



Texas Flute Society

THE
newsletter.

Winter 2015

Carolyn Keyes, Editor



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Letter from the President



Greetings and Happy Holidays!!

How incredible is it that 2015 has drawn to a close?! I feel like just yesterday I was sweating in the Texas heat during summer band camp and introducing my 7th and 8th grade band students to classroom expectations and harder band literature. Now, after a successful holiday concert and submission of grades for the semester, I am looking forward to some much needed rest. I am also looking forward to spending more than a few stolen moments here and there during the school day to practice. It is amazing how something as simple as time to practice can become a hot commodity.

The Texas Flute Society enjoyed an event-packed season, beginning with the first all-region clinic featuring Dr. Julee Kim Walker on Saturday, September 26 at Centennial High School in Frisco. Dr. Walker took the

time to stress the importance of applying specific fundamentals that directly related to each region etude. This not only provided players with the tools needed to achieve higher levels of success in auditions, it will help them practice purposefully. She discussed topics such as articulation, use of vibrato, trying technical passages, and consistency of tone in all registers. The concept of practicing with a purpose is a useful one for all flute players, but is definitely a crucial concept to introduce to young players as they begin the audition process. Thanks to Dr. Walker for introducing the musical “toolbox” to young flutists.

On Sunday, October 25, 2015, TFS hosted a second all-region clinic with Associate Professor of Flute at Oklahoma State, Dr. Virginia Broffitt. The event was held at Lake Highlands High School in Dallas. Attendees had the opportunity to participate in a mock audition during the clinic. In addition to stressing effective use of air, Dr. Broffitt encouraged participants to be musical at all costs, by committing to musicality above all aspects of playing, whether through breathing, rubato, or articulation. It is hard to separate musicality from all of the elements we focus on as flute players. Often, we have tunnel vision as our eyes single out the most difficult technical areas – dreading awkward note combinations, leaps, or adventures in what I refer to as the stratosphere, or high range of our instrument. Many thanks to Dr. Broffitt for reminding us that the creation of a complete musical idea at the end of a performance is our ultimate goal as musicians.

The season ended with the fall event: the Texas Flute Society’s first ever Private Instructor Recital, held Wednesday, December 16th at Ranchview High School in Irving. Instructors and performers included Daniel Perez, Haiyang Wang, Tyra Thompson, Elyse Senteney, Melissa Dick, along with our Master Class Coordinator, Tim Hagen and our Co-Chair, Bethany Padgett. Performances included Debussy’s *Syrinx*, Doppler’s *Andante et Rondo*, *Maya* by Ian Clarke, *Charanga* by Michael

Colquhoun, and Gaubert's *Sonata no. 3*. What a wonderful way to bring instructors from many areas together to perform, network, and bond over commonalities. It was truly a pleasure to attend. Texas Flute Society members are indeed lucky to be able to both provide and enjoy so many ways to observe, learn, and participate.

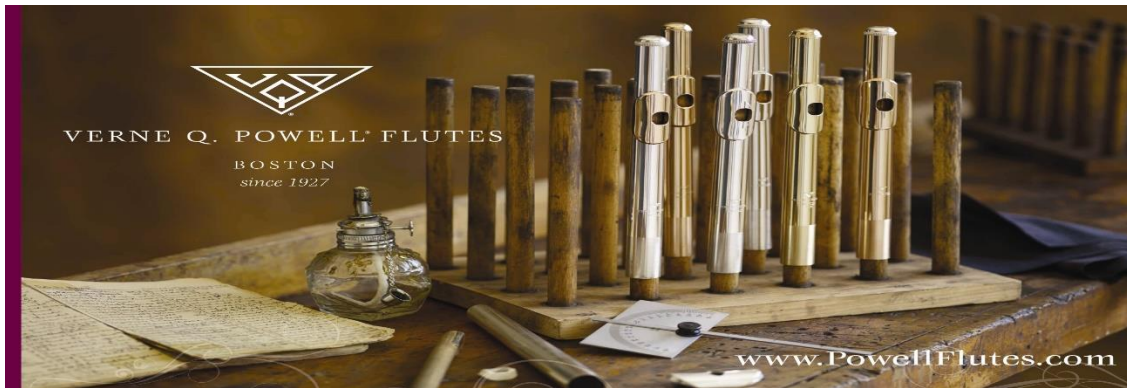
Although the season has drawn to a close, we are extremely excited about the events coming in the spring including our spring event featuring the Silver Keys Trio and, of course, the 2016 Texas Flute Society Flute Festival featuring guest artists Gary Schocker, Nina Perlove, and this year's Myrna Brown Competition winner, Isabel Lepanto Gleicher. With so many opportunities to learn, perform, and observe – the Myrna Brown Competition, and the Donna Marie Haire Young Artist's Competition, the workshops, master classes, recitals, and the exhibitors – the spring is sure to bring much excitement.

Until then, enjoy your remaining holiday, stay warm, and as I say to my students, Practice Up!!

Warmest Regards,
Brittany DeLaVergne

Upcoming Events!

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2016 Competition Information

Interested in performing in a masterclass with one of the Guest Artists at the 2016 Texas Flute Festival? A competition is held to select performers for each masterclass from the following categories - Junior High, High School, and College & Adult. Applications and requirements are available on the [TFS website](#) or by contacting the Masterclass Coordinator, Timothy Hagen at tim@timothyhagen.com.

The **31st Annual Myrna W. Brown Artist Competition** is held in conjunction with the Texas Flute Festival May 19-21, 2016. This competition is open to anyone, and there is no age limit. Prizes are as follows: First Prize - \$1,200; Second - \$500; Third - \$250. Applications and requirements are available on the [TFS website](#) or by contacting the Myrna Brown Coordinator, Terri Sanchez at terriflute@gmail.com or 972-746-1397.

The **5th Annual Donna Marie Haire Young Artist Competition** for school age flutists will be held in conjunction with the Texas Flute Festival on May 21, 2016. This competition is open to all school age flutists who will graduate high school during or after the 2015-2016 school year. Prizes are as follows: First - \$1,000 and Second - \$500. Applications and requirements are available on the [TFS website](#) or by contacting the Haire Competition Coordinator, Francesca Arnone at Francesca_Arnone@baylor.edu or 254-710-6524.

Interview with Isabel Lepanto Gleicher



"No one is going to learn how to play the flute for you. Teachers will guide and push, but at the end of the day, you are the one that puts in the hours, and thinking, and organizing, and it is something I think a lot of people struggle with. But not musicians, and I am proud to be a person like that."
Isabel Lepanto Gleicher

Flutist Isabel Lepanto Gleicher is a compelling and versatile musician who performs internationally. Most notably, Isabel has appeared in Carnegie's Zankel and Weill Recital Hall and Symphony Space in the United States, The National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, China, the National Theater and Concert Hall in Taipei, Taiwan, Fukuoka Symphony Hall and Tokyo Suntory Hall in Japan, as well as the Rolston Recital Hall at the Banff Center in Canada.

In 2015 Isabel won first prize at the Myrna Brown Young Artist Competition at the Texas Flute Festival. She will return to the festival in 2016 as Guest Artist and perform a solo recital. Previously, Isabel won second prize at both the South Carolina and Kentucky Flute Festival Young Artist Competitions.

Isabel is a member of new music sinfonietta Ensemble Échappé, an ensemble dedicated to performing a spectrum of 20th and 21st century music that is undefined by genre or style. She is currently a member of Tactus new music ensemble, and has made appearances with Le Train Bleu as part of the New Haven Arts and Ideas Festival as well as Cantata Profana in Boston and New York City. Isabel has performed on Dawn Upshaw's First Songs concert series with the Bard Graduate Vocal Arts Program. She is a founding member of woodwind quintet Xylem, and has won fellowship positions at the Norfolk Chamber Music Festival and the Imani Winds Chamber Music Festival.

As an orchestral musician, Isabel is principal flute of the New York Symphonic Ensemble that performs throughout Japan. She was a member of the Banff Festival Orchestra under the baton of Joel Smirnoff and Lior Shambadal, as well as Principal Flute with the Yale Philharmonia under the baton of Peter Oundijan and Krystoff Penderecki.

While receiving her Master's degree at the Yale School of Music, Isabel worked as a Teaching Artist through the Music in Schools Initiative. She taught in two New Haven public schools, giving individual and group lessons, as well as flute ensemble coaching. She was a woodwind section coach for the New Haven All-City Band Ensembles, as well as Flute Faculty at the Morse Summer Music Academy.

Isabel has recently joined the Bridge Arts Ensemble as a Teaching Artist where she will perform concerts and teach workshops in public schools throughout the Adirondacks, New York. Isabel is currently completing her second Master's degree in Contemporary Performance at the Manhattan School of Music. She holds a Master's degree in Flute Performance from the Yale School of Music as well as a Bachelor's degree in Flute Performance from SUNY Purchase Conservatory of Music. Her primary teachers include Dr. Tara Helen O'Connor, Mr. Ransom Wilson and Dr. Tanya Dusevic Witek.

Interview with Isabel Lepanto Gleicher

What got you involved in music? Did you listen to it as a child? Was there a specific influence along those lines?

There was always an eclectic mix of music playing in my home growing up. Coming home from school I would hear Steve Reich, Bob Dylan, Lucinda Williams, Elliot Carter or Thelonious Monk. I learned to appreciate all kinds of music, and I carry that with me now throughout my professional career.

Why did you choose to play the flute?

I chose the flute when I was a child after I heard it played live up close for

the first time. I was in an elementary school that was lucky to have a Teaching Artist come in once a week and teach us about the joy of music. I remember one day she played *Syrinx* by Debussy and that was it, I had to play the flute!

Who were your teachers?

Tara Helen O'Connor, Ransom Wilson and Tanya Dusevic Witek have been my primary teachers.

What musician has had the largest influence on your playing?

Hands down, flutist Tara Helen O'Connor has had the largest influence on my playing. I have known her for almost 10 years now, and studied with her for 8 of those years, and I owe so much of my musical self to her. She taught me to how to speak through my instrument, how to be inspired by my colleagues, and how to be a happy fulfilled person. She loved my curiosity in other areas, like art and sports and food. This curiosity is something she helped bring to my music, and for that and much more (that I am unable to put down on paper) I am eternally grateful.

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

I love playing any J.S. Bach sonata. I am drawn to the complexity of these works and the subtlety and composure that is needed to play them with any justice. But I do also love performing the Charles Widor's Suite because it is just absolutely gorgeous and it is a true duo piece and my favorite thing is to work with other musicians. In the same vein, it is so much fun to play the Paul Taffanel and Jean Francaix's Woodwind Quintets, and Marc Mellits's SPAM for flute, clarinet, violin, cello, and

piano.

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?

Music was always something that made me incredibly happy, and it was also something that I continued to get better at. I definitely had this crazy childhood fantasy of growing up and becoming a WNBA player who also played the flute! I think I always knew no matter what happened I needed to also play the flute. But I do remember the specific moment that I realized music was going to be my career. I was at my very first lesson with Tara Helen O'Connor. I was a junior in High School, and I had just finished playing the first movement of the Reinecke's 'Undine' Sonata, and Martin's Ballade. Tara made us tea and we were sitting down to chat, and she said to me with a very serious expression on her face, "What do you want to do with the rest of your life?" and surprisingly it took me no time what so ever to respond, and I looked her in the eyes and said "I want to play the flute!" I have never wavered or looked back or regretted that decision. The flute is a part of me, and I am grateful for that.

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

Persistence and a constant drive to learn.

Do you get nervous before a performance or a competition? What advice would you give to musicians who are nervous?

I used to get nervous. Now I would describe my feelings before performance/competition as more anxious than anything else. The worst part for me is the waiting backstage to play! I think what changed for me

is understanding what 'prepared' really means. There is a difference between being 'lesson ready' and 'performance/competition ready'. Learning all of the notes isn't enough to feel confident on stage. Making the time to fully digest a piece in its entirety is the key. Knowing what you want to communicate on stage, and the notes are then secondary. That is the kind of prepared that allows for true confidence and then there is no need for nerves, just excitement (and most importantly, fun!).

What have you learned from music that has helped you in other areas of life? What is the most valuable lesson the flute (or music in general) has taught you?

It may sound cheesy but music has taught me the importance of doing what you love every day. I mean, I get to wake up and play music that is beautiful, and challenging, with talented friends! I have learned to work in many different situations with many different personalities and that is something that is valuable where ever you are. Probably the most valuable lesson I have learned is how to be completely self-motivated. No one is going to learn how to play the flute for you. Teachers will guide and push, but at the end of the day, you are the one that puts in the hours, and thinking, and organizing, and it is something I think a lot of people struggle with. But not musicians, and I am proud to be a person like that.

If flute is your "first passion" in life, what would you say is your second? Do you pursue any other arts, such as writing, painting or crafts? What other interests or hobbies do you have outside of music?

I have always been interested in visual arts and sports! I love to draw, paint and build things during my down time. My work is very bright and vibrant, almost like gallery style graffiti. Lately I have gotten a few

commissions to create concert posters and merchandise/logo designs. It is a lot of fun! Also growing up I swam competitively for many years and played basketball. Recently, I resurrected the Yale School of Music intramural basketball team... 'The Blockers' (in honor of our Dean, Robert Blocker). Although we were not destined for the playoffs, we had a courageous season of 6 games, the highlight of which was one win over the School of Medicine.

Make Time for Time

by Carolyn Keyes

Several years ago, a famous conductor came to give a guest clinic with my undergraduate orchestra. Somewhere in the middle of one of the thornier passages of *Till Eulenspiegel*, he stopped to ask the orchestra what we thought was the most important part of music. One of the younger cellists raised her hand and said "love." He sighed and said "Well, yeah, ok... but that's not what I was thinking. I meant rhythm." He followed up with a passionate soapbox speech on the importance of playing with good time. The sound of our collective bubbles bursting must have been audible to the observers in the hall. I find this story funny now because I have witnessed (or have been on the receiving end) of many such incidents, and most of them were not quite so polite. In fact, the only time I (knowingly) witnessed a musician get fired in the middle of a rehearsal, it was over rhythmic issues.

Recently, I was having lunch with a friend of mine who was in that same rehearsal. We laughed at how little we understood what the conductor meant. My friend was also in the cello section then, but now plays full time as a bassist in a Southern rock band. These days he works more on his rhythm than on flashy technique, and he wishes more musicians

would do the same. His band is auditioning new drummers and he complained about how few of them had even a passable sense of time.

It makes sense that playing with good time is so critical to a musician's career. Music is a temporal art, after all. The way that a piece of music unfolds in time, whether it is groove-based funk or a highly flexible Romantic piano work, is arguably its most critical component. If this is so, why would anyone neglect this part of his or her training? Often, I think it is because the musicians don't know they have a problem. Rhythm and time issues are very hard to perceive in the moment, particularly when playing alone. They are often only revealed through the introduction of a metronome or another musician. On top of that, practicing rhythm and time is neither easy nor glamorous. However, those who do play with great rhythm will tell you that patient and intelligent work in this area will pay huge dividends.

Below I have compiled a few common exercises for improving one's time. Be aware that while these exercises are simple, they are not easy. If you are just getting started working on time and rhythm, make sure that you are doing the following three things first: 1. Play with others. If you spend most of your playing time alone, it is easy to develop poor pulse and sloppy rhythm without realizing it. 2. Use a metronome. If you are practicing alone, a metronome will keep you honest. (Of course, metronomes can be used incorrectly, but more on that later.) 3. Record yourself. Rhythmic issues are much more obvious as an observer. Record yourself playing with the metronome and playing with others, too!

Slow and Simple

I know many excellent musicians who swear by this first exercise. It is as effective as it is simple. Set a metronome to a slow tempo (50 beats per

minute or so), pick any note and play quarter notes with the metronome for 2 minutes without pausing. Increase the metronome by 5 or 10 beats per minute and repeat the exercise for another 2 minutes. Increase the metronome again and repeat the exercise one last time. Practice this exercise every day for at least two weeks.

After some time, your perception of the beat will change. I began to notice that the beat is not a single point, but an area. Once this happens, you can practice playing consistently on different parts of the beat. Being able to play on the front or back side of the beat is important for specific musical styles, but it is also important to be able to adjust to your placement to match others.

Disappearing Click

Metronomes are a great tool for improving your time, but only if used wisely. I have encountered many students who use a metronome but still have poor rhythm. Once they turn the metronome on the problems disappear, only to reappear again once the metronome is off. Try the following exercise to reduce metronome dependency.

Play through any passage with a metronome set to play every beat. Once you can execute the passage accurately and consistently, turn the sound off on every other beat. (Many metronome apps will allow you to specifically mute different beats within a measure, but you can achieve the same effect by setting the metronome to half tempo.) Once you can do that, set the metronome to play every four beats (or three or six depending on the meter). The fewer the pulses provided by the metronome, the stronger your internal time must be. Alternatively, you can download an app like Time Guru which mutes beats at random based on the percentage you set.

Subdivisions

It is possible to play with a steady tempo and still play with poor rhythm. To improve your internal subdivisions, be sure to practice a variety of rhythms everyday (perhaps on your scales and arpeggios). You can also try setting the metronome to the offbeat instead of the downbeat. This is very challenging at first, but with a little practice it is actually fun to do. This exercise will reveal any rushing or dragging you might be doing within each beat.

Study the Time of Great Musicians

This advice is true for more than just rhythm, obviously. Listen to recordings of famous musicians of all genres to find out how they use time. If you can go see great players live, that is even better. I have been a fan of salsa music for many years and have always enjoyed the interlocking dance rhythms that form the backbone of the style. However, the first time I saw a high-level salsa group from Cuba perform live, I was in for a real treat. Their collective sense of time created such a strong physical response that I felt my heartbeat syncing with the percussion. There is a visceral aspect to playing rhythmically that is difficult to attain in isolation, so be sure to listen and join in as often as possible.

How did these exercises work for you? Do you have any favorite exercises for improving your time? Let us know on Facebook or Twitter!

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