

Newsletter

Vancouver Cello Club



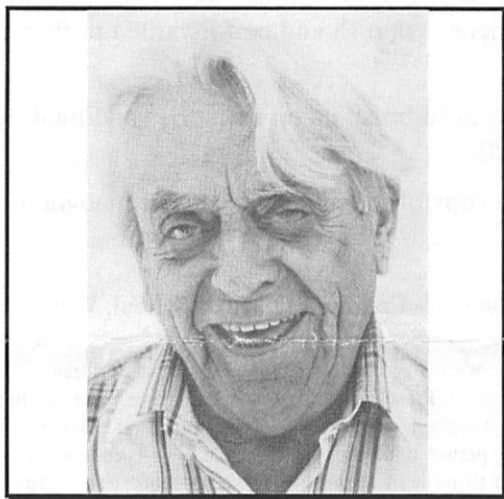
October 1996

Editor: Judith Fraser

President:	Ian Hampton	939 Ioco Road, Port Moody, V3H 2W9
Secretary:	Ernest Collins	1407 Haywood Ave., West Vancouver, V7T 1V5
Treasurer:	Judith Fraser	210 - 235 Keith Road, West Vancouver, V7T 1L5
Past President:	Audrey Piggott	
Executive:	Kristl Armstrong, Lee Duckles, Heather Hay, Robin Miller, Jean Ireland, Catherine Carmack	
American Cello Council Delegate:	Judith Fraser	

Colin Hampton

Distinguished musician and cellist of the Griller String Quartet, born June 6, 1911, died peacefully August 10, 1996 in Oakland, California.



Colin Hampton – by Charles Burress

Colin Hampton, an internationally known cellist, composer and teacher who lived in Berkeley and Kensington for half a century, died August 10, 1996 at Kaiser Hospital in Oakland. He was 85.

Mr. Hampton was the last surviving member of the Griller Quartet, which won renown in England during World War II by being one of the groups that performed noon concerts in the National Gallery while bombs were falling on London.

The members of the group, who were drafted into the Royal Air Force, also played for pilots returning from combat missions at all hours of the day and night.

After the war, they came to the United States and played regularly at Carnegie Hall. Beginning in 1948, they took up residence at the University of California at Berkeley for several years.

The Griller Quartet, which consisted of the same four musicians for the entire 36 years of its existence, "occupied the same sort of position as the Amadeus Quartet did after them", said Mr. Hampton's son, Ian, a cellist in Vancouver.

Mr. Hampton remained active throughout his life, especially toward the end. "His last few years have been extraordinarily productive in composition", said Anne Crowden, founder and director of the Crowden School in Berkeley. "He had a terrific output. He couldn't sleep so he was always composing at 5 in the morning". "Cellists all over the world are playing his works now."

They also came to play with him and learn from him. Mr. Hampton was a much-beloved teacher to generations of students, Crowden said. But mostly, she said, "he was just a colossally great musician."

Cellist Bonnie Hampton, his former wife and continuing colleague, said: "One music teacher told me this morning that Colin was the last of a musical tradition, where the focus was on just pure musical values, when today so much is on commercialism or career direction."

His love of the cello led him and master cello teacher Margaret Rowell in 1950 to found the California Cello Club, the nation's oldest such organization. It has helped turn the Bay Area into a leading cello centre, fostering many brilliant performers and unusual events such as the annual Cello Bash in Berkeley, where about 100 cellists take the stage at once.

Mr. Hampton was born in London and educated at Westminster Choir School, Whalen Cello School and the Royal Academy of Music.

In addition to his son Ian, he is survived by son Andrew of Pitlochry, Scotland, four grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

COLIN HAMPTON



The Griller Quartet with Colin Hampton (right)

Colin Hampton, cellist, died on August 10 in Oakland, California, aged 85. He was born in London on June 6, 1911.

ganised by Dame Myra Hess.

As well as most of the standard quartet repertoire, the Griller Quartet also played a good deal of modern music and formed links with contemporary composers. Among those with whom they were associated were Edmund Rubbra, Arnold Bax, and, especially, Ernest Bloch, who wrote his Third String Quartet (1952) for them and whose Fourth (1953) and Fifth (1956) quartets they also premiered and recorded. Arthur Bliss was another who wrote various works for the Grillers, including his Second Quartet, and they in turn marked the bowing of his Music for Strings (1935). In 1932, with Leon Goossens, they gave the premiere of Benjamin Britten's *Phantasy* for oboe and quartet.

THE death of Colin Hampton breaks the last link with one of the finest string quartets of the century. As cellist of the Griller Quartet, Hampton toured the world, giving more than 3,000 concerts between 1928 and 1961. He and his colleagues — violinists Sidney Griller and Jack O'Brien, and violist Philip Burton — introduced generations of music lovers to the intimate pleasures of the quartet repertory. They played for Queen Elizabeth (now the Queen Mother) at Buckingham Palace in 1940, while Augustus John painted her portrait, and for the delegates at the Potsdam Conference in 1945.

The son of an organist, Colin Hampton took up the cello at the relatively late age of 12, attending the Herbert Walenn Cello School in London. When Hampton entered the Royal Academy of Music at the age of 16, Walenn continued to tutor him. He and his three future partners first played together as students in the chamber music class of the legendary violist Lionel Tertis, who encouraged them to form a permanent string quartet.

Other than the Amadeus Quartet, no other British string quartet has remained together for longer while keeping the same personnel. Their well-received London debut in 1928 was followed in 1930 by their first tour of Europe and in 1938-39 by a successful tour of the United States.

During the Second World War the quartet joined the musical establishment of the RAF, working alongside the pianist Denis Matthews and the horn player Dennis Brain, and also appearing at the National Gallery concerts or-

After a visit to the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, California, in 1947, the Griller Quartet were invited to become quartet-in-residence at the University of California at Berkeley. There were occasional forays to other parts of the world, including a 25th anniversary recital in the Festival Hall in 1953, but they remained in California until the death of Philip Burton in 1961, when the surviving members decided to disband.

Hampton was settled in the New World and quickly found a niche for himself as a teacher. Latterly he composed a great deal, often writing for small string forces or arranging works for multiple cellos. During the past year he had arranged the Holy Sonnets of John Donne for tenor and string orchestra. They were given their first performance two months ago at Berkeley.

Colin Hampton was three times married. He is survived by his third wife, Megan Dalton, and by two sons from his first marriage, one of whom, Ian, is a professional cellist in Vancouver.

***Vancouver Cello Club seeks to honour Colin Hampton
with a proposed change of name for the Caroline E. Riley Scholarship***

Colin Hampton, whose life of devotion to the cello and cellists came to a widely mourned end last August, was keenly interested in the work of Vancouver Cello Club. He gave numerous workshops, master classes and lessons during his visits to Vancouver – sessions which many professional cellists – then students – now vividly remember, not only for the instruction they received, but also for the warmth of Colin's personality and his pervasive love of music and the cello.

Vancouver Cello Club Executive wish to commemorate Colin's life and work by associating his name with what has hitherto been known as the Caroline E. Riley Scholarship.

Some twenty or so years ago, Mrs. Riley was an enthusiastic supporter of music in Vancouver, especially of the Purcell String Quartet, of which Ian Hampton was then a cellist. On her death she left a donation to Vancouver Cello Club, which was used to establish a fund for the

annual award of a scholarship to a student leaving home base for the first time to pursue further studies. Other donors have since added substantially to the fund, and over the years some twenty students have benefited from the scholarship; most of them are now well-established in the profession.

The Executive will propose, at the next Annual General Meeting in June 1997, that the name of the fund and the scholarship be changed to:

***“The Colin Hampton Memorial Scholarship
(formerly the Caroline E. Riley Scholarship)”***

In this way, we hope to perpetuate Colin's influence among the young students of Vancouver Cello Club, while continuing to acknowledge the Original donor.

25th Anniversary

1997 will be the 25th Anniversary of the Vancouver Cello Club

At the Executive meeting held September 15, 1996, Jean Ireland and Kristl Armstrong were appointed to spearhead the Committee to plan the celebrations. Any suggestions from the membership should be forwarded to them, or perhaps e-mailed to: robin_miller@mindlink.net.

The May 1997 Newsletter will be a big one – an anniversary edition so brush up on memories and mail them to me as I am not on e-mail or the Internet!! I can be faxed at (604) 731-1920.

So whet the memory bank juices and get them flowing – here is a copy of the minutes from the Inaugural Meeting of the V.C.C. October 13, 1972.

Minutes of Inaugural Meeting – Friday, 13 October 1972, 8:00 pm – Community Music School, Vancouver, BC

NOTICE – Notice of the meeting was contained in Newsletters dated September 1972 and 6 October 1972.

PRESENT – Mary Cawood, Paul Paulson, Lindsay Burrell, Polly Walter, Eldo Neufeld, Bill Johnson, Gwen Zuker, Dawn Binnington, Pat Laiman, Margaret Fisher, Lyn Bailey, Mary Van Horne, Audrey Piggott, Leon de Haan, Chris Catchpole, Judith Fraser, Jill Webber, Peter Gardiner, Hans Sigrist, Desmond Hoebig, Ian Hampton, Ernest Collins.

CHAIR – Ian Hampton too the Chair.

CONSTITUTION – Ernest Collins outlined the need for a formal constitution enabling the Club to be registered as a charity under the Income Tax Act in order to qualify for grants for workshops, etc. He outlined the terms of the Constitution and Bylaws which had been registered under the Societies Act of British Columbia and reported that application had been made for registration as a charity and a reply was awaited.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS – Pursuant to the Constitution and Bylaws, it was moved

by Lion de Haan and seconded by Chris Catchpole that Ian Hampton, Judith Fraser and Ernest Collins be elected as members of the Executive Committee for the period until the first annual meeting which is to be held next June. There being no other nominations, the motion was PASSED.

(NOTE: Following a short recess at the end of the business portion of the meeting, it was announced that the cello section of the VSO had elected Audrey Piggott to be Executive Committee and that the student cellists present recommended that Lindsey Burrell be co-opted on the Executive Committee. It remains for the Committee to co-opt also a teacher of cello.)

PROGRAM – Future program and activities of the Club were then discussed.

- (a) Arrangements already made:
- Oct. 14 - club members may attend rehearsal with Zara Nelsova and VSO.
 - Nov. 17 - cello students recital at CMS, 7:30 p.m.
 - Dec. 10 - professional recital of cello ensemble at CMS, 7:30 p.m.

(b) Future possibilities:

Dr. Peggie Sampson has offered the loan of a film on “Playing the Viol” which the Club will endeavour to obtain. When registration as a charity has been obtained, arrangements can be made for a workshop in the spring. General satisfaction was expressed with the workshop arranged in 1970. Considerable interest was expressed in having opportunities to play cello ensembles. Ernest Collins took the names of those interested and undertook to make some suitable arrangements.

Those members interested in contacting violinists and viola players for chamber music were referred to the North Shore Chamber Music Society and opportunities for advertising on CMS notice boards.

VILLA LOBOS – BACHIANAS BRASILEIRAS NO. 5 –

Following the conclusion of formal business, members present rehearsed this work with Marguerite Noye. This evidently gave great pleasure to those taking part. We are very grateful to Marguerite Noye for her help.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 1996 - 97

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

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

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

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.....\$ _____

Reprinted from Fall 1996 – National Capital Cello Club Newsletter

A Stick in Time: Choosing the Right Bow for Your Cello, by Ronald M. Costell

Much has been written about bows. But little has been written to assist you, the player, in the task of choosing a bow for your cello. I will share here the results of my own experience, which has led to a method of evaluating the playing qualities of bows, and I hope that my suggestions will make the process more efficient and logical.

The "right" bow for a cello is a bow that seems transparent and unobtrusive in your hand. What we seek is a sensation of ease. We want a freedom from awkwardness, discomfort, or excess effort in our playing, and the ability to draw the sort of sound from our instrument that makes us proud to own it.

The right bow is but a single factor in a complex equation that includes the player and the cello. Only you can evaluate a bow suitable to your style and playing needs, and this evaluation can be accomplished only on your own instrument. Further, because it makes no sense to acquire a bow less suitable than one you already own, bow testing must compare the resident bow directly with the challenger.

When I test a bow for its playing quality, I consider three aspects which I shall refer to as "balance", "brilliance", and "bite". While these three are related to an extent, they can be evaluated separately.

In evaluating balance, I first check on the overall sensation of comfort and secure contact with the string. I do this by playing a simple scale with slow, full, up and down bows. Next, I check the comfort of string crossings from frog to point, and from point to frog, using a slow tremolo between each pair of adjacent strings. Here the sensation should be one of

comfortably maintaining contact, without the "tail wagging the dog", right down to where – on the up-bow – the frog has almost reached the string. Lastly, try some bow acrobatics: détaché, martelé, spiccato, and up and down-bow staccato. Better yet, work on a passage you have found challenging from a current project. As a "test drive", to evaluate bow contact and string crossing, I like the *Prelude* from the first Bach Solo Suite. To test bow agility, try the second movement from Brahms' E-minor sonata (Op. 38). You may discover that a heavier stick will sometimes excel in comfortable contact and string crossings, but disappoint in providing a sense of agility.

Incidentally, a bow that *feels* heavier may not actually *be* heavier, because the sensation of heaviness can sometimes be followed by other factors, such as the shape and size of the part of the bow that you are touching or looking at. In ideal circumstances, you can expect to discriminate no better than about a two-gram difference between one bow and another. If you are interested in which of two bows is actually the lighter, you must weight them on a good scale.

"Brilliance" is a way of describing the kind of frequency response which different bows excite in the instrument. Each bow differs in its capacity to expose the bass and treble resources of your cello. A stiff stick, which permits higher tension on the hair, may be able to produce a brighter sound, but with the sacrifice of a certain richness in the mid-range or bass. I like to try a passage such as measures 46-53 in the first movement of Brahms' E-minor, which has the added advantage of lying near a minor "wolf" not in many instruments.

As always, it is the match between bow and instrument that is important. A "bright" bow may help to improve the projection of a more "nasal" cello, just as a less bright bow may be appropriate to a more raucous, already over-bright instrument.

"Bite" refers to the ease with which the notes of the register resonate under the bow. I like to try a slow and methodical chromatic scale at a forceful volume, a practice known to drive spouses and children from the house when carried on with a large array of try-out bows. Notice whether certain notes speak easily, while others seem to require too much effort, or seem muted or constricted in quality. In performing these tests, but with the "bite" evaluation particularly, I find it essential to have all of the bows I am testing readily at hand. If I reach a note that seems muted, I will hand off the bow and try another without removing my left hand from the string, to see if the other stick plays this range more easily.

The "bite" test seems especially sensitive to a bow's ability to play through the "wolfish" resonances inherent in most instruments – particularly anywhere on the instrument where the notes from E-flat to F-sharp live. In Piatti's first *Caprice* (Op. 25), there is a superb test of this quality in a bow. The passage requires rapid up-bows at the tip in fourth position on the G-string. A bow that permits you to play this pattern easily, drawing rich sound, will tend to perform well across the entire range of your instrument. It is an excellent passage for comparing bows. Other music I find useful for the "bite" evaluation includes Popper's *Etude*, No. 6, in his *High School of Cello Playing*, and the *Prelude* of Bach's third *Solo Suite*.

Fellow Cello Scrubbers...

From: michael.olsen@utoronto.ca / X-Sender: michael.olsen@log3 / To: The Vancouver Cello Club <robinmiller@mindlink.net>
Subject: The Gist of U of T / MIME-Version: 1.0

Hello fellow cello scrubbers. I thought I would send you a line in the tradition of Meran's regular discourse with the club. The reason? To tell you all about U of T, and Shauna Rolston. Well I have to admit she is a pretty funky teacher. Her studio is decorated with a red ceiling, Danish halogen lighting, espresso machine, and this strange cut-out cardboard picture of a baby I've yet to be able to explain. Also all my friends are trying to get me to set up a date for them... with her. Despite these unusual pressures, I find that the atmosphere here is very productive, the instruction excellent, and the people pretty friendly once you get to know them. (It ain't Vancouver) Shauna is unorthodox in her mannerisms, but a very serious teacher. She tends to encourage originality in everyone, and stays more out of the way, the more capable a student proves to be in a particular area. I find it refreshing that she is not jamming a "method" down anyone's

throat but merely offering her well thought out guidance. Universities unfortunately are bereft with inflexible instructors. I count myself fortunate to have NEVER had one. (oooo kudos there) Shauna is always off doing something and then breezes into town to give a flurry of lessons. This suits me fine as I have more time to practice in between. In fact Shauna was in Vancouver this past week recording and doing some TV thing. (Tommy?) In fact I have turned the tables on the student/teacher relationship by giving her advice on amplification, which as most of you know I "wasted" several years on. I have decided to overwork myself by taking on a lot of extra playing. Besides a Sonata class, my repertoire and a quartet, I am playing Messiaen's "Quartet for the End of Time" for my Contemporary Ensemble class. We are supposed to play the two hardest movements on Oct. 30th at a festival gig, so please, some collective finger-crossing the day of. I love the

piece, in fact I am obsessed with it, but I have taken to calling it the "Messy Quartet for the end of my Free Time". It is driving all the members of my group slightly insane, oh what fun. Toronto is a dismal place with generally bad coffee, no mountains, no ocean (well except for that pissy little lake of theirs), and pollution. It is perfect for me since I am usually staring at the inside wall of my practice room, so what the hell do I care!

Take care all you cellists and remember, when they ask you why you do it, just tell them there's no good reason – but that never stopped a musician.

Yours with love of a Thousand Puppies.

PS: A tip of the lid to Joe Elworthy if he still subscribes to this thing and my many other friends scattered in Florida, Montreal, and who knows what other places.

? I n f o r m a t i o n Q u e s t i o n n a i r e ?

Where in B.C. can amateur cellists play?

Name of Organization _____

Address _____

Contact Phone: _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Level of Performance: Beginner Intermediate (tenor clef; Q position basic) Advanced

Do you know any interested violinists, violists, pianists, etc. interested in chamber music?

Name _____ Instrument _____

Contact Phone: _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

PLEASE RETURN TO JUDITH FRASER: 210 - 235 Keith Rd., West Vancouver, BC V7T 1L5

Calendar of Events

Music in the Morning

- V.A.M. – 10:30 a.m.
- October 22, 23, 24
- *David Finkel & Wu Han*

Honours Recital

- V.A.M. – 7:30 p.m.
- October 24
- Winners of the Florence Mary Docherty Memorial Scholarship: *Joel Aird & Leah Zielinski*

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

- Orpheum – 2:30 p.m.; 8:00 p.m.
- November 2, 3, 4
- *Steven Isserlis*

Banff Centre "Cellofest"

- November 8, 9, 10
- *Zara Nelsova*

Vancouver Symphony Orchestra

- Orpheum – 2:30 p.m.; 8:00 p.m.
- January 10, 11, 13, 1997
- *Eugene Osadchy* – Beethoven Triple Concerto

Recital

- V.A.M. – 7:30 p.m.
- March 12, 1997
- *Lee Duckles & Silvia Fraser* – Benefit for Vancouver Cello Club

Recital

- U.B.C. – Noon Hour
- March 19, 1997
- *Lee Duckles & Silvia Fraser*



For Sale

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|----------|
| ➤ 4/4 Cello | \$12,000 – Jennifer / John McFarland | 926-3286 |
| ➤ 1/2 Czech Cello | Jennifer / John McFarland | 926-3286 |
| ➤ 3/4 Hoffner Cello (1986) | Diane Gooderham..... | 224-3382 |
| ➤ 1/2 German Cello (Circa 1920) | \$1800 – Excellent tone, soft case | 274-1484 |
| ➤ 4/4 Czech Cello | Su Wan | 261-7033 |

Correspondence

From Esther at The American Cello Council, Inc., New York

August 19, 1996

Dear Judy:

It was wonderful seeing you at the congress. I would have loved to spend more time with you – but all our schedules wouldn't permit it. Do you ever come to New York???

I received your Newsletter and writing to tell you your article on the Congress was the best and most wonderful of all that I have read from other Newsletters. You captured the feeling and the flavour – our Family of Cellists. THANK YOU.

Now – Taki and I plan to write to the Council members sometime the end of September – and I would very much like to include your article as a second page. I would edit it of course with your permission and give you the By-line.

I can fax you my editing if you have a fax. Otherwise I would mail it – no hurry. Our letter (separate from the article) is about our future plans, etc.

My summer is now coming to a close. I bring an office to the Cape – and my husband and I will be back Labour Day.

Hope you have had a great relaxed and productive summer.

...

**Do you remember in our October '95 newsletter the unknown writer of "Cellist in Sarajevo" – ICS Article?
It appears NATALIE WILLIAMS, currently studying in Manchester, England has found the author!**

Date: Thu, 12 Sep 1996
To: pmiller@mindlink.net (Peter Miller)
From: williamg@direct.ca (Garth Williams)
Subject: Re: Manchester International Cello Festival

Of all the events of this year one, in particular, stands out. Last April I was invited by the Cellist Eugene Friesen to perform with him at the International Cello Festival in Manchester, England.

That phrase seems to tell me that the article was written by Friesen's pianist – Paul Sullivan. He was right – the concerts were amazing and that experience with the Sarajevo cellist was brilliant. Anyways, that's my guess – possible, I guess. I remember reading that article too – I subscribed to ICS when I had email of my own!

I will send the two programs and some photos tomorrow so they should get to you Monday or Tuesday – take your time with them as I won't be back in Vancouver until Easter at the earliest.

Say hello to Judy Fraser for me if you see her – I haven't talked to her in years. I think anyone who is a student or an ex-student of Judy's really appreciates what she gives to you. She's a great teacher!

Have fun browsing through the pictures and programs!

Addresses...

Jeehoon Kim

Now at Yale University in a M.M. program with *Aldo Parisot*, 58 Winchester Ave., New Haven, CT 06511, USA

Pat Kim

Now in 2nd year B.A. at Wellesley College TCW; Wellesley College; 106 Central Street, Wellesley, MA 02181, USA

Becky Wenham

Now in 1st year of Harid Conservatory, Apt B-506; 300 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton, FL 33432, USA

Sophie Willer Reen

Now teaching Kindermusik from her studio at home and performing with her pianist husband, Steven Reen; 1631 Washington St., Columbia, IN 47201, USA

Jon Braunstein

Now at McGill University; 325 McConnell Hall, 3905 University St., Montreal, P.Q., H3A 2B5, Canada

Also at McGill:

Jennika Anthony-Shaw; Victor Chun; Becky Foon

Finalists named in CBC Radio's National Competition for Young Composers

CBC Radio Music today announced the finalists for the 1996-97 NATIONAL COMPETITION FOR YOUNG COMPOSERS, naming nine compositions by seven Canadian composers. The finalists were selected from a record number of submissions received this year, 189 works by 163 composers.

Finalists in the category of Music for Orchestra are: *Un, Deux, Beaucoup* by 26 year-old Laval native, Eric Morin; *In Light of Faith* by 28 year-old Montrealer Michael Oesterie, and *Burning by Vancouver's 27 year-old Sean Anthony Varah*.

In the category of Electronic Music, the finalists are: *Magellan* by 21 year-old Torontonian Ian Stewart; *Le Viscéréal* by Sherbrooke's 24 year-old Eric R. Tremblay, and *Aria for cello and tape by Sean Anthony Varah*

The Chamber Music category finalists are: *...émerions...* for violin and piano by 27 year-old Eric Marty; *Still* for oboe and chamber ensemble by Michael Oesterie, and *Palio & Opedragen Aan Dirk Proost, Geestenziener* for five instruments by 28 year-old Quebec City native, Francis Ubertelli.

The nine works will be broadcast live on CBC's French and English Stereo

networks on January 9 and 10, 1997. The orchestral music will be performed by the National Arts Centre Orchestra, conducted by Mario Bernardi.

The jury, chaired by Canadian Composer and conductor Linda Bouchard, and including Ivo Malec of France, William Bolcom of the United States, and Canadians Gilles Tremblay and Walter Buczynski, deliberated for five days at Toronto's Canadian Music Centre before choosing the finalists.

The will award more than \$40,000 in prizes, including first prize of \$5,000 in each category, \$4,000 for second and \$1,000 for third; the National Arts Centre People's Choice Award of \$2,500 in the orchestral category; a \$3,000 commission from Neunesses Musicales of Canada, and The Canada Council Grand Prize of \$5,000 for the best composition overall, should one finalist receive a majority vote.

The 1996-97 NATIONAL COMPETITION FOR YOUNG COMPOSERS is produced by CBC Radio Music and presented in cooperation with the National Arts Centre and the Canada Council.

Conversation with Nathaniel Rosen

by Tim Finholt

Nathaniel Rosen, former Teaching Assistant for Gregor Piatigorsky at the University of Southern California, is renowned for being the only American cellist to ever win the Tchaikovsky Competition in Russia. Mr. Rosen is in much demand as a soloist, recording artist, and chamber musician. He teaches at the Manhattan School of Music and the Thomas More College in New Hampshire.

TF: Eleonore Schoenfeld, Professor of Cello at UBC, was your first teacher. What was she like:

NR: I studied cello with her from the beginning, starting with open strings. She was well-organized and patient, but still very demanding. Because of this, she has become one of the best in the business. The finest young talents from all over the world seek her guidance. She stressed the fundamentals of cello playing at all times, i.e. intonation, good tone production, a well-organized approach, and a progressive approach to technical advancement. All the things that exemplified her playing were passed on to her students, which is what all good teachers do. When I was 12 years old she encouraged me to change teachers. She thought it was time I had some new input, which is a remarkable thing for a teacher to do.

TF: Was this when you went to study with Piatigorsky?

NR: Not quite. Miss Schoenfeld intended that I study with Gabor Rejto. At that time, the formation of what was to be called the Institute for Special Musical Studies at USC, whose teachers were to be Heifetz, Primrose, and Piatigorsky, had not yet been announced. But before I make the switch to Gabor Rejto, the Piatigorsky appointment to the USC faculty was announced. My father thought that I had a good chance of being accepted, since Piatigorsky had heard me in a trio when he was a judge of the Coleman Chamber Music Competition the previous year. Incidentally, the trio, which was coached by Miss Schoenfeld, included myself, Glenn Dicterow, now the concertmaster of the Yew York Philharmonic, and Hans Boepple, now professor at Santa Rosa State College in California. My father was hoping that Piatigorsky would be willing to take on a 13 year old student in his master class, which he did.

And so I began my new life as a member of the Piatigorsky class, going down to USC all day twice a week, missing school. From that time on, I was busy slithering through junior high and high school, while my real life and my real challenge was in the Piatigorsky class. The class was a very difficult environment for me because I was expected to do things that I didn't understand, let alone how to do them. But Piatigorsky was very patient. He kept me on the same two pieces for the entire first year - the Goltermann Concerto No. 1 in A minor and the Piatti Caprice No. 8. He wanted me to learn how to play the cello, not just learn repertoire, which is the right thing for a 13 year old. I also had plenty of musical inspiration elsewhere. I played chamber music every Friday night with my father and his friends.

TF: How did you feel about playing the same two pieces for a year?

NR: I just was hoping that I would get them learned so that I could move on to something else. Piatigorsky told me the greatest thing that any teacher has ever told me. "If you don't get bored, I don't get bored." And he was as good as his word. He wanted me to play heroic music like a hero, and he wanted me to play the virtuoso music like a great juggler. He always said that learning to play the cello is like learning to drive a car (this is coming from a man that learned to drive a car when he was over 50). If you learn how to do it properly, you can go anywhere. And with a cello, it's the same. If you learn to play it properly, you can play anything. The people that have the most difficulty are those that have to re-learn how to play every time they learn a new piece. The corollary to this is that, if you learn to play the cello really well, you will tend to make the teacher superfluous, which was his goal, that his students would become their own teachers.

TF: Did he demonstrate in lessons?

NR: Yes. He would seize someone's cello and purely express himself with it. It came out richly and fully without any apparent concern for whether or not everything came out technically perfect or not. It just sounded like that was how the music was supposed to sound and mean. He was oblivious to whether or not there would be a scratch or a scrape, or whether the fingerboard was a little different or a little bigger or smaller. Every cello seemed to fit his idea of how the music was supposed to go. Whereas so many others try and fit their musical ideas to the cello, he just fit the cello to his musical ideas.

Conversation with Nathaniel Rosen cont'd.

TF: that must have been amazing! Did he dictate interpretations to you?

NR: No. That was another thing that set him apart from other teachers. He wanted us to find our own bowings and fingerings first, and then he would show us what was good about them or not so good. The purpose being that merely prescribing in advance the proper bowings and fingers would never teach his students to deal with these matters on their own. They would always be looking for somebody to tell them what bowing and fingering to use. They would never learn how to find them for themselves, so that they could best express their own musical ideas.

TF: You mentioned that Heifetz and Primrose were also at the Institute for Special Musical studies. I presume you were in chamber classes with Heifetz and Primrose. Did you enjoy working with Heifetz?

NR: Heifetz was an inspiring chamber music coach. It was just wonderful. In chamber music, even more than in his violin teaching, he taught by demonstration. He was also very involved with how to do things in chamber music. For instance, he discussed the proper role of each instrument, and he always wanted the first violinist to take on the leadership role.

TF: Naturally.

NR: I remember there was one Chinese student, now in the Chicago Symphony, who had recently come over to study with him from Beijing. She didn't know any English at the time. It was very difficult linguistically and culturally for her to do what Mr. Heifetz wanted her to do, which was to lead the

group. She was playing first violin and he wanted her to lead in many ways, not only musically and gesturally, but he also wanted her to be able to say, "Let's start at letter B", or something like that. He tried to explain to her that she had to say, "Let's start at letter B". But he could never get her to do anything more than nod and agree. It became very funny and finally he gave up, laughed, and we went on to something else.

TF: Was he as imperious as is often portrayed?

NR: Not in the way you imply. Of course he was imperious in the sense that he was an emperor, which he truly was. He was "Heifetz", after all. But I wouldn't say "imperious", because it has negative connotations. I would say "imperial". He behaved as an emperor should and the people around him behaved as imperial subjects. He was a great chamber music coach and it was trilling to play with him. Chamber music sessions with him were some of the greatest moments of my life, of which they number many, not only in class but at parties and in public.

TF: How about William Primrose, the legendary violist?

NR: My coaching with him was more limited because he stayed in Los Angeles only for one year before he accepted a job at Indiana University. I think Heifetz was angry with him for breaking up a good thing. But people have to do what they have to do.

TF: Let's talk about the Tchaikovsky Competition. When you won it, the United States and the Soviet Union were still in the

throes of the Col War. You were thrust into the role of an American hero.

NR: And a Jewish one too, which was very important at that time because there was a wave of anti-Jewish persecution in Russia. The reporters from the television networks were very eager for me to talk about such matters. I didn't really have my act together and I thought it would be a distinct betrayal to criticize my hosts for their politics. In the following years, I got my act a little more together, but it was too late to do any good because it was no longer news. If I had been a little more busy with politics, I might not have been as busy with the cello and I might not have won that gold medal.

TF: When you were practicing for the competition and when you won, were you thinking that you were carrying a banner for America?

NR: I definitely carried the banner for America. I'm the only American cellist ever to win the Tchaikovsky Competition. I was very proud of that. It was a great victory and I did it against all odds. I feel very fortunate to have done it. I also feel proud that I surmounted the odds, and I also surmounted all the negative advice that I was getting from just about everybody. And if the reporters had asked me the same question they asked me then, regarding how I feel about Jewish persecution, I know what I'd say now. I would say it's not to the corrupt and evil political system of the Soviet Union that I appeal when I play there, it's to the great Russian musical tradition. I didn't quite have it together in my head at the time, but I gave it a lot of thought later, and that's still how I feel.

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