



Texas Flute Society

THE
newsletter.

Spring 2015

Carolyn Keyes, Editor



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In This Issue

Letter from the President

Upcoming Events

Interview with Flutronix

There's an App for That

Letter from the President

Greetings! March is upon us, and while It may still technically be winter, the Texas Flute Society is busy preparing for the coming change of seasons.



TFS will celebrate spring with our annual Members' Recital on Saturday, April 4, 2015, at 6:00pm. Messiah Lutheran Church in Plano will be hosting us again. Be sure to stop by to hear performances by our talented members with a special performance of an arrangement of "Kingsfold" from Dives and Lazarus by the TFS board. Interested in performing?

Simply email Brittany DeLaVergne at b.delavergne@yahoo.com or call [254-434-3889](tel:254-434-3889) by Saturday, March 7th.

Next we will herald the coming summer with the 28th annual Texas Flute Festival May 14-16, 2015 at Texas Woman's University in Denton. The performances, masterclasses, and workshops presented by our guest artists, Bonita Boyd, Flutronix, and Kristyn Son will surely provide inspiration for our summer practicing! The comments given to soloists and ensembles performing for flute specialists will give summer practice sessions direction, and the fun had by the festival flute choirs will supply the energy needed to stay inside to practice when summer beckons. And of course, numerous vendors will line the exhibit halls with instruments, music, and every accessory necessary for successful practicing. Mark your calendars now. You will not want to miss this festival! Stay tuned for our next newsletter issue for more festival information.

Until then, may scales warm your fingers and beautiful melodies warm your soul.

Best wishes,
Lisa Phillips

Upcoming Events!

Brookhaven Flute Day, 3/7/15 @ 2:00 PM,
Brookhaven College, Farmer's Branch, TX

TCU Flute Festival, March 27-28 2015
Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, TX

[CLICK FOR MORE EVENTS](#)

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Interview with Flutronix

" Music is the only thing that I
can't picture as not being a part of



my life. It's woven into the fabric of my being, so I honestly never considered doing anything else."

Nathalie Joachim

Flutronix

What got you involved in music? Did you listen to it as a child? Was there a specific influence along those lines? Why did you choose to play the flute?

Nathalie was always drawn to music as a child, and was lucky enough to grow up in West Orange, NJ, which had a wonderful school district that encouraged student participation in music and the arts. In the 4th grade, every student was required to either play an instrument or join the choir, and Nathalie chose the flute by chance. She took to it immediately and has been playing every day since.

Allison grew up in a very musical household and her father had quite an extensive and eclectic record collection. With other musicians in the family as well, music was a recurring theme throughout her life. Having been exposed to so much music since childhood, Allison was drawn to an array of genres and has grown to demonstrate that through her own music making. One of the records played often in the house was Hubert Laws' *Rite of Spring*. His playing was incredibly influential to Allison and inspired her to pick up the flute.

How did the two of you meet? How did Flutronix come about?

Allison and Nathalie both grew up playing flute in the New York City area, but never knew each other. About 6 years ago, Nathalie found some of Allison's music on MySpace, and sent her a message asking if she'd like to

meet. It turned out that Allison lived just a few blocks away from Nathalie in Brooklyn, so a few days later Nathalie walked to Allison's house! They shared their stories with one another - their love for the flute and various styles of music like drum & bass, hip-hop, jazz and more, and learned that they both wanted to combine those genres with their flute playing. That day, Flutronix was born.

Who were your teachers?

Nathalie's primary teachers were Jayn Rosenfeld, Bradley Garner and Carol Wincenc.

Allison's primary teachers were Mary Barto and Tara Helen O'Connor, with further mentorship from Gary Schocker and composer, Joan LaBarbara.

What musician has had the largest influence on your playing?

Hubert Laws was a big influence for both of us - a fantastic role model who set a new standard by mastering several styles of playing including classical, jazz, and popular.

What is your favorite piece to play from the flute repertoire and why?

Nathalie: It's a tie for me between Dutilleux *Sonatine* and J.S. Bach's *Partita in A minor*. The Dutilleux was the first French piece I ever fell in love with. I'm very partial to French music, so it holds a special place in my heart. However, the Bach *Partita* is the piece I revisit when I want to recapture my strength as a player. I appreciate the challenge that the piece offers - it has a way of making players feel completely vulnerable, which makes performing it successfully that much more gratifying.

Allison: I too, love the *Partita in A minor*. Bach never ceases to amaze and every time I pull out the piece, I discover something new - not just about the composition, but about my own playing. It's a very revealing work and constantly presents new challenges to overcome. In second place, the *Undine Sonata* by Carl Reinecke. I love the romance and drama of this piece. There's such a broad palette of colors and emotions to explore.

How did you get started in composing?

Nathalie: I started experimenting with song-writing as well as acoustic and electronic composition after I finished my undergraduate studies and spent a year in Paris. My only goal that year was to make, play, and hear as much music as possible - a post-graduation challenge for myself before continuing formal study. I was compelled to express myself in new ways, and that manifested into a desire to compose.

Allison: After I completed my undergrad studies, I decided to take time to try different styles of music and familiarize myself with the various music scenes in New York City. During this time I experimented with improvisation, which eventually led to composing. I found myself very artistically satisfied as a composer and began to take it very seriously, eventually leading to my graduate composition studies at New York University.

Who and/or what has had the largest influence on your composing?

Nathalie: Most of my major compositional influences, with the exception of Steve Reich, are not classical composers, but electronic music icons of mine: Bjork, Aphex Twin, Roni Size and Radiohead are at the top of that list. All of them are pioneering producers and creators of electronic sound, and very much shaped my creative approach to composition and music making in general.

Allison: I'm very much into minimalism, rhythmic patterns, folk elements and shifting harmonic colors through the use of common tones. There are so many artists that I find influential, I can't name them all, but they all have one or more of the above qualities, always.

Describe the emergence of your style. Did you begin with a traditional classical background, or have you always explored several genres?

Nathalie: As a child, I had two major obsessions - flute playing and electronic music - I think it's safe to say that I still have those obsessions! My formal training is all classical, but as I was meticulously studying classical music, I was also meticulously studying electronic music, so in many ways it was very natural for me to form a group like Flutronix. Beyond that, my massive and eclectic music collection at home stands to

show that I've really always been an "I'll listen to anything I can get my hands on" type of person. So, in many ways, years of listening to everything from country music to Tuvan throat singing contributed to my having a very diverse musical palette to access as a performer.

Allison: I started the flute on my own and didn't begin formal training until high school. I've always been an intuitive player, so going with what I know and love has come very natural to me. Having grown up with so much music, my gravitation towards and mixing of many styles is a direct result of what's going on in my subconscious. The classical training made me a better musician, but the desire to have a life involving a diverse world of music has always been there.

If you could identify the moment in your life when you knew that you wanted to be a professional musician, what would that moment be?

Nathalie: For me, there was no moment, it just has always been. Music is the only thing that I can't picture as not being a part of my life. It's woven into the fabric of my being, so I honestly never considered doing anything else.

Allison: For me, it literally hit like a ton of bricks. I'd always loved playing and listening to music, but for whatever reason, I never considered it as a profession until I was about 15. One day I was in the car with my mom and we were listening to WQXR, the classical radio station in NYC. Beethoven's 5th came on and I was talking to my mom about what I should study in college and do with the rest of my life. I remember thinking out loud, "well, what do I like to do? What am I good at?" While we're having this conversation, I start to zone in on what's happening on the radio. Suddenly I was like, "DUH. I can play the flute professionally! I can be a musician! This is a thing that people do." And from that moment on, I became truly dedicated.

What qualities do you think are most essential to musical excellence?

Discipline, dedication and joy.

What qualities do you think are most essential in a chamber music relationship?

Musical excellence - be the best player you can be; Be nice - be a person that people like to be around, which means treating others as you'd like to be treated; Be reliable - be a person that people can count on to be on time and uphold commitments; Be a good listener - in both musical and non-musical contexts.

Do you get nervous before a performance or a competition? What advice would you give to young performers?

I don't know that we get nervous much these days, but the best advice we can give is to remember that at every performance/competition/audition, most (if not all) of the people present want you to do well. They are for you, not against you. Knowing that eases the pressure. Most importantly, remind yourself that you are doing the thing that makes you the most happy, so enjoy it!! There's nothing better than watching someone do what they love!

Do you have any early career stories you would like to share?

We spent the first year of Flutronix strategizing our brand, image and message. We didn't play our first note until we felt confident with our brand identity and that has proven to be one of the smarter moves we made early on. We also spent this time getting to know one another and became trusted friends. This is a great thing to do for any relationship and certainly strengthened our partnership.

You both lead active lives as performers, educators, composers, and producers. How do you balance it all?

By being *highly* organized. The odd thing about going into a career where you're mostly your own boss is that for the first time in your life, you have to rely on yourself to implement a system for success. If you think about it, we are in school for most of our lives, and most people go from school to a job in an office or another environment where someone else outlines their schedule and tasks. As musicians, we had to learn very quickly how to manage our own time effectively in order to be successful at wearing lots of different hats and still have lives and careers that we truly enjoy. We make detailed daily schedules for ourselves that include everything from

practicing and business meetings, to dedicated creative time and down time with friends. It's no easy task, but is worth the peace of mind that we can always make a plan to get everything done as long as we take the time to organize ourselves.

What have you learned from music that has helped you in other areas of life?

Discipline, how to work hard *and* smart, how to work well with others, how to listen effectively, the importance of dedicating ourselves to seeing a task through to completion, how to make a plan and how to be flexible in that plan...the list goes on and on!

What is the most valuable lesson the flute (or music in general) has taught you?

Never give up, because if you're really willing to do the work, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to and probably much more.

If flute is your "first passion" in life, what would you say is your second?

Nathalie: Education - I love teaching and learning and am committed to doing so for the rest of my life.

Allison: Definitely composition and in general, creating things from nothing. I'm a total DIYer and I love coming up with ideas and turning them into something tactile.

Do you pursue any other arts, such as writing, painting or crafts?

Nathalie: Not other creative arts (outside of song-writing), but I am deeply interested in culinary arts.

Allison: Home improvement projects.

What other interests or hobbies do you have outside of music?

Nathalie: Cooking, knitting, biking and yoga

Allison: Spending time with my family, outdoor activities, politics/current events and wine.

There's an App for That

by Carolyn Keyes

Not everyone has or wants a smartphone nearby at all times, but if you are interested in turning your device into a practice aid instead of (ok, in addition to) a distraction, read on for some of the latest ideas. Many helpful apps are downloadable versions of tools that musicians already use. Although the app versions don't work any better than traditional methods or stand-alone devices, they are often cheaper (sometimes free!), and are conveniently stored on a single, portable device.

THE ESSENTIALS

Audio Recorder: Most smartphones and tablets come with built-in recording capabilities, so there is no excuse for not recording ourselves regularly. On-board microphones don't usually capture the tone of flute's higher register very well, but are still helpful for reviewing daily practice. For projects that require better recording, external microphones can be attached to smartphones by purchasing a mic that is meant to connect through a headphone jack, or by using an adapter.

Metronome: Even if you have no intention of giving up your Dr. Beat, a metronome app is a great back-up for days when you can't or don't want to carry around your full-sized metronome. Metronome apps abound, so be sure to read reviews and look for one that meets your specific needs. The most advanced versions include multiple meters, polyrhythms, tapping functions to estimate tempo, and even pre-programmable tempo changes. If the metronome isn't loud enough to hear while you are practicing, you can connect your device to an external speaker or look for a version that has a large visual component.

Popular Metronome Apps: Tempo Lite/Tempo/Tempo Advance (free, \$2.99, \$3.99 for iOS or Android); Metronome Plus (free, iOS only); Time

Guru (\$1.99 for iOS or Android); Pro Metronome (free for iOS only)

Tuner: As with the metronome apps, tuner apps vary from the most minimalistic versions to feature-rich tuner/metronome/spectrometer/tone generator combinations. Check the reviews to make sure that the app you choose responds to higher frequencies (especially if you are going to use it for piccolo). To get the most out one app, it should be fully chromatic and capable of tone generation.

Popular Tuner Apps: Cleartune (\$3.99 for iOS or Android); Tonal Energy (\$3.99 for iOS only); n-Track Tuner (free with optional in-app upgrades for iOS or Android)

YouTube: Most smartphone users already know that this is an excellent way to find instructional videos, live performances, and interviews with famous performers. Unfortunately, it is also a continual source of cat videos and other practice distractions.

THE EXTRAS

For those who love to use their smartphones for everything, there are many more applications to help you get the most out of your practice. Decibel meters (Decibel 10th, deciBEL, dB Volume Meter) can help you see your own volume or let you know when a rehearsal warrants ear protection. With iReal Pro (\$12.99 for iOS and Android), flutists interested in jazz can play along to the chords of their favorite tunes performed by simulated accompaniment. Multitrack recording programs such as Apple's Garage Band (\$4.99 iOS only) and FL Studio (\$14.99 and \$19.99 for iOS or Android) are also now available as downloadable apps, and if you want to notate your latest composition, apps like NotateMe (\$39.99 for iOS and Android) and NotateMe Now (free version), will help you get your ideas down no matter where you are.

Theory and Ear Training: There are now several different apps to help hone your music theory and ear-training skills. My personal favorite, Theta Music Trainer (app is free with yearly subscription fee and online registration) turns activities like interval identification and rhythmic dictation into games, complete with a ranking system to track yourself against your friends. Others, such as ReadRhythm (\$2.99 for iOS or Android), SingTrue

(free for iOS), and [InTune](#) (\$.99 for iOS), focus on developing a single skill.

Stay Organized: There are many different apps for personal organization on both Apple and Android devices, but some of them are particularly helpful for musicians. [Music Journal](#) (free with limited features, \$6.99 for Pro Version, iOS only) tracks how you spend your practice time, helps you set goals, and even has a built-in metronome for recording tempo progress. Scanning apps such as [TurboScan](#) (\$2.99 for iOS and Android) and [Scannables](#) (free for use with Evernote account) use your smartphone camera to turn photos into PDFs that can be stored on your phone or sent to someone via text messaging or e-mail.

What are your favorites?

If you have music apps you would like to add to this list, feel free to share them with us on Facebook or Twitter.

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