

## NEWS OF THE FIELD

### Compiled by Jeffrey Nussbaum

*If you have news of a publication, event, recording or ensemble that would be of interest to HBS members, send it to: Jeffrey Nussbaum, 148 W. 23rd St. No. 2A New York, N.Y. 10011.*

### Publication News

#### IGEB

The International Society for Investigation and Promotion of Wind Music puts out a series of books dealing with wind music called *Alta Musica*. Volume 9 in this series is of particular interest for early brass players. These proceedings, written in German, consist of papers presented at the symposium, "The importance of the Wind Instruments in the Work of J.J. Fux" hosted by the IGEB in Graz, Austria, in 1985. The book, *Johann Joseph Fux und die barocke Bläsertradition*, is published by Hans Schneider (Tutzing, 1987) and edited by Bernhard Habla. There are 18 articles by leading musicologists. The papers dealing with early brass subjects are: Herbert Seifert, "The Wind Players of the Imperial Court Orchestra in the Age of J.J. Fux"; Eugen Brixel, "The Wind Tradition of the Ferdinandeum in Graz before 1700"; Herbert Heyde, "Wind Instruments and Players of the Dresden Court Orchestra at the time of the Fux student, Johann Dismas Zelenka"; Markus Spielmann, "The Zink in the Instruments of the South German Austrian Region 1650-1750"; Detlef Altenburg, "Instrumentation as Governed by the Court Ceremonial-Observations Concerning the Trumpet's Use in the works of J.J. Fux"; Friedrich Körner, "Performance Practice Indications Concerning the Renaissance of the Baroque Clarin and Trumpet Playing Techniques"; Kraus Winkler, "The Significance of the Trombone in the Work of J.J. Fux"; Wolfgang Suppan, "Fux Renaissance and Wind Ensembles," and Erich Schneider, "The Significance of Wind Instruments in Alemanic Legends." A small booklet giving summaries in English is available. Contact: Dr. Wolfgang Suppan, Institut für Musikethnologie, Leonhardstrasse 15, A-8010 Graz, Austria.

#### FAM SEMINAR ON HISTORIC BRASS

During May, 1990, the Forum for Early Music, Rostock, GDR and the Musical Instrument Restoration Society of East Germany sponsored a two-day seminar entitled "Historic Brass." The conference featured presentations on the development of brass alloys and their use in instrument making between 1100 and 1900.

Erhard Brepohl, a goldsmith and editor of a number of technical books, presented translated material from the extensive Latin work *Theophilus Presbyter*. He went into great detail in his description of the portions dealing with the extraction of copper and

other elements for use in brass fabrication in the 12th century. Brepohl covered procedures that would have been followed in the typical workshop. He described specialized tools and the technology for processing the brass alloys then in use. He then gave an analysis of these alloys and discussed their influence on the development of manufacturing processes.

Karl Hachenberg expanded on much of this material in his presentation, "Raw Brass Materials in Middle European Brass Instrument Construction from 1600 to the End of the 1800s." Hachenberg is a quality control engineer for a steel company in Wissen. Because of his technical knowledge and his passion for collecting brass and metal wind instruments, he was especially qualified to speak on this topic. Hachenberg gave a comprehensive overview of raw brass materials in the context of the time period 1600-1800. He discussed the location of brass foundries and the origin of their raw materials, sources of raw materials for instrument makers and information about standards in brass fabrication. He also presented some results of his investigations of sheet brass and brass wire. Hachenberg is conducting extensive research on these topics.

Other speakers and participants included Roland Hentzschel, Stefan Ehrlich, Wolfgang Wenke, Tom Lerch, Klaus Gernhardt, Christian Scheffler (restoration specialists); Elfriede Gatzka (goldsmith); Achim Haufe (violin maker), and Martin-Christian Schmidt (historical keyboard maker). For more information, contact: Forum Alte Musik, Wokreuter Strasse 31, Rostock 1, 2500 Germany.

#### **GALPIN SOCIETY JOURNAL**

The most recent *GSJ* XLIII (March 1990) contains two interesting articles on early brass subjects. David J. Shaw's article, "A Five-piece Wind Band in 1518," analyzes the instrumentation and the early wind band approach to dance music. Clifford Bevan's article, "The Saxtuba and Organological Vituperation," discusses this unusual 19th-century instrument giving details of its history and musical literature.

#### **MOZART SYMPOSIUM**

A symposium, "Performing Mozart's Music," will be presented by the Mozart Bi-Centennial at Lincoln Center on May 19-24, 1991. This event will consist of papers and presentations given at the Juilliard Music School Theater at Lincoln Center in New York City. The lecture representing Mozart's brass music will be given by Don L. Smithers on Tuesday morning, May 21. Registration fee for the entire symposium is \$75 (\$100 after April 1). Tickets for individual presentations will be sold to the public provided that the event is not sold out. Contact Fiona Fein, Mozart Bi-Centennial at Lincoln Center, 140 W. 65th St., New York, N.Y. 10023.

#### **BAROQUE PERFORMANCE INSTITUTE: TRUMPET**

Since its founding in 1972, the Baroque Performance Institute at Oberlin College has been a legendary force in the field of Baroque performance practice. As part of its 20th annual institute, BPI will feature trumpeter Fred Holmgren as a member of the faculty,

and Dutch harpsichordist and conductor Gustav Leonhardt as guest musical director and conductor. Holmgren performs extensively on both Baroque and modern trumpet, and has appeared with many American and Canadian early music ensembles, as well as several recordings. He will participate in the first week of the institute (June 9-16), conducting daily masterclasses coaching chamber ensembles and playing in the faculty orchestra (in performances of 18th-century sacred music, including two Bach cantatas and a mass by Francisco Valls). Holmgren will also be available for private lessons. Students at all levels, from beginners to professionals, are welcome at the institute, which will run from June 9-23. Deadline for applications is May, 1991. For information, contact: Dr. Beverly Simmons, BPI Administrative Director, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio 44074.

### SIXTH ANNUAL EARLY BRASS FESTIVAL AT AMHERST

The informal gathering of early brass enthusiasts began Friday afternoon, Aug. 3. After words of greeting and friendship, cases opened, mouthpieces started buzzing and informal playing groups were formed. Ben Peck officially started the Festival Saturday morning. In his opening remarks, he fondly reminisced about the origins of workshops and pointed out some evolutionary progress in performance practices over the years. As interest in early music caught on, players of the recorder tried their hands (and lips) on other instruments. To accommodate the growing number of early brass performers and enthusiasts, he and Eric Anderson founded an Early Brass Festival, held under the aegis of the Early Music Workshop at Amherst College. Peck reminded us that the Festival was never intended to be a workshop. There are no organized classes and there are no teachers. The Festival is a forum for academics and players to share knowledge and to provide an arena for expanding playing experiences.

The basic structure of the Festival is playing and learning. The opportunity for learning was provided by presentations on various subjects. These ranged from the practical ("How to keep your chops together," by Gary Nagel and "Viennese oratorios with obbligato parts for trombone" by Stewart Carter) to historical speculation ("Performance practices at St. Mark's in Venice" by Marty Morell and "Improvisation in the 15th century" by Keith Polk).

Nagel offered the following tips to the brass player with minimum time for practice:

- . Write down what you are doing.
- . Be aware — listen to your playing instead of simply reading notes.
- . Plan a specific time of day for practice.
- . Buzz your mouthpiece and do solfège exercises in order to hear note placement; develop the ability to "sing" into the horn.
- . Break bad habits by introducing new (good) habits.
- . Practice breathing — learn to build oxygen intake with relaxed breathing.

Keith Polk offered hypotheses on improvisation in the 15th century. The focus of his talk was on available evidence to support the art of improvisation by 15th-century musicians. Polk mentioned that woodcuts and paintings show musicians performing without music.

Simple examples of a countertenor line were shown to illustrate the ease with which a musician could “fill in” some counterpoint by simply knowing the basic rudiments of harmony. Early musicians may have developed more elaborate skills by studying theorists such as Tinctoris. A skilled and knowledgeable 15th-century performer presumably could have applied the basic “riffs” that fit the structure of a popular melody of the time in much the same manner as modern jazz musicians extend the tunes through a knowledge of chord changes. An interesting philosophical question: why should we necessarily believe that early musicians who were skilled in their musical idiom behaved differently than modern musicians?

Polk’s presentation stimulated a great deal of discussion. Three arguments were advanced:

- . A picture showing musicians playing without music does not necessarily mean that they are improvising; they might have memorized the music.
- . The “improvisations” could have been written out by the group’s “arranger” and assigned to (and rehearsed by) specific players.
- . Perhaps visual artists did not include music books in portraits for artistic reasons.

Carter’s presentation, “Trombone Obligatos in Viennese Oratorios,” offered a detailed listing of oratorios with trombone parts by such composers as Ziani, Fux and Caldara, ranging chronologically from 1666 to 1739. Live musical examples were provided by Carter, Peck and Nagel on sackbuts, with Anne Hodgkinson, soprano, and Mitchell Sandler, baritone.

In his paper “Performance Practices at St. Mark’s, Venice,” Marty Morell cited payment records (relating particularly to Giovanni Gabrieli, Girolamo Dalla Casa and Giovanni Bassano) to prove that, indeed, brass players did perform at St. Mark’s. Morell pointed out that the most highly detailed accounts are found in the writings of foreign visitors, although in many cases their reports of musical performances are not specific to St. Mark’s. As is often the case with early music, interpretations relating to performance practices are reached deductively. Morell showed various illustrations of the physical layout of the cathedral, and offered conclusions as to where the instrumentalists and singers performed and how many could conceivably have fit within the space confines. Particularly interesting was Morell’s assertion that there is no evidence to support the popular notion that choirs performed in opposite balconies.

Morell’s analysis of the acoustics at St. Mark’s shed some light on the instruments used for double- or triple-choir canzonas. If each of the choirs used a similar combination of instruments (i.e., all brass), the polyphonic effect would have been dissipated. Conversely, if each of the choirs was composed of a different family of instruments (i.e., brass vs. strings), the polyphonic effect would have been enhanced. Animated discussion continued beyond the time allotted for the presentation.

The annual meeting of the Historic Brass Society was held late Saturday afternoon. HBS President Jeffrey Nussbaum gave a report on the progress of the young organization. Last year’s membership of 300 should be met or exceeded this year. An international network has continued to grow, connecting many organizations with similar interests.

Several noted authorities have agreed to write for future issues of the *HBS Journal*. The possibility of presenting a large international symposium on historic brass was discussed as were ways of expanding the membership.

Playing experiences were abundant at this year's Festival. Particularly gratifying was the opportunity to play large-scale double-choir works. Under normal circumstances it is not easy to find a multitude of cornett and sackbut players to imitate the sounds that were spawned at St. Mark's in Venice more than 400 years ago. Under Barry Bauguess' helpful direction, the natural trumpet ensemble read through many works for trumpet and timpani ensemble from the 16th through the 19th centuries. When not playing, the trumpet group had great fun comparing horns and equipment.

Several playing sessions provided by Ben Peck and Stewart Carter (co-directors of the Festival) helped to bring musicians together. Peck gathered all available sackbut players for a sackbut choir. Carter helped to organize various playing events, including a session for experienced players, reading from facsimiles of early Baroque notation.

After Morell's presentation on Sunday afternoon, early brass players quickly gathered to rehearse for the final concert. Virtually every participant performed. Natural trumpets assisted by Barbara Kupferberg (organ) played Biber's *Sonata Sancti Polycarpi*. They were joined by the natural horns and Stewart Carter, trombone, to play works by the German composer M. Mösl found in the 19th-century trumpet method of French trumpeter F.G.A. Dauvémé. This may have been the first performance in this century of the pieces on their intended instruments. The sackbut choir performed Japart's *Nenciozza mia* under Peck's direction. Mixed ensembles of cornetts and sackbuts played several chansons and motets, and the Early Notation Brass Ensemble performed Picchi's *Sonata Undecima*.

Particularly notable were canzonas by Gabrieli and Frescobaldi, performed by members of the New York Cornet & Sackbut Ensemble (with Gary Nagel), and a stirring rendition of Reiche canzonas by "The Righteous Reiche Brothers," an ad hoc group comprised of Michael Collver and Douglas Kirk (cornetts), Gary Nagel (sackbut) and Dan Stillman (dulcian).

The weekend concluded with tired lips, an absorption of many useful ideas and the strong resolution to meet again next year.

*Submitted by Ron Nelson*

### THIRD INTERNATIONAL HORN COMPETITION

Lowell Greer reports on the Third International Natural Horn Competition at Bad Harzburg, Germany: "Although this year's winners represented the same, or similar stellar level of performance presented by previous laureates of the competition, there was a realization that the general level of the competition has risen as the early music movement has grown. The jury sadly noted the necessary elimination of many contestants whose performances were very admirable." This year's laureates were Javier Bonet-Manrique (Spain) first prize; Clemens Wieck (Germany) second prize; and Eva-

Marie Görres (Germany) third prize. The jury, chaired by Hermann Baumann, consisted of Lowell Greer, Bernard LePonam, Vitale Rujanowski and Knut Hasselmann. The week-long event was held under the auspices of the Harzburger Musiktage and included performances of jury members and guest artists with the Polish Chamber Orchestra and Salzburg Soloists. Among the works performed by the jury members were *Sinfonies de Chasse* by Mouret and Schumann's *Konzertstück*. Works that were compulsory in the competition were: Caprice No. 10 by Jacques François Gallay, Sonata by Ferdinand Ries, Concerti (K417, K317) by Mozart, Concerto No. 1 in D by Haydn. The final round of competition consisted of a performance of the Haydn Concerto No. 2 in D with the Salzburg Soloists. New works for horn have been written as a result of this competition. This year two were performed, *The Dying Deer* by Alan Grancis and *Brevi Loquens* by Vincent Grüger. Natural horn players may expect another competition in 1993 and can obtain information by writing: Kurbetriebgesellschaft Bad Harzburg, Postfach 1364, 3388 Bad Harzburg, Germany.

### RESTORATION WORK

Peter Barton is involved in a project making a complete slide for a Ködich (J.C.) alto trombone. He seeks information, dimensions, and photos from anyone who owns or has access to such an instrument or a Ködich tenor or bass. Contact: Peter Barton, Thurland, Mill Lane Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 9LU England.

### THE WHOLE NOYSE

This San Francisco area based band (Stephen Escher and Brian Howard, cornetts; Richard Van Hessel and Ernest Rideout, sackbuts; Herbert Myers, curtal), received enthusiastic praise during its recent European tour. In May and June, 1990, the group performed at the Regensburg Festival in Germany and at the Vigadâ in Budapest. From a review in the *Mittelbayerische Zeitung* (6-4-90), "...the cornetts played with outstanding control of their instruments" and "...the Americans played with a supple and balanced sound texture by which they achieved a wonderfully transparent polyphony." The Whole Noyse was recently awarded a grant from the California Arts Council's Touring/Presenting Program for the 1990-1992 seasons. The 1990-91 season will include concerts in Vancouver with Andrew Parrott as well as in Portland, San Diego and Berkeley. A recording of German wind band music is slated for the fall of 1990. Contact: Stephen Escher, 742 Homer Ave., Palo Alto, Calif. 94301. (415) 321-9492.

### TROMBACELLO

HBS member Mark Jones reports that he has found what he believes to be the second extant Bb baritone trombacello. The other known trombacello is in the Hancock Museum in Hancock, N.H. It has three Vienna twin pistons and was made by Graves and Co. of Winchester, N.H., and is numbered 57. The instrument is 36 inches long and has an 8-inch bell. It was found in the original case with its mouthpiece in a barn in Lawtons, N.Y. Jones reports that he purchased this instrument from Roy Taft. Taft, now in his

80s, informed Jones that the instrument was originally owned by his grandfather, Levi Taft, and was made in the late 1840s. Jones is investigating biographical material on Levi Taft in the hopes of shedding light on the use of the trombacello. Mention of the trombacello is made in the 1856 Dodworth Music Co. price list and it is thought that they were played in 19th-century keyed brass bands. This rare instrument was restored by Robb Stewart of Arcadia, Calif. Anyone with information on the trombacello or Levi Taft should contact: Mark Jones, 2686 Green St., Eden N.Y. 14057 (716) 992-207.

#### **POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

Seven positions are available for versatile performers. Early brass, keyboard, strings, winds and voice needed. Stipend \$1,800 plus travel allowance and housing, late May to Sept. 7, 1991. Apply to Utah Shakespeare Festival, 351 W. Center St., Cedar City, Utah 84720. Deadline for application forms and tape, March 1, 1991.

#### **CALL FOR PAPERS—BAND RESEARCH**

The Fifth Conference of the World Association for Symphonic Band and Ensembles (WASBE) will take place July 14-20, 1991, at the Royal Northern College of Music at Manchester, England. colleagues who are willing to present papers of 5-10 minutes please contact one of the chairmen: Dr. David Whitwell, California State University, Northridge, Calif. 91324, or Dr. Wolfgang Suppan, Institut für Musikethnologie, Leonhardstrasse 15, A-8010 Graz, Austria.

#### **HISTORICAL BRASS EXHIBIT IN COPENHAGEN**

A special exhibit of historic brass instruments is being held at the Musikhistorisk Museum Og Karl Klaudius' Samling through April 1991 in Copenhagen, Denmark. The exhibit features a number of ancient Roman and Scandinavian trumpets as well as a wide array of historic brass instruments. Contact: Ole Kongsted or Peter Johnsen at Aberrå 30, DK 1124, Copenhagen, Denmark.