stay busy, especially this time of year when school is starting. I went home last night and had my lunch. And my next day off isn't for another six weeks." So why does he do it? "I am truly excited about what I do and enjoy the variety. When I help people, I feel successful. The entire staff here at Burrage is dedicated and we function as a team. No one gets a commission, so we focus on the customers' needs. Sometimes a customer sings a small snatch of a melody and wants me to find it. I'll ask another staff person for help if I can't figure it out. We help each other, because people depend on us for thousands of dollars of their budget. Sometimes the staff even has potlucks together on the weekends."

I asked if he ever gets complaints from customers. "Although most people are generally positive, sometimes we do get complaints. How I handle that depends on the nature of the complaint. If the customer is upset with me personally, I take it personally. You can't have the tremendous joy without the enormous responsibility."

Victor told me how much Burrage Music Company is committed to serving the needs of its customers. Once an elderly lady called, asking for the music for "Taps." She wanted it for the funeral of her husband, a retired soldier. The armed services would not send someone to play it, and it is not a published song. So one of the staff people at Burrage who plays trumpet made a cassette recording of "Taps" for her. Every year, the store publishes the piano contest list in large print for teachers who are visually impaired. The staff tries to work with customers' deadlines, even though sometimes someone will ask for a song for their wedding — and the wedding is scheduled for the next day.

I am blessed to have Victor Denny as a friend and colleague. I admire his intelligence, dedication, kindness and humor. Once, in a fit of gratitude and silliness, I told him that he was the King of all music store people in the world. Since then, when he does something beyond the call of duty, I "promote" him, and he has now reached the level of Associate Emperor. (This is one of those sickening ongoing jokes between us.) Thank you, Your Royal Majesty, for being you.

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Flutist Helen Spielman lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina..

FROM THE HEART THE MONARCH OF MUSIC

by Helen Spielman

For eight years during my late twenties and early thirties, I did not take my flute out of its case. At the end of that long break, I tried tentative notes and simple melodies, but the first serious piece I wanted to play was the Pachelbel Canon. I called Burrage Music Company in Raleigh, North Carolina, and a man with a particularly pleasant voice told me there was a good arrangement of the Canon in such- and-such a book. He volunteered to send it for my perusal, and the book was in my hands the very next day.

Since then, I have called Victor Denny hundreds of times, not only for myself, but for my students as well. I talk to him at least once a week, and visit the store several times a year (it's almost an hour from my home). When I watch him work, I see how efficiently he moves. He doesn't turn a page in a music catalog, he *flips* it. He doesn't climb to the top shelves of the music stacks, he *jumps* up. I ask Victor to research pieces for me; I ask his advice about what book is appropriate for a student with a specific need, or where to find lyrics or hymns. Victor and I have become good friends over the years, sharing bits and pieces of our lives; I tell him where my husband and I ate dinner last night, he tells me that his wife got a new job as an elementary school music teacher. He calls me on my birthday. I send him Christmas cards and copies of the articles I write for Music for the Love Of It. We have some "in" jokes between us and we tease each other *ad nauseam*.

Victor says that when I call him I brighten his day. That is not much to give, compared to all the exceptional things he's done for me. He sends me newly published

music he thinks I might like. I once requested flashcards that included the high C on the flute. None existed, so Victor *made* me a set of cards, enlarging the notes, printing them on colored paper and laminating them. When I told him I wanted to use some lyrics in an upcoming Music for the Love Of It article, he located the lyrics for me and gave me detailed information on how to secure copyright permission, complete with the publisher's address and phone number.

One Saturday, I needed to make a last minute change in a student's recital piece. Victor walked to the post office and mailed my package to me, so he wouldn't have to wait until Monday to send it from the store.

Another time, I called him in a panic. "Victor, I've lost the flute part to my solo for next Sunday! What should I do? I know you don't carry this piece regularly. Help, I'm desperate!" Victor calmly told me that there is no flute part, reminded me with amusement that I was playing the vocal line, and didn't make me feel like an idiot (I'd done a pretty good job of that myself).

Victor has Bachelor and Master of Music degrees in Percussion Performance (and now plays keyboards). He worked for Carl Fischer Music Publishers in Boston for five years, and came to Burrage in 1984 as the Manager of the Band and Instrumental Department. "My first responsibility is to file the material we get from the publishers. Second, I reorder material and adjust the quantity according to demand. Third, I have to know the material so that if customers ask for a recommendation with certain criteria, I can save them a

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