

MUSIC FOR THE LOVE OF IT

APRIL 1997



photo by Elaine Parhamovich
Playing in Costume at CAMMAC, Lake MacDonald, Quebec

SELECTING A MUSIC WORKSHOP

by Hugh Rosenbaum

Many amateur chamber players think about going to a conference or workshop for the first time. Some think about switching to another, or trying another for a change of scene. This is a users' guide for comparing and deciding.

My wife and I attended the Chamber Music Conference and Composers' Forum of the East at Bennington, Vermont for many years. Then geographical distance and curiosity brought us to try a number of other workshops and conferences. Now we live in England and have been trying some of the workshops in the UK and on the Continent.

There are no perfect workshops for everybody. (For brevity I will use the term "workshop" to mean any participation-oriented music conference or workshop.) There are just too many variables. Here are some basic differences to be aware of.

1. Pre-formed groups?

If you're part of an existing ensemble that wants to work together, you won't want a workshop that obliges you to play with others. However if you're by yourself you don't want to be left out. There are

- Workshops that prefer pre-formed groups
- Those that accept individuals or pre-formed groups but allow pre-formed groups to work together
- Those that regroup participants for each session or assignment

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EUROPEAN ADULT AMATEUR MUSIC WORKSHOPS 1997

This guide offers information on European music workshops open to adult amateur musicians during the summer and fall of 1997. It will be updated for 1998 in the December issue. Please write the editor if you know of other European workshops our readers might enjoy. For more professionally oriented string workshops see the March-April issue of *Strings*. Many thanks Jane Carhart of *Musical Passages* and to Geoff Piper of *MusicEnterprise*, who helped us find not only their own workshops but several others. Their contact information is given below. Geoff's *Music Courses for Amateurs, Issue #1, December 1996*, was an invaluable source.

Alpeggio

Blonay, Switzerland, September 13-19, 1997

Chamber music workshop for proficient strings, 1-2 pianists; French, English spoken.

Groups are selected and music is assigned in advance. Private lessons are available.

Coached by the Bridge String Quartet.

Excursions available.

Held in a Swiss chalet overlooking Lake Geneva with practice rooms, pianos and a large library

775 Swiss francs includes room, board, coaching

contact: Floryse Bel Bennett

Hindemith Foundation

Ruelle de l'Eglise

CH 1143 APPLES, Switzerland

tel 41 21 800 5522 fax 41 21 800 5522

Brahmsjahr im Hamburg

Hamburg, Germany, May 17-24, 1997

chamber music workshop for strings, piano, clarinet, horn; English, German spoken.

Program will include all of Brahms' chamber music except the sonatas. Music assignments will be given as soon as the mix of instruments is known.

Professional coaching

Held in "Haus Rissen" (A Congress Center), with a piano and four practice rooms.

\$565 includes travel, room and board, tuition

contact: Dick Sheftel

Zenith Travel, New York, NY

tel 800/221-2786

chetjk@concentric.net

Capezzano

Viareggio, Tuscany, Italy

weekly March 29-October 11, 1997



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THE IN BOX

NORTH AMERICAN WORKSHOPS

The Prairie School Summer Chamber Music Institute in Racine, WI will be offered June 16-22, 1997 for advanced adult string players, with fine cuisine and coaching by the Manhattan String Quartet. Participants must prepare: Beethoven, Quartet Op. 131; Haydn, Quartet Op. 74 No. 3 ("The Rider"); Fauré, Quartet, Op. 121. Contact Pat Badger at 4050 Lighthouse Drive, Racine, WI 53402, 414/260-3845, fax 414/260-3790.

The Willowa Lake (Oregon) Chamber Music Festival and Workshop will be held August 14-17, 1997, with coaching by Fox Fehling, violin, Julia Müller-Runte, viola, Martin Müller-Runte, cello and Lisa Robertson, violin. It is open to existing groups and individuals of all ages. Contact Lisa Robertson, PO Box 94, Enterprise, OR 97828-0094, 541/426-6502, lrobert@orednet.org.

Alice Parker, an outstanding choral writer and charismatic teacher, will lead the Westminster Choir College workshop, "Writing for Voices," June 30-July 4, 1997, in Princeton, NJ. This session will stress vocal improvisation. For information on this and her other upcoming workshops are available from Alice Parker at 96 Middle Rd., Hawley, MA 01339, 413/339-8506, <AliceP16@aol.com>.

We received a heartfelt letter from violist Nona Martin of Issaquah, WA describing her week at the Max Aronoff Viola Institute last summer, attended by 40 violists aged 14 to 80. After an inspiring week of chamber music, private lessons, recitals and master classes, she writes: "The final evening was the climax of our week's work. Every student performed in a group (some in light-hearted fashion). Two students played a duet on one instrument! Blowing bubbles helped another group. Faculty members as well as students joined in the fun. The evening ended with all 40 viola students playing the Brandenburg Concerto No. 6. What a perfect way to end a week of music making!" This year's session will be June 30-July 5 in Seattle, WA. Contact Joyce Ramée, 206/474-6922.

MUSICIANS ARE DEFINITELY NOT DULL

Reader Dorothy Thomas of Overland Park, Kansas, writes that she participated this February in a weekend of non-stop skiing and chamber music at Blaine Mountain, Michigan, with the *Dare to be Dull Chamber Music Society of Greater Detroit*. Contacted by phone, she waxed enthusiastic. She had met the DDCMSGD's sparkplug, attorney Joan Blair, at the Interlochen adult workshop, and Joan had called her to fill a cancellation. For this expedition, fourteen multi-talented people aged 27 to 70 occupied a condominium at Blaine Mountain, skiing all day and playing until 3:00 a.m. Shared cooking responsibilities were pre-assigned. When the

one cellist was injured skiing, Dorothy, a violinist, simply played his instrument until he felt well enough to resume. Joan, it seems, persuades groups of people to join her on similarly manic weekends of skiing or sailing combined with chamber music throughout the year.

Pianist Nancy Garniez (author of "Team Resonance", *Music for the Love of It*, October, 1996, and director of the Alaria Chamber Music Workshop) has developed *Tonal Refraction*, a technique for illustrating the sense of a musical composition with animated color projections. Her graphic concept appears to be similar to that of Stephen Malinowsky ("Seeing Music: the Art of Stephen Malinowsky", *Music for the Love of It*, October 1995) in that it represents each note as a horizontal band of color whose vertical position denotes its pitch and whose horizontal position denotes its timing. Malinowsky works mostly at the computer, however, whereas Garniez' motivation is live performance. She will give a premiere performance of *Tonal Refraction* in Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall on May 2, 1997.

Donald Noyce of Oakland, CA forwarded a copy of a fascinating article about the influential perinatologist Virginia Apgar, MD (1909-1974). Apgar, for whom the Apgar Score of newborn babies' health is named, was an amateur musician and a co-founder of the Amateur Chamber Music Players, Inc. Under the guidance of luthier Carleen Hutchins, she made a fine quartet of stringed instruments, (violin, mezzo violin, viola, cello) that is now performed on regularly by the Apgar Memorial String Quartet. The wood for the viola's back was a beautiful spruce plank that formerly served as a shelf in a telephone booth at the Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center when Hutchins was a patient there. When the hospital refused to part with the plank, the two women secretly replaced it with a nicely stained piece of plywood. The article can be found in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, December 25, 1997.

Suzanne Lord of Carbondale, Illinois, turned pro after 12 years as an amateur flutist and is now a university flute instructor. She is starting a flute club for the Southern Illinois region. Its first goal is to establish an adult flute choir. Suzanne can be contacted at 5494 Grant City Road, Apt. D, Carbondale, Illinois 62901, <lordlord@siu.edu>.

MUSIC FOR THE LOVE OF IT

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NEW ACF CHAPTER

The American Composers Forum has a new chapter in the San Francisco, California area, the Bay Area Chapter, coordinated by composers Darcy Reynolds (415/386-9190, metta4@sirius.com) and Charles Sepos (707/874-1929, csepos@sonic.net). Meetings will be the first Saturday of each month at the 2nd floor conference room of the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, 701 Mission St., San Francisco, from noon to 3:00 p.m. Two composers will present and discuss their work at each meeting.

SHEET MUSIC SOURCES, ON LINE AND OFF

Robert F. Commagere reports that his chamber music site is just about finished. He offers rare, out-of-print chamber music of most types in high quality, bound copies. A list of composers with links to the catalog are now online at <http://www.GenesisRecords.com/comcol.html>.

Subscriber Deborah Greenblatt of Greenblatt & Seay in Avoca, Nebraska, wish us a happy spring with some new arrangements for the recorder. These pieces are available in score form and/or parts and include Trios. She also offers to help find any other music we may be craving. Their web site, with details and ordering instructions, is at <http://www.mastercall.com/g-s>. They are located at The Old Schoolhouse, Avoca, NE 68307-0671. 402/275-3221, g-s@navix.net.

Judith Rattenbury of SJ Music in Cambridge, England, publishes a small but wonderful assortment of unusual chamber music, for strings and the odd clarinet. Of special interest to string players getting in shape for summer workshops will be her five volumes of "Naughty Bits" (difficult excerpts from chamber works). The catalog is recommended reading. Order from SJ Music, 21-23 Leys Road, Cambridge CB4 2AP, UK, tel. 0 (0223) 314771.

NEW TOPICS REQUESTED

Readers have suggested the following topics for articles in future issues:

- Elderhostel orchestras and chamber music sessions
- Unusual careers using music
- Software for transposing music
- A series on community bands around the world
- My ten most memorable music-making experiences

Please contact the editor for our writers' guidelines if you are interested in submitting an article.

MAILING DANGEROUSLY

David Kaslow's book, *Living Dangerously with the Horn: Thoughts on Art and Life*, reviewed by Mark Anderson in the December 1997 issue, can be ordered for \$14.00 from Birdalone Books, 9245 E Woodview Drive, Bloomington, IN 47401. Apologies to readers who had their letters returned for "insufficient address."

BOOK REVIEWS

by Mark Anderson

An Evening of Brahms. Fiction, 222 pp. 1984. Richard Sennett. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. ISBN 0-394-51300-2. The book begins with a student ensemble working on the Brahms Piano Quartet in C Major. It ends with a wonderfully failed performance of the Brahms Requiem. In between we follow Alexander Hoffman, a young cellist of tremendous technical virtuosity and enormously repressed emotions.

This is a coming-of-age story about a musician which also offers us some good insights into the music of Brahms, the story of Brahms and the Schumanns, the special relationships established between gifted teachers and students, passionate political discourse, and the enormous losses endured in the failed marriages of multiple generations.

Alexander Hoffman manages to escape the loveless household of his parents because of his exceptional musical abilities. In an advanced program at a New York conservatory he meets and weds Susan Fields. Although she is a good musician, she is not of the same caliber as Alexander. As their marriage wobbles toward an almost inevitable failure, Susan is seriously injured and eventually dies of the injuries. In his grief and guilt Alexander says he "... wanted to read something from the lives of Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms, because it was the piano quartet which Brahms wrote for Clara Schumann which first brought us together." His true catharsis, however, must wait for a performance of the Brahms Requiem. Alexander substitutes for the conductor who has become ill and finds that he has at last exceeded his limit.

The descriptions of the preparation and performance of the Brahms works will have a terrific impact on any musician, whether or not they have performed these particular pieces. The entire story is an honest contemplation of love, marriage, great loss, and art.

The February issue of *Music for the Love of It* was great for reading all about the summer music workshops and doing a little daydreaming. If you are planning a delightful week at one of those summer venues, you may want to tuck a musical mystery book in your bag for the quiet moments. Here are a few possibilities.

Divine Inspiration. 407 pp., 1993. Jane Langton. Penguin Books, NY. ISBN 01401.73765.

This is a wonderfully convoluted mystery involving an abandoned baby, an old Boston church with a tremendous pipe organ and an architectural flaw, and the lives of struggling musicians. There are delightful illustrations, including excerpts from Bach's chorales, the *Magnificat* and the *Little Organ Book*. The headnotes for each chapter were culled from the writings of Martin

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DAD MAKES MUSIC

Being a good father in today's complicated society is not easy, considering the pressure to have a successful career, engage in meaningful activities for his own pleasure, and yet "be there" for his children. When a career or hobby involves making music, a man must be especially creative in balancing all the parts of his life.

Juggling Commitments

Wayne Menard, a minister and amateur flute player in Montreal, says, "Being a dad and a flutist is not always easy. I'm with the children for their daily activities such as school, meals, music, and ouches. Most of the time I feel like a juggler. Not always easy but the rewards are there. Flute playing is one of them. My heart does a dance when my 11-year-old boy says, 'Hey, Dad, wanna play some duets?' There is nothing quite like it.

"Flute and music are simply part of what goes on in our house. Many friends come to my home to play music. My children hear more live music than they do TV and I've never heard them complain. My four-year-old girl will curl up at the bottom of my music stand, her head resting on my feet, one leg thrown over the other, book in hand, and she will stay there until I move. I can be doing scales and it's OK. When she has trouble sleeping, she calls me to play for her so she can fall asleep. Our ensemble can rehearse until the wee hours of the morning and the children will sleep through it without a problem.

"I am indeed a father who plays flute and not the reverse. Juggling and rushing to and fro is part of most parents' lives, yet rushing for the sake of music brings its own special rewards."

Kids vs. Gigs

Professional musicians share similar concerns about scheduling and fitting in their music-making activities with family life. "Earning a living as a musician necessitates a schedule unlike that in most other professions. Solo recitals, orchestra concerts, theater productions, and club dates are mostly evening events, and all seven days of the week are fair game. Teaching private students usually begins in the afternoon. Finding practice and rehearsal time is a must. A musician's workday extends from noon to midnight or later, and this odd schedule does not allow one to spend

much time with one's own children," says Larry Krantz, a flutist and teacher in British Columbia, Canada

"When my children were of pre-school age," Larry continues, "they went to rehearsals with me. They knew every nook and cranny of the concert halls. They were amazed by the switches in the control room, the pit was a favorite location for play, and the costume room was a pirate's treasure. They were comfortable with the notion that dad was over there on stage making music with other people. When they became of school age, I never saw them until the weekend, and often I'd have a Saturday matinee or Sunday concert. My wife was also a musician and sometimes we were involved with engagements at the same time. Fortunately, my class of private students provided a wonderful source of baby sitters.

"In spite of (or maybe because of) my unusual musician's life, my grown daughters and I have a close relationship. Both are well-adjusted, happy, successful people, so the experience of growing up with a musician father must not have done them too much harm. I would change very little about my fathering, other than I would've liked to be there when the girls got home from school so that I could hear all about their day when they were still excited about it."

Tod Brody, a flute player and teacher in California, agrees that scheduling time with his children, ages 15 and 13, is the biggest challenge. He states, "During my children's younger years I practiced and performed while their mom watched them, although I often practiced flute and piccolo for many hours with my baby daughter in a pack on my back. She was often hard to soothe at that age, but put her in that backpack and she'd snooze through hours of orchestral excerpts

"Now my children are older and live in two single-parent households. I try to schedule my commitments when they're not here, but do often need to be out working late at night. I call them on my cellular phone when I'm out working, but they've become strong and independent, and I realize the calls are more for me than for them. There's little choice: if I have a last-minute chance to make \$300, then other plans are set aside and I'm off to the opera."

"Having children and seeing them grow is the best thing I've ever done. The responsibility of parenting has been a big part of my growing up. It's changed me, and as music-making is an outgrowth of the whole person,



THE SENIOR ADULT CHAMBER MUSIC PLAYERS
of the 92nd St. Y, 1395 Lexington Ave., New York City,
invite you to join them every Thursday, 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
(free trial period). For information call Jo Brown, Director,
Senior Adult Program, 212/415-5636 or Ted Baumgold,
Chamber Music Coordinator, 203/325-4910.

my musical expression has become larger and more complete."

Unpopular Avocation

Dennis Miller, a dentist in Chicago, took up the flute three years ago and, remarkably, has not missed a single day of practice. "I wish that I could say being a flutist father is all fun and games but it isn't. My children aren't interested in hearing me play the flute. They don't like to listen to classical music, let alone listen to etudes. They go to my recitals when my wife makes them. To make peace, I moved my practicing out of the house. I built a garage with a soundproof loft. Now I can practice any time of the day or night and not disturb my household especially when the TV is on or homework is being done. On breaks I come back to the house and supervise homework.

"You can't count on your children to share your love of playing an instrument. Often they feel like they're competing with your instrument for your attention or they find the music annoying or distracting. My daughter has often said, 'I hate the flute.' Someday I hope they will enjoy hearing me play."

Househusbanding

Robert Bigio, an English flutist and flute maker, speaks of his earlier struggles. "My wife went back to work when our son was ten weeks old, and I became a househusband. At the time we lived in a small town where gender roles were strictly defined. Added to the usual problems of child-rearing was hostility to the idea that a man could look after a baby.

"As for what this did to my flute playing career, I can only say it ended it. Orchestras would occasionally ring up and ask me to play, but I always had to make certain the childcare arrangements were foolproof before I could accept. As it happens, performing was taking a less prominent place in my life anyway, so it didn't matter too much.

"Now that we've moved to London I find that househusbands are not so rare and I don't have the hassles I had before. Besides, my son is no longer a baby. I'm still the one who takes him to and from school and extra-curricular activities, who stays with him when he is ill. Yes, I did take a baby break from playing the flute. Now ask me if I regret it!"

At any point in their lives, each of these men could have left their music-making behind to seek a new vocation or avocation that would more easily mesh with their fathering responsibilities. They chose, instead, to devise solutions that allowed them to continue doing what they love: making music.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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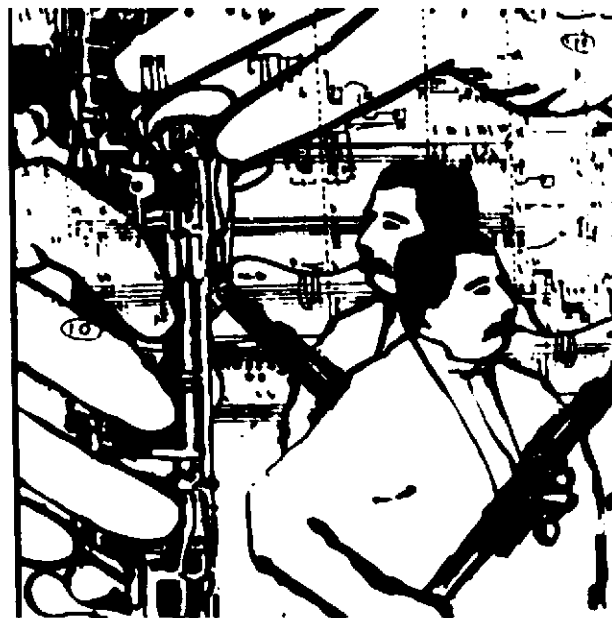
Luther. The ending and afterward to this gem are simply not to be missed. It turned my thoughts to another ecclesiastical work, entitled:

Severed Wasp. 388 pp., 1982. Madeleine L'Engle. Farrar, Strauss, Giroux, New York. ISBN 0 374 51783 5/0670.

Not a mystery, *per se*, but certainly a wonderful novel by this masterful writer who weaves for us here a story about a retiring world-class pianist who returns to her home in New York City after a lifetime of concertizing. She becomes involved with an old friend and the doings around the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. To say that the book culminates in a benefit concert is saying both too much and too little.

Quite different from these is the newly published crime novel of Cynthia Harrod-Eagles: *Blood Lines*. 281 pp., 1996. Scribner, NY. ISBN 0 864 80047 0.

If your taste runs toward the bizarre and grisly sort of murder mystery, this is it. Herein we have a music critic, a British music critic, murdered in a most unseemly way in a men's room at a TV station just before he was to go on the air and do battle with a longtime rival. If you have a weak stomach and long for happy and tidy endings, then this one is not for you. If you enjoy good writing and are not perturbed by mirrors held up to real life, then go for it.



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WHO KILLED BO CHERRY?

In previous issues, violist Bo Cherry was found dead in the recital hall of the Chico Chamber Music Workshop. Sixty workshop participants are still suspects. And now Bo's Stradivarius is missing. This episode ends the story.

by Ted Rust

5. THE RIDE OF THE VALKYRIES

Al said the viola he found in Bo's case had been assigned to a student assistant at the workshop named Biff Browning, who was also the person in charge of locker assignments. We all knew who he was — he dressed in leather and chains and talked a lot. Biff certainly had access to the list of combinations and probably knew Bo owned a Strad.

The bicycle ladies agreed that Valerie would sweep the downtown area and Angela the campus, and they would meet back at the music building in twenty minutes. They tore off on their bicycles. Five minutes later I got a call on my beeper from police headquarters. There was some lady at the bus station who wanted them to arrest a murderer, and I was supposed to know all about it. I got there the same time as two patrolmen. There was Val blocking the door to a huge Greyhound. She was waving a bicycle pump and yelling at a terrified young man in leather, twice her size, clutching a viola case. Her voice cut easily through the bellow of the the monster diesel. Only middle school music teachers develop voices like that.

"There's no ___ing way you're getting on that ___ing bus, you ___ing murderer."

Biff seemed to agree. He spun around and ran right into my arms. The case fell open and Bo's Strad bounced onto the sidewalk. I told him he was under arrest.

"Fine, just keep that crazy lady off of me."

I read him his rights and the patrolmen took him to the lockup. I was a musician again.

6. THE ASSIGNMENT FROM HELL

Back at the music building just before 9:00 am, I found my name with Lippo's and Angela's under *Rhapsodie II: Le Cornemeuse* by Charles Martin Loeffler. I'd never heard of it or him. When I got to our practice room Lippo and Angela were paying no attention to each other, both of them frantically trying to get their fingers around the strangest tangles of notes I'd ever heard. I looked at the score over Angela's shoulder.

"What a ghoulish assignment for the day after a murder. Read the poem," she said.

The poem at the front of the score was a grim French thing translated into English about a dead bagpiper moaning in the cold night at a crossroads. The score was

so black with notes, one bar took most of the first page.

"I don't see how we can perform this in one day," I said.

"The hell we can't," said Lippo. "We'll knock their socks off. Look over your part and let's get started."

Angela rolled her eyes, smiled sympathetically, and gave me a tuning note.

Burke walked in and said, "Nice piece. You guys can handle it. Look it over and I'll be back in an hour or so. Be sure to read the poem." And left. God help us, he left!

We started.

Angela had a long, florid introduction, and through all those compound triplets and septuplets and umptuplets and pauses and tempo changes, I never had the slightest doubt where the beat was. It was gorgeous. Then came the oboe entrance, just one bar of triplets in common time, and I couldn't follow it. We backed up two bars and tried again.

"Listen to my left hand, Lippo," said Angela.

He glared at her, but this time he locked into her eighth-note rhythm and gave me something firm enough to grab hold of.

Radical key change, *tempo allegro impetuoso*, unaccompanied oboe entrance. Not even Angela could follow Lippo through that one. He got uppity.

"Well, I guess my interpretation is too complex for you. I'll play it metronomically. Just count."

Well, Lippo's mental metronome has a convenient way of slowing down for cross-fingerings and racing ahead when things get easy, but Angela managed not to tell him so. He certainly had a lot of notes in his part. We watched his cues and tried to jump in at the right spots. But once in, we could never progress more than one or two bars before we were all playing on different beats. It was incredibly frustrating. Our first reading of this ten-minute movement took us over an hour. With Lippo blaming every breakdown on one of us, the atmosphere got pretty poisonous. We took a break, avoiding each other in the coffee room.

Burke was there when we got back, and we all relaxed a little. Angela played her opening even more beautifully. He let us go until we crashed, not more than four bars into the *allegro impetuoso*.

"Let's start at the double bar and just play the notes that have accents on them."

One (oboe) — Two (piano) — Three (viola) — Four (piano). Holy cow! There's a rhythm to it!

"Bounce off each other's accents. Make a phrase."

One — Two — Three — Four — some energy started to pass between us.

"Now add the sixteenth-notes. They're just ornaments. Throw them away, no stress at all." Somehow, Lippo's jerky, labored sixteenth-notes became a coherent stream, still uneven, but no problem to follow. The passage was ours.

"That's what I've been trying to get you guys to do all along," said Lippo.

"Good," said Burke. Angela nodded politely.

By lunch time we didn't need to avoid each other. Angela and I realized we had to keep Lippo away from Hans and a trip to the Bear Garden, so we took him with us to the cafeteria and sat with Pearl.

"I can see Biff ripping off an expensive instrument but I can't see him killing somebody for it," Angela said. "He's really a sweet kid under that act of his."

"I don't know," said Lippo, sober for once. "These kids all use drugs and it makes them totally irrational."

I let that one pass. "Well, he's being held for grand theft, but I don't think there's any evidence to make a murder charge stick. My guess is the DA might plea bargain with him. But he'll spend some time in prison."

"Poor kid," said Angela. "I wonder who really killed Bo Cherry. And why? Somebody besides Biff must have thought they would benefit from his death, and known how to kill him with a reed tool."

We got right back to work after lunch. There were lots more passages with different problems to solve. By mid-afternoon we were out of the woods except for some fierce technical passages that had Lippo and me buffaloed. We were working on one of them in a break when another coach named Pete heard us struggling and came in.

"How slow can you play that?"

"Whattaya mean slow? It goes like the wind!"

"Try it slow anyway. Lots of repetitions. Don't even think of speeding up until you can play it beautifully." That's a great method a month before a concert. For a ten-minute woodshedding break, I'm not so sure. Anyhow, he kept us from egging each other on into a frenzy.

Suddenly it was time to perform, and we weren't ready, but somehow we got through it. Angela held us together, even when Lippo double-timed one of his solo passages.

I joined Pearl in the audience after we finished.

"What a weird piece. You look wiped out. Want a shoulder rub?"

Did I ever.

7. ENLIGHTENMENT AT MOZART HOLE

Wednesday was a short day, meaning larger ensembles. Maybe the staff knew I needed a break, or maybe it was luck, but I got a piece I knew and loved, Mozart's E-flat major viola quintet, K. 614. Nothing could be better for restoring your faith in human reason than a day at play among the inner voices of that glorious quintet.

Pearl's son Art came up to Chico to visit her for the Wednesday concert and an evening swimming party in the upper park. It was his birthday. Pearl invited Angela and me to join them, and I offered to drive.

Art was a tall, pale and friendly fellow, with black curly hair. Angela seemed to like him a lot. I did, too. The pink summer twilight was still hot on the canyon wall above us as we bumped up the dirt road into the upper park in my old car. Dvorák's Serenade was on the tape player. The rim shadow reached the creek as we clambered down from the parking lot, leaving us in the glow of reflected light from the east wall and radiant heat from all around. We undressed modestly on opposite sides of an oak tree— men upstream, women down, — and fell gratefully into the most deliciously cool bubbling stream you could ever imagine, sliding with the current over the undulating black forms of sculptured lava. We swam until we were cool, hauled out like seals on the smooth warm rock to bake and chat a few minutes, then slid back into the water, in and out until all the week's worry and tension had washed away and the chatter gave way to a calm sharing of the beauty around us. Angela and Art went off, riding the current through a riffle like otters. Pearl and I baked.

And then it came to me. Bo must have been Art's father. Both their marriages broke up over it. He refused to marry her, but agreed to pay child support to avoid a paternity suit. He would have just stopped his child support payments when Art turned eighteen, leaving Pearl with a talented son on the brink of an expensive education and needing a good instrument to make it as a professional. She gave Bo a nice shoulder rub there in the recital hall, got him to lean his head forward, one quick jab, and he never felt another thing.

She heard us talking at lunch and knew we'd be onto her soon. So she brought us here. To beg? I doubt it. Anyway, I didn't let that happen.

"Pearl, did Bo leave his Strad to Art?"

She nodded, tears welling up.

"You know, I'm a cop. I can't cover up for you."

"I didn't plan to do it. Lippo's tools were lying there and suddenly I just had to get Art that instrument."

"You need to talk with Art. I'll take you down to the station after supper."

2. Chamber focus or orchestra focus?

Those workshops that focus on orchestra and feature chamber music as a sideline are what many Europeans seem to be looking for.

Personally, as a wind player, I avoid orchestra-focus workshops because I end up sitting around a lot, but many string players in England, at least, like orchestra-focused workshops for the opposite reason. I have also found that many chamber music players crave the "big sound" of an orchestra, deep down. However, my wife, a string player, shares my preference for chamber ensembles.

3. One or more sessions per group and piece?

This seems to be a major dividing line, and is critical to the enjoyment of the workshop. There may be

- One session per group and per work
- Three (or more) sessions with the same group but with different pieces each time.
- Multiple sessions with the same group on the same piece.

I find there are advantages to both formats. Where ability level is "varied" the one session per group format holds out some hope of sorting out incompatibilities. It also exposes me to more and varied pieces during the workshop, and improves my sightreading. On the other hand, the several sessions per group and per piece assures more work on a particular piece in detail, which, with the right piece and the right group, can be very rewarding, too.

4. Daily format

There are variables in the scheduled sessions that make a difference. A person used to playing only an hour or two may find a five-or-six-hour program too exhausting to be enjoyable.

- Number: One, two or three daily organized (sometimes coached) sessions
- When: Morning, afternoon or evening
- Length: One to two hour sessions each. Some workshops offer a mix.

5. Participants' level of ability

This is the biggest challenge to organizers and the biggest unknown for the new participant. There is a limited number of ways this is handled at workshops:

- Players are somehow ranked beforehand and put into compatible groups
- They are ranked during the workshop and sorted out by trial and error
- Everyone gets a chance to play with everyone else

It can be stressful or a pleasant surprise to find oneself in a group whose abilities are much more or less advanced than one's own. Some workshops make a

special point of encouraging a positive attitude towards such differences, while others have notoriously competitive atmospheres.

The other problem is the problem of who judges ability level, and how do they know? Only a few workshops require auditions or tapes, and even when they do an audition, or *a fortiori*, a tape, is unlikely to reveal a player's chamber music skills - listening and counting, etc.

6. Number of participants

A small number (20-30) makes the importance of their playing level more important. A large number (over 50) makes it less important.

What to ask: How many participants usually come?

7. Repertoire

Some workshops stick to the "standard" canon, and some don't. Participants sometimes attach a lot of importance to being exposed to, or shielded entirely from, contemporary music. The repertoire can be:

- 18th-19th through early 20th Century standard works
- More contemporary music, or
- Standard works with "an attempt" to introduce more contemporary music

8. Coaching time

Workshops vary greatly in the amount of time a coach will spend with your group. These seem to be the styles:

- Full-time coaches for every coached session
- Floating coaches that come in and out of several concurrent sessions
- Master-class format, in which groups come to the coach (usually with the same piece)
- No coaching, perhaps better described as "get-togethers" than "workshops."

9. Coaching personnel

There are three other critical aspects about coaches that can make or break an enjoyable workshop:

- Are they full-time professionals and how important to you is their reputation?
- Do they have coaching experience?
- Do they come prepared to coach the pieces they are assigned?

You can tell about coaches' professional standing by the blurbs in the material. Personally, I have found that professional status, especially among young coaches, does not promise good coaching technique. I look for teaching or coaching experience. As to whether they know the pieces or not, you can sometimes infer that from the chamber music experience, professional or teaching, they appear to have. I have also found that you can't judge anything about the quality of the coaching from whether they have been coming back to workshops year after year or are there for the first time. Where they do come back year after year, I have found

that for any workshop the "good" coaches become known by the end of a session, by word-of-mouth. Find out who they are. There is only one way to find this out for yourself, and that is to call up a former participant, preferably one who has been going to the workshop for several years.

10. Performances to listen to?

This aspect is of interest to many participants, but not all. There may be:

- Concerts by the coaching staff
- Performances by resident professional groups who aren't coaching
- Opportunities to attend neighboring events.

12. Participant performances?

Participants sometimes like to perform in public, but sometimes hate the idea. At workshops there may be:

- No performances of any kind
- Organized (and obligatory) performances every day
- Performances at the end of the workshop: all (obligatory) or some (voluntary) groups
- Impromptu performances at parties (voluntary)

13. Impromptu playing

For some this is important, for others, not. Here are the critical issues

- How many of each instrument are accepted? (Be alert to surpluses of clarinets, shortages of horns or cellos.)
- How many pianos are there, how good and in what condition?
- Do they have a library of music? Is it kept open after scheduled activities are done for the day?
- Are there enough separate places to play in, with good lighting, and until what hour?

14. Other considerations

Like making a car-buying decision on the basis of its color and upholstery, these other considerations sometimes mean a lot to participants:

- Attention to helping newcomers feel welcome, meet people and get oriented (badges stating everybody's name and instrument are very helpful)
- Adequate size, lighting, ventilation and acoustics of the playing rooms
- Availability of loaned or rented instruments like cellos or basses of decent quality
- Lodging: Quality and phonic separation of sleeping arrangements, including sanitary facilities
- Eating: The food and the dining facilities
- Climate: The climate (hot, cold, etc.) and air-conditioning
- Venue: The scenery and tourist possibilities (city or country venue), as well as facilities for daily exercise
- Distractions: Other distractions, like folkdancing, lake or sea bathing, movies, nearby bustling town or city, discos, museums, shopping....
- Non-playing significant others: Will they be bored

and lonely? Is day care available?

And last but not least

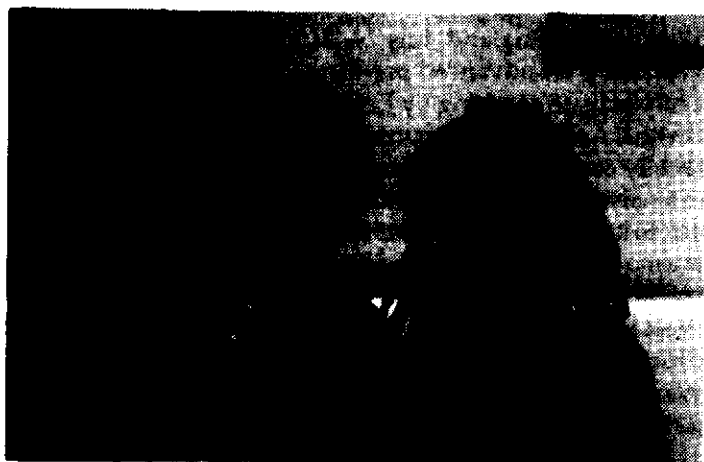
- Cost: As for the things I have been talking about, I have found that higher cost usually indicates:
- More coaches, more coaching time (sometimes too much)
- Better lodging and food
- More rooms to play in, more pianos, music library (and librarian), better concert hall
- Access to concerts and recitals.

As I said at the beginning, there is no perfect workshop. The proof? The fact that there are so many, and that there is no agreed-upon "best one".

Which criteria do I think are the most important? At this stage of my playing ability and experience, I look to the format, the participants and the coaches. These are the three first things I ask participants about before I ask about the other things. For instance,

- Format: Harrogate (week-long, UK) wind week has one session per group per piece. Keele University (week-long UK) has three sessions per piece with the same group.
- Participants: Humboldt (week-long, US) did not require auditions, Bennington (week long, US) does.
- Coaches: Kent Music, (week-long, US) has floating coaches, Bennington has full-time coaching.

It would be interesting to hear from other readers which of these criteria they think are the most important, or whether there are others that I didn't mention.



Hugh and Rowena Rosenbaum

Hugh and Rowena Rosenbaum are a rare chamber music couple, a string player married to a wind player. For years they attended the Bennington workshop. This August they are both hoping to attend "Fugues en Liberté" in the South of France, (no auditions, floating coaches, uncertain housing) where the environment, the food (and wine!) have a lot to do with their selection.

String quartet workshop; German spoken
Daily music assignments programmed in advance;
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contact: Manfred Blümm

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Organizer: Vivienne Pittendrigh

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447 British pounds includes room with bath, tuition,
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contact: Rosemary Marley, Music Course Organizer

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Chichester

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Fugues en Liberté

Pertuis, Provence, France

May 15-18, 1997; August 24-30, 1997

Vocal and instrumental chamber music workshop
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Assignments will be prepared for each group
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1,300 French francs includes tuition, lunch

contact: Philippe Rougé

Campagne la Graille

F-84160 Cucuron, France

(33) 490 77 13 63

Musical Passages

St. Donat's Castle, Llanwit Major, near Cardiff, Wales

July 4-11, 1997

Chamber music vacation for strings, woodwinds, piano.

Assigned and informal ensemble playing with
participants and local professional musicians. Steinway
"C" performance grand and Morley single manual
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Sightseeing, pubcrawls, swimming and picnics.

Single and shared rooms with private baths.

410 British pounds includes room, board, music
facilities use.

contact: see below

Musical Passages

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Chamber music vacation for strings, woodwinds, piano.

Assigned and informal ensemble playing. No coaching.

Several pianos (one excellent grand), harpsichord,
extensive chamber music library.

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accommodations, single or shared rooms.

855 Swiss francs includes shared room, board, music
facilities.

contact: Jane Carhart

25 Alden Terrace

Millbrook, NY 12545

914/677-5092

carhartjm@aol.com

MusicEnterprise

Bodenrud, Hochtanus (near Wetzlar), Germany

May 4-11, 1997 and August, 1997

String orchestra workshop for violin, viola, cello, bass;

English, French, German spoken

Program will include Warlock, Capriol Suite; Grieg,

Two Elegaic Melodies; Bach, Violin Concerto in A-

minor; a contemporary Hungarian work.

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Modern double rooms, full board.

260 British pounds includes room, board, tuition

contact: see below

MusicEnterprise

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English, French, German spoken.

Program will include Holst, St. Paul's Suite; Volkmann,

Serenade in F-major; Sibelius, Impromptu; possibly

Vaughan Williams. Orchestra rehearses five hours daily.

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Guided excursion in Budapest countryside available.
Bed and breakfast, double rooms with private shower:
simple student accommodations in theological college.
260 British pounds includes room, board, tuition.
contact: Geoff Piper
24 rue des Cerisiers
L-1322 Luxembourg
tel (352) 47 42 69 fax (352) 22 35 85

ORCHFEST

Eastbourne, a British seaside resort
September 26-28, 1997
Symphony orchestra workshop .
The participants will rehearse a symphony and shorter pieces.
David Baltusch, conductor.
Excursions available.
Accommodations: variety of hotels, guest houses, etc.
27.50 British pounds includes tuition only
contact: see below

ORCHFEST Wind Band

Eastbourne, a British seaside resort
October 31-November 2, 1997
Wind band music workshop .
The participants will rehearse several compositions for wind band.
David Baltusch, conductor.
Accommodations: sea-front hotel.
65 British pounds includes room, board, tuition.
contact: Peter Mayes
24b Bedford Grove
Eastbourne BN21 2JU, England
(44) 1323 642116

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Advanced workshop for accomplished singers,
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Soprano/Stage Director, James Brooks-Bruzzesse -
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Joseph J. Graffeo - Keyboard, Composition,
John La Barbera...Early Music, Guitar, Peter Michalica -
Violin, John J. Olah, Jr - Brass, Joseph Reichgott - Jazz,
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US \$2,640 includes room, board, tuition.
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tel 954-723-0026 fax 954-723-0021
TUBAMLB@AOL.COM

Symphonie in Fels

Larochette, Luxembourg
October 2-5, 1997
Symphony orchestra workshop
German spoken.
Participants will rehearse Brahms' 2nd Symphony
Volmar Fritsche, Music Director of Balingen.
Accommodations in arious hotels or youth hostel.
contact: Hubert Muller
5 auf Preimert
L-6955 Rodenbourg
tel (352) 77 05 01 fax (352) 77 06 95

The Tuscany Project

Villa outside Gubbio, Italy, July 20-August 2, 1997
vocal workshop in cabaret and gospel music for all
singers with a sense of discovery and the courage to
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zarren@cove.com

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contact: Brian McBryan
Dublin Chamber Music Group
19 Brooklawn Wood
Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland
tel 353-1-2883627 fax 353-1-4780788

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