

MUSIC FOR THE LOVE OF IT

APRIL 1996



LiveOak Workshops (see page 3)

MAKING MUSIC WITH A SEVERE HEARING LOSS

by Wendy Cheng

Violinist Wendy Cheng describes here how she learned to perform music with very limited hearing. How similar her problems are to those of hearing musicians. Who hasn't shared the shock and confusion she experienced in her first orchestra rehearsal? How similar, too, are the strategies that work best for her.

My hearing loss was caused by an ototoxic drug at the age of two and was discovered during a routine screening at school when I was nine. I have no residual hearing in my right ear and I cannot make out intelligible speech or music without wearing a hearing aid in my left ear. The hearing aid has its limitations. It makes speech and music reception satisfactory at a low volume setting, but to distinguish the tone quality and resonance of my violin accurately, the volume has to be set higher than I like. In the interest of hearing conservation, I shut off my hearing aid when I do not need to hear.

My mother loves piano, and I took several years of piano lessons in grade school. But I wanted to study the violin. It sounded so lovely and warm when it was played well . . . I had a strong desire to call it "my instrument." When I finally started violin lessons in college, I knew I was in unexplored territory due to the severity of my hearing loss. I never dreamed that I would be playing in an orchestra or taking string quartet lessons some years later. This article covers the special problems I have faced so far in solo and ensemble playing.

continued on page 6

CECILE CHAMINADE'S PIANO TRIO No. 1

by Mary Alice Mote

Cecile Chaminade (1857-1944) is now known mainly for her piano solo, *Scarf Dance*, which sold over 5,000,000 copies,¹ and her lovely *Concertino for Flute*. In her time, she was also known as a prolific and respected composer of orchestral and chamber music, popular songs, ballets and comic operas. Her two trios for piano, violin and cello are fine works. *Trio No. 1, opus 11*, in particular, should be heard more often. It is both beautiful and playable.

Chaminade was born in Paris in 1857. She studied with Benjamin Godard. She was a friend of Bizet and wife of the editor Louis Carbonel. Performing her own compositions, she made a highly acclaimed concert tour of the United States in 1908, where she learned that "feminine admirers . . . had formed more than 200 Chaminade Clubs."² During the Second World War she was "deprived of her royalties by the German occupation (because) her Jewish publishers in Paris had been liquidated."³ She died in comparative obscurity in Monte Carlo in 1944. *Trio No. 1, opus 11* is a youthful work, published in the 1870s.

Chaminade opens the exposition section of the first movement suddenly, with an expanding, arpeggiated g-minor theme in the piano and cello. The theme then is argued by the two strings:



Cecile Chaminade



continued on page 8

LETTERS

TAX WRITEOFFS

I am a devoted and enthusiastic amateur horn player (I guess that's a little redundant) and do a lot of playing for good causes. For example, I sometimes volunteer my services playing in the pit of community theater orchestras even though most of the other players are freelancers who are getting paid. (Just so you don't think I'm stealing jobs from professional freelancers, I'm usually told by the musical directors that given the limited budget, they would otherwise do the show without a horn). I also play in several groups that do fund raisers. I've been wondering if there's some way of declaring these services as a charitable contribution. Is it legal? If so, what sort of paperwork is required?

I attended the ACPMP workshop at Lincoln Center (an incredible experience!), at which I met Dan Nimetz, who was kind enough to ask the ACPMP accountant my question. He affirmed that one cannot declare donation of services as a tax-deductible contribution, but one can get paid, return the money, and declare that donation as a contribution.

Marc Wager
New Rochelle, NY

LASSEN LOOP

I found Karen Lassen's article about a violin support in the February 1996 issue very interesting. I have been having severe discomfort lately with my chin and shoulder and have been looking for a solution.

Lou Bole
Maspeth, NY

For string players interested in the "Lassen Loop," (February, 1996) but who may not like having the coil around their neck, I have made a variation that folds over the left shoulder and extends down to the scapula. Attached to the end of the loop, to counterbalance the weight of the instrument, is a 4-oz. lead fishing sinker. So the "Lassen Loop" now comes leaded or unleaded.

Karen Lassen
Oakland, CA

My husband Miguel made both viola and violin "Lassen Loops" for me, based upon Karen Lassen's design described in the February issue. The violin loop was more successful for me than the viola loop. But I think a fundamental component requirement for success is having a shoulder pad high enough. Without it, the violin also droops too much. Even so, using the loop did minimize the pressure needed by the chin. Finally, I was somewhat inconvenienced by having my instrument up all the time since taking off the instrument-with-loop requires both hands.

The viola may be a bit heavy for this device. The viola droops a lot without some help from the left hand, although the loop did let me hold my instrument up with my hand and not my chin, which I found easier and more secure.

The Lassen Loop may be the perfect short-term solution to muscle strain and tension. For me, a longer term approach would be to attend a Kato Havas workshop and work toward a better balance of my instruments to avoid future problems.

Nori Hudson
Berkeley, CA

ENSEMBLE ATTITUDE

Editor:

A while back I was required to take a course in connection with my job. It was on "acquisitions," whatever that is. The instructor put a slide up first entitled "How to Get the Most out of the Course." About halfway through the slide it dawned on me that this was a perfect prescription for a good chamber music session. The points were:

1. Enter into the discussion
2. Share your experiences
3. Listen very carefully
4. Be patient with other people
5. Stay on the topic
6. Be receptive to new ideas from others.

I couldn't have come up with a better list myself if my life depended on it! I wonder if the instructor was an amateur chamber music player.

Joe Horner
Belmont, MA

MUSICAL FAMILY REUNION

In 1994 my dad invited all of his 5 children and a cousin of mine to join him for a week at the Orlando Festival and we had a very musical family reunion. For a whole week an all-Bonebakker group rehearsed the *Suite d'Argent* by Herman Strategier which Dad commissioned for his silver wedding anniversary in 1957. We performed it in the Rolduc concert hall and again a week later for my 25th wedding anniversary. It was a memorable performance.

At 88, Dad has every reason to celebrate a lifetime dedicated to music. My cousin Annelies performed the soprano part, formerly sung by my mother. Thanks to some excellent coaching by Josje ter Haar and 38 years of maturing and experience among the players, we reached a level of musical proficiency never heard before. Rarely if ever does a family reunite later in life without spouses or children. It was as if time had stood still; we relived our past and experienced family

MORE WORKSHOPS

dynamics that had been all but forgotten. We also realized that after all these years we still have so much in common and so much to share. I enclose a picture taken at the Rolduc Abbey in July 1994.

Standing from left to right are Mouringh (vln), Boudewine (p), Tyne (vlc), Annelies (sop), Lodewijk (Dad, fl) and seated Marijke (p) and Joop (fl).



Dad and I met again last August at Wellesley College (Composers Conference) near Boston Massachusetts. We were impressed by the beauty of the campus and its facilities (34 Steinways in the music centre!) We never packed so much chamber music playing in one week and had some great coached sessions as well. In this respect, Orlando is quite different. Participants register as a (well rehearsed) group and work on the same piece throughout the week. This includes considerable time without coach. The end result is a depth of music making not found in other summer programmes, but also less opportunity for in promptu sight reading sessions. I guess it all depends what you prefer.

Tyne Bonebakker
Kleinburg, Ontario, Canada

LiveOak Workshops

Intimate weekend and week-long retreats in Boston, Massachusetts, or Antrim, New Hampshire, for singers and plucked strings (guitar and its ancestors). Each session includes master classes, ensemble coaching and work on individual performance skills. They are held all year. Schedule, location and fees vary; call for a current schedule. Contact LiveOak and Company (Nancy Knowles, Frank Wallace and others), 75 Bridle Rd., Antrim, NH 03340, 603/588-6121, e-mail <parsons@msopwi.enet.dec.com>.

Chamber Music Associates

A weekly chamber music workshop for adult amateur musicians who want to get back to music or improve their skills, Wednesday evenings from October through May, at 129 West 67th St. in New York City. Prospective members are welcome to visit, but should call to confirm that there is a session when they plan to come. No audition is required. Members should be intermediate or better players on piano, violin, viola, cello, flute, clarinet, oboe or horn. Workshop meetings are coached by faculty and supported by professional players as needed. The program has been in existence 40 years. Director is Barbara Keller, author of "Conquering Stage Fright". Faculty members include Lily Friedman, Suzan Schwartz and Ivonne Hicks. Music facilities include ten rooms with piano(s) and an extensive sheet music library. Contact persons: Rita Shuster Tel: 718/434-0171 Ivan Kadar, 2 Willben Lane, Plainview, NY 11803, e-mail <kadari@sunynassau.edu>.

CAMMAC Spring Weekend

Cedar Glen, Ontario, Canada

April 26-28, 1996

CAMMAC (Canadian Amateur Musician Association) is having a chamber music weekend at Cedar Glen, near Bolton, just north of Toronto. Intended for wind/string players and pianists to get together with friends and colleagues to enjoy chamber music playing. Participants are encouraged to form their own groups ahead of time. Unattached players will be matched with others of similar ability. An afternoon performance is possible on the last day. Accommodations and food are included. Call Doris Tanter at 416/924-1938 or e-mail <CAMMAC@io.org>.

Bear Valley-Tehachapi Chamber Music Weekend

Bear Valley Springs, CA

May 24-27, 1996

Assigned groups and pieces Saturday, informal concert and dinner, barbecue and jam session Sunday. Condos and cabin rentals are available. Write Deborah Hand, 27901 Hale Ct., Tehachapi, CA 93561, with a stamped

continued on page 4

WORKSHOPS

continued from page 3

return envelope or call 805/821-2143.

Dakota Chamber Music

Minot, North Dakota, June 5-11, 1996

Adult amateur program June 7-9, 1996

A string chamber music workshop for students and adults, with the Ying Quartet in residence and concurrent university-level courses in chamber music by the Minot State University faculty. Jon Rumney, Director. Contact Lynne Rumney, MSU Music Division, 500 University Ave. W., Minot ND 58707, 800/777-0750.

Kato Havas New Approach Workshop

Brattleboro, Vermont, June 23-29, 1996

Lecture-demonstrations and daily master classes exploring the physical and mental problems inherent in string playing and ways of dealing with them based on an understanding of inward-to-outward energy impulses. Special emphasis will be given to repetitive strain injury, tendinitis and related physical problems. All participants receive individual attention from Ms. Havas and are invited to perform in master classes. Open to string teachers, students and performers at all levels. Contact Virginia Fleet, Vermont New Approach, RR 4, Box 806, Brattleboro, VT 05301, 802/245-9138.

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Music Discovery Workshop is designed to help musical parents, grandparents or teachers introduce young children to music. It is open to adults and to children aged 7-12. The focus is on Renaissance England, with instruction in song, dance, recorder, harpsichord and creative drama, and a professional clown on the faculty. Contact the San Francisco Early Music Society, PO Box 10151, Berkeley, CA 94709, 510/528-1725, e-mail sfems@sfems.org.

Music Institute for the Development of a Personal Style

Ashland, Oregon, June 23-27, 1996

Led by The Encore Duo, Sherry Kloss, violin, and Mark Wescott, piano. Admission as a participant is by taped audition. Contact The Encore Duo, 55 Pompadour Dr., Ashland, OR 97520.

Circle of Song

Cortes Island, British Columbia, August 25-30, 1996

Jazz singer Rhiannon focuses this workshop for singers on building strength, dexterity, range, endurance and courage. She will guide participants through exercises that develop skills in listening, harmony, creating melody and interlocking parts, and attention to rhythmic patterns. Contact Hollyhock, PO Box 1616, Blaine, WA 98231, hollyhock@oberon.ark.com

Westminster Choir College of Rider University

Princeton, NJ, all summer, 1996

Westminster offers a recorder weekend June 21-23 and a wide variety of courses in choral technique, repertoire, accompaniment, conducting and training through August 9. Call 609/924-7416, ext. 227 for a brochure.

CTMS 16th Annual Folk Festival

Calabasas, CA, June 21-23, 1996

Short workshops by the performers, informal jam sessions, folk dancing, storytelling and crafts fair. A choice of camping or hotels. Contact the California Traditional Music Society at



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GIFTS OF MUSIC

Yesterday I went to the hospital to visit a vibrant forty-ish friend, a singer, songwriter and guitar player, who was hit by a car two weeks ago. She is expected to be paralyzed below the waist. I took my flute with me and asked her if she wanted me to play. She was most eager, saying that she didn't feel like being social anyway, so for about 40 minutes I played soothing music. She had her eyes closed and seemed happy and relaxed. When I left the hospital, I felt grateful that I know how to play this beautiful instrument, and that I've been given the ability to give someone like my friend a gift of the spirit. Those 40 minutes were a better gift for her than anything I could have bought in a store. We didn't talk much before or after, but I left feeling that she and I had connected deeply; I felt our love for one another.

This experience prompted me to ask other musicians about ways they've given musical gifts. I posed the question to friends and on the Internet. Jim Cleere, who sings with an Iowa gospel group, related this story: "In the fall of 1992, our group was invited to sing for a nursing home. We went there on one of those cold snowy Iowa Sunday afternoons when you would just as soon be in front of the TV or sipping warm apple cider. We sang old hymns, and afterward each person smiled and expressed the tremendous meaning of each of our songs: this hymn was played at their wedding, that song was their husband's favorite. . . The power of music transformed them. Just as baking bread takes you back to your first memory of that smell, music transformed them, for a moment, into their younger selves. I hope that in the future, when I am wheeled into that room, another person or group is standing there ready to perform. And I hope that our contact will be as rewarding to them as mine was to me."

Randolph Case, the director of the Atlanta Center of Music for Healing and Transition, wrote: "Our mountain dulcimer group came up with the idea of sharing our music with folks at a home for the profoundly retarded. The excited little group was made up of mostly beginning players, although two people thought that nothing 'amateurish' was suitable for a 'public performance.' But everyone did show up at the appointed hour. We made some mistakes and couldn't tell for certain that our music was getting through. We had just started our third song, 'Greensleeves,' when a young woman in the front row, who had been severely contorted, sat up and started to sing. She sang through the whole song, all the verses, right with us on pitch and tempo. After she finished, there wasn't a dry eye in the house, including the two who thought we weren't ready to play for anyone. The nurse told us later that this was

the first intelligible sound she had ever heard from the young woman. We meant to share the gift of music with the people we played for. We didn't expect the gift we received."

Susan Dirks-Henry lives in Apple Valley, Minnesota. She plays her harp for sick and premature babies in the Special Care Nursery. Each time a new baby is brought in, she composes a song especially for him or her just as she imagines the angels did for us upon our births. One baby's family was so touched that they invited her to play at their baby's baptism.

Music accompanies us from birth to death. My friend Mark Smith told me about the song he wrote for his mother who was dying of cancer. The song is about how precious life is, that there's nothing wrong with dying, and that all souls are connected even beyond death. "The cancer was making communication hard for her," Mark told me, "but she could hear fine. During my last visit to her, I played my guitar and sang the song for her and our family. We were all clearing our eyes and breathing deep, letting the feelings flow, releasing and yet maintaining concentration on the song as it took us through some kind of passage. Now, two years later, I'm still so glad that my Mom knew that we would miss her and but that she was free to go."

My friend Ellen Zimmerli, who often plays her flute as a gift at weddings, tells of when two of her best friends performed at her wedding. "Donna played some Bach sonatas on flute and Jane sang 'Ave Maria.' The music was so beautiful. I was in tears during most of the ceremony. I believe that the music was one of my most beautiful gifts which will last forever and take up no space on any cabinet, yet will always take a big space in my heart."

Peter Mason lives in Australia, is an amateur musician, and has a day job totally unrelated to music. Three of his co-workers asked him to teach them basic musicianship and to play the recorder, so he has a class for them at lunchtime every Monday. He charges them nothing, but says, "It's a real buzz for me, and a thrilling new experience for them. It's my gift to them."

Barbara Duhl-Emswiler gave a surprise gift to her co-workers at her first company party. "We had the party at our CEO's home, a beautiful contemporary residence atop Seattle's Queen Anne Hill with views from Mt. Rainier to the islands in Puget Sound. Our office manager, who arranged the party, was secretive about the entertainment, saying it was a surprise. I got there early, set up my harp, and then just hung out as a guest until later. It was great fun to hear all the speculation about who this mystery harpist was going to be! And it was equally fun to see the reactions of my co-workers

continued on page 6

when they found out it was me! I hadn't worked there very long and most people didn't know I played."

"It was Christmas, and I was almost broke," related Sonia Rosen of Ambler, Pennsylvania. "I didn't know what to give my parents. My father had been learning the song 'Longer,' a love song by Dan Fogelberg. He loved it and often sang it to my mother. I play piano, so for more than two months I worked on that song, figuring out my own dynamics and putting all my feelings into it. I recorded it and decorated the cassette cover myself. I made a tape for each of my parents so that they could use the song to feel the love between them wherever they went. My parents said it was the best present they ever got."

When Gina Cox from Minnesota woke up on her sixteenth birthday, four of her girl friends came into her room with their instruments, a bassoon, flute, violin, and piccolo, and played "Happy Birthday" to wake her up. My own 10-year-old student, Christine Perry, played her flute for her grandparents' 50th wedding anniversary, lovingly decorated the sheet music with a special program on her computer, and framed it to present to them as a memento.

Sometimes the gift of music is given publicly, for charity. Calla Fireman, a Canadian flutist, played for five hours at a Cut-A-Thon sponsored by hairdressers who cut hair all night long, to help raise \$2,000 for AIDS patients. Sometimes the gift is intimate, like the one from Stephen Duncan of Portales, New Mexico, who "has been known to have dinner with a special friend - flowers, candlelight, and cuddling her next to me as I play my Celtic harp just for her."

Tim Brimmer, a professor of music education and technology at Butler University in Indianapolis, puts it wonderfully. "I sing John Denver songs to my wife when she has cramps. I sing lullabies to my children at bedtime, and soothing folk songs when they've been hurt. Music is a gift to be shared. I find great joy in giving the gift of song to people young and old. I have the joy of seeing the fruits of my labor spring up in the faces of newlyweds and church members. I have seen the tears of deepest passion pour down the cheeks of nuns in Germany while conducting liturgical music. I've seen Italian girls swoon while being serenaded by a barbershop quartet. I've seen proud parents burst into applause in response to their children's performance of difficult repertoire. I've seen human prejudice converted to respect during intense rehearsals, and I've seen respect turn into deep admiration during performances. Yes, music is a beautiful gift to give, and I'm a very happy person because of it."

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Tuning

One of the fears my mother had when I began was "You will not be able to tune your instrument!" Well, I was positive that there was more to violin playing than just tuning it so I decided I would somehow cross that bridge when I came to it. It was a relief to discover that even hearing students cannot tune their own instrument when they first begin! I am learning to tune my violin the way hearing people do . . . use a piano or a Seiko metronome which sounds the A to tune the A string, then tune all other strings from that benchmark A. I still need assistance to get the A tuned properly, but I have a fairly good idea of what sounds consonant and what sounds dissonant for all of the other other strings, so that is coming along okay. I do not think I will ever be able to tune the A well by myself, but I try not to worry too much about that.

Intonation

Intonation was and still is a more difficult problem for me, and I am very sensitive about this issue. Sometimes, I feel like throwing up my hands in despair when my quartet teacher tells me that my D sharp is too sharp or the phrase I just played was slightly flat. When I first started playing the violin, I soon discovered that octaves of the open string notes (G, D, A, E) would have this ringing sound and I quickly learned to associate the ringing sound with having achieved the right pitch. I listen for intervals (i.e. major thirds, fifths, octaves, etc.) that should sound consonant (smooth as silk) and not dissonant (like two pieces of sandpaper rubbing against each other).

Unfortunately, I became obsessed with getting perfect intonation and for a long time, "fished" to get to the exact notes. Now, I am learning to trust my reflexes and leave my fingers down. This technique seems to keep notes in tune more often. I also know now that even hearing students have intonation problems (which makes me feel better).

In December of 1992, after much cajoling from my private violin teacher, I finally decided to move up to a

MFP AD

better violin, from the the low grade student model I had. This search for a new violin turned out to be really interesting. I did not really understand what I was missing until I started trying better models and discovered I could get better resonance in third position on some of the models. After trekking to three violin shops in the Washington area and trying out at least twelve violins, I finally found a violin I was completely satisfied with and have never regretted buying.

Dynamics

A third problem which many hard of hearing or deaf music students face (regardless of what instrument they play) is understanding the dynamics of a piece. How loud is *forte* and how soft is *piano*? Sometimes I cannot tell the difference between subtle shades in volume, such as the difference between *mezzo piano* and *piano*, or between *piano* and *pianissimo*. I have learned that I tend to play my music on the loud side and need to compensate. I consider a marking of *ppp* as playing so softly that I cannot hear myself playing and need to compensate by using my imagination.

Playing in Small Ensembles

Ensemble coordination is a challenge for me in chamber music. In the absence of a conductor, I have learned to observe any body language the other players are conveying and to sit where I can see and hear the other players as well as possible.

My experience in playing chamber music has had its ups and downs. In 1990, I played second violin in a string trio with one other violin student and a violist. I did not sight-read well at that time and I also had trouble keeping up in this group. It seems that no matter what part I played in a string trio or quartet, having the other players situated to my left would be helpful, since my left ear is my better ear. In my trio, the violist was sitting to my left and the first violinist was sitting to my right some feet away. I did not realize until much later that I was not picking up the melody as well as I could have.

In 1991, I started playing first violin in a string quartet and the seating arrangement is such that the other

players (especially the second violin) are located to my left. I usually can hear the cello, but sometimes the notes do not come through well, so I use peripheral vision to see the cellist's bow strokes. And I try to listen for something which will help me, such as a passage in which the cellist is playing straight quarter notes.

At one point, from 1992 to 1993, I tried playing second violin again. Normally I wear only my aid in my left ear, but after a few sessions, it was clear I was not picking up enough sound from others (especially the first violin) to hang together with the group. So I finally gave in and attached my bicos wire to my aid. (The bicos wire is attached to my aid on the left end and to a small microphone on the right end. The small microphone is contoured to fit over my right ear. What this does is to route sound stimuli over from the right to the left so I can hear just a bit better the sound coming from the right.) Normally I hear the resonance of my violin much better without the wire but in this case hanging together with the rest of the group was more important. In addition to the bicos wire, seating myself so that I can use my peripheral vision to see others and doing a lot of counting enabled me to play second violin this time with more success.

Playing in an Orchestra

My own attempts at participating in any kind of large musical group were not very successful at first. In elementary school, I had an opportunity to take group lessons on a recorder-like instrument with my classmates, but I had to quit after a few lessons because I was not able to follow the teacher's verbal instructions as she moved around the room. Then in high school, I auditioned for the choir and was accepted as a second alto. A few days before the first performance, the guidance counselor tactfully informed me that the choir director said I could not distinguish pitch as well as she expected, and requested that I silently mouth the words. I chose to leave the choir. Notwithstanding those bad experiences, I still dreamed of playing violin in an orchestra some day.

That dream become reality in 1989 when I signed up for an orchestra workshop for beginning and intermediate adult string students living in the Washington DC area. The first class was a big shock: I had to sight-read, play the music and follow the conductor while not letting the other players overwhelm me. I kept getting lost.

When I look back to that first workshop, I feel lucky that I had a very patient and enthusiastic teacher who sat in one place during the rehearsals and did not mind repeating instructions if I did not get it the first time, as well as helpful classmates and a private violin teacher who worked with me on difficult passages. I discovered

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continued on page 8

HEARING LOSS

continued from page 7

that it was easier for me to play when others playing the same part were sitting next to me. Meeting a new hard of hearing friend who was a viola student also made the whole experience even more special. I felt less alone in my attempts to accomplish my goals.

I took the workshop for the second time in June 1990. At first, I was upset at being assigned to sit in the back row in the second violin section. During all of my classes in public schools, I had *always* sat in the front to hear better, so this new seating arrangement was hard to accept. During one of our rehearsals, however, I realized that I could easily use my peripheral vision from my seating position to see the teacher's conducting signs and did not have to look up from the music. I slowly realized that if I sat up front, I really have to adjust the stand so I can see the conductor. I think this realization proved to be a turning point in my progress and I got lost less and less often. I have also learned to count better and to maintain a balance between listening to myself and listening to the other sections.

In January 1993, I made my first foray into a real community orchestra . . . and experienced the greatest amount of hardship I ever had trying to play in a musical ensemble. Far from my friendly, non-threatening adult orchestra workshop, I became painfully aware of my place in the pecking order in the string section of a real orchestra. Sitting 20 feet away from the conductor I strained to hear the conductor telling jokes and announcements as well as letting us know how she wanted the music to be played. Never in my life have I felt so desperately the need for a sign language interpreter to sit nearby and interpret for me during each three-hour rehearsal and I was too shy to ask the the conductor to wear the transmitter of my FM system. (It would be enormously helpful to hearing-impaired musicians if their hearing colleagues and the conductor learn to sign the numbers and letters.) I also discovered that I would need to sit on the outside stand, since I hear better from my left ear. By the end of the season, I became brave enough to ask whoever was my stand partner for the evening to quickly confirm what I thought I heard, especially important things like our next starting point.

The only thing that kept me going during that spring season was the fact that I was growing musically. We had all the instrumentation at every rehearsal. We rehearsed at near performance tempo. And the music! No more simplified arrangements: we did Beethoven's overture to *The Creatures of Prometheus* and Mendelssohn's *First Symphony* in the original versions. Once you have played such music you want more of it.

Performing in Public

In an actual performance situation many new factors are

added to the picture. The acoustics of the hall are important. I have played in magnificent drawing rooms and concert halls where I could hear well. I have also played in a church where I could barely hear my violin teacher accompany me on a violin duet (I had to ask him to move closer). When the acoustics are not as good as I want, there is not much I can do but do my best anyway and ask God to take care of the rest. Another factor is tuning the instrument before a performance, when there is a cacophony of sound and I do not trust my ear to do a good comparison of my strings with everyone else's. I try to tune my instrument before the rehearsal and the actual performance. Sometime I find a nice person who has a little time and can help me tune.

My orchestra workshop had just finished its concert when Bonnie came over to congratulate me, speaking and signing at the same time. "Wendy, that was a great performance! . . . But how can you tune your instrument with everyone else? I wouldn't be able to hear myself in the middle of all that noise!" I smiled fondly at my best friend. Hard of hearing like me, Bonnie could quickly realize what problems I might face in a musical ensemble. I gave her a mischievous look. "Actually, there are a few tricks I have learned . . ."

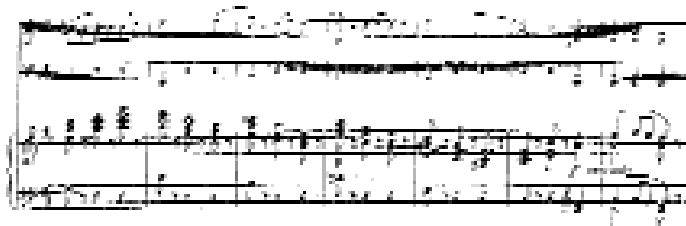
Wendy Cheng lives with her husband and daughter in



CHAMINADE

continued from page 1

Just as suddenly, she changes mood with the *grazioso* second theme, hinting of reconciliation. Some will consider this reminiscent of the second theme of "The Scarf Dance":



In the development section, the soft murmurings of the instruments accompanying the vigorous, strident first



theme promise a happy ending:

Rampant chromaticism is added above the murmurings, briefly obscuring the promised resolution. However, perfect harmony enraptures the recapitulation in a crescendo of bliss.



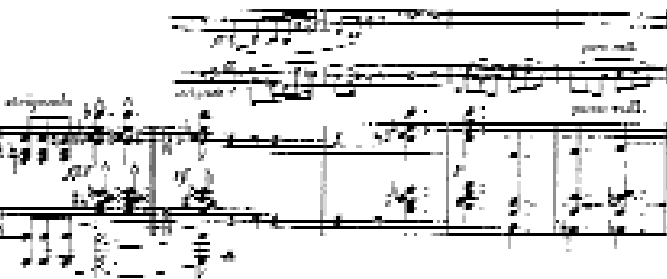
The *Presto leggero* of the third movement in G major is technically demanding for the piano, but the cascades of 16th notes provide a scintillating frolic with the assistance of the strings.

The second movement is in ABA form in the key of E-flat major. Entering, the cello sings a simple, lyrical melody, meeting the violin to soar with it to the upper stratosphere, culminating with the piano providing the heart throb in a moment of repose which not only gives

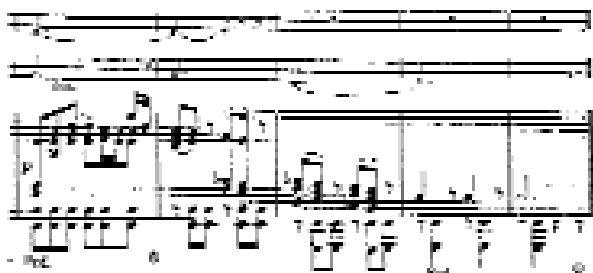


a premonition of a storm, but of a type of melody arrangement associated three decades later with Andre

Don't start the *Allegro molto agitato* of the fourth movement too agitato — there's danger ahead in the six sharp middle section for the strings, and again when



Previn:



A lovers' outburst erupts, but subsides almost as quickly as it started:

ending in the warm afterglow in the piano, which has the last word.

they play tag with each other in g minor:

All's well that ends well in a spectacular ending that warrants a "Brava" to a recipient of the Legion of Honor.

Notes

1. TIME, May 1, 1944
2. Etude, August, 1952, "Composer of the Month".
3. Kerr, Laura, *Scarf Dance*, Abelard Press, N.Y. 1953.

Disc: *Chamber Works by Women Composers* VoxBox CDX 5029: The Macalester Trio: Donald Betts, piano, Joseph Roche, violin; Camilla Heller, cello.

Score and parts: Chaminade, Cecile, 1857-1944. *Trio pour piano, violon et violoncelle: op. 11*. Huntsville, TX, Recital Publications, 1995. Originally published: Paris: Durand et Fils, 187-.

Further Reading: Citron, Marcia J. *Cecile Chaminade, a*

THE TEACHER OPENS THE DOOR

by Maisie Kohnstamm

I am an inveterate lesson taker. Yet, expertise in music has remained my most passionate quest.

This all began when I was about eight. Mr. Haff appeared on our doorstep with his violin and a little one for me under his arm. He had walked three miles from the Larchmont train station thus encumbered Mr. Haff was a gray man. His threadbare suit and grimy shirt collar were gray. His sparse hair, raked gluiely over his bald spot, was gray, and even his sallow cheeks were a shade of yellowish gray. Mr. Haff was a man of few words at best and as he stumbled into our living room he was gasping from the exertion of his long walk. It was somehow apparent to me that he did not like children, he did not much like the violin, and that his career as an itinerant violin master was dictated by financial need. This was the depth of the Depression.

And so we began. I loved my little violin. I liked the velour lining in the case, and the way the bow fit into its little slot, and the small compartment for the rosin. I was less impressed by the miserable squawks that emanated every time I attempted to draw the bow across the strings. The years rolled by. Mr. Haff appeared every Wednesday after school. Mr. Haff would oversee my efforts, occasionally rallying enough ire to swat me with his bow. Upon the completion of the lesson he would collect his fifty-cent fee, mount his scrawny ankles, and start his trek back to the station.

My father was not pleased with my efforts. He did not play an instrument himself, but he was an avid collector of classical records and devoted to all forms of classical music. My father dictated my downward spiral. At first

I practiced in my bedroom but he could not bear the sound. I was removed to a room off the kitchen, but the noise was still audible. Then Daddy moved me to the basement with my music stand and little violin case. I set up shop next to the oil burner where my companions were spiders and an occasional mouse.

There ensued a hiatus of about ten years in which music did not play a role in my life. Then, while my husband was stationed in the Army in Abilene, Texas, opportunity knocked. Through our landlady I heard about a phenomenal blind woman who gave piano lessons. With great trepidation I called and made an appointment, then rode my bicycle across the dusty town to her neat bungalow. My piano teacher greeted me at the door, a shy and delicate woman in her late twenties. She showed me to the piano and we began. She introduced me to the minuets of Johann Sebastian Bach, composed for his wife Anna Magdalena. I was smitten. I went to the USO every afternoon to practice, disregarding the unhappy glances of the servicemen trying to amuse themselves. Though we stayed in Abilene only a few months, the seed was planted.

When I retired and the nest had emptied, I said to myself, "Now!" I went out and bought a violin. It is a bruised instrument which has had a traumatic life, and may even have been abused, but it is noble, brave and sweet. I have presented myself to several teachers who have helped me. Currently I am studying Bach's *Concerto in A-Minor*. My rendition is not flawless but playing it is so satisfying.

I opened a fortune cookie once. The message read "The teacher opens the door, the student enters alone." The door has been opened. I am not quite ready to enter alone but I am closer to the portals of that mysterious realm of music.

MUSIC FOR THE LOVE OF IT

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