

VOLUME 47, NO. 1 FALL 2021

# THE FLUTIST

QUARTERLY

# Amatzinac

The Mystery of José Pablo Moncayo's Elusive Jewel

## Music Careers and Chronic Conditions

Reframing the discussion of illness, injury, and disability

## Lauding Lowell

Composer Lowell Liebermann reflects upon his long, celebrated career

Teaching Students of Diverse Backgrounds

The Blessings and Challenges of Navigating the Pandemic

And Much More...

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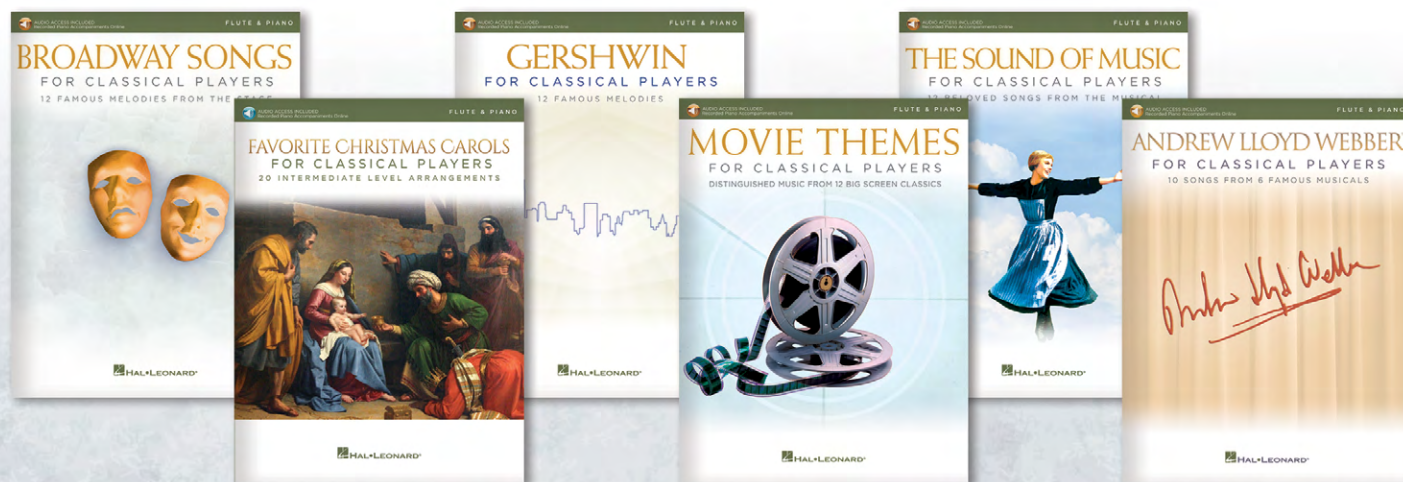


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FALL  
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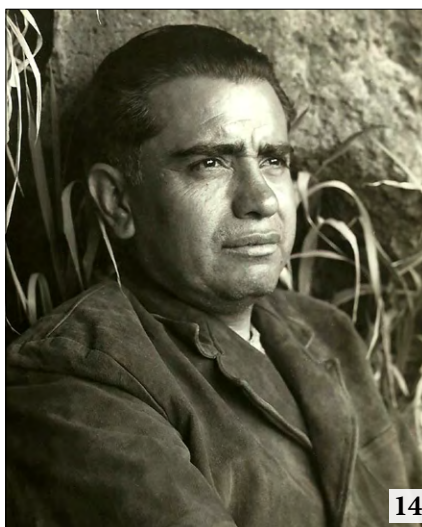
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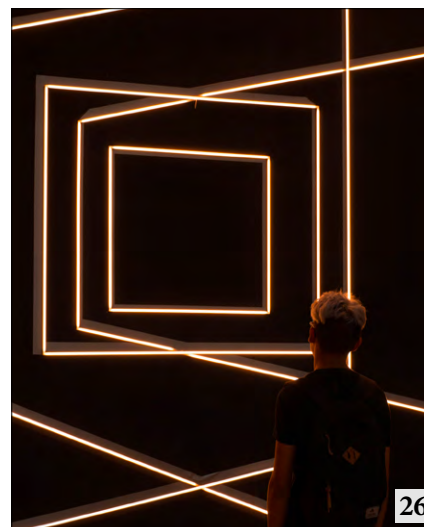
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# From the President



By Penny Zent

## Greetings!

I must confess that I'm still in a euphoric state after our recent NFA Virtual Convention! The love and care that went into the performances and presentations was absolutely amazing—thank you to all who participated, especially our wonderful program chair, Jennifer Grim. It lived up to its title, *Variations On A Dream*, too, and the many dream-like videos accompanying many of the presentations just added to the overall effect. The community interactions on Whova were extraordinary—I met so many new friends from across the globe, and I hope you did, too! It really was more than I could ever have hoped for, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive.

It's now time to move forward, and I'm pleased to tell you that the plans for 2022 in Chicago are just fantastic. Program Chair Aaron Goldman and Assistant PC Laura Benning have been hard at work for months laying out the plans for the NFA's Golden Anniversary Convention. "Evolution" is the theme, and we will reflect upon 50 years of the NFA and look forward on our industry as a community. From a Flute Ensemble Festival to Golden Anniversary Awards, we will once again be celebrating all things flute! We hope to see you in Chicago August 11–14, 2022.

I've mentioned several times in different arenas that our Board of Directors is fully engaged in looking for ways to make the NFA more accessible, more affordable, and more inclusive. We examined our strategic plan during our convention meetings and remain committed to the path that we set out for the NFA in 2020. As we move forward, I encourage all of you to reach out to those of us in leadership roles to share your thoughts and insights, raise any concerns you may have, and ask questions (you'll find all of our contact information in this issue and at [nfaonline.org](https://nfaonline.org)). Additionally, to be as transparent as possible, our staff and board have created some blog posts about the inner workings of the NFA called [Organizational Insights](#), which address a number of topics. We're promoting the series via the NFA Weekly—please check it out.

Lastly, I would like to thank all the outgoing board members and committee chairs: we appreciate your service. Congratulations to our new officers, Julee Kim Walker (Assistant Secretary) and Thomas Mease (Treasurer)—we are excited to work with you and our new board members, Kim Scott Strickland, David Houston, and Tadeu Coehlo.

Thanks again for being part of our wonderful flute community. I'm honored to serve as your president.



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# From the Executive Director



By Jennifer Clarke

## Seasonal Transitions

The four days in August I spent glued to my computer from early morning to late at night during my first NFA Convention is a time I will truly never forget. Working with Jennifer Grim and the NFA Board and staff on the virtual set-up could not have prepared me for the explosion of activity during our four-day event. Every session I attended was prepared and presented with such care and creativity—not to mention excellence. And the spirit of community interaction was incredibly heart-warming.

As the 2022 Program Chair, Assistant PC, and all those involved in the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention undertake the mammoth task of planning our next gathering—all together in Chicago—my hope is that we can continue to incorporate online access. What we have learned from our 2020 Summer Series and our 2021 Convention is that the virtual platform, while limited in some ways, allows us to reach members of our community who have never been able to attend an in-person convention for reasons of

accessibility, geographic, or economic limitations.

Matters of financial accessibility have been especially on our members' minds recently, and in response I have created a [three-part blog series](#) on the financial realities of the NFA. My hope in presenting the information this way—with two posts by me and another by Vice President Rebecca Johnson—is that our financial information is open, clear, transparent, and always accessible for review on the website. I am available at any time to discuss any of the details.

Financial accessibility and all areas of diversity and inclusion continue to be at the center of planning, and as we begin the budget process for 2022, we're exploring new approaches to push back the barriers while also making sure we maintain the level and quality of everything we provide for our members. Bit by bit, my goal is to focus on the opportunities that are important to NFA members and how to make sure they are equally accessible to all.

As the seasons blend from summer into fall, the NFA annual cycle continues along its path, with the 2022 Convention proposal process in place, competition descriptions soon to be updated, and Board and committee transitions underway. I look forward to experiencing the next phase of the organization as we prepare for 2022 and beyond.





# Katherine Kemler

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# From the Editor

## Forging Ahead

It's hard to believe it's been more than a year-and-a-half since our world was turned upside-down, and the pandemic has been so difficult for all of us, in so many ways. At this point the disease itself has touched all of us in some way. We've also watched it pull the rug out from under our industry and impact so many parts of society in profound ways. The exhaustion is palpable—we can see the light at the end of the tunnel, but it feels like it just keeps going and going.

Among many other things, this experience has encouraged many of us to further focus on our health—especially our mental health, which is

something we, as a society, have not always made a priority. In this issue, we have a feature by Jillian Reed that looks at the importance of discussing and dissecting certain aspects of health in the music industry. And the Performance Health Committee's Angela McCuiston and Francesca Leo share fellow flutists' stories of dealing with the challenges that came up during lockdown.

As life moves forward, I'm incredibly thankful to be returning to live performances in actual theaters again. I can't express the feeling of what I've missed any better than Tony-winning actor Danny Burstein did in his powerful



By Karissa Krenz

*New York Times* essay—and though he's talking about Broadway, I believe it's relevant to music as well: "...theater isn't just a form of entertainment; at its best, it is a collective, spiritual experience. It is church for the heart and mind. It is shul for the intellect. A mosque celebrating mankind. It reminds us how beautiful life can be and how fragile it is as well. It helps us form opinions and gain insight into the lives of our fellow humans."

To me, all of those reasons are why the arts are so important.

To celebrate our wonderful corner of the creative world, also in this issue, dive into Katherine Kemler's chat with composer Lowell Liebermann, who celebrated his 60<sup>th</sup> trip around the sun this year. Check out Jonathan Borja's deep dive into José Pablo Moncayo's *Amatzinac*. The Diversity and Inclusion Committee shares hints on how to better serve students from diverse backgrounds. And be sure to read up on what your fellow NFA members have been getting up to, listening to, and reading—and much, much more—over the last few months.

Perhaps one of the rare good things about the pandemic is that it has also given all of us the opportunity for a bit of a reboot. And we're still in the midst of doing that here, too! We're working hard on making a better online version of *FQ*—more on that in the not-so-distant future. And don't forget, we want to hear from you about the topics you'd like us to cover, so feel free to drop me a line anytime at [kkrenz@nfaonline.org](mailto:kkrenz@nfaonline.org).

Stay healthy, everyone!



# High Notes

News of the accomplishments of NFA members and the flute world

[Shanna Pranaitis](#), artistic director and cofounder of FluteXpansions, created and launched the first FX Sonic Immersion online summer program in June, which ran for four weeks with seven of the world's top experimental contemporary flutists as faculty, including Anne La Berge, Camilla Hoytenga, Carla Rees, Eric Lamb, Jane Rigler, Melody Chua, and FX cofounder Matthias Ziegler. They welcomed 13 participants from around the world into a space where they could stimulate their curiosity, expand their skills and contemporary flute expertise, and supercharge their artistic voice while exploring improvisation, electronics, composition, Deep Listening™, interpretation, Feldenkrais, and yoga.

When she created Sonic Immersion, Shanna purposely designed a space that would allow for the courageous and messy experimentation needed for creativity to thrive. Participants shared their varied personal experiences and interests with each other and the faculty, and special group projects developed during the session in-



Shanna Pranaitis

clude a gallery of sound projects that will be available to the public in December. Pranaitis says that “running the Sonic Immersion program was a gift to my life, and I’m so excited to do it again next summer!” More information can be found at [FluteXpansions.com](https://FluteXpansions.com).



Carla Rees



Emily Butterfield

## Congratulations!

London's Royal Academy of Music has named **Carla Rees** as the professor of low flutes and contemporary flute—the first time a low flutes-specific appointment has been made at one of the conservatoires! **Rose Martus** has been selected for the 2022 cohort of the [Global Leaders Program](#). A recent graduate of UNC–Greensboro, Rose is a freelance educator and content creator who has worked with education and presenting organizations to facilitate audience engagement. **Catherine Bergman** celebrated her 20<sup>th</sup> year teaching flute at Emporia State University with a potluck with her students. “I feel very blessed and honored to be at ESU!” **Emily Butterfield** received the Vanderbilt Distinguished Teaching Award from the University of Central Oklahoma, where she is professor of flute.

## Volunteers Sought

[Chip Shelton](#) is seeking a limited number of flutist volunteers to beta-test a **new jaw stabilizer appliance** worn when playing flute to help manage involuntary jaw movement syndromes that interfere with effective performance. Designed by an orthodontist/flutist, the flexible rubber appliance engages the upper and lower side teeth, enhancing jaw stability, and is thin in the anterior section to allow for airflow and articulation. The appliance should be used with caution if there are severe medical problems, jaw pain, “TMJ,” or chronic dental and/or gum problems.

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# Amatzinac:

## José Pablo Moncayo's Elusive Jewel

BY JONATHAN BORJA

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## One of Mexico's most celebrated composers made his debut with a flute work whose multiple versions surround it with mystery.

**O**n August 15, 1941, the life of then 29-year-old José Pablo Moncayo (1912–58) changed forever as his work *Huapango* was given its first performance by the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico under the baton of his teacher and mentor Carlos Chávez.<sup>1</sup> It became an instant classic and was the most performed and recorded piece for orchestra by a Mexican composer until the end of the 20th century.<sup>2</sup> Its popularity was both a blessing and a curse for Moncayo as it brought him international stature but overshadowed the rest of his output.

But before the success of *Huapango*, Moncayo began his professional composing career with a short work for flute and string quartet from 1935, *Amatzinac* (pronounced “amatsi’nak”). Interestingly, the story of this piece is not quite straightforward; there are two versions, one of which was unknown to his family for almost 50 years.

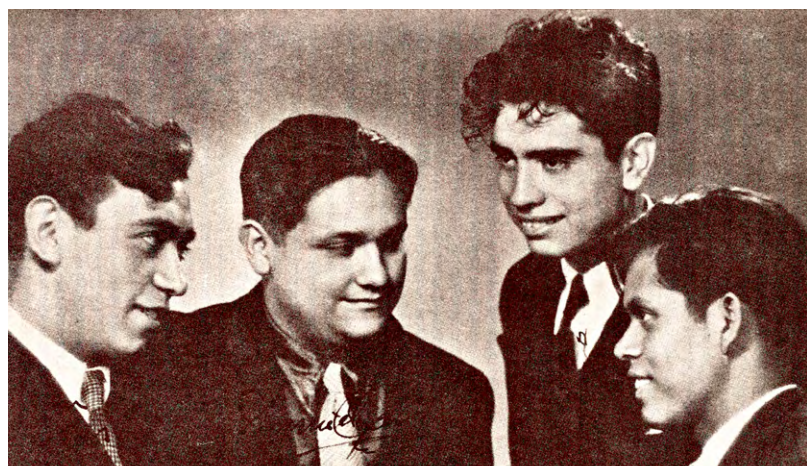
The word “amatzinac” means “paper creek or brook” in the ancient Aztec language Nahuatl and is the name given to a river that flows near the outskirts of the Popocatepetl volcano.<sup>3</sup> An avid mountaineer, Moncayo enjoyed climbing the high mountains and volcanoes surrounding Mexico City and frequently titled his compositions after places he visited and enjoyed.<sup>4</sup> While the 1935 manuscript does not include double basses and is simply titled *Amatzinac*, and the concert program of its premiere lists it as a “piece for flute and string quartet,” when it was finally published by Ediciones Mexicanas de Música in 1987 (long after Moncayo’s death), it was noted as “a piece for flute and string orchestra.”<sup>5</sup> The second version, which first surfaced in 1956, is in fact for flute and string orchestra (including double basses), but its manuscript is not in the family’s archive. The lack of clarity and differentiation between the two versions, the existence of a third score residing in a Philadelphia library, and the uncertainty surrounding the later revision makes *Amatzinac* one of Moncayo’s most mysterious works.

### A Composer Gets His Start

José Pablo Moncayo García was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco, on June 29, 1912, while the Mexican Revolution (1910–21) raged. His parents, Francisco and Juana, had nine children, and Pancho, one of Pablito’s older siblings who became a violinist, introduced him to music at an early age.<sup>6</sup> The Moncayo family moved to Mexico City in 1918, and young Pablito began formal musical studies at age 14 with Eduardo Hernández Moncada, but unlike his brother, he studied piano and showed an early interest in composition.<sup>7</sup>

Hernández Moncada suggested Moncayo enroll at the National Conservatory in 1929 (at age 17), where Moncayo continued piano studies with Moncada and began composition lessons with Candelario Huízar.<sup>8</sup> In 1931, Moncayo joined Carlos Chávez’s newly formed composition seminar along with classmates Blas Galindo (1910–93), Salvador Contreras (1910–82), and Daniel Ayala (1906–75).<sup>9</sup> The following year, to supplement his income, Moncayo joined the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico as a pianist and member of the percussion section.<sup>10</sup>

Moncayo and his three classmates launched their professional careers on November 25, 1935, with a concert they organized at the Teatro Orientación.<sup>11</sup> In it, Moncayo performed his Piano Sonata and conducted *Amatzinac* for flute and string quartet, featuring flutist Miguel Preciado.<sup>12</sup> Critics enthusiastically reviewed the young musicians’ program, and *El Universal*’s José Barros Sierra gave them a promising review and nicknamed them “The Group of Four,” a name with which they would be associated for the rest of their careers (similar to Russia’s “Mighty Handful” or France’s “Les six”).<sup>13</sup>



The photo of The Group of Four used for their debut; (l to r) Salvador Contreras, Daniel Ayala, Moncayo, and Blas Galindo.

Their mentor, Chávez, who was then music director of the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico and enjoying an international conducting career, became their greatest supporter and promoter. After conducting a program with the Boston Symphony Orchestra in April 1936, Chávez organized a concert that included some of the works from the November concert; *Amatzinac* was played by none other than Georges Laurent, then principal flute of the BSO, with Boston critics praising the work.<sup>14</sup>

Beyond these early performances, there is little else known of this original version of *Amatzinac* and its performance history. It was published by Ediciones

Mexicanas de Música in 1987, and it appears that its only recording was made by Tadeu Coelho in 1997 (and released in 1999).<sup>15</sup>

Moncayo's career continued on an upward trajectory. In 1942 he studied at Tanglewood with Aaron Copland. Having been a member of the Symphony Orchestra of Mexico, Moncayo became its music director in 1949, just as it became the National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico (OSN).<sup>16</sup> His music and that of his colleagues and mentor were frequently featured in his programming until 1954, when he was replaced by Luis Herrera de la Fuente.<sup>17</sup> For the final four years of his life, Moncayo spent his time teaching composition and conducting at the National Conservatory.<sup>18</sup>

## A Second Version

The first mention of a second version of *Amatzinac* came in 1956, when Moncayo gifted the manuscript to Ildefonso Cedillo Rodríguez, one of his conducting students at the Conservatory, telling him to “play it a lot; it’s a jewel.”<sup>19</sup> It contains material derived from the 1935 original but significantly expanded and for string orchestra. While not dated, musicologist Eduardo Contreras Soto suggests that the calligraphy and type of pen used in its manuscript matches that of other scores from 1937.<sup>20</sup>

Cedillo Rodríguez went on to become a founding member, and later conductor, of the Bellas Artes Chamber Orchestra (OCBA), and it is with this group that *Amatzinac* has a long performance history. Julieta Cedillo, principal flute of the OSN and Ildefonso Cedillo Rodríguez’s daughter, says that it can safely be assumed that if her father was conducting the work, it was the 1937 version;<sup>21</sup> therefore, there is record of this later *Amatzinac* being performed by the OCBA in 1961, 1989, several times in 1993, and in 2017.<sup>22</sup> The only exception was in 1995, when the OCBA toured the United States with a program showcasing Mexican composers, and Julieta Cedillo appeared as *Amatzinac*’s soloist.<sup>23</sup> She turned up to the first rehearsal with her manuscript part from her father’s file but quickly realized the orchestra was playing the 1935 version, considered “official” because it was the one that had been published.<sup>24</sup>

At about the same time, the OSN released a collection of albums through Sony Masterworks featuring the music of Mexican composers. In 1994, one of those recordings included the 1937 version of *Amatzinac* with Enrique Diemecke conducting Elena Durán, who had also performed it a few times in 1993 with the OCBA. The booklet lists this as the work’s premiere recording.<sup>25</sup> For the album’s release concert, Julieta Cedillo was the featured soloist, making her solo debut with the OSN, on February 3, 1995.<sup>26</sup>

While Ediciones Mexicanas de Música was aware the second version existed, the family knew nothing about it and could not assert its authenticity.<sup>27</sup> In 2003, Miguel Ángel

The image shows a program for a concert. At the top is the logo of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional, featuring a conductor and the text "ORQUESTA SINFONICA NACIONAL" and "ENRIQUE ARTURO DIEMECKE DIRECTOR ARTISTICO". Below the logo is the word "P r e s e n t a" in a stylized font. The title of the concert is "Concierto Especial". The date and time are "Viernes 3 de febrero, 20:30 horas". The conductor is "Enrique Arturo Diemecke, director". The soprano is "María Luisa Tamez, soprano". The choir is "Coro de México/Gerardo Rábago, director". The program lists three pieces: "MONCAYO Sinfonietta 11'", "MONCAYO Amatzinac 10'", and "GALINDO Sones de mariachi 9'". Below this is the word "I n t e r m e d i o". The next piece is "VILLA-LOBOS La selva del Amazonas 54'". At the bottom, there is a box with text: "SE SOLICITA AL PUBLICO ASISTENTE DESACTIVAR LAS ALARMAS DE SUS RELOJES, APARATOS DE TELECOMUNICACION Y TELEFONOS CELULARES. A FIN DE EVITAR INTERRUPCIONES MOLESTAS DURANTE EL CONCIERTO". Below this box is the address: "Av. Juárez y Eje Central Lázaro Cárdenas, Centro México, D.F."

Program for the album release of the 1995 recording of *Amatzinac*; while Elena Durán was on the recording, Julieta Cedillo played this concert. Image courtesy of Julieta Cedillo.

Villanueva, flute professor at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), wanted to include it as a required piece for the newly founded Gildardo Mojica Flute Competition. He approached Ildefonso Cedillo Rodríguez, who authorized him to make a copy of the manuscript, which was then presented to the Moncayo family. Through



a handwriting analysis, the family validated that it was in fact by Moncayo, so Villanueva commissioned a computer-generated engraving of the score and parts to be used for the competition. He recorded it in 2008.<sup>28</sup>

Contreras Soto's analysis of the composer's handwriting places it in 1937, and yet questions remain about the actual date of *Amatzinac's* second version. Why was the manuscript only seen for the first time in 1956? While blank spaces in the 1935 manuscript show evidence of Moncayo's intention to expand the piece, the second version is much more mature and sophisticated—could he have made those changes much later in his career?<sup>29</sup> Further, Moncayo was not bashful about programming his own music when he was music director of the OSN, yet there is no record of this second version been performed during that time. If he considered this piece such a jewel, why did he not program it? There is also a score of the 1935 version held at the Edwin A. Fleisher Collection of Orchestral Music in the Free Library of Philadelphia that was, according to curator Gary Galván, made from parts obtained by Nicholas Slonimsky during a series of trips to Latin America underwritten by the library. He brought the music back to the U.S. in 1941, it was added to the library in 1943, and between 1945 and 1955, a new score and parts were created with this material.<sup>30</sup> While this third score bridges some of the discrepancies between the two earlier versions, the answers to many questions were taken to the grave by the composer, leaving *Amatzinac's* history with a mysterious aura, much like its revised ending.

## A Deep Dive into the Two *Amatzinacs*

The first six measures of each version of *Amatzinac* include the same pitches in the flute and strings. The difference, however, is that string entrance in the 1935 version is given to the first and

**Example 1.** The opening six measures of both versions of *Amatzinac*; the 1935 instrumentation is noted in green and 1937 in red. For the 1935 version, Copyright 1987 by Ediciones Mexicanas de Música, A.C.; administered by Peer International Corporation. Used by permission. All Rights Reserved. Permission for use of the 1937 version granted by Julieta Cedillo.

**Example 2.** On the left is the 1935 version; note the simpler accompaniment and shorter melody. In it, the upbeat to the third measure is a D instead of an E, and the final two notes of the section are an octave higher than in the 1937 version. Note the bracketed measures as the extension of the original melody and the more active rhythmic density in the accompaniment in the 1937 version. For the 1935 version, Copyright 1987 by Ediciones Mexicanas de Música, A.C.; administered by Peer International Corporation. Used by permission. All Rights Reserved. Permission for use of the 1937 version granted by Julieta Cedillo.

second violins, while the violas and cellos play those notes in the 1937 revision. The Philadelphia score, while for string quartet, matches the 1937 version here (Example 1).

While the solo flute's melody in the next 21 measures is the same in the second version, the strings' contrapuntal lines are similar but appear in different places, creating longer interludes that allow them to sound more settled. By measure 30 in the 1935 version (measure 35 in 1937), things really begin to change: The flute's melody is almost the same for the first six measures, and then, in the revision, Moncayo expands this melodic idea for two more measures before eventually finishing the line as in the original. (This extension is

drafted in an empty staff of the 1935 manuscript, so clearly Moncayo was already thinking about expanding this passage.) The accompaniment here is also different. While the strings play open fifths in sustained whole notes in the 1935 version, the latter has the violin 2, violas, cellos, and basses continue the dotted rhythm from the previous section while still playing open fifths, with the first violins doubling the flute's melody (Example 2).

To close this opening section, Moncayo writes a slow passage in quarter notes. In the 1935 version, this passage is given to the solo flute, while in the revision it is played by the first violins doubled by the cellos.

The fast section that follows is where Moncayo best expands upon the raw

material in the original: the ostinatos in the strings are similarly presented in both versions, but the melodic material played by the flute is significantly developed (Example 3).

In the original, the fast section is followed with musical ideas that Moncayo did not further develop in 1937, and then he concludes the work by returning to the slow opening musical ideas that give it a rounded finish. The 1937 version follows this fast flute passage with a ritornello-like repetition in the strings that leads to a brand-new slow section with modal melodies for the first violins, the cellos, and the solo flute. After a quick transition (with music that appears in both), the revision returns to the music of the fast section, this time played by the flute and the violins simultaneously. To end, the solo flute returns to the music of the opening 14 measures (with the same orchestral accompaniment), which leads into a suggestion of the same follow-up music in the strings—only to end quietly with harmonics in the strings.

The mystery around *Amatzinac* does not diminish the beauty of either one of the versions; it is, like Moncayo called it, a jewel. Thankfully, Peermusic now has Miguel Ángel Villanueva's engraving of the 1937 score, as well as the flute and piano reduction of the 1937 version made by the author with the composer's grandson, pianist and conductor, Rodrigo Sierra Moncayo. Both will be available soon.

### Works for Flute by José Pablo Moncayo (links where available)

- *Amatzinac* (1935) for flute and string quartet
- [Amatzinac \(c.1937\) for flute and string orchestra](#)
- Trio for flute, violin, and piano (1938) (Published solely by Ediciones Mexicanas de Música)
- [Amatzinac \(1937\) arranged for flute and piano by Rodrigo Sierra Moncayo, edited by Jonathan Borja](#)

The image displays a side-by-side comparison of musical notation for the flute part of 'Amatzinac'. The top section, labeled 'Aprisa', shows the 1935 version (green) and the 1937 version (pink). The 1937 version expands on the 1935 material, repeating it. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *p*, and *f*, and a *cresc.* marking. The 1937 version also includes a *stacc.* marking. The bottom section shows the 1937 version's expansion of the fast section material, with a *cresc.* marking.

Example 3 shows how from the eight measures of the 1935 version Moncayo expands the material to create a more memorable (through repetition) fast section in the 1937 version. The colors show the relationship of the expansion in the musical material. For the 1935 version, Copyright 1987 by Ediciones Mexicanas de Música, A.C.; administered by Peer International Corporation. Used by permission. All Rights Reserved. Permission for use of the 1937 version granted by Julieta Cedillo.



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Composer of *Huapango*, one of the Mexican repertoire's most played pieces, Moncayo's career began with the 1935 version of *Amatzinac* for flute and string quartet.

## Endnotes

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4. José Kamuel Zepeda, *Moncayo: vida y obra* (Guadalajara: Secretaría de Cultura, 2005), 99.
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9. Zepeda, 13.
10. Zepeda, 38.
11. Tello, 34.
12. Tello, 35.
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14. Tello, 47.
15. Tadeu Coelho, *¡Rompe!: música contemporánea para flauta y clarinete*, CD, Mexico City: Fideicomiso para la Cultura Mexico/USA (1999).
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17. Maupomé, 116.
18. Torres-Chibrás, 124.
19. Miguel Ángel Villanueva, interview with the author, October 13, 2020.
20. Rodrigo Sierra Moncayo, personal email, February 3, 2021.
21. Julieta Cedillo, interview with the author, October 11, 2020.
22. Aurelio Tello, *50 años de un itinerario sonoro: Orquesta de Cámara de Bellas Artes* (Mexico City: INBA, 2009). See pages 30, 128, and 129. Corroborated by Julieta Cedillo, interview with the author, April 26, 2021.
23. Tello, *50 años*, 147.
24. Julieta Cedillo, interview with the author, October 11, 2020.
25. Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Mexico, *Galindo, Contreras, Moncayo, Revueltas, Chávez* (1994), Enrique Diemecke, cond., Elena Durán, flute, Sony Masterworks CDEC-471000.
26. Julieta Cedillo, interview with the author, October 11, 2020.
27. The family was not aware of the 1994 recording. Rodrigo Sierra Moncayo, interview with the author, October 10, 2020.
28. This recording also says it is the premiere recording of the work. Miguel Ángel Villanueva, "Amatzinac," liner notes to *Amatzinac*, Urtext Digital Classics JBCC168, 2008.
29. Miguel Ángel Villanueva, interview with the author, October 13, 2020.
30. Gary Galván, personal email, September 29, 2020.





# Lauding Lowell

The amazingly prolific composer **Lowell Liebermann** turned 60 as we were beginning to come out of lockdown in February 2021, and we couldn't let this very special year go by without celebrating his extraordinary career (so far!). So this summer, **Katherine Kemler** (who commissioned *Soliloquy* from him in 1993) sent him some of her most pressing questions about his many acclaimed flute works, his creative process, and what he's been doing during the pandemic. He responded via email.

PHOTO BY JOSEPH MORAN



**Katherine Kemler:** You marked this milestone of your 60th birthday in the midst of a pandemic, an event that has caused many of us to reflect on our personal lives and careers. Has this time made you think differently about your work so far or your career going forward?

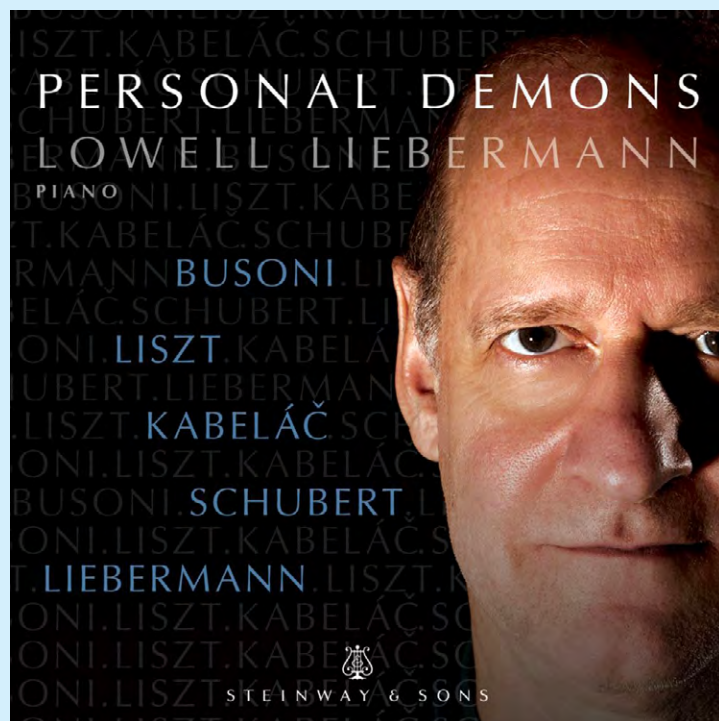
**Lowell Liebermann:** I had just finished two commissions and was taking a bit of a composition holiday when the pandemic hit. The result of that was that all of my upcoming commissions were either cancelled or put on indefinite hold. So I decided to use the time to do something I had been thinking about for a long time: to record a solo piano CD. For me, one of the downsides of a full composing schedule is that I don't have the time I would like to have at the piano, and so I used the opportunity to practice like crazy. I recorded what turned into a two-CD album called *Personal Demons*, which was released on the Steinway label in February, and produced and engineered by Sergei Kvitko. It contains not only my own music but also works that have been very important to me as a composer, by Schubert, Liszt, Kabeláč, and Busoni. Since the pandemic was raging by the time I was ready to record, I drove from New York to the Blue Griffin recording studio in Michigan. The combination of the pandemic and the fact that I was turning 60 has given me an impetus to really do the things I want and not waste time.

**KK:** In all the time that I've known you and read about you, I don't think I have ever heard you explain how you came to be a composer—except that you had “a knack” for creating your own pieces even while studying piano at age eight. Did you come from a musical family?

**LL:** My family were not professional musicians, but classical music was always playing in our house. One of the profoundest influences for me at an early age was Wendy Carlos's *Switched-On Bach*, which my mother constantly played on the stereo. I started piano lessons at the age of eight and at the same time started making up my own pieces. When I was 13, I declared that I wanted to be a composer, and shortly after that I began lessons with my first composition teacher, Ruth Schonthal.

**KK:** I believe your Sonata for Flute and Piano (1987) was your first piece for flute. It was commissioned by the Spoleto Festival, dedicated to Paula Robison, and premiered by her there in 1988. I have two groups of questions for you about it. First: How did it come about? Did you know Paula?

**LL:** It was indeed my first piece for flute. A pianist and classmate of mine at Juilliard, Erika Nickrenz, was playing a solo recital at the Spoleto Festival and premiered my *Bruckner Variations* as part of her program. Her father,



Scott Nickrenz, who ran the chamber music series, heard it and asked me to write a piece for his wife, flutist Paula Robison, and pianist Jean-Yves Thibaudet. They are both fabulous performers, and I wanted to write a piece that would be a showpiece for both flute and piano. I didn't know Paula previous to that, but she then went on to commission my Sonata for Flute and Guitar.

**KK:** Second, I think that the sonata really became known in the flute world when Paula performed it at the 1991 NFA Convention (the NFA had already chosen it as one of the Best Newly Published Flute Works in 1989). Her performance was so stunning. Looking back on that moment makes me wonder what influenced your writing in the work? The two-movement format, while a bit unusual in a sonata, really works well here. Did you plan it that way from the beginning? Were you influenced by any other composers of flute music?

**LL:** I probably would never have written a flute and piano sonata if it had not been commissioned. I had at that time a stereotype in my mind of what “flute music” was like from all of those fluffy French conservatoire pieces, and I wanted to go very much against that and show a real range and power in the flute writing. I also wanted the piano to be an equal partner rather than being a docile accompaniment. So I think I was led by that in my writing rather than being influenced by any specific composers. As far as the two-movement structure goes, I usually don't make long-term structural decisions until I have worked with the material for a while and made lots of sketches. So the decision of how many movements



Lowell Liebermann and Sir James Galway in NYC.

there will be is something that usually evolves during the writing of a piece. In this case, the two movements seemed right and there was, of course, the more practical consideration of timing as specified by the commission.

**KK:** Sir James Galway commissioned three works from you, the first of which was your Concerto for Flute and Orchestra. It was premiered in 1992 by the St. Louis Symphony, and I had the pleasure of attending that performance—it was thrilling! How long after the premiere of your sonata did this commission come about? I know Galway had been performing the sonata on concert tours.

**LL:** The Flute Sonata was premiered in 1987, and the concerto was premiered in 1992. I had known through my friend Charles Hamlen (who was Galway's manager) that Jimmy had started playing my sonata, something I was thrilled about! One day I was walking down Broadway and I saw Charlie coming toward me—he was very tall and always stood out in a crowd. Charlie saw me, stretched his hands out in my direction and exclaimed to his companion, "Well, here he is!" His companion was James Galway, and as Jimmy likes to tell the story, he was walking down the street "talking to Charlie's elbow." Jimmy had apparently at the very moment been telling Charlie that he would like to meet me! Charlie introduced me to Jimmy, and we arranged that I would meet him the next day at the apartment he was staying at (the apartment of another mutual friend, tenor Robert White). I remember that when I rang

the doorbell, Jimmy opened the door offering me a couple of St. Patrick's Day cookies on a napkin. He initially asked if I would orchestrate the Flute Sonata so that he could perform it with orchestra. I told him that if he really wanted me to, I would, but I had concerns about orchestrating it. Since so much of the energy of the piece comes from the dynamic interaction between the two soloists, I was afraid that if it was orchestrated, a lot of that energy would get diluted: What is difficult and thus virtuosic in the piano part would become easy when played by orchestra and quite a bit of the tension might get lost. I said I would much rather write him a new piece with orchestra, and he said, "OK, I'll commission it!"

**KK:** I have a memory of a phone conversation the two of us had before the premiere of your concerto. I asked how it was coming along, and you said you had finished it, but that Galway had told you it was unplayable—but then called back several hours later and said, "Lowell, I think I can play it!" I've since noticed, in the first edition, on the second-to-last-page of the flute part, there was a slight slowing of tempo marked. But in subsequent editions, that's not there. Is there a story behind this change?

**LL:** There was one passage in the first movement that Jimmy said was impossible, and so I told him I would write a couple of alternate versions. When I finished (a day or two later), I called him to get his fax number so I could send them, and he said, "Don't bother! I've been practicing it, and I can play it!"

As far as the tempo change at the end: I originally wrote it without the tempo change but then added the slower tempo, and it was originally performed and published that way. I toyed with the idea of keeping the tempo change as an *ad libitum* indication in the score, but then I decided to remove it entirely. It works much better without it.

**KK:** There is an arrangement of your Concerto for Flute and Orchestra for wind band by my trumpet colleague at Louisiana State University, Brian Shaw, and revised by you. I listened to Marianne Gedigian's wonderful 2014 live performance online. How did the idea for this come about? It seems like it will open up many more opportunities for performance.

**LL:** I believe that was originally the idea of Jerry Junkin, who is the conductor of the Dallas Winds. They wanted to have Brian Shaw make an arrangement for Marianne to perform and applied for permission from my publisher, Theodore Presser Company, which was granted under very specific conditions. A similar situation recently occurred with my Piccolo Concerto: There is now a wind ensemble version of that piece too, which was done for the Kosei Wind Orchestra in Tokyo by Keiichi Kurokawa.



**KK:** Galway also commissioned your Concerto for Flute, Harp, and Orchestra in 1995 (which he premiered with the Minnesota Orchestra that same year), as well as your Trio No. 1 for Flute, Cello, and Piano in 2002. I also remember his wife, Jeanne, telling the audience at a special concert of your music at the 2009 NFA Convention in NYC that her husband had commissioned a piece for her from you as well—she said it was a surprise Christmas present. Can you tell us a little more about these commissions?

**LL:** The only thing that stands out in my memory about the circumstances of the flute and harp concerto commission was that there were several orchestras involved, and each orchestra was supposed to sign the contract and send it on to the next orchestra to sign. One of the administrators of one of the orchestras let the contract sit on his desk for literally months, almost jeopardizing the entire project. By the time the contract was signed, I had a ridiculously short amount of time to write the piece. What turned out to be a predominantly serene piece was written under a tremendous amount of stress.

My first flute trio was indeed commissioned by Sir James as a Christmas stocking-stuffer for Lady Galway. It was all supposed to be hush-hush. I finished the piece right before Christmas and express-mailed it to Europe. According to all the tracking information, it wasn't going to be delivered until the day after Christmas, but by some Christmas miracle, it was actually delivered on Christmas Day.

**KK:** After the success of your sonata and concerto, many flutists were very anxious to commission more works from you—including myself. At the time, I had just received a small grant from the Louisiana Division of the Arts, and I talked to you at the 1992 NFA Convention about commissioning a short piece for flute alone. I am so happy you wrote *Soliloquy* for me in 1993, which I love, and I'm proud that it's become part of the standard flute repertoire. With so many requests from so many flutists, how do you make the decision which ones to accept? Where do you find the inspiration for all of these pieces?

**LL:** I was very happy to write the *Soliloquy* for you, and your performances and recording of it are superb! Starting out as a composer, if you are trying to make a living as one, you cannot pick and choose which commissions to accept: You have to write what people are willing to pay you for. This is not necessarily a bad thing since you end up writing for combinations that you would not necessarily write for on your own. As I said before, I probably would never have written a flute sonata if I had not been commissioned for it. Then, as one's career progresses, you can have a bit more discretion in picking and choosing which commissions you want to do. It was said of my teacher at Juilliard, Vincent Persichetti, that he would



Lowell Liebermann and Lady Galway in Madrid.



Above: Performing in Seville with Sir and Lady Galway.

Below: Liebermann in Athens.







Lowell Liebermann coaching in Athens.

never accept a commission unless it was for a piece that he was already working on. At this point in my life, with about 140 works in my catalogue, I don't feel such a pressure to write so many pieces, and there are many other things I want to do besides music. For example, I've taken up drawing and painting again, something I was passionate about but stopped doing in my student days when the music became all-encompassing.

**KK:** Your Concerto for Piccolo and Orchestra was commissioned by the former St. Louis Symphony piccoloist Jan Gippo in 1996. What are the challenges of writing for piccolo? What was your inspiration?

**LL:** Jan approached me backstage after one of the premiere performances of the Flute Concerto. Again, I had a cartoon stereotype of piccolo music in my head and, honestly, I didn't think the commission would go anywhere (I didn't know Jan yet!). So when he called me to tell me he had raised the money, I had to figure out what to do. I knew of lots of baroque piccolo concertos and some modern pieces, but I didn't know of any that really allowed the piccolo to sing in an extended melodic way, and so that's what I decided the repertoire needed. When the concerto was first performed, it was spoken of as the most difficult piccolo piece written, but now some high school students are playing it. It is amazing how quickly technical growth catches up to the repertoire.

**KK:** I had never heard of your Eight Pieces for Solo Bass Flute or Alto Flute or C Flute or Piccolo, Op. 59 (1997), before. Were you influenced at all by Hindemith's "Acht Stücke"? What made you decide to let the performer decide which instrument or combination of instruments to use?

**LL:** Those pieces were commissioned by Sally Baird Fouse and were originally all written for bass flute! It was Jan Gippo who originally suggested that they would work well on piccolo, and as I was going through them to make a piccolo version, I thought, "Well, why not the other flutes

as well?" So I left it to the choice of the performer as to which flute to play them on or, indeed, to mix more than one flute in performance of the whole set, and that's how it was published. I did feel almost guilty about that, as if I was somehow "stealing" something from the bass flute that was supposed to be its alone. But in its current version, it certainly receives many more performances than if it had been published just for bass flute. I didn't actually know the Hindemith pieces before I wrote mine, and the fact that mine turned out to also be eight pieces was a coincidence.

**KK:** Which of your flute pieces make you the most proud?

**LL:** I don't really think of my music in terms of being "proud" of one piece rather than another, but I will say that one piece that I wish was performed more "because I think of it as one of my most personal pieces" is my Second Flute Trio.

**KK:** Do you have any new works for flute on the horizon?

**LL:** The piece I completed just before the pandemic happened was a Trio for Flute, Alto Sax, and Piano, commissioned for the Yargo Trio. The premiere of it was delayed more than once by the pandemic, but it will finally (fingers crossed!) be premiered at the Athens Chamber Music Festival in Georgia and the NFA Convention in 2022.

**KK:** Finally, during the pandemic, many of us found it difficult to find traditional outlets for performing and teaching so had to go online. Some feel that this may change the way we experience music performance in the future. Do you have any thoughts on this?

**LL:** I have found online performances, no matter how good the performers are, for the most part to be an unsatisfactory experience. It is simply not the same as sitting in a concert hall, not only acoustically but also in terms of concentration, focus, social interaction, and ambience. I find myself getting easily distracted watching concerts online and usually end up "zoning out" after a few minutes. I do hope we can return to the normalcy of live concerts soon!



*Katherine Kemler is flute professor at Louisiana State University and has performed worldwide. She was the first flutist to record Lowell Liebermann's Sonata for Flute and Piano on Centaur Records in 1992, and commissioned and recorded his Soliloquy for solo flute in 1993; both are available on Spotify and Apple Music.*





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# *Music Careers &* CHRONIC CONDITIONS:



REFRAMING ILLNESS, INJURY, AND  
DISABILITY IN THE INDUSTRY

BY JILLIAN REED



While there is an enormous focus on the individual's responsibility for musical preparation, decorum, health precautions, and proactive treatments, let's face it: we're all subject to our bodies' responses to the world. We are living in the midst of a pandemic and have our own social determinants of health, personal medical histories, and careers that are physically demanding.

There are things we can do to take care of our mental and physical health that help us sustain our wellbeing and our livelihoods, and there is a whole world of performance healthcare modalities that can facilitate and support a healthy relationship between our bodies and our instruments.

But there are also things that happen that cannot be planned for, prevented, or even cured. Opening up more conversations about this reality will help chip away at the stigma that surrounds illness, injury, and disability in the classical music world. Why cast such a wide net by referring to "illness, injury, and disability"? This language is intentionally broad, encompassing physical and mental health as well as conditions that are both acute and chronic. "Disability" also holds power as a descriptor and an identity. These terms call on our whole community, whose diverse health experiences and backgrounds are united by their deviance from the able-bodied norm that is assumed and expected in the classical music world.

## DISCOURSE

The topic of musician's health is shrouded in horror stories of careers cut short. It seems like the only time illness, injury, and disability are discussed without a hushed tone or apologetic expression is when it's a story of *overcoming adversity*. Whether that is through a transformative new practice in performance healthcare, a new diet, or sheer perseverance and grit, these are the stories we like to focus on and cite for inspiration. But here's the reality: Many illnesses, injuries, and disabilities cannot be prevented or cured by "doing all the right things" or "working harder." Many successful music careers are sustained by musicians who constantly adapt and work with their bodies' changing needs. Therefore, framing a musician's physical and mental health condition as only ever an inspiration or a tragedy provides little comfort or opportunity to learn for all of us outside of that binary.

In disability studies, an analysis of narrative finds that most stories featuring disabled characters conclude with them either being killed or cured. (Take a second to think about it—the trope is everywhere!) In the classical music world, it seems that the stories on which we fixate center on the assumption that one is either promptly cured of their illness, injury, or disability, or permanently unfit for their career.

Let's explore the nuance that is lost in that oversimplified framework. The best way to do so is to learn from musicians who are sharing their stories in their own words—stories of flutists who are living with chronic illnesses, navigating injuries, caring for their mental health, and figuring out what they need to do to continue building the life and career that aligns with their goals.

## RESEARCH

From 2019 to 2020, I conducted an in-depth investigation into musicians' experiences with disability through 15 anonymous interviews and a survey of 200 musicians. Protecting the anonymity of my interviewees was essential while researching disability in a field where health rumors and realities can negatively affect musician's reputations.

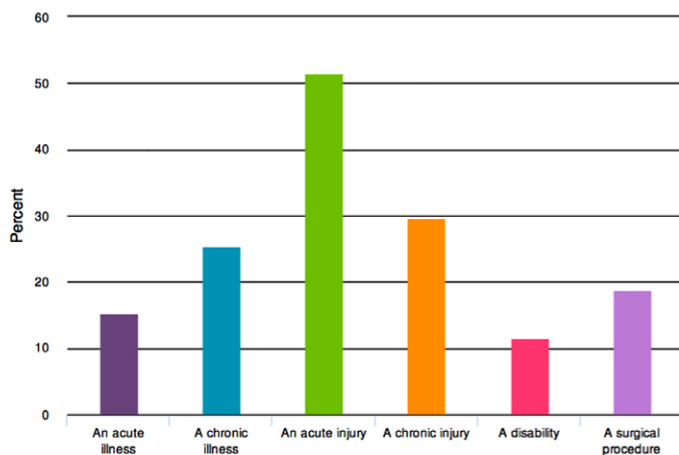
One flutist I interviewed, whom I'm calling Eliza, said:

**I've talked to other people about my health struggles, and I feel like I do it largely to try to set the example of destigmatizing this.... I don't think that we talk about it enough. I think it's seen as like a weakness to acknowledge and talk about those aspects of who you are and how you get up every day and do what you do.**

She wants to open up the conversation of illness in our field, and she acknowledges the way health issues are often perceived as a personal and professional shortcoming.

Musicians with mental and physical health challenges and corporeal differences have been and always will be part of our community. Out of 200 musicians surveyed, 138 of them reported having experienced an illness, injury, or disability that has limited or interfered with their ability to play their instrument in a significant way. I asked those 138 musicians to select which categories best described their illness, injury, and/or disability. Their selections, which could be multiple per survey participant, reflected a diversity of ailments experienced by this population.

As shown in the chart on the next page, the most common health concern experienced by my survey respondents was an acute injury, affecting 51%, or 71 out of 138. Beyond that clear majority, chronic injury and illness were the health conditions most affecting this population, reported by 29.7% and 25.4% of the survey respondents respectively. These chronic conditions dispute the false dichotomy that a musician's health has to either result in a full cure or the end to one's career. Most of these survey respondents continue to perform while navigating their chronic health conditions. However, this certainly does not come without challenges.



Charts illustrating how interviewees described their illness/injury/disability. (Mental illness is included in the acute and chronic illness categories.)

Value	Percent	Responses
An acute illness	15.2%	21
A chronic illness	25.4%	35
An acute injury	51.4%	71
A chronic injury	29.7%	41
A disability	11.6%	16
A surgical procedure	18.8%	26

## HEALTH AND IDENTITY

Illness, injury, and disability that can't be easily "overcome" or cured—whether it be cancer, arthritis, autonomic dysfunction, PTSD, or a broken bone—are oftentimes isolating to navigate. Harper reflected back on her experience in conservatory and shared:

I would always get a really bad cold like four or five days before an audition. I would often lose my voice, which are now symptoms that I have a way of framing and understanding. But at that point, I didn't pay attention to the fact that I always had colds. And I just thought that, you know, I was kind of a bad flute player and a bad student. I mean, I think that it was really hard on my self-esteem as a musician.

Without a clear diagnosis and open dialogue about her health in the music community, Harper's experiences with illness felt like a personal character failing.

Finn, an interviewee who had a chronic injury, shared, "Like many, many musicians, I would try to just push through the pain. I had to learn how to slow down and understand that it didn't mean that I was any less of a musician." They learned how to listen to their body, and in the process, they recalibrated their relationship to their instrument and the grind culture that makes musicians feel like they have to sacrifice their health for their art.

While the players I interviewed had different relationships with the flute due to their health—from maintaining performance careers to teaching to retiring or changing career paths—all of them mentioned some feeling of needing to prove themselves as musicians to "make up" for the fact that they were experiencing or had experienced an illness or injury.

Eliza told me, "I think my identity issues are kind of similar to any other musician...that search for the worthiness of

being an artist. But the illness can compound that. I feel like there's this extra struggle to be resilient and reliable." This feeling of needing to prove oneself as a legitimate artist and one who can be depended upon is pervasive in this competitive field and understandably so! People hire musicians with the expectation that they will perform precisely and punctually.

But because people even within the music field aren't well versed in musician's health and don't talk enough about the gray area between crisis and nonissue, *any* mention of illness, injury, or disability could be misunderstood by colleagues or employers as something that would render a flutist incapable of performing. In reality, most flutists with health issues and corporeal differences are not only able to perform well, but also build full careers enabled by simple accommodations such as a physically accessible rehearsal space, enlarged music, scheduling modifications, adjusted part assignments, etc. Because of this misunderstanding, flutists experiencing illness, injury, and disability are in the constant position of both proving themselves as hyper-competent and educating those around them about their needs and abilities.

## SOCIAL DISCOMFORT

Anything that deviates from the able-bodied norm is often met with unease and social tension. People often translate their own discomfort with health and corporeal diversity into judgement, perceiving people with disabilities as incompetent or undependable. As Rosemarie Garland Thomson, disability studies writer, asserts, "Constructed as the embodiment of corporeal insufficiency and deviance, the physically disabled body becomes a repository for social anxieties about such troubling concerns as vulnerability, control, and identity." This phenomenon of projecting "social anxieties" onto disabled bodies is noticeable in work environments, when physical difference is mistaken for unreliability.

Sonya, a flutist with invisible chronic illnesses, talked about the way her employers and colleagues related to her and her body after she disclosed her health status:



If they aren't sure what to do to help you, they start asking you what you are doing to lessen your burden. Out of that, the conversation can go awry and then it can turn into judgement, like, "Are you doing what's best for you and your body to be able to do this so that I can count on you? Are you doing all the right things? Oh, is it really the best thing to stay home or are you trying to avoid and shirk your responsibility?"

The quick descent into judgement and assumption of moral flaws or bad work ethic, as described by Sonya, captures the skepticism faced by people with disabilities, particularly those whose health conditions are not visible.

A flutist named Dana reflected:

I think for me personally, this has been a journey of learning how to advocate for the conditions that I have. They're invisible illnesses, they're not something that people can see or equally understand or comprehend. And I have been misunderstood; I've been called a hypochondriac. So there's a constant educating of people of my perspective. And then there's also educating them about my needs..., not because I want special treatment but because I want to ensure success with the group, success of the ensemble, success of the event.

Dana needed to convince her colleagues and employers that her illnesses were real to even justify asking for accommodations. That is a burdensome level of self-advocacy required when her goal of coming together to play great music is so universally shared amongst musicians.

## REFRAME

We are all human beings with different and complicated corporeal experiences. We need to work to honor and understand the ways in which illness, injury, and disability have and will continue to affect us all.

Let's move past the narratives that put those who "overcome" illness/injury on a pedestal, those who are unable to perform in a position of pity, and anyone in the gray middle ground with minimal access to accommodations or understanding. The more that musicians with disabilities are heard, accommodated, and respected in our community, the better the music making and culture that surrounds it

will be for everyone involved. I hope that our community will become more comfortable and familiar with the glorious impacts of mutual aid, asking for and granting accommodations for physical and mental health, and normalizing the narrative that illness is neither a catastrophe nor an opportunity for heroism. With this reframing, we will all be in a better position to have nuanced conversations about health and accommodations with our colleagues, mentors, students, and peers.

Let these flutists' stories and insights spark greater dialogues about how we can build more sustainable music careers and enriching communities that are centered around our shared acknowledgement of our humanness and our love for flute performance.



*Hudson Valley-based flutist Jillian Reed loves the opportunities for connection and collaboration that come with being a performer, entrepreneur, flute teacher, and member of the NFA Performance Healthcare Committee. While at Bard College and Conservatory, she pursued degrees in flute performance and human rights to explore the intersections of music and social justice, culminating in her thesis investigating issues of health and institutional ableism in the classical music world.*

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A vertical image of a dark-colored flute with silver keys and a silver headjoint. The Abell logo is visible on the headjoint.



# THE BLESSINGS AND CHALLENGES OF NAVIGATING THE PANDEMIC

From the Performance Health Care Committee  
By Angela McCuiston and Francesca Leo

## MARCH 2020:

We'll never forget the surreal realization that life as we knew it was forced to stop. Shows, concerts, tours, lessons, recitals—gone. We had to either cancel our gigs or find a way to transition online. For musicians, finding our place in the virtual space and pivoting to new ways of generating income over the last several months has come with blessings and challenges.

These are some of your experiences:

Throughout the many challenges this time has presented, for many it served as a reminder to let go of perfectionistic fantasies and begin to reconnect with our purpose as flutists: to bring people together through our shared love of music.

In the very beginning, the pandemic offered us a much-needed break from our hectic schedules. Catherine Flinchum writes, "When the pandemic hit, I was seriously thankful. My schedule had been packed so fully that I was starting to feel the consequences of burnout." We all got a chance to rest and recharge and also appreciate time at home, but as "two weeks to stop the spread" turned into months, that respite became a hiatus that challenged many of us when it came to performing, teaching, and making a living.

For many flutists, improving their knowledge of music technology ended up being one of the pandemic's silver linings, as we all had to learn creative strategies to keep the music alive while living in isolation. Although motivation was challenging at times, several people found a way to continue playing with others remotely through apps and software such as Acapella, GarageBand, and Jalamus (which allows musicians to play together in real-time).

Linda Hartig described her pandemic experience through finding joy and motivation in these remote musical experi-



ences and reconnecting with her love of playing: “I’ve played more at home than ever before, although I can’t really say I’ve PRACTICED. But through technology, we manage to keep playing and keep connected with something we all love.”

Nan Raphael also describes technology as a motivating factor that helped her continue playing: “Not only did [this technology] calm me and keep me occupied, it gave me a chance to play repertoire I wouldn’t otherwise have had the chance to play.... The other motivation was to give back and use my music for healing and respite during this difficult period.”

Turning to social media to fill the void of human interaction, we experienced the emotional rollercoaster of seeing our friends either struggling or succeeding. As one flutist put it, “I was watching others share their successes and discoveries during the pandemic while I sat in the back thinking, ‘Why am I working so hard yet feel so stuck?’ I felt that I hadn’t made any ‘big moves’ in my career because I was so set on paying the bills, which made me believe that I was a failure, and everyone that had believed in me beforehand was disappointed. These running thoughts broke me mentally, and I started to contemplate if I should switch careers or apply for a job that would help provide me a more secure life.” This thought echoed throughout the creative community.

We were able to slow down, prioritize our health, and take stock of what’s really important in life. But above all, we learned to appreciate what we need the most: each other.

As ensembles were forced to cancel seasons, many of us found ways to keep performing live. Several orchestras turned to alternative venues such as warehouses and outdoor amphitheaters, and individuals found alternatives in “living room” concerts as well as concerts performed on porches and driveways where we could ask for donations via Venmo or CashApp. Neighborhood concerts became the new norm.

“Zoom fatigue” affected most of us. In the beginning we enjoyed the novelty of connecting online through virtual concerts, happy hours, etc., but that feeling soon wore off as we realized those kinds of gatherings could never replace hugs or live audience interaction. Performing in our living rooms gave us the opportunity to be more vulnerable and approachable to our viewers, but offerings began to feel incessant, and we were all competing against others for valuable airtime. This added to everyone’s mental and emotional stress.



Francesca Leo



Angela McCuiston

When it came to teaching, some flutists who were new to the idea of educating online faced technological challenges that ultimately ended up being helpful. In an unpublished interview she did with Amy Hoffman earlier this year, Kate Bergman noted that “teaching online helped [Amy] become more aware of students playing with a non-steady airstream as Zoom or FaceTime cuts out when the tone is really poor. Technology can also address articulation—Amy mentioned that students playing with a hard tongue really came across with a big thump online.”

We’re still feeling the effects of the lockdown, and we will be for a while. Flinchum writes, “This pandemic was a pure professional and mental struggle that I’m still working out to this day, but I will take note of some good things. For one, I was able to spend more time with my instrument the way I wanted to. I challenged myself to apply for competitions and auditions within the last year, where beforehand I would have said, ‘I don’t have enough money or time for this.’ I learned that my personal health should be #1 on the priority list, not just for my own sanity but also for the personal relationships that I do have.”

Overall, this situation has been both a blessing and a challenge for the musical community. The sudden shift to staying at home and facing financial hardship spurred self-reflection, growth, and creativity. Finding new ways make music, teach, and earn an income was scary, yet at the same time exciting. We were able to slow down, prioritize our health, and take stock of what’s really important in life. But above all, we learned to appreciate what we need the most: each other.

**Francesca Leo is a flutist, educator, and the founder of [playingwithoutpain.com](http://playingwithoutpain.com). A member of the Performance Health Care Committee, she holds flute performance degrees from Bowling Green State University and the Manhattan School of Music, and is a current MBA candidate at BGSU. Angela McCuiston, NASM-CPT, CES, SFS, M.M., is owner of Music Strong, a business that specializes in fitness for musicians. Winner of the 2007 NFA Piccolo Masterclass, she is assistant principal/piccolo of Sinfonia Gulf Coast, the 313th Army Band, and chair of the Performance Health Committee.**



By Jeiran Hasan

## From the Diversity & Inclusion Committee

### Teaching Students of Diverse Backgrounds *Basic principles to guide, enrich, and shape our students' unique diverse lives.*

**W**hat does “diversity” or “having a diverse background” mean to you? To some, it references race; to others, a varied career background. Acknowledging the sensitivity and importance of the topic, talking about the subject with others, and finding ways to be open-minded and accepting will all contribute to more effective and successful dialogues with your students.

Discussing diversity requires an honest, open conversation with yourself before approaching others. Analyze your personal background, interests, life and career path, and how you have been shaped as an individual. Your willingness to learn and improve is the most important action that you can take, as well as accepting and admitting where there is room for growth—especially when realizing diversity may refer to a much larger spectrum than you initially thought.

When it is time to work with your students, consider the subjects of race; gender and identification; background and family lifestyle (including environmental, social, cultural, and community influences, in addition to first-generation students); ideology, religion, and beliefs; academic interests, majors, minors, and secondary areas; and disabilities.

At the beginning of the year, talk with your studio members about their interests and background to help instill a healthy learning environment where students have a safe space to feel valued, included, and comfortable sharing thoughts and concerns. Furthermore, these discussions can aid in specific accommodations to be considered that may influence repertoire, seminars, guest artists, and overall student accountability. Involving the community and younger students' families in lessons by programming repertoire specific to their background may increase their overall investment in supporting music, since it will be more openly relatable to them.

In an academic studio environment, there is more opportunity for varied educational learning. A few questions to ask yourself when planning your teaching schedule include: What am I doing and what else can I do to expose my students to something unique? Am I actively aware of, pursuing, and programming repertoire of diverse backgrounds? Do

I have any colleagues that can serve as guest artists or speakers that are specialists in something nontraditional? One positive we have all experienced from the pandemic is the ease and value of including video platforms in our teaching; we can continue to use this technology, especially for niche guests and topics.

Additionally, there are so many resources that can be utilized to maximize nontraditional learning. For example, on campus, encourage your students to take advantage of the international programs department and its variety of events or seminars, especially if they are interested in research or travel. By participating in these events, interested students can gather information on university, governmental, regional, or other national grants and scholarships available. Encourage them to perform in nontraditional ensembles related to their interests, and join professional service fraternities. Exploring databases including ProQuest and JSTOR and joining online social media groups can broaden their horizons as well. Confer with faculty colleagues, especially those that teach ethnomusicology, nontraditional courses, or special seminars.

**Your willingness to learn and improve is the most important action that you can take, as well as accepting and admitting where there is room for growth—especially when realizing diversity may refer to a much larger spectrum than you initially thought.**

Professionally, being a member of the NFA, regional and national flute clubs, and other organizations is beneficial not only career-wise, but also offers access to diverse committees and their events, guests, and special topics.





The NFA's Diversity and Inclusion, International Liaison, Career and Artistic Development, and New Music Advisory committees expose students to a variety of unique topics. Participating in conventions through other major organizations related to education, instruments, or other areas is valuable as well. Finally, reaching out to or participating in cultural diasporas can lead to unexpected networking, as well as performance and travel opportunities.

Personal awareness, a willingness to grow, a sense of curiosity, and utilization of our never-ending and evolving resources will make you a better member of the community. It is crucial to work with what you have and continuously make small improvements that will have longer-lasting benefits. Always remember that your studio is already unique—there is no other you, and no other place in the world with the same exact people and circumstances. You are actively teaching students of diverse backgrounds!

*Dr. Jeiran Hasan enjoys a multifaceted career as a flutist and educator, holding degrees from the University of Iowa and the Cleveland Institute of Music. She has competed nationally and internationally in over 20 competitions, including the NFA Young Artist, and teaches and performs with the Knox-Galesburg and the Quad City Symphonies. [j-hasan.com](http://j-hasan.com)*

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# NFA News

Updates on committee activities and other news of interest from the national office

## Virtual Event Series

Building on the success of the edition we did in the spring, this summer the NFA took applications for the fall Virtual Events Series, which is running now through December 19, 2021. The ten available spots have been filled with an array of highly-contrasting events that illustrate the vibrancy of the NFA, and will ensure our members continue to stay connected. More information can be found at [nfaonline.org/community/events/nfa-events](https://nfaonline.org/community/events/nfa-events).

The application process for the next series begins in October (after the 2022 Convention proposal submission process is complete), so we look forward to presenting another member-driven lineup of virtual events starting in February 2022.

## Building the NFA Team



Daniel Pozzebon

As we approach the end of the year, we continue to rebuild the NFA staff as we recover and move forward from the difficulties created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In early October, Daniel Pozzebon joined the NFA as Convention Director, a position that has been vacant for more than a year. Daniel brings a wealth of experience that he's developed along the way; his many former posi-

tions include being the events director at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts and director of operations at Ball State University's Emens Auditorium and Pruis Hall.

As we welcome Daniel, we also say farewell to Alana Zalas, who has worked with the NFA as our bookkeeper since February 2020. During a time of upheaval during the pandemic, she made sure that our accounts were as solid as a rock. We wish Alana all the best as she pursues new opportunities.

As this issue goes to press we're in the process of welcoming Alana's replacement, Charles Mills, as well as our new Development Manager, Nicholas VanderLaan, who will come on board to help us diversify revenue streams and bring new resources to the NFA. More on our two new team members in the next issue!

## Become an NFA Intern!

Our experience during the virtual convention was made richer by the presence of our amazing team of interns—and we hope some of them join us again to help facilitate our Virtual Events Series! We're seeking office interns to join our team, too. In addition to participating in NFA projects, they'll have the opportunity to have regular, career-based informational sessions with members of our staff and community. For more information our intern program and how to apply, visit [nfaonline.org/convention/volunteering/internships](https://nfaonline.org/convention/volunteering/internships). And if you're a member who would like to offer an informational session for the interns, please contact Jenny at [jclarke@nfaonline.org](mailto:jclarke@nfaonline.org).

# Notes from Around the World

Conventions, festivals, competitions, and other global flute activities

**The Puerto Rico Flute Symposium's** 2021–22 season, "Flutists of Latin America," features a series of virtual masterclasses and recitals. Guest artists include Joidy Bianco in October, Marcos Nicolas Sosa in November, Catherine Ramirez in December, Gabriel Cruz-Ruiz in January, Mariceli Navarro Salernoo in February, Ivan Denes in March, and Baltazar Diaz-Davila in April. For more information, visit [prflutesymposium.org](https://prflutesymposium.org) or email [info@prflutesymposium.org](mailto:info@prflutesymposium.org).

Italy's **20th Chieri International Competition** has been rescheduled for November 21–28, and the application deadline has been extended to November 17. Flutists can compete in one of two age groups: performers no older than 20 years old, and those 21 to 30. For application guidelines, repertoire requirements, and official rules, visit [sites.google.com/view/ccpiemonteseen/home](https://sites.google.com/view/ccpiemonteseen/home).

**The International Flute Competition Domenico Cimarosa** is scheduled for December 3–5. Visit [concorsocimarosa.it](https://concorsocimarosa.it).

The inaugural **Nordic Piccolo Festival** has been scheduled for March 24–27, 2022, in Denmark, featuring piccolo artists Russell Itani, Viveca Löfgren, Camille Guenot, Heili Rosin, Ragnhildur Josephsdottir, and Christine Elizabeth Clancy. For complete details, visit [nordicpiccolofestival.com](https://nordicpiccolofestival.com).

The **Deutsche Gesellschaft für Flöte** (German Flute Society) is planning to hold its International Flute Festival in Freiburg, Germany, in March 2022. Visit [floete.net/en/dgff-ev/dgff-events/virtual-flute-festival](https://floete.net/en/dgff-ev/dgff-events/virtual-flute-festival).



# Video Showcases

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# Video Showcases

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### Free Live Recordings

I offer these recordings of live, unedited performances for the following reasons:

1. A few of these pieces are either unavailable on commercial recordings or are difficult to obtain.
2. I feel that there is a certain level of excitement and energy found in live recordings that can sometimes be lacking in professionally edited studio recordings
3. Students should have the opportunity to hear an artist living through the music phrase by phrase, recovering and playing through the minor errors without letting them destroy the mood or excitement of the performance.

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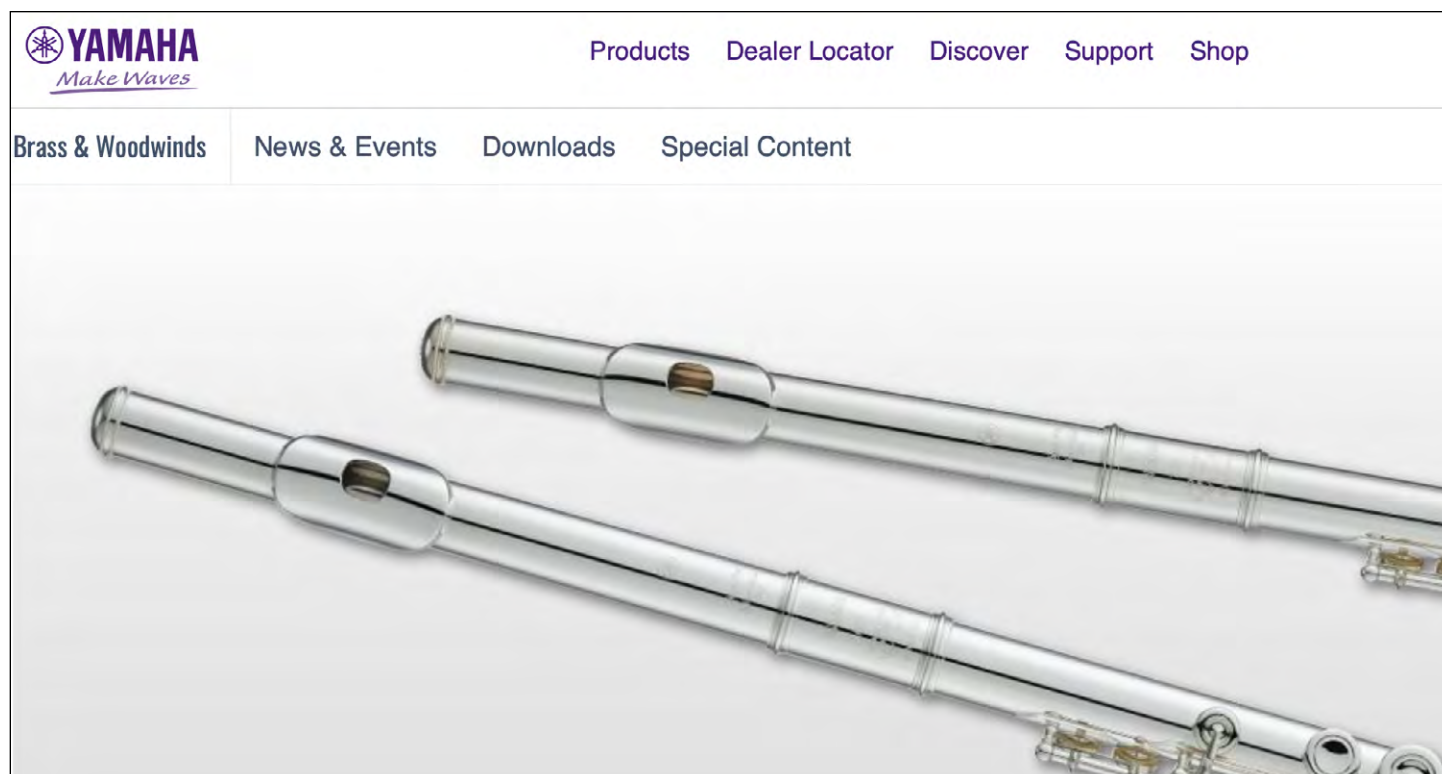
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# Video Showcases

## Pearl



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# Video Showcases

## Oberlin Conservatory



## Sunderman Conservatory



# Across the Miles

News about flute club and flute choir activities throughout the United States



Les flûtistes de Montréal

On August 21, **Les flûtistes de Montréal** offered their first live performances since before the pandemic. *Summertime au bord du lac* (Summertime by the lake) was presented on lovely Lac St-Victor in the Laurentian region of Quebec, Canada. The first of the two performances, *Concert en famille*, was enjoyed by families, with children joining in on Offenbach's "Can-Can" from *Orpheus* on personalized percussion instruments. The *Concert Cocktail* included Raye/Price's "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy," arranged by Chris Potter; Jonathan Cohen's

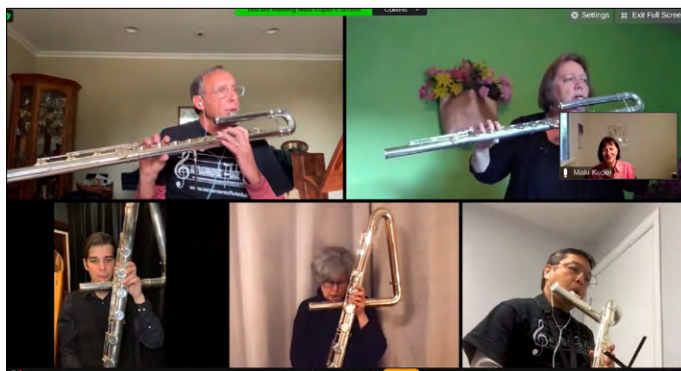


*Temperamental Triodes* for low flutes; and Peter Senchuk's *Canadian Celebration*, commissioned in 2017 by Judy Diez d'Aux for Les flûtistes de Montréal in celebration of Canada's 150th anniversary. The group's members are Judy Diez d'Aux, Nancy Newman, Catherine Audet, Annie Thibault, Susan Elliott, Danielle Barro, Lise Germain, Daniel Deprés, and Christiane Laflamme, with guest conductor Jean-Guy Boisvert and special guest artist Billy Kerr. For more information, visit [lesflutistes-demontreal.com](http://lesflutistes-demontreal.com).



The Sacramento Flute Club goes virtual

As with so many flute clubs in the 2020–21 season, the **Sacramento Flute Club** went virtual. While it was disappointing to be unable to get together and play as a group, the year was a fun opportunity to learn from flutists that club members wouldn't have been able to meet during a normal year. Presenters included Paige Dashner Long, Sarah Jackson, Annie Wu, Patricia Zuber, Paul Edmund Davies, and Alexa Still. They also enjoyed presentations from their own expert flute members, including Alice Lenaghan, Mila Olson, Cathie Apple, and Mat Krejci. And they took a few



minutes at the end of every meeting to hear from their fellow SFC members and learn how they came to the instrument.

The club's 2021 Flute Festival featured master classes and a recital with Carol Wincenc, talks with vendors, and presentations from Mat Krejci and Cathie Apple. It ended with video presentations of virtual performances of the Bach Air and the premiere of the *Sacramento Shuffle*, composed and arranged for the club by Paul Edmund Davies. The group sends a big thank-you to the Madison Flute Club for giving them advice on how to organize their first virtual festival.



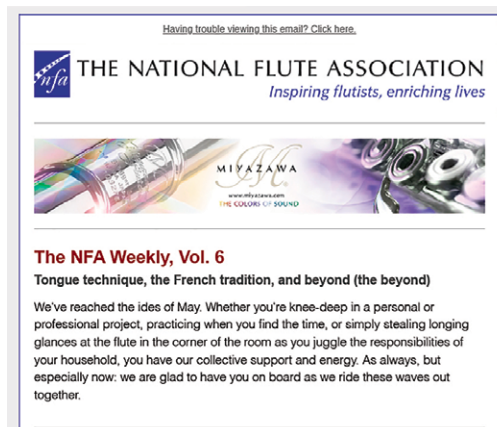


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## From the Research Committee

### Graduate Research Competition: 2021 Winner

**T**he NFA's Research Committee is proud to announce the winner of the 2021 Graduate Research Competition, Alexandra Aguirre. The competition is overseen by the NFA's Research Committee (Christopher Chaffee, Elizabeth Brightbill, Julie Hobbs, Sara Anne Hook, Kelly Nivison, Elizabeth Robinson, Shaina Rush, and Patricia Surman). The committee seeks to honor and recognize important new contributions to flute research, promote the value of research, and expose new and important scholarly work to an interested audience. This year's winner was selected by the committee panel based on the quality of the writing, research, abstract, and proposal, as well as the overall contributions to our field. We are pleased to share the winner's abstract here.

—Julie Hobbs

**TITLE:** Finding Messiaen's Blackbird

**BY:** Dr. Alexandra Aguirre, D.A.,  
University of Northern Colorado

**ABSTRACT:** This document explores Olivier Messiaen's use of serialism, Greek rhythms, Hindu *deçi-tâlas*, "style oiseau," and other ornithological information as they relate to his composition for flute and piano, *Le merle noir*.

As a result of this exploration, an investigative analysis of several compositional elements is provided, including ancient Greek rhythms, Hindu *deçi-tâlas*, serialism, and birdsong in order to process their connection with Messiaen's blackbird.

Messiaen's blackbird is identified as the Eurasian blackbird (*Turdus merula*), and recorded birdcalls from the Eur-



asian blackbird have been converted into spectrograms. These graphs facilitated a comparison of the vocalizations produced by the birds with Messiaen's written music.

This investigative analysis provides a new perspective in the interpretation of *Le merle noir*.

## From the Career and Artistic Development Committee

### The National Flute Association C.R.E.A.T.E. Project Competition

**T**he NFA values and supports innovation, creativity, entrepreneurship, and ingenuity. Through the C.R.E.A.T.E. (Creating Resources through Engagement, Artistry, Teamwork, and Entrepreneurship) Project Competition, we have seen our members build community, equity, artistry, and education through their projects. It has been an exciting way to shine a light on who we are as a creative community.

We are pleased to announce that the competition will again take place at the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual NFA Convention in Chicago, August 11–14, 2022.

#### Previous winners include:

[LunArts Festival](#): an annual performance festival celebrating women in the arts.

[Play It Forward](#): private music lesson scholarships combined with community service for motivated young musicians.

[Flute New Music Consortium](#): a nonprofit organization promoting new music for the flute.

We encourage you to dream about your project and start preparing for your proposal now.

Entrants may be individuals or teams of up to three people. Teams must include at least one flutist. Entrants are expected to submit multimedia materials that display the full scope of the project, including what has already been accomplished as well as projected goals and successes. Submitted materials may include video (no more than three minutes in length), audio, informational graphics, and documents. All entries must include a current and projected budget and indication of any outside grant sources or awards.

**Check the NFA website for dates and deadlines in early 2022!**

# Passing Tones

In memoriam

## CHARLES WYATT (1943–2021)

by Evan Pengra Sult

Charles Wyatt, who performed as the principal flutist of the Nashville Symphony for nearly a quarter-century and then switched careers to become an accomplished poet and fiction writer, died August 6, 2021. He was 78 years old.

Born March 15, 1943, he began flute studies around the age of 12, learning to play on an old Bundy, which he recalled “cost \$140 and was the most valuable thing in the house.” When he wasn’t practicing, the family hid the flute in the linen closet for fear it might be stolen. He spent his undergraduate years at the Curtis Institute of Music as a student of William Kincaid, then earned a master’s degree from the Philadelphia Musical Academy (again as a Kincaid pupil). In the summer of 1965, he attended Tanglewood as a flute fellow.

While living in Philadelphia, Wyatt played in the pit orchestra of the local opera company. Eventually, he joined the Marine Corps Band in Washington D.C. (in so doing, he escaped the Vietnam draft). Following his tour of duty, he freelanced in New York—primarily as a performer of new music—until there was an opening in the Nashville Symphony. He took his audition in the Detroit airport, won the job, and departed for Tennessee, where he served two stints as principal flutist (1968–70 and 1975–96). During these years, he also performed at the Peninsula Music Festival in Ephraim, Wisconsin.

By the late 80s, Wyatt had grown tired of “being yelled at by conductors” and began exploring alternate career paths. The written word beckoned, and in 1991 he earned his MFA in Fiction from Warren Wilson College. He published his first book, a novel in stories called *Listening to Mozart*, in 1995; it won the John Simmons Short Fiction Award and was favorably reviewed in *The New York Times*, which called it “eccentric but effective” and praised Wyatt’s “rich use of metaphorical language.”

Buoyed by this success, Wyatt officially retired from the Nashville Symphony the following year to focus full-time on writing. Over the next 25 years, he published six more books, including several collections of poetry. (A final collection of short stories is forthcoming.) Many of his works fictionalize his own experiences as a performing musician or respond to musical works of personal importance. Wyatt described himself as a “migrant fiction



Charles Wyatt

worker,” a wry summation of his second career, which took him to Binghamton University, Denison University, the University of Central Oklahoma, Purdue University, and Oberlin College, all as a visiting professor. Additionally, he taught online for UCLA and in the low-residency MFA Program at the University of Nebraska in Omaha.

Although he maintained a low profile in the flute world after his departure from orchestral performing, he was a member of *The Flutist Quarterly* Editorial Advisory Board from 2007 to 2016.

Wyatt is survived by his wife Cindy, a harpist and fellow poet; two sons, Peter (Yvonne) and Alexander (Courtney); and two grandchildren, Declan and Cecily.

In one of his later poems, “Decorations from the Bardo,” Wyatt bade farewell to an eventful life. It ends:

Music comes before the sap rising,  
the leaves falling, neither weak nor strong.  
The last ode is the first.  
The wise man is always moving.  
Some music lingers  
with the last and sudden swallows.



# SHAUL BEN-MEIR (1940–2021)

by Evan Pengra Sult

*The author wishes to thank Liz Ben-Meir for her assistance in compiling this obituary.*

In August 1983, the NFA Convention in Philadelphia was abuzz with chatter about the new kid on the block: a single booth in the exhibition hall with a mom-and-pop vibe and an unmatched selection of sheet music and flute accessories. By the end of the first day, the supply had been cleaned out and frantic phone calls were being made to restock before the next morning. Leaving the convention, many attendees found their luggage a little heavier thanks to the inclusion of a thick new catalogue from the booth, emblazoned with the words “Flute World.”

It was the realization of an idea that began in the mind of Shaul Ben-Meir, who died on July 21, 2021, at his home in Walnut Creek, California, from leukemia. By the time of the '83 Convention, Ben-Meir's multifaceted career as a flutist, teacher, and conductor had carried him from the Middle East to a longtime position in the Detroit Symphony. After its triumphant debut, Flute World moved its headquarters from Ben-Meir's home to a storefront in Farmington, Michigan. There, for over three decades, it was co-owned and managed by Ben-Meir and his wife, Liz. Today the store has three locations nationwide and customers all over the world.

Shaul Ben-Meir was born on September 14, 1940, in Iraq; the family relocated to a *kibbutz* soon after the founding of the state of Israel in 1948. Although resources were scarce, the community placed great importance on cultural development, and Ben-Meir began playing the recorder. He showed exceptional promise and, thanks to an American donor, was able to obtain a flute and begin taking lessons in nearby Tel Aviv. He quickly made up for his comparatively late start: By the age of 21 he was the principal flutist of the Haifa Symphony. Soon after, he received a scholarship from the American-Israeli Cultural Foundation to travel to England and study with Geoffrey Gilbert. In 1962, his star rose further when he was awarded the Silver Medal at the International Wind Competition in Helsinki, Finland.

Soon after, he made his first trip to the United States, where via an exchange program he swapped places with a professor at Ithaca College. Eager to stay in America, he subsequently was appointed an artist-in-residence at the University of Buffalo, where he worked alongside composer Lukas Foss, focusing on modern music research and performance. (While in upstate New York, he took the opportunity to take lessons with Joseph Mariano, then professor at Eastman.)

His relocation to the United States became permanent in 1967, when he joined the Detroit Symphony; the other members of the section were Albert Tipton and Clement



Shaul Ben-Meir

Barone, both of whom he recalled fondly. Upon Barone's death in 2004, Ben-Meir paid tribute to his “warmth of heart and modesty” and described how Barone had become like “a father figure” to him. Ben-Meir spent just over 30 years in the DSO (he retired in 1997) during which time he was also, variously, a member of the Detroit Woodwind Chamber Players, the principal flutist of the West Bloomfield Symphony, and a member of the Renaissance Woodwind Quintet.

In 1985, Ben-Meir was elected to the Board of the National Flute Association. His candidacy statement focused on the “enhancement of the link between the performer and the craftsman, which I believe is the only way to insure the continuing progress and development of our instrument.” His interest in flute-making was not limited to the relationships with craftspeople he had developed through his commercial ventures; he himself tried his hand at making flute headjoints and had a long experience as a repairman, including a trip to Japan to receive training with Muramatsu.

His relationship with the NFA was a long one: In addition to his time on the Board of Directors, he was a featured performer at multiple conventions and a frequent competition judge. His NFA involvement was bookended by events reflecting his great love of flute choirs. In 1978, he was already recognized as one of the “pillars of the NFA and the flute choir movement” and joined fellow honorees (including Arthur Ephross and Philip Swanson) for the world premiere performance of Louis Moyse's *Une Affaire de Famille*. And at the other end of his career, in 2006, Ben-Meir was invited to conduct the National Flute Orchestra at the convention in Pittsburgh. In addition, in recognition of his prolific efforts arranging symphonic works for flute ensembles, he was a four-time winner (and almost-yearly honorable mention) of the NFA's Newly Published Music Competition.

His acclaimed arrangements for flute orchestras were initially borne out of necessity—as the founder of the Michigan Flute Orchestra, he had grown tired of the insipid orchestrations of the limited available repertoire. Why couldn't the great symphonic works he performed weekly in Orchestra Hall be adapted for the players of the MFO? What set his arrangements apart, recalled Liz Ben-Meir, was the care he took writing for low flutes: "He took his cue from the original orchestration. If the composer didn't use piccolo, neither did Shaul. He had an ear for the symphonic sound, and his arrangements highlighted the wonderful alto and bass voices." His final arrangement—of Dvořák's *Carnival Overture*—was finished earlier this year.

After his retirement from the DSO, he traveled widely as a sought-after guest conductor and coach for flute orchestras across North America. One such ensemble was the Florida Flute Association's Flute Teachers' Orchestra, which he

proudly conducted for 20 years. In an online tribute, the FFA remembered how "his driving enthusiasm and his insistence of perfection from his musicians created amazing experiences for both the players and the audience. He pushed us as performers and as players and sometimes we were surprised at what he was able to draw out of us. Our musicianship and flute skills were improved every time we rehearsed or performed with him. You knew it would be tough, but you also knew it was going to be quite an experience."

In addition to his wife of 45 years, Liz, his survivors include a brother, three children, and five grandchildren.

*Evan Pengra Sult is the principal flutist of the Pacific Northwest Ballet Orchestra and serves on the board of the Seattle Flute Society. He holds degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the San Francisco Conservatory and was a fellow at the 2018 Rubin Institute for Music Criticism.*

## ELLEN RAMSEY (1959–2021)

By Michelle Stanley

*"I would like to be remembered as someone who used whatever talent she had to do her work to the very best of her ability" –Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

Ellen Ramsey, owner and operator of Ellen Ramsey Flute Repair in Colorado, passed away on February 10th after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

As one of the great repair technicians in the United States, she created a thriving and popular business selling and repairing high-end instruments to clients across the country. Her commitment to her customers was unparalleled, her knowledge of flutes was limitless, and her kindness toward the flute community was unmatched.

She began her work as a technician in Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1990 repairing band instruments. She relocated to Colorado in 1992 and started a similar business in Boulder where she gained a great reputation for her work. She gradually shifted to working solely on flutes around 1995 after she saw a large and growing demand, and her business grew into a home for musicians who needed to purchase new instruments and a space where flutists were truly heard, whether they were choosing a new voice or repairing their beloved old instruments. She was dedicated to her clients' needs, and her thoughtfulness, generosity, and magic ears made her the "go-to" for anyone in our community.

Ellen handled everyone with kindness and made each person feel that they were the most important flutist that existed. Her knowledge of flute repair was among the strongest and most respected in the industry, as demonstrated by her friendships with David Straubinger and Steve Finley.



Ellen Ramsey

The meaningful friends she amassed over the years grew as large as her generosity. Those friends feel her passing immensely, and the void she leaves in the flute community (especially in the mountain west) will take another generation to fill. May we all be so blessed as to leave such a personal and professional impression on lives within our spheres.



## JOE BONNER (1947–2021)

By Christine Erlander Beard

Joe Bonner, 74, passed away on August 31, 2021, at NEA Baptist Memorial Hospital in Jonesboro, Arkansas, after a brief illness. He was surrounded by loving friends and family. Born to the late George W. and Elaine Smith Bonner on May 13, 1947, in Center, Texas, he graduated from Hemphill High School (TX) in 1965. Following graduation, Bonner served his country in the United States Air Force during the Vietnam conflict as a member of the 2nd Air Force Field Band in Bossier City, Louisiana, and then the 13th Air Force Band in the Philippines, in which he played trombone and was later promoted to drum major. The band served the conflict area by playing concerts and ceremonies for our troops.

Following his military service, Bonner enrolled in college and received a bachelor of flute performance from the University of Houston in 1978 and a masters in flute performance from Stephen F. Austin State University in 1983. He was doing postgraduate work at Arizona State University in 1984 when he joined the faculty as assistant professor of flute at Arkansas State University in Jonesboro (ASU). He then continued postgraduate work at the University of Memphis in 1986–87. His teachers included Byron Hester, former principal flutist of the Houston Symphony, and Harold Bennett, former principal flutist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra in New York City.

A consummate musician, Bonner was a well-kept secret from most in the flute community, known only to those in the mid-South region because he dedicated his life to the success of his students and focused on his teaching rather than promoting himself. He leaves behind a legacy of hundreds—if not thousands—of students thankful for the time spent with this master, many of whom have gone on to become band directors, university professors, professional performers and—perhaps most importantly—supporters of music. Always a champion of his flute students, Bonner is described in their tributes as a talented musician, kind, tough but nurturing; a man to be admired; someone who treated others with kindness and dignity; a master teacher; and a second father. After they graduated, he remained a life-long friend, mentor, and confidant. Joe will live on through the many lives that he touched.

Bonner served as principal flute in the Delta Symphony (formerly the Northeast Arkansas Symphony) after his appointment at ASU until his retirement in 2017. In 2010, he was named ASU's first-ever Honors Professor of the Year. During the nomination and voting process, honors students left countless comments about their encounters with him. One student wrote, "Professor Bonner is amazing. He made the class so interesting; the only thing I regret about Honors Fine Arts Musical is that I can't take it again.



Joe Bonner

His knowledge of so many different areas of music is outstanding, and he knows how to keep us interested. My musical tastes have broadened thanks to him, and I listen to music in a totally different way than I used to." Another said, "This isn't your traditional music class, and he has a unique teaching style that generates an appreciation for different styles of music that today's generation would otherwise deem as uninteresting or outdated. Rather than a class of just lectures, his class is dependent upon class discussion—Professor Bonner is an excellent professor." One summed it up by saying, "Professor Bonner makes learning an extraordinary journey. He deserves this award more than any other professor by whom I have been taught."

In addition to his parents, Bonner was preceded in death by his brother, George W. Bonner II, and sister, Mary Elaine Bonner. Survivors include his daughter, Cai Hopkins, and her mother, Dawn; several cousins; as well as a multitude of friends and colleagues. A celebration of his life for students and friends will be scheduled later.

### In Memoriam

*We also remember these NFA members who recently passed:*

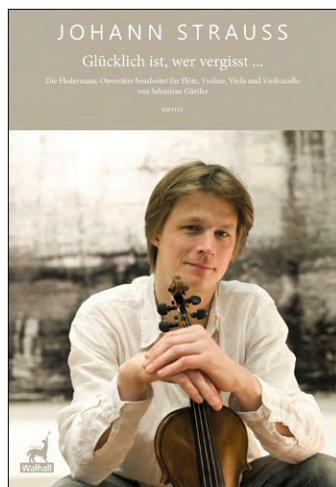
James Lee Vatter (1954–2021)

Ginka Gerova Ortega (1944–2021)

# Reviews

Reviews of flute-related recordings, books, and other items of interest

## Music



### **Die Fledermaus Overture for Flute, Violin, Viola, and Cello**

**Johann Strauss II, arr. Sebastian Gürtler**

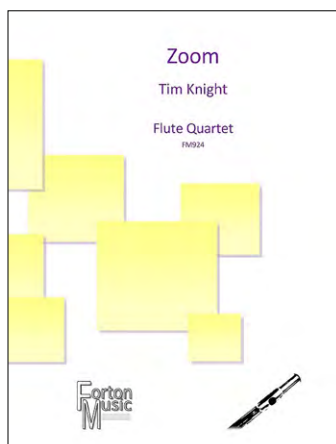
©2020 Edition Walhall

Sebastian Gürtler's new arrangement of the *Die Fledermaus* Overture is full of the elegance and charm we expect from Strauss. Gürtler has done a remarkable, faithful job of representing the origi-

nal orchestral score in chamber form and brings out every convention, every change of tempo, texture, and tonality that Strauss included. The flute part is satisfyingly virtuosic, covering most of the range of the instrument—including flutter-tonguing in the final section—and requiring control of breath, technique, and dynamics.

The edition itself is lovely. It is large and easy to read, and page turns have been accounted for in all parts. For the flute, the rests line up obligingly, while spare single pages have been tucked into the string parts to facilitate turns. This arrangement includes numerous opportunities for delicate ensemble playing with lots of communication, and it would be a credit to any chamber program.

—Jessica Dunnivant



### **Zoom**

**Tim Knight**

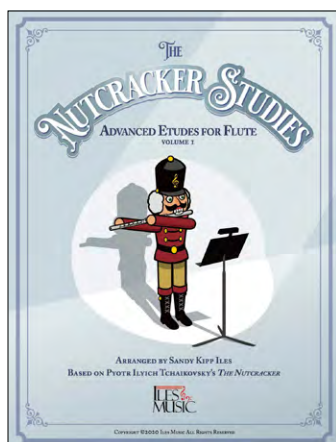
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Motivated by circumstances of the pandemic, Yorkshire composer Tim Knight wrote “Zoom” to reflect the exciting yet often inconsistent and frustrating aspects of the typical Zoom meeting. This piece jests at the technical inconsistencies such as lost

connections, accidental muting, audio delays, and other mishaps of our technical experience.

Written for four C flutes, “Zoom” is a quick and amusing one-minute work that allows for enjoyable interplay among players. Quirky, catchy, and musically effective, its allegro tempo and straightforward eighth- and sixteenth-note rhythms make it accessible and fun for intermediate to advanced flute quartets. Sixteenth notes overlap and pass among each part to create the energetic motion behind the music, while rests are cleverly placed to create interrupted pauses suggesting “technical issues.” Each part is equally active and requires independence among players to ensure clear vertical rhythmic alignment. This brief and spirited piece will make a terrific opener for a flute ensemble recital or outreach concert and will delight audiences of all ages.

—Brielle Frost



### **The Nutcracker Studies Advanced Etudes for Flute, Volume 1**

**Sandy Kipp Iles, arranger**

©2021 Iles Music

This spectacular volume of flute etudes based on Tchaikovsky's much-loved *Nutcracker* should prove immensely popular for multiple reasons: Not only does it include the famous passages

from the ballet's flute and piccolo parts, but many melodies from the other orchestral parts are here too, making a

read-through of the book feel like playing through the entire score. Unlike the original's flute part, the etudes are clearly and beautifully printed, helpful for learning the notes before tackling the harder-to-read originals. Whimsical drawings by Mark Divers (who also did the cover) are inserted for ease of page turns. Especially valuable is the detailed performance advice found within this volume: stylistic suggestions, special fingerings, breathing ideas, practice and performance goals, and common mistakes to avoid.

The prodigious notes about the ballet itself are delightful and unexpected; Sandy Kipp Iles gives us historical information, commentary on instrumentation, storyline, and vivid descriptions of the action. Useful analyses of techniques, along with exercises to help woodshed some of the trickier passages, are also scattered throughout. For “Galop

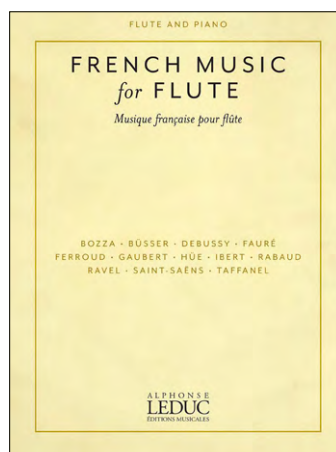


of the Children,” she gives us the necessary harmonic fingerings; for the notorious rhythmic challenge at the opening of “Waltz of the Snowflakes,” she shows us the underlying half-note hemiola figure to listen for as we play; for “Mother Ginger,” she gives us harmonic fingerings and discusses the octave slurs that require efficient and supple lip work. Iles tells us that her suggested tempo ranges help us learn passages, which will (in reality) vary in speed depending on the ballet company/dancers/conductor, and she warns that some of the articulations and dynamic markings have been changed to make this solo flute version work.

This volume should appeal to advanced high school players who have already had their hearts captured by the ballet’s music, to university and older students who need

to become familiar with the flute parts, and to any flutist who loves the familiar score. Thanks to these incredibly fun etudes, anyone can now visit this world of winter, children, and hot chocolate any time of year. So much of the famous music is included that at the end of Act I you might think you see the snowflakes falling from the rafters of the concert hall and smell the dry ice wafting over the edges of the orchestra pit. Californian flutist and music educator Iles has created a valuable addition to our catalog of etudes, which is so well done that movements might be used for solo performance or for holiday gigs. We can eagerly await the next volumes in the series, based on Bizet’s *Carmen* and Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*.

–Joanna White



## French Music for Flute Sonora Slocum

©2020 Alphonse Leduc

*French Music for Flute* is a wonderful new collection compiled by Sonora Slocum, principal flutist of the Milwaukee Symphony. The book contains 11 favorite works from the French tradition with a variety of textures and difficulty levels, including

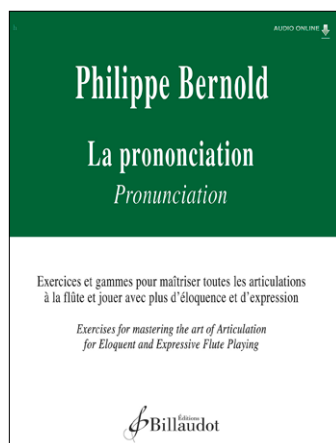
pieces by Bozza, Büsser, Debussy, Fauré, Ferroud, Gaubert, Hüe, Ibert, Ravel, Saint-Saëns, and Taffanel.

This is a great tool for anyone looking for a new introduction to sub-groups of the French School. Flutists just beginning to explore unaccompanied French works can begin with Debussy’s *Syrinx*, progress to Ibert’s *Pièce pour flute seule* or Ferroud’s *Trois Pièces*, and graduate to Bozza’s

*Image*. It’s easy to imagine a similar curriculum of flute and piano works: Ravel’s *Pièce en forme de Habanera* and Saint-Saëns’ *Romance* logically lead to the bigger challenges of beloved works like Busser’s *Prelude et scherzo*, Op. 35, and Fauré’s *Fantasie*, Op. 79. For those ready to explore the height of French musicality, performers will have the option to explore both Hüe’s dramatic lyricism and the haunting delicacy of Gaubert.

Many of the published flute parts are similar to other printed versions, with small changes for convenience (*Syrinx* appears all on a single page), which is great for younger performers who lose pages or can’t quite manage in-performance page turns. The longer works generally have reformatted page turns just before prolonged rests, which are not always consistent with older editions but much appreciated. Old or young, this collection features a great variety of French school works and would be fantastic for any flutist headed to a masterclass or hoping to round out their personal music library.

–Elizabeth Robinson



## Pronunciation

Philippe Bernold

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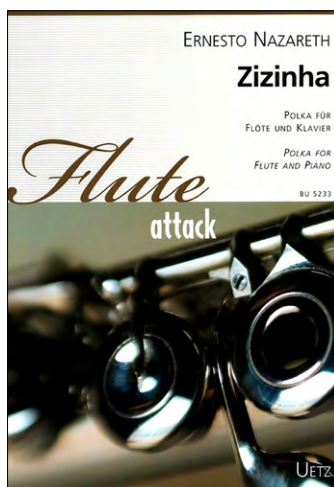
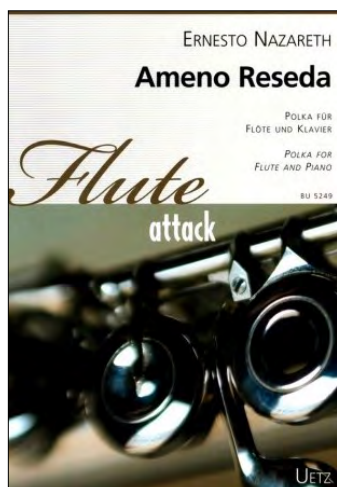
This perceptive and comprehensive edition of articulation studies is an invaluable addition to the educational resources of both flute students and teachers—a thoroughly artistic approach to the study of articulation subtitled “Exercises for mas-

tering the art of Articulation for Eloquent and Expressive Flute Playing.” The book, written in both French and English, is divided into six chapters consisting of exercises for single legato tonguing, French détachée, 50 different

articulations, speed of double- and triple-tonguing, specific attacks, and highlights of important orchestral excerpts, including an additional study focusing on difficult articulations. There is also an insightful concluding section offering an historical overview of articulation through the ages with relevant quotes from primary sources. A removable sheet gives the specific practice instructions and articulations for the exercises of Chapters 1–3.

What makes this book truly unusual is the constant emphasis on and discerning explanations of how to create musical phrasing with the various articulations. It is not only a simple etude or study book, but also includes thorough musical and historical context. There is also an online link for a well-executed play-along piano accompaniment by Fuminori Tanada that gives harmonic meaning to the performance of these studies.

–Andrea Kapell Loewy



## Ameno Resedá and Zizinha Ernesto Nazareth, arr. Heinz Bethmann ©2021 Musikverlag Bruno Uetz

Brazilian composer and pianist Ernesto Nazareth (1863–1934) was known for his solo piano repertoire that incorporated a mixture of European, African, and emerging

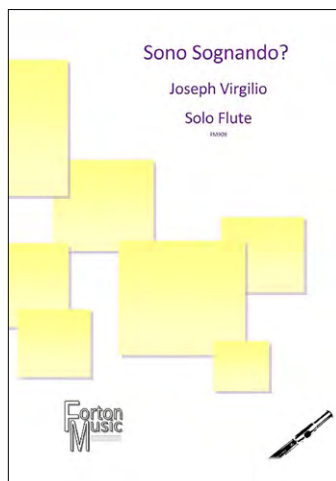
Brazilian dance rhythms. Popular in the day were maxixes, lundus, choros, and polkas, the latter of which arrived in Brazil in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Heinz Bethmann arranged two of Nazareth's solo piano polkas for flute and piano in two separate Uetz Music publications, "Zizinha" and "Ameno Resedá." Both follow the original scores with a few exceptions—"Ameno Resedá" was originally in C major and maintains the same rhythmic pattern throughout, whereas the Bethmann arrangement is in A major and varies the accompaniment rhythm. For "Zizinha," the key of G major and the accompaniment adhere to the original.

The editor's articulations are a mix of the original and the editor's suggestions, but as is performance practice for this style, the flute soloist can add personal flair by varying them.

These short works—perhaps two to three minutes in length each—are of an easy to moderate difficulty level, with the greatest challenge likely being the syncopation/rhythmic feel. Their light nature and alluring melodies are sure to add variety and interest to any repertoire.

–Julie Koidin



## Sono Sognando? Joseph Virgilio ©2020 Forton Music

*Sono Sognando?* (*Am I Dreaming?*) is a pairing of two short pieces for solo flute by New Jersey-based composer Joseph Virgilio. This work, which he terms "confinement music," is a reflection of existing in isolation during the pandemic and a "personal response to the world's latest

calamity." Not only does the piece reflect what is going on outwardly, but it reveals the composer's inward thoughts as well.

Virgilio describes his music as "linear driven with vertical structures more chromatic than diatonic." He depicts the uncertainty and anxiousness of the pandemic through his use of abrupt contrasting rhythms, disjunct intervals, and unpredictable harmonies and pitches. Swift and striking dynamic changes and frequent accidentals generate a sense of instability. He incorporates brief note bends and flutter-tongue effects to enhance both somber and erratic moods.

The first piece, *Lo sono?* ("Who am I?"), begins in an Adagio tempo with slow-moving notes that set a secluded mood. This introspective opening changes to a quicker Allegretto with short motives that are developed to build

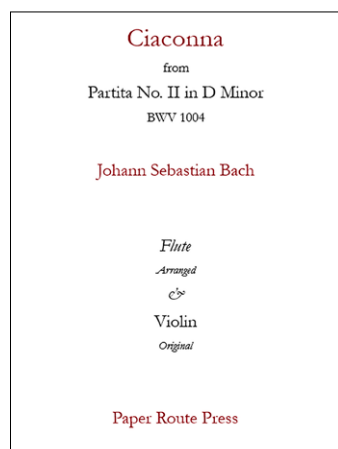
tension throughout. In the second work, *Non penso: vado a giro in giro!* ("I do not think: I go around and around!"), greater note activity creates an anxious feeling, reflecting the title. Short musical motives with rising shifts in pitch maintain the suspense until the end. The performer will need a solid rhythmic foundation to execute the work's various rhythmic changes.

[*Sono Sognando?*] proves to be an important representation and addition to the flute repertoire to mark a turbulent moment in history.

Approximately seven minutes in length, *Sono Sognando?* allows for many opportunities of nuance and interpretation. This work is best suited for an advanced student or professional and will allow the performer to showcase a variety of musical and technical abilities. The creative message *Sono Sognando?* presents will make this work particularly effective on a themed recital or as part of an exhibit. It proves to be an important representation and addition to the flute repertoire to mark a turbulent moment in history.

–Brielle Frost





**Ciaconna from Partita No. II in D minor, BWV 1004**  
**Johann Sebastian Bach,**  
**arr. Timothy Lane**  
 ©2020 Paper Route Press

Timothy Lane, who recently retired from the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, established Paper Route Press in 2016 during a year-long sabbatical. Although it

currently consists of Lane’s own works, there are plans to publish other composers’ works as well. The eclectic catalogue ranges from a flute quartet transcription of Dufay’s *Missa Se la face ay pale* to a flute and piano arrangement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Brazilian composer Henrique Oswald’s *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (see below).

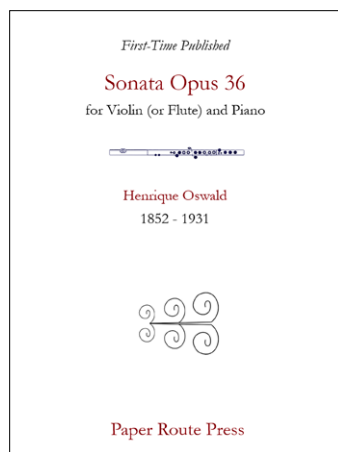
Lane’s edition of J.S. Bach’s *Ciaconna* includes the original violin score so that flutists can easily see the changes in this arrangement. He keeps the violin’s original counterpoint

intact so performers can determine how to recreate the multiple lines and double stops. Lane also offers performance suggestions, including “adding different degrees of space between consecutively placed, independent voices and playing multiple, simultaneous sonorities as either sequential pre-beat, during the beat, or post-beat grace notes, appoggiaturas, or arpeggios (as well as choosing not to play some of them).”

The preface also includes information about musicologist Helga Thoene, who wrote that the *Ciaconna* is based on hymns Bach had written in remembrance of his first wife. This theory of compositional intent has not been conclusively proven, so perhaps it’s not ideal in this context, presented as the most prominent background information on the piece.

Clearly printed, the sparsely edited flute score results in the performer being able to make informed choices. The slur indications of the flute transcription follow the violin original, and there are several places where Lane makes note substitutions or suggests playing up an octave. There are no dynamic markings either, as in the baroque era Bach would have left this to the discretion of the performer.

–Andrea Kapell Loewy



**Sonata for Violin (or Flute) and Piano, Op. 36**  
**Henrique Oswald, arr. Timothy Lane**  
 ©2019 Paper Route Press

Brazilian composer Henrique Oswald (1852–1931) studied extensively in Italy, and this 1908 sonata exhibits late Romantic lyricism reminiscent of Schumann and Franck. The harmonies are rich with

chromatic inflections that give it emotional intensity, and in the chordal and linear structures, this drive is often combined with the French Impressionistic style often found in Fauré and Saint-Saëns. Unexpected chordal resolutions, including enharmonic modulations and linear parallelism, are prevalent. The 24-minute work’s four contrasting movements (Allegro moderato, Allegro molto moderato, Andante molto espressivo, and Allegro con brio) demonstrate the late 19<sup>th</sup>-century European model of a lengthy and highly emotional formal instrumental sonata.

Unfortunately, most of Oswald’s compositions were not published during his lifetime, including this sonata. Lane explains in the introduction that after hearing it performed on a recording by esteemed Brazilian violinist Claudio Cruz and pianist Nahim Marun, he contacted flutist José

Ananias to see how he might purchase a copy. Ananias explained the situation but said that he had a photocopy of the original manuscript, which he sent to Lane—who not only published the original version for violin and piano, but also his own transcription for flute. Wonderfully, Lane notated the minor changes he made in the flute transcription directly below the original violin part, so the performer can see exactly how it was transcribed from the original.

–Andrea Kapell Loewy



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**the whirring dusk**  
**Lisa Bost-Sandberg**  
 ©2018 ChromaWorks Press

Flutist/composer Lisa Bost-Sandberg is known for her deep commitment to contemporary works, improvisation, and music with “rich roots in the classical repertoire.” Her compositions have been selected for performances by the Society of Composers and

Iowa Composers Forum, as well as national conferences for flute, trombone, saxophone, and other instruments. Among her flute works is *the whirring dusk*, dedicated to and premiered by Hannah Porter-Oceña, which has been honored as a finalist in several composition competitions, including the 2021 NFA Newly Published Music Competition and the 2020 Flute New Music Composition Competition.

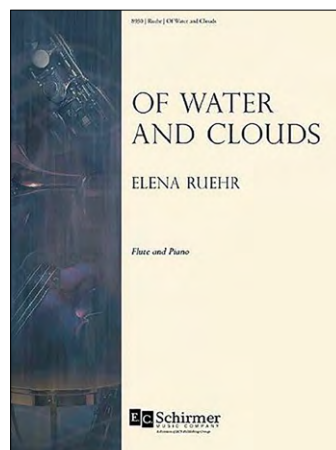
Bost-Sandberg’s works are often characterized by their exploration of timbre, color, and texture. Of *the whirring dusk* she writes, “I was reflecting on the conflicting emotions and states of being that come with significant life experiences. Pain and joy, fragility and strength, disquiet and peace—

they are visceral, they are entwined, and they evolve and transform through the moments and the months.”

Indeed, the piece moves through several distinct sections, each with their own timbral and emotional aspects. The opening is peaceful, characterized by widely voiced gestures in the piano, paired with sweeping lines spanning the range of the flute, both pinned over frequently changing meters. As it unfolds, both voices become more repetitive and insistent, urged on by the constantly shifting meters. In “Broadly,” the pianist begins to loosely imitate the style of the opening section, but the flute line begins to include quarter-tone tunings, adding to the pathos and disquiet indicated. The quarter-tone pitches eventually give way to larger and larger tremolos in the flute as the leaps in the piano become more rapid; the markings indicate increased intensity and an insistent character—perhaps the flutist perseveres?

The last section offers some freedom of gesture to the piano, and the flute is marked “spinning, sparkling.” The flute line becomes briefly more lyrical, and the unsettled meter changes give way to improvisatory gestures; perhaps this is the musical peace Bost-Sandberg mentions in her program notes. Both gestures become more and more sparse and then fade out together.

—Elizabeth Robinson



**Of Water and Clouds**  
**Elena Ruehr**  
 ©2020 Schirmer

American composer Elena Ruehr wrote *Of Water and Clouds* for flutist/composer Su Lian Tan, and the two of them premiered it in Alice Tully Hall in 1987. Recently published by Schirmer, this is a captivating work that remains fresh and appealing.

An award-winning MIT professor since 1992, Ruehr’s compositions have been noted as “unspeakably gorgeous” (*Gramophone*) and “sumptuously scored and full of soaring melodies” (*The New York Times*).

It begins with the solo flute playing sinuous water statements that rise and fall, subtly punctuated by clusters of cloud-like chords in the piano. This conversation builds into a lightly driving ostinato in the piano, a dance that the flute initially shyly sings over and then eventually joins. Mixed articulations, meters, and dynamics add further elements of excitement, and the piano ostinato gently trans-

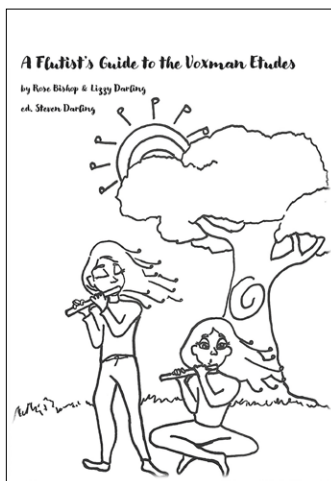
...this is a fantastic addition to an imaginative, rhythmically-savvy player’s degree recital or to anyone interested in playing a well-crafted, intriguing piece.

forms into a more liquid undulation beneath the soaring flute lines by the middle section. The two instruments continue in conversation as water and clouds: at times evaporating into mist, at others heavy with rain, in reflection of each other, or as byproducts of each other. Ruehr notes *Of Water and Clouds* “uses the metaphor of the water cycle as a basis for its form,” as seen in the fascinating processing of material throughout the piece and across parts. Of particular note is the surprise ending, which launches both players out into the atmosphere.

At under nine minutes, this is a fantastic addition to an imaginative, rhythmically-savvy player’s degree recital or to anyone interested in playing a well-crafted, intriguing piece.

—Francesca Arnone





## **A Flutist's Guide to the Voxman Etudes** **Rose Bishop and Lizzy Darling, ed.** **Steven Darling**

©2020

In their new book, *A Flutist's Guide to the Voxman Etudes*, Rose Bishop and Lizzy Darling have compiled and created a performance guide that, if we're being honest, most flute teachers have probably

wished we had on hand. I'll admit, Voxman's *Selected Studies* is a book I bought over 20 years ago as an undergraduate student first starting to teach lessons—a volume I filed away and forgot about within two or three years in favor of Cavally's *Melodious and Progressive Studies* series. Bishop and Darling's clever annotations, useful suggestions, and thorough errata have led me to pull this book back down

off the high shelf, and with their guidance, I see its value—I think I'll keep it handy from now on.

How many times, in the middle of a lesson, has a bright student asked you who Köhler was or what a sarabande is? In this companion volume, all of that information is readily available. The authors have a real talent for providing enough biographical and historical information without writing too much. For each etude, along with that biographical info, they also list several specific challenges with advice on how to meet them, as well as practice suggestions that are, from my perspective, pedagogically sound and good advice. After each etude has been covered, the book ends with a glossary and errata—and there are enough mistakes in the printing to make the errata especially welcome.

The volume is accompanied by recordings of each etude, alternating between the two authors. Their playing is lovely—both Bishop and Darling have warm, rich sounds, clear and controlled technique, and a full expressive toolbox. In my opinion, the whole project is valuable, well researched, and welcome in my studio.

—Jessica Dunnivant



## **Beatboxing and Beyond** **Dr. Mary Matthews and Nicole Chamberlain**

©2021 Spotted Rocket

*Beatboxing and Beyond: An Essential Method for the 21st-Century Flutist* immediately grabs you with its exciting cover—graphically, it's dynamic: an exploding box full of valuable information for modern flutists, and it is very much an example of

truth in advertising. Inside, Mary Matthews and Nicole Chamberlain have provided a primer for common extended techniques. They are thorough and do an excellent job of explaining what the techniques are, providing photos and diagrams along with narrative explanations of how to produce them, and each explanation is accompanied by a newly-composed companion etude from Chamberlain. In truth, *Beatboxing and Beyond* puts together the information most of us have picked up only from poring over the keys that come with contemporary pieces (if we're lucky) and a few other available titles on the subject—I've never seen all of it in one place before.

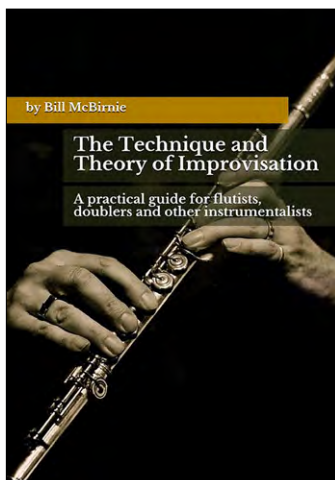
Matthews and Chamberlain cover 14 extended techniques, divided into groups that encourage growth of basic musical concepts. Part One, "Tone Development," includes

flutter tonguing, harmonics, whistle tones, and multiphonics. Developing each of these tends to have a wonderful effect on tone production in general, because they require a conscious polishing of embouchure, openness, and air direction. Part Two covers techniques that aid in developing ear training, while Part Three covers projection and coordination, and Part Four works on building air support and endurance. The book covers skills including quarter tones and timbral trills, singing and playing, jet whistles, and—yes—beatboxing. Each category also includes a few suggestions for repertoire, and there is an index of works referenced with publisher information.

*Beatboxing and Beyond* is a revelation—it's a worthy addition to all our libraries. The explanations alone are clearer than most I've seen, and the breakdown of steps for how to achieve the desired effect is brilliant. Chamberlain's etudes are accessible and challenging, and as with so much of her music, they're also clever and fun. If the proof is in the interest of the public, I'll leave you with this: One of my high school students who'd heard about the book saw it sitting on my piano and begged to borrow it for a week. I think she'll have to buy her own copy—I need to practice beatboxing!

—Jessica Dunnivant

*Beatboxing and Beyond* is a revelation—it's a worthy addition to all our libraries.



## The Technique and Theory of Improvisation

Bill McBirnie

©2019 Extreme Flute

Acclaimed jazz and Latin flute specialist Bill McBirnie has written a wonderfully instructive guide, subtitled “A practical guide for flutists, doublers and other instrumentalists.” Its first section includes a concise technical explanation of jazz technique

with practice guides for a stylistic approach to articulation, vibrato, and breathing. The second includes a comprehensive analysis of jazz theory incorporating concepts of rhythm, melody, and harmony, with clear explanations of chord functions and equivalents, the dominant function

with altered scales, and the minor/modal perceptive.

The book’s third and fourth sections seamlessly integrate the technical and theoretical concepts with melodic samples, ideas for transcriptions, and instructive improvisation exercises. This area is comprehensive and includes topics such as “Developing Your Ear,” “Playing with Recordings,” “Taking an Idiomatic Approach,” and “Transcribing” using a lead sheet, analysis, and an excellent, informative example, “Billy Boy,” with a link to a wonderful recording of the transcription by pianist Mark Eisenman. There is a uniquely personal aspect to this fourth section, especially illustrated by his sharing of “The Most Important Lesson I Ever Learned.”

Finally, the thorough Appendix lists several other important books on jazz, providing readers with a helpful resource guide to what else is available. Instrumentalists of all levels would benefit from this concise and coherent guide to improvisation.

—Andrea Kapell Loewy

# CDs



## Painted Music

Quatra Duo

©2020 Navona Records

Based in Fort Collins, Colorado, flutist Michelle Stanley and guitarist Jeff LaQuatra have been performing together as Quatra Duo since 1998, and while their performance

repertoire is deep and wide, they are currently focused on commissioning new music, moving the potential of this instrumental combination to a new era of options and possibilities. *Painted Music* is a pure and successful reflection of this commitment.

The descriptive liner notes convey everything that needs to be said—upon reading, one feels curious and inspired to listen to all the pieces, especially Osvaldo Golijov’s *Fish Tale* (“piscine adventures”), which are described in the notes: “The music recounts these piscine adventures through a dazzling array of musical styles and colors, from African thumb piano, samba, folk music, and more.” Originally written in 1998 for guitarist David Leisner and flutist Eugenia Zukerman, this piece takes the listener on an 11-minute, fully engaging journey—one may as well be sitting on the back of the fish; here and there, one even gets a little worried about its well-being, but the duo brings its very rich adventure to life. Put in your earphones and go for a walk by the water.

This album connects music and art, a theme that seems to be increasingly popular among contemporary commissions—but, in this case, a naturally positive one. In fact, this intention is made outstanding given the inclusion of *From the Dreaming*, a 1997 work by Australian guitarist, composer, and [visual artist Phillip Houghton](#). The music, inspired by a visit to the Australian outback, “reflects the grandeur and raw power of the country’s climate and ecosystems. Searing heat, ancient riverbeds, scurrying geckos and violent storms are all reflected in the dynamic twists and turns of the flute and guitar.”

The album’s namesake, Bryan Johanson’s *Painted Music*, is a six-movement sonata from 2017 in which each is inspired by a different painting by Paul Klee, who was also a trained musician who loved classical music. Johanson’s first piece written for the flute and guitar, Quatra Duo “suggests listening to this piece while simultaneously taking in each of the eponymous paintings by Klee in order to more fully appreciate the musical work and to create a truly multi-media experience.” It’s worth it—the visuals helped bring the music forward, and the piece added sense and color to the imagery.

James McGuire’s *Suite for Flute and Guitar* was commissioned by the guitarist as a gift to his flutist wife—and it’s been growing over the lifetime of the duo’s relationship: its first four movements were completed in 2016, two more were added in 2019. May it continue to grow! It’s both charming and sweet but still musically substantial—playing this piece must feel like coming home to



them. The third and fifth movements (Festive and Lullaby, respectively) are gorgeous and should be played by all at least once.

*Painted Music* is the inevitable weave of aesthetics, visuals, sound, and movement. It is the imagination it inspires and requires to consume it. It exercises the heart, mind, and soul muscles. Put a thumb on this recording and you are touching creativity—and it is a refreshing reminder to deeply slow down, relax, and listen carefully.



### Cypress Duo

### Cypress Duo

©2021 Cypress Duo Music

Enabled by a grant through The Arts Council of Wilmington, North Carolina, guitarist Justin Hoke and flutist Amanda Hoke's self-recorded and self-titled album, *Cypress Duo*,

was produced during the pandemic. In short, this well-performed and recorded collection is worth multiple listens by those both in and outside of the flute and guitar world.

Featuring George Gershwin's *Three Preludes*, Mario Castenuovo-Tedesco's classic *Sonatina for Flute and Guitar*, three songs by Egberto Gismonti, and Astor Piazzolla's *Libertango*, the selections add up to an original contribution to the flute and guitar world—one both traditional and forward thinking. The duo shows a particular talent for giving a solid delivery of what makes the flute and guitar so suited to each other: the wind's long vocal line and the wood's rich harmonic lines and percussive sound. It is evident these two have played together for a long time, but that they also strive to keep it fresh.

Gershwin's *Three Preludes*, arranged by Justin (and originally written for piano in 1926), is the album's high point—lively at places and dreamy at others. It is a well-known and often-arranged piece that is an atypical selection for flute and guitar repertoire, yet well suited to the combination. The duo describes these preludes as “quintessential examples” of the composer's familiar and “innovative blending” of classical, jazz, and blues. Overall, the arrangement is fun, unique, and challenging, and without a doubt an interesting addition to the repertoire (and word on the street says Justin intends to publish it soon). It is of moderate difficulty and a technically and stylistically challenging choice for any new or even more established duo. Each invites numerous interpretations with an array of potential colors; there is a lot to chew on—it's Gershwin! (There's a live performance on [YouTube](#); in some respects, this is a more stylistically clear, nuanced, and vibrant recording than the one on the CD.)

Of Gismonti's song-like pieces, all arranged by Justin, the duo delivers a particularly heartfelt performance of “Ciga-

Additionally, the flute and guitar as an ensemble is particularly suited to evoking harmonic resonance, melodic richness, depth, and breadth of colors and impressions. The wood, metal, strings, wind, dynamic distance, and range of percussive sounds all add up to something special. And this is yet another contemporary recording by outstanding flute and guitar artists who really can and do help push the boundaries of the instruments and the ensemble.

—B.J. Nicoletti

na” (“Gypsy Woman”), “a meditative theme accompanied by colorful harmonies separated by improvisational interludes.” Without a doubt, flutists can have a lot of fun playing the second song, “Loro” (“Parrot”), to which many jazzy, sexy, funny, happy, moody, energetic personalities can be assigned; Cypress Duo plays it together joyously. “Agua e Vinho” (“Water and Wine”) is one of Gismonti's most enduring and familiar melodies—it stays with you for a long time. Justin handles the sharing of melody and accompaniment in a lovely way, and the duo is especially strong at blending the long, connected, supported lines.

The album concludes with an energetic, contrasting step into Astor Piazzolla's *Libertango*, which is lovely after Gismonti's slow-moving, deeply melodic “Agua e Vinho.” Does every flute and guitar duo recording have to have a Piazzolla piece? Maybe so. In this case, given the overall selections, it is an irresistibly good fit with an awesome, uniquely signature delivery of that jazzy tango energy.

This is a nice collection of what feels like world music, selections deep in global spirit (American, Argentine, Brazilian, Italian), sway, blues, tango and other catchy rhythms. It also has a consistent theme that blends styles. The notes are accessible to both musicians and non-musicians alike with just the right balance of overview and descriptive detail, providing a simple feel for each of the pieces and a little background on the composer and what makes these pieces so characteristic of their style.

—BJ Nicoletti and Dirk Weiss

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