

# Vancouver Cello Club

January 1999

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## RECITAL PROGRAM

March 25, 1999

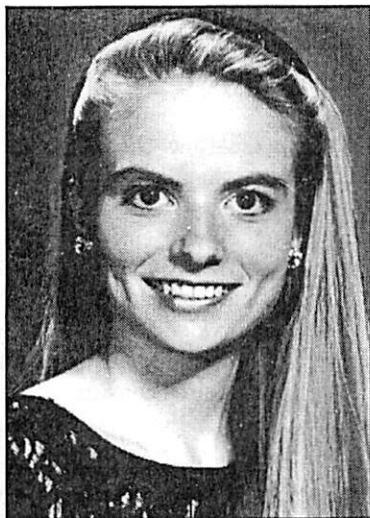
Vancouver Academy of Music / Koerner Recital Hall

7:30 pm

Sonata in G minor Op. 5 No. 2 .....L. van Beethoven  
 Adagio sostenuto e espressivo  
 Allegro molto piu toto presto  
 Rondo  
 Une Larme ---Theme and Variations.....G. Rossini

### INTERMISSION

Kreisleriana Op. 16.....R. Schumann  
 Sonata Op. 40 (1934).....D. Shostakovich  
 Allegro non troppo -- Largo  
 Allegro  
 Largo  
 Allegro



**Sophie Willer-Reen**

Sophie (Willer) Reen studied at the Vancouver Academy of Music with Audrey Nodwell, Lee Duckles and Judith Fraser. She received the Bachelor of Music Degree in Cello Performance from the Cleveland Institute of Music in 1992, an Artist Diploma in 1993 and the Master of Music Degree from Indiana University, Bloomington, in 1996 where she studied with Janos Starker and Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi. Mrs. Reen is the Assistant Principal Cellist of the Columbus Phil-harmonic Orchestra, is a member of the "Six-teen Strings" String Quartet, and performs frequently throughout the U.S. and Canada with her husband, Stephen Reen. In January of 1996, Sophie founded Kindermusik of Columbus, an international highly acclaimed program which educates young children through the study of music. Today her program reaches nearly 200 students ranging from birth to 8 years old, in Columbia and surrounding areas.

Stephen Reen, a native of Buffalo, NY holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Piano Performance from the State University of New York at Buffalo and is a candidate for the Doctor of Music in Piano Literature and Performance at Indiana University, Bloomington where he studies with Shigeo Neriki. He has appeared in solo



**Stephen Reen**

concerts, and chamber music performances throughout the U.S. and Canada. Mr. Reen has taught piano for Indiana University, S.U.N.Y. at Buffalo and privately for 15 years. Together with his wife Sophie he is co-founder of the Columbus Academy of Music and currently teaches Kindermusik, Adult Piano Workshops, and over 100 students of piano, voice, organ and guitar.

## May 8 - 9 Recital & Workshops

The Vancouver Cello Club and The Vancouver Academy of Music will present PAUL MARLEYN in a recital and workshops May 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, 1999 in The Koerner Recital Hall.

Paul Marleyn is Professor of Cello and Director of Chamber Music at the University of Manitoba in Winnipeg. From 1993-7 he was principal cellist of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra. Awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to the U.S.A. in 1985, Paul Marteyn worked with Aldo Parisot at Yale University and received his Master's Degree and Artist's Diploma from the New England Conservatory.

More details in the next Newsletter (editor).

*The Athletic Musician*  
By Barbara Paull & Christine Harrison  
Scarecrow Press, 1997

Christine Harrison is a professional violinist who relates how her newly commenced orchestral career almost ended due to "playing while hurt". Barbara Paull is a physiotherapist who, likening playing the violin to an athletic activity, set up a "training schedule". Both these women are Canadian and my old student Carey Cheney, editor of "Cello News" has reviewed this book in her fall '98 newsletter:

"The innards of the book goes through systematically to explain what physio-therapy is, exercises to implement in your daily routine, warm-ups, some "trouble-shooting advice" and lots of photos, diagrams, drawings explaining correct postures vs. incorrect ones. For example, there is much sound advice on selecting chairs for cellists:

*Your knees should be lower than your hips, so sit on a high stool, or chair with a cushion. Ideally the seat height should be higher than your kneecaps when you stand beside the chair. Choose a seat or cushion which is higher at the back than the front. This will tilt your pelvis to that you can sit with a natural lordosis (curvature naturally built into the neck and spine) with very little effort. The amount of tilt is a personal preference and depends upon how flexible your spine is and how deep a lordosis you have. A wedge cushion can make all the difference, so experiment with the degree of tilt until you find what suits your back the best. Some musicians have learned to put blocks under the back legs of their chairs."* (The Athletic Musician, Barbara Paull & Christine Harrison: Scarecrow Press, 1997. P. 60).

As unbelievable as it may seem, orchestra management is sometimes very reluctant to deal with more ergonomic improvements in chairs and conditions in general that support the musician's total health. Yes, the individual musician is responsible to stay flexible, exercise and stay in good physical condition, but proper seating, lighting, hearing protection and healthy scheduling of work (opera, especially) are essential to improving the longevity and health of the musician. Orchestra committees must be "watchdogs" and be persistent with efforts to have good chairs, and other conditions met. It would be excellent also to try to have Ms. Paull and Ms. Harrison, two fine Canadians, come to the orchestra as guest lecturers offering more specific education about "playing hurt" and how to avoid it."

This excellent book is obtainable through your local book store, or music store or directly through the publisher: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD. 20706. My cost (paperback) at a music was \$27.95 (U.S.)

*The Smiling Cellist*  
Instrument Cases

Have you ever wished you didn't have to buy a plane ticket for your cello? Or put your cello in the hold of a plane and spent the flight wondering how many pieces it would be in upon arrival? Ever wished your case was half the weight, yet twice as strong?

**Introducing...** from Tasmania, Australia comes a brand new range of cello cases. They are light and durable, being made using epoxy-resin, the strongest resin for carbon fibre and kevlar (most competitors only use vinyl-ester or polyester resins, which are nowhere near as tough). The back area of all models is reinforced with 4 mm high density sandwich foam between laminates. The carbon fibre provides strength and rigidity, whilst the kevlar provides toughness and impact resistance - kevlar is also used for bullet-proof vests and chainsaw-proof leggings!

3 Cello Case Models Available

1. Fibreglass construction with carbon fibre/kevlar reinforced lid - wt 7kgs.
2. Epoxy-resin & kevlar construction with carbon fibre reinforcement - wt 4.2 kgs.
3. Clear finish exposed carbon fibre with kevlar reinforcing - wt 4 kgs.

All models are fitted with anchor points for back packs, and a back pack kit is available as an accessory. *All models are capable of safe transport in aircraft holds.*

For more information or to order:

c/- Sarah Winslade  
46 Hereford St., Apt. 1F  
Boston, MA 02115  
Ph (617) 247-6412  
E-mail: TheSmilingCellist@rocketmail.com

*News from Other Cello Clubs*

• January 31, 1999 - 8th Annual Cello Orchestra Festival conducted by *Douglas Moore*. Featured guest *Mark Summer*, cellist of the Turtle Island String Quartet. Held at U. of CT, Storrs, CT. Attention: Professor Mary Lou Rylands, Music Dept.

• Nov. 16, 1998 *Eugene Friesen* Program for Solo Cello at the Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St., New York.

In his wide-ranging program, Eugene Friesen will present works for solo cello inspired by his experiences in improvisation and world music. He will include pieces from his music/theatre show *CELLOMAN.*, interspersed with narrative on the origins of music, travels with Paul Winter, performing for children and developing skills as an improviser. A not to be missed evening. A get together after the program. \$5 for non-members.

**EUGENE FRIESEN** has created a unique voice among the cellists of the world. Drawing on a childhood filled with the great masterworks of western music as well as the influences of hymn, ethnic and popular music, Eugene uses cello and voice to create new music which is accessible and personal.

Friesen is a member of the Paul Winter Consort with whom he has toured internationally for the past twenty years. In addition to the Consort, he is currently touring with TRIO Globo (with Howard Levy and Glen Velez). He has composed the score for Rabbit Ears Productions, "The Bremen Town Musicians" and a major concert work for orchestra, chorus and the Consort, "Grasslands", premiered in 1997. He has recorded with the Paul Winter consort, with whom he won a Grammy award in 1994, with TRIO GLOBO, and with such diverse artists as Dave Brubeck, Toots Thielemans, Betty Buckley, Anthony Davis and Scott Cossu.

Living Music Records has released two recordings of his music: *Arms Around You*, a showcase for cello with a large ensemble, and *New Friend*, a collection of spontaneously created duets with Paul Halley on piano and pipe organ. A new recording *The Song Of Rivers* is to be released in 1999.

Eugene Friesen lives in Vermont with his wife Wendy and two children.

CELLO MAN makes great music, from Bach to rock, accessible to audiences of all ages. Using masked characters, stories, comedy and recordings of the humpback whale, Eugene Friesen and his special guest, mask-maker/director Rob Faust, draw upon a lifetime of experience in music and theatre to inspire and educate. This new video of CELLO MAN will be available Jan. 1, 1999 for a price of \$20 plus \$7 shipping and handling from:

**EarthVision Inc.**

52 Cook Hill Road, Cheshire, CT 06410  
by Phone: 203-250-9311  
by Fax: 203-699-0865

\* \* \*

The fall/winter '98/'99 newsletter, "Cello City Ink" from the New Directions Cello Association had a stimulating write-up on their three day New Directions Cello Festival. Held every year since '95, it was hosted at the U of CT at Storrs and about 75 cellists from around the country shared the widely diverse workshops full of opportunities to learn new ways to play the cello. The festival also consists of jam sessions and concerts. For those students who love the 10 studies of Aaron Minsky, a trio led by Aaron and his electrified blue cello gave the first concert of the festival. He also presented a workshop called "Improvising on Pre-existing Music".

*Quote from the "Cello City Ink"*

*"First he took the first phrase from the Gigue in the fourth Bach Suite for solo cello, and gave it a new rhythm. He had part of the group add a harmony, and had a third section of the group improvise over that. Using that process on a number of other pieces from diverse sources in the cello repertoire and including historical references, he showed us how often music is created from pre-existing music. Not only is this a very creative and stimulating way to practice, but it is a rich form of improvisation as well. He pointed out how the future of music can be enhanced if we all could be comfortable with this process."*

# The Bach Gamba Sonatas

## A Cellist's Ventures

by Ernest Collins

"You should leave them to the professionals", said a friend after hearing an effort of mine on the Bach Gamba sonatas. My reply was that I would then have a thin time of it, since professional performances (save on special festival occasions) tend to be few and far between.

Anner Bylsma says, "Perhaps the gamba sonatas... should be regarded as a kind of music for private performance - pieces that are not at all intended for presentation in public". (Liner notes to recording referred to below).

However frequently or infrequently performed, the sonatas for viola da gamba and harpsichord by J.S. Bach (BWV1027, 1028 & 1029), to give them their full title and opus numbers, have nevertheless long been a staple of cello and piano literature. They are in large part trio sonatas, the two solo lines lying in the cello/gamba and the keyboard right hand, the keyboard left hand supplying the basso continuo, though from time to time the keyboard left hand supplies a third polyphonic voice to the texture.

Each sonata has therefore three lines which have to be held in balance and be clearly distinguishable to the ear. Much of the problem of playing these sonatas lies in the difficulty of holding this balance, so that the ear hears clearly the interweaving of the solo lines and the subtlety of the harmonic structure.

When playing these works with cello and piano, this problem is compounded by the relatively opaque nature of the sound of each instrument; the danger is that players will be tempted to create a large mass of confused sound, ended only at points of harmonic resolution. This danger is particularly present in Sonata No.1 2nd movement, Sonata No.2 4th movement and Sonata No.3 1st movement.

Playing these sonatas with cello and organ to some extent circumvents this problem, as well as giving a specially majestic feeling to the works. Effective organ registration can create contrasting sounds which help to separate the sonatas' three elements in the listener's ear. The first and second movements of Sonata No.2 go particularly well with cello and organ.

It is essential that the organ console, organ pipes and the cellist's playing space be contiguous, otherwise horrendous problems of ensemble can result. The organ registration must be discreet, if the cello line is not to be obscured.

In 1990, Anner Bylsma and Bob van Asperen recorded an interesting experiment on the Sony Vivarte label (SK45945), playing these sonatas with a 5-string violoncello piccolo and baroque organ.

The acquisition of a baroque instrument in the 1980s gave me the opportunity to play these works with baroque cello and harpsichord. The relatively transparent quality of the sound in both instruments makes for a better balance and a clear differentiation of the contrapuntal texture - but only after a great deal of experiment with registration, relative position of the two instruments, acoustic properties of the room and so on. But eventually, I found it possible to play the cello / gamba line and be conscious of the other two lines in constant balanced interplay with it.

Another problem remained - the top cello string (A) is a fourth lower than the top gamba string (D), thus requiring the use of high positions. To avoid a contrived or a virtuosic feeling, I found it necessary to work out fingerings across, rather than up and down, the strings - using thumb positions where necessary; (thumb positions are perhaps unhistorical for baroque cello, but in the circumstances, musically authentic).

This latter problem was obviated when I tried a 5-string violoncello piccolo, the top string of which is E. The sonatas do not then require positions higher than the fourth and cross-string fingerings lie well. While similar to a 4-string cello in most respects, it makes special demands in bow elevation and string crossings. Mastering these requirements in an instrument of relatively meager literature, I found to be something of a disincentive.

Viol-playing friends eventually persuaded me to take up the gamba; so I am now in a position, after some assiduous practice, to attempt these sonatas on the instrument for which they were written. The sound is

very relaxed and transparent, so the problem of keeping the three contrapuntal lines in balance is lessened. While with a cello/harpsichord combination, the cello may sometimes prove too strong, the reverse is true with the gamba and harpsichord. Again endless acoustical experiments are called for.

Playing the first sonata (BWV 1027) with baroque cello and latterly gamba has, I think, brought me nearer to an answer to the problem of the third movement (Andante) - What is it saying? - Where is it going? - What are its significant turns of phrase? I have found it helpful to regard it as the accompaniment to an imaginary arioso for bass voice in one of the Bach Passions or Cantatas, and to endeavour to express in it the reflective, contemplative and deeply felt nature of these ariosi.

Finally, with my ear accustomed to the gamba/harpsichord sound, I revisited the sonatas as works for cello and piano, to see what I might have learned during these journeys.

"Lightness is all" seems to sum it up. I am reminded of Milan Kundera's famous phrase, "The unbearable lightness of being". In his novel of that name he says, "The absolute absence of a burden causes [us] to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and [our] earthly being, and become only half-real, our movements free" (Part One, Chapter 2). That kind of lightness is perhaps fully achievable only in the imagination; but it seems to me to be the objective which the cellist and the pianist should set themselves, so that each voice in these sonatas can be distinctly heard and the music not be obscured by undifferentiated sound.

One last reservation - the views expressed in this piece are entirely personal; others may well disagree - mildly or strongly, in whole or in part, as the case may be. That is as it should be.

"Tot homines, tot sententiae", as the Romans used to say.

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### VANCOUVER CELLO CLUB

Judith Fraser, Treasurer, #210 - 235 Keith Road, West Vancouver, BC V7T 1L5

#### Caroline E. Riley Scholarship

I hereby apply for this scholarship to be awarded in May 1999.

- Please check:  I am a member in good standing of Vancouver Cello Club  
 My application for membership is enclosed  
 I propose to leave my home base for further cello study

at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ (approx. date).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

## Words from a Master...

(reprinted from the  
Los Angeles Violoncello Society  
Newsletter, July 1998 issue)

The young Gregor Piatigorsky once in Berlin and, inhibited by shyness, made mess of music by Beethoven, Schumann, and Bach. Casals, nonetheless, applauded energetically and embraced the diffident cellist. Some years later, when playing duos together late into the night Piatigorsky confessed that he had been hurt by the undeserved praise. Casals reacted with sudden anger. He rushed to the cello. "listen!" he played a phrase from the Beethoven sonata. "Didn't you play this fingering? It was novel to me... it was good... and here, didn't you attack that passage with up-bow, like this? ... And for the rest," he said passionately, "leave it to the ignorant and stupid who judge by counting only the faults. I can be grateful, and so much you be, for even one note, one wonderful phrase." (Excerpt from *The Book of Musical Anecdotes* by Norman Lebrecht)

The Oregon Cello Society had the 1998 Scholarship Auditions last spring. There were 25 students competing from eight different studios. The judges were Robert Hladky, Dieter Ratzlaf, and David Straka. The sponsors of the prizes were: Schuback Violin Shop, David Kerr Violin Shop, Day Music Company, Portland Music Corp., and Sheet Music Service. I was keen to notice that a student I had started in Knoxville, TN many years ago, at the tender age of two was one of the prize recipients!! Glad to hear about the efforts to support the young cellists in the Oregon area, and to have such great sponsorship - congrats to the OCS!

It looks like Yo Yo Ma has a new recording out of works by British composer John Tavener, one work is "The Protecting Veil", and a world premiere of another work, "Wake Up and Die". The recording features the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of David Zinman. The CD is on the Sony label.

### "CELLO NEWS" - SALT LAKE CITY

Thanks to Rick Mooney who recently came to our fair city and was our guest clinician for the Fall Cellobration '98. He worked with 10 area cello teachers in enrichment sessions covering all kinds of subjects from motivating students, introduction of reading skills, sequencing of reading material, ensembles, vibrato... you name it! The students, over 60 enthusiastic cellists, enjoyed the ensembles, the technique and the focus on sharpening their reading skills. We used almost all of Rick's publications during the workshop (Thumb Position, Position Pieces, Double-Stops, Ensembles for Cello, plus many of his great NCI ensemble/arrangements. It was a great weekend!



## Cello Chit Chat!

Congratulations to Sonja (de Langen) Adam on the birth of a daughter, Elspeth, October 10, 1998. The St. John String Quartet was away on our in Japan when she was due and she waited for her father's arrival home (by 12 hrs!). Sonja as well as cellist with the quartet, teaches in Saint John and Fredericton, N.B.

Becky Foon was written up in the McGill University Tribune last October for a review of the benefit concert for the McGill Women's Union and Blood Sisters Women's Organization. "The event brought together some relatively well-known names. Thom York of Radiohead made a brief appearance on acoustic guitar. As well, Erin, Montreal's official replacement for Nerdy Girl, and cellist Becky Foon, who nearly erased every act before her with a performance so passionate that it could have scared The Montreal Symphony Orchestra off the picket lines."

Chan Centre for the Performing Arts / Sunday, April 25, 1999, 3:00 pm  
Steven Isserlis, cello and Stephen Hough, piano / Vancouver Recital Society

Koerner Recital Hall, Vancouver Academy of Music / Tuesday, February 23, 1999, 10:00 a.m.  
Eugene Osadchy, cello and Linda Lee Thomas, piano "Music in the Morning" Composers and Coffee. "In a morning of Russian music, cellist Eugene Odsadchy will discuss composers Tchaikovsky, Rachmaninov and Shostakovich."

Koerner Recital Hall - Vancouver Academy of Music  
April 13, 14, 15, 16, 1999, 10:30 am Concert / David Finckel, cello and Wu Han, piano  
Dynamic duo! Music in the Morning audiences will remember the 1996 concert by this wonderfully talented husband and wife team. A critic recently said, "Watching them play is like witnessing a love affair expressed through music." David Finckel is the cellist for the Emerson String Quartet and Wu Han enjoys a solo career and plays with orchestras throughout the world. Their program will include Beethoven, Franck and Finckel.

## The American Cello Council, Inc.

340 West 55th Street, 5D • New York, NY 10019 • (212) 586-7137

December 17, 1998

Dear Colleague:

Greetings and here's to a Healthy and Productive Holiday Season.

Helene Breazeale, Executive Director of World Cello Congress III, to be held at Townson University, Baltimore, Maryland, May 28 - June 4, 2000 - has invited the Members of the American Cello Council to participate in this event.

This is an excellent opportunity to present our American Cello Family. We need your input - suggestions.

We look forward to hearing from you no later than January 30th. In the meantime, reserve the date and HAPPY HOLIDAYS.

With our warm greetings,

Taki Atsumi, President

Esther Prince  
Exec. Dir./Treas.

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 1998 / 1998

Membership subscriptions are now due, please send to: Judith Fraser, Treasurer, 210 - 235 Keith Road, West Vancouver, BC V7T 1L5

Please enrol me as a member of the Vancouver Cello Club:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution Membership (over \$25).....	\$ _____
Sustaining Membership.....	\$ 25.00
Family or Individual Membership.....	\$ 20.00
Student .....	\$ 15.00
Out-Of-Town Membership.....	\$ 10.00

Donation to Scholarship Fund .....	\$ _____
Donation to Performance Fund .....	\$ _____
Donation for General Purposes .....	\$ _____
Donation to Colin Hampton Fund.....	\$ _____

# Cello News

... toddler through teen

Some perspectives by Carey Cheney

As the years pass, and I begin more and more very young cellists as young as three, I am amazed at how much attention I spend on developing (by an unending variety of "packaging") the concept of ringing tone to my students. I have been taping lessons, sort of randomly, studying my interaction with the especially very young set, and hoping to improve all along. It doesn't seem like a three or four year old cellist playing a tenth - size cello would have much use for the word "tone", but it is all in the "getting" to the tone that I feel makes it a worthwhile endeavour. By that I mean, the "how to" of making the string vibrate, the fingered note ring. Here are some strategies that I began listing as I watched the tapes:

**Modelling:** Play a lot for the young student, in the lessons, with vibrato, and big tone; give recitals of the tape of program and length of program that would be appealing to the very young.

**Use a Flashlight!:** Kids love the visual stuff, so get a small flashlight that has some really cool stickers on it and call it the "Tone Beam" or something, and turn out the lights; draw the bow or pluck the string and shine the light on the vibrating string to demonstrate what to look for when practicing.

**Use the "Signal" Words:** My favourite word is "tug" or the phrase "pluck the string with your bow"; these signals should not get too length - just a reminder to get the bow hold set and the arm weight distributed so as to initiate the pulling of the string so it can respond.

**Don't Dwell on Too Slow A Bow Speed:** If the tone is not ringing, the arm needs to be free to move and "tug" the string. I have found great results with trying to work on a medium fast bow speed when dealing with the whole bow, at the early stages (we call them "zips).

**Plus the Left Hand Notes:** to listen for a ringing sound, and to check that the left hand is not pulling the string to one side as the fingers are placed - this creates a lot of tension which ends up getting transferred to the bow arm as well. This is an excellent "check" for more

advanced players to ensure when they are placing a finger for vibrato they are indeed getting the string completely down to the fingerboard.

**Use the Half-string Harmonics:** in anything possible to create an opportunity to hear the ringing of the harmonic and to develop excellent left arm posture to reach the harmonic note in the midst of a regular first position piece. Just substitute open string notes (e.g. A or D) with the harmonics. Try it on *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* - the kids love it. You can do a million variations on this idea using other harmonics and other keys, etc., etc., etc.

**Incorporate Tone "Bites":** into daily practice routine - asking a young child to practice ringing tones on a scale each day doesn't have to be boring!! Remember that it is all in the packaging!! It could be the *Stair-Stepping Song*, or "Name that Note" song, or whatever your whim calls it that day.

**Make sure the instrument** is rally playable and can produce a ringing tone by you, the teacher!!

As the student grows and matures a little, I will incorporate the usual terms of legato, tenuto, loure, ... stuff that deals with an application and variance in the use of the arm weight to create specific colours in timbre. Of course, we will begin pre-vibrato exercises from the beginning, and often the child is really ready to start experimenting with vibrato on his/her own by the end of the Suzuki Book 1. This is one of those amazing moments when a young child really wants to use vibrato to attempt to add "expression" to his/her playing!! I often will have the student bow my cello (standing up) or put his/her hand on the back of the cello while I play something just to experience the vibrations, first-hand of a really big cello. The resonance is exciting and hearing it in the "mind's ear" is the key to learning how to replicate it. Experimenting with slower bows, closer to the bridge is an advanced beginner activity (the 20 second bow, or 30 second or 90 second or whatever...) which is exciting and

fun, so long as there is the usual caution to make sure the child has a flexible and functional bow hold.

Time marches on, and soon once the vibrato is beginning to take shape nicely balanced on any finger, I love to make my student practice "vibrato transfer outlines". This is just playing a series of notes from a piece with no rhythm or specific bowing, just the "bare bones" but fleshed out with a gorgeous, ringing tone and lots of loose, wide vibrato. Also practicing the notes individually with different fingers to try to achieve the same beauty of tone with every finger (or even thumb!!). I guess I do emphasize the "profile" of the fingers very much as I tend to think about that a lot in my own playing, and see myself referring to it on videotaped lessons. I know this comes out of another subject for yet another day - double-jointed fingers! I struggled with double-jointedness and never had a teacher who really gave me specific advice on how to get comfortable with vibrato without sacrificing excellent curved posture (please realize I am not talking about ALL the time in this posture) of the fingers. I practised a lot of one finger, chromatic shifting up and down one string slowly to finally discover something that worked really well - keeping my fingers curved enough that I could negotiate the long shifts and be accurate and still keep the joints springy and supported in a curved shape - and sounded great - so I am selling this to my students, I guess. Anyway, I digressed a little - my intermediate students are asked often to play old pieces with new fingering options without open strings, or scales without open strings to work on that tone production and vibrato control. The hope is that they will really have command of the concept of glorious cello tone at least basically before they are a teenager! That is not the only age acceptable of course! My point is that the concept of tone needs to be reinforced and worked on continuously from the very earliest beginnings throughout the student's study.

## *In a Letter to the V.C.C. from Christine Wild...*

Some of your readers may not know that the huge mural hanging in the Chan Center had the Dvorak piece "Silent Woods", or "Restful Woods", as an inspiration. At a concert organized by the Vancouver Art Gallery to pay tribute to the artist, Gordon Smith, Christopher was asked to play the piece. Gordon Smith said it was one of his favourite pieces. The painting is called "Silent Woods". Some may see a cello bow in it.

Christopher also won the 14 under division in the CMC finals held in Montreal in June. He played the Saing Sæens Concerto and received a mark of 94%; the average mark from 6 judges.

## *Banff Cellofest No. 3*

At Banff School of the Arts, in the Rolston Hall, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cellofest will take place Feb. 22, 23, 24 under the direction of Tsuyoshi Tsutsumi, who will give a recital Sunday evening, Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>. These classes follow a 3-day workshop for the Calgary, Edmon-ton and Vancouver Youth Orchestras under the batons of Arthur Polson, John Thompson and Michael Massey.

...Continued from last Newsletter

**CLASS WITH KLENGEL**  
**A Master Teacher Remembers his Great Teacher**

SG: *Would you say that Klengel was part of the Teutonic tradition of training – methodical, disciplined, founded on repetition?*

WM: Never anything of the sort. It's hard to imagine, even as a younger man, that he would have been different. Now Hugo Becker in Berlin was another story. He was a fierce disciplinarian and once broke a bow over my first teacher's head.

SG: *Did Klengel have the patience to analyze a problem and work with a pupil toward a solution? Did he teach by demonstration or example?*

WM: Up to a point. The students in the class were much older than I and could already play everything quite well; I don't know what they would have been given before I arrived.

Klengel demonstrated by example, by playing, and the high standard in the class was evident. But you never saw the hard work.

I recall Zimble and I shared "digs" for six months. He used to practice to the minute from 10-12.00 and 4-6.00, and he sent me off to do the same. Four hours a day for those six months - for me that was hard work. That's when I did most of my learning. I never found anything difficult. My eye saw and my fingers did it, and I don't believe that I was aware of this piece or that being difficult or demanding.

There were public concerts at the school; the public paid to attend, and Klengel would say "you will do this and that". Even then, he would play the piano parts for most of his pupils, sitting cross-legged in the same manner. Of course the standard repertoire was much larger, and pieces like the d'Albert concerto were played in public.

SG: *Did he expect pieces to be memorized?*

WM: Yes, he did, but with me, memory came so quickly that he wasted no time trying to teach me to memorize. He didn't have to specify how.

SG: *Did you ever hear Klengel perform in public?*

WM: Yes, I heard him play twice. Once, in an out-of-town hall, in a recital, I heard him do the Boccherini A major Sonata. Something went wrong, he mumbled to the pianist, and they started again. He was very agile on the instrument, even in his old age. I recall the day he went off to make a gramophone recording of either the Popper or Piatti Tarantella, right after one of my lessons. He said to me, "Look at these dry, old hands."

He came to the Crystal Palace in London before the First World War. The audience was so staggered that they demanded encore after encore, and even crowded onto the platform to watch him more closely.

SG: *How did your work with Klengel influence your own teaching, if at all?*

WM: Since he didn't force me into any moulds, he left me free to shape myself. And since I didn't have to undo anything later on, I was left to be me. My own teaching was free to evolve out of teaching people as they came along.

London  
27 October 1997

. . .

**William Pleeth** was born in London in 1916 and studied with Julius Klengel in Leipzig, where he made a sensational debut in 1931 at the age of fifteen. He returned to England the following year and gave his first BBC broadcast in 1933.

In 1937 William Pleeth met the pianist Margaret Good and a few months later, on his 22nd birthday, they gave their first recital together at the Wigmore Hall. In 1939 they started recording for Decca, as well as broadcasting for the BBC, which they continued to do for nearly forty years. They were married in 1944.

Despite a long career, much of which has been devoted to teaching, giving recitals and playing concertos with many celebrated conductors, chamber music has been William Pleeth's enduring passion. He first recorded the Schubert Quintet with the Amadeus String Quartet for HMV and again in 1966, for Deutsche Grammophon. Among the works he recorded with his own quartet - the original Allegri String Quartet - were Haydn's great Opp. 54 and 55.

For several decades William Pleeth has enjoyed an international reputation as a teacher and pedagogue, advanced students and professional players coming from almost every continent to study with him. Since his retirement from the concert platform in 1986 he has continued to be invited to give Master Classes - both Cello and Chamber Music - all over the world. His book *Cello*, in the Menuhin Series, has been universally acclaimed and published in many languages.

Among the numerous honours conferred upon him, William Pleeth was awarded the OBE in 1989.

Gregor Piatgorsky Seminar

JUNE 6 - 12, 1999

*The Faculty:*

**Frans Helmerson**

**Joel Krosnick**

**Laurence Lesser**

Together they bring to the Seminar an extraordinary range and depth of artistic, technical and professional accomplishment

*The Participants:* Ten advanced cellists at the beginning of their professional careers will be chosen to participate in the Seminar as guests of the USC School of Music. Each participant will be provided living accommodations and meals, a private studio and an accompanist. Travel costs - Economy or Super-Save fares only - are provided. The cost of transportation of instruments will be met only in the most exceptional case.

*Organization of the Seminar:* All seminar sessions, performances and related activities are held in facilities of the USC School of Music. Participants are expected to arrive no later than 2:00 pm on June 5, 1999 and to attend an orientation dinner that evening at 7:00 pm. Thereafter, the basic daily schedule will be as follows:

- 9:00 to 12:00 Rotating master classes by each resident artist
- 2:00 to 5:00 Master classes
- 8:00 Master classes or student recitals

Participants should schedule their departure on June 13, 1999.

*Auditors:* As in the past, auditors will be accepted to attend the full seminar or to attend on a daily basis. A fee of \$125.00 is charged for auditing the full seminar. A fee of \$25.00 is charged for auditing by the day. Auditors must arrange for their own travel, lodging, and meals. On-campus facilities are available; please write for summer housing brochure.

*Application & Audition:* Participants are selected upon application and successful audition

*Applicants must have been born on or after June 6, 1973.*

*The deadline for application is February 1, 1999.*

*The non-refundable application fee is \$30.00.*