Tune In

Raleigh Area Flute Association November 2005

Flute Fair with Guest Artist Rhonda Larson

"...Once every generation there comes along a transformative force that breaks all the industry rules. Larson wields her instrument like a blow torch, breaking down our Victorian preconceptions of what the classical flute should be, how it should sound and where it should take us...This intensely gifted flutist needed little more than her native Montana charm to win the hearts of the packed house…" raves Connecticut's *VOICES* review of Rhonda Larson in concert.

Flutist, composer, and bandleader Rhonda Larson entered the national music scene from her native Montana by winning first prize in the National Flute Association's Young Artist Competition in 1985, including a Carnegie Hall debut. Shortly thereafter, Rhonda joined forces with the Paul Winter Consort, initiating her journey of combining diverse musical styles in addition to her classical training. Rhonda won a Grammy Award during her last year with the Consort, departing the group at that time to embark on her individual cross-cultural/multi-genre music path.

Rhonda's diversity, combined with her musical and technical wizardry, has begun a new generation for the flute as a leading voice in the music world. Composing much of her own repertoire, Larson continues to be recognized as a visionary force creating a refreshing hybrid music for the flute, including her versatility on an array of ethnic flutes from around the world.

Larson journeyed to South Africa as a musical ambassador for the United States to perform for the Parliament of the World's Religions, sharing the stage with such luminaries as Nelson Mandela and the Dalai Lama. In addition to South Africa, Rhonda has toured in Russia, Japan, Israel, Europe, Central America and throughout North America. Rhonda's band, Rhonda Larson & Ventus, has performed in Minsk, Belarus, as well as the National Flute Association's convention in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Most recently, Rhonda has performed in Ireland, Italy, and Spain. In Spain she recorded with the Celtic Galician group "Milladoiro" from the Santiago de Compostela region, and performed as a guest soloist with this stellar bunch along with guest soloist Eileen Ivers, famed Celtic fiddle player of the original *Riverdance* troupe.

Rhonda has a discography of over 17 commercial recordings from label/distributors such as Windham Hill and American Gramaphone, among others. She has recently recorded a variety of flute music for the CBS television series, *Survivor* and *The Restaurant,* and in May 2004 performed on the Live CBS finale episode of *Survivor* from Madison Square Gardens, seen by over 40 million viewers.

Ms. Larson has two solo recordings: *Free as a Bird* and her newly released second solo CD entitled *Distant Mirrors*. The latter is an eclectic musical reflection on world cultures and ancient traditions and was listed in the top ten of the "25 Essential CD's for 2003" nationally syndicated Public Radio program, *Echoes*. Rhonda is featured in the 2003 *Flute Stories—101 Inspirational Stories from the World's Best Flute Players,* Windplayers publication. Ms. Larson is on the Board of Directors of the National Flute Association, Inc.

Rhonda and her husband Lee deLisle live in Southwestern Michigan and part-time at their second home in the Lazio region of Italy.

See enclosed flyer for details on Rhonda Larson's appearance as guest artist for Flute Fair 2005 on Saturday November 19.
Ms. Larson's morning concert will be followed by two afternoon sessions: a participatory class and a traditional masterclass.
Don't miss this dynamic flutist!

Flute Choir News

RAFA's three flute choirs are busy rehearsing for several December holiday performances.
We invite you to come hear us!

Saturday, December 3 at 3:00 p.m.
Triangle Town Center (lower level near Belk's)
Performance by Silver Winds, Silver Pipes and Silver Fantasy flute choirs

Saturday, December 10 at 3:00 p.m.
Historic Oakwood Tour, Tucker House
418 N. Person Street, Raleigh
Performance by Silver Fantasy Flute Choir

Sunday, December 11 at 10:15 a.m.
Raleigh Mennonite Church,
1116 N. Blount St, Raleigh
Prelude and several anthems during worship service performed by Silver Fantasy Flute Choir

Participating in the flute choir program this semester are the following RAFA members:

Silver Winds (beginner level)
Max Adelman, Tess Allen, Dianwen Li, Micaela Magee, Gwen Shedor, Kaylie Tomasso.
Directed by Liz Gibbs

Silver Pipes (intermediate level)
Mary Auen, Natalie Bader, Kim Berryman, Suzanne Brennan, Anne Burton, Debra Davis, Stephanie Flynt, Sarah Hardin, Jun Hong, Anand Kannan, Kristen Pascoe, Seema Ravishankar, Kelly Tomlinson

Silver Fantasy (advanced level)
Ami Allgeier, Sarah Chaffins, Ronette Gehring, Kathy Hancock, Augusta Johnson, Frankie Lugiano, Yva Miller, Sindhu Ravishankar, Tammy Schmidt, Tammy Van Pala

Auditions
New members are welcome to join the flute choirs in January.
Auditions and first rehearsal will be held Sunday, January 15 (auditions at 1:00 p.m.) at the Jaycee Community Center in Raleigh.
For audition details and directions, visit www.RaleighFlutes.org or contact Rosene Rohrer at (919) 781-3225 or info@RaleighFlutes.org.

The Flutist's Ten Commandments

(From *My Complete Story of the Flute* by Leonardo de Lorenzo, c. 1992 National Flute Association)

1. Keep your instrument clean.
2. Remember that slow practice is the study of the gods.
3. Honor your teacher—even if you do believe that you know more than he/she does.
4. Less practice on your instrument—but more thinking and studying away from it will be conducive to greater results and higher development.
5. Embrace every opportunity to play concerted music. If there are no opportunities, create them.
6. Keep your ears and eyes open to everything and everybody; in other words, study carefully the method of every artist.
7. Be a musician as well as an executant.
8. Remember that though you may be able to play everything from A to Z, it does not mean that you are a musician.
9. Remember that an ounce of tonal quality is worth a ton of technique.
10. Work for your health, while working to achieve artistic ambition; for fresh air, deep breathing and long walks mean renewed vigor and mental activity.

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Review and Contest

RAFA's 21st annual Review and Contest will be held **Sunday, November 13**, 2:00-6:00 p.m. at Highland United Methodist Church in Raleigh. Participants will soon receive notification (via their teachers) of their assigned performance time. Participants are reminded to bring an extra score of their solos for the judges, with the measures numbered. Only originals will be accepted—no copies are allowed!

Parents and friends are encouraged to join us for the Winners' Recital on Friday, November 18, 7:30 p.m. at Highland United Methodist Church. A reception will follow the recital.

Many thanks to Contest Coordinators Liz Gibbs and Heidi Sue Albert for skillfully organizing the various aspects of this popular competition. Thanks also to all the teachers, judges and monitors for donating your time and services to make this a very successful and beneficial event!

Any questions or concerns can be directed to Contest Coordinator Liz Gibbs at elgibbs@nc.rr.com or (919) 848-1596.

Honorary RAFA Membership Granted to Mark Thomas

RAFA's Board of Directors voted recently to honor Mark Thomas with honorary membership to our organization. Mr. Thomas has made significant contributions to the flute community across the United States, particularly as founder of the National Flute Association in 1972. Internationally known as a soloist and recording artist, he has made appearances in 49 states and 20 foreign countries, performing before royalty and heads of state in Europe and Asia. In the U.S., he appeared at the White House before four presidents. He has served on the artist faculties of George Washington University, the American University, the University of Notre Dame, and most recently the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, where he was awarded the prestigious Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award in 2001. Many of his former students are members of major symphony orchestras and university faculties. Over the years, Thomas has served as artistic design consultant and educational liaison for many leading flute manufacturers. *The Mark Thomas Flute Method*, a progressive instructional series, is used by teachers world wide. We are indeed honored to have Mark Thomas as a fellow North Carolinian and a member of RAFA.

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Upcoming Concerts

Sunday, November 6 at 3:00 p.m.
Ritz Chamber Players with flutist Damarre McGill
Fletcher Opera Theatre, Progress Energy Center
(formerly BTI Center)
General admission $22; students $8
(919) 821-2030; www.rcmg.org
The nation's first chamber music ensemble comprised solely of accomplished African American musicians brings a fresh new energy to the classical music genre.
Presented by Raleigh Chamber Music Guild.

Friday, November 18 at 7:30 p.m.
RAFA Contest Winners' Recital at Highland UMC
1901 Ridge Rd, Raleigh
No admission charge
The recital will feature the winners of RAFA's 21st annual Review and Contest held November 13.

Saturday, November 19 at 10:00 a.m.
Rhonda Larson, flute at RAFA Flute Fair
Highland United Methodist Church
1901 Ridge Rd, Raleigh
Free for RAFA members; $10 general admission
The day's activities include additional workshops, masterclasses and an exhibit hall.
See enclosed flyer for details.

Sunday, December 18
Raleigh Flute Choir—Holiday Concert at 3:00 p.m.
NC Museum of Art, auditorium
2210 Blue Ridge Rd, Raleigh
$4 RAFA members & students; $6 NCMA members; $8 general admission
(919) 787-4142; www.RaleighFlutes.org/RFC

Sunday, January 1
Raleigh Flute Choir—Epiphany Service at 10:45 a.m.
Duke Chapel, Duke University (west campus), Durham
Open to public at no admission charge
(919) 787-4142; www.RaleighFlutes.org/RFC

The Second Winds

RAFA's support group for adult amateur players will meet on Sunday afternoon, December 11 at 2:00 p.m. Our theme for our next gathering will be holiday or winter music. Contact Ami Allgeier at tigger@nc.rr.com for additional information and directions.

Talk the Talk with *Flute Talk*

RAFA has a group subscription to *Flute Talk*, an informative magazine for flutists of all ages. Both current subscribers and new subscribers are asked to contact Rosene Rohrer (781-3225 or drohrer123@pobox.com) with your name and address **by November 20** to be included in the incredibly low group rate of $7 (for 10 issues). RAFA's group subscription year spans January through December. The new subscription will begin with the January 2006 issue. Each issue is mailed directly to your home address, and you will be billed directly as well.

Cleaning Out?

Donate your old music, CDs, flute accessories or knick-knacks to a worthy cause. Bring your items to the Flute Fair Saturday, November 19. We will have a "RAFA Treasures" table in the Exhibit Hall where items will be made available to anyone in return for a donation to RAFA!

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RAFA SOLO FEST

In spring 2006, RAFA will sponsor its 2nd annual Solo Fest for flutists of all ages and ability level. Partially based on the Royal Conservatory of Music's (Toronto) certification program, the examination is set up so that participants prepare solos, etudes, and scales according to a graded syllabus and are then tested in annual examinations. Awards are given based on excellence of performance.

Solo Fest is divided into six levels (Grades A-F). The complete list of required scales, etudes and solos for each level can be found online at www.RaleighFlutes.org. The registration form, also available online, is due January 15.

We hope many student and adult flutists will take up the challenge and participate in this year's Solo Fest, which will be held at Meredith College. Direct questions to Anne Dyke at (919) 755-2267 or annedyke@aol.com.

Raleigh Symphony Orchestra Features RAFA Flutists

RAFA member Patty Angevine will perform Bernard Rogers' *Flute Soliloquy* with the Raleigh Symphony Orchestra on Sunday, October 23 at 3:00 p.m., Jones Auditorium, Meredith College.

RAFA member Irene Burke will perform Lowell Liebermann's *Flute Sonata* on Sunday, October 30 at 3:00 p.m, Carswell Recital Hall, Meredith College. Accompanied by pianist Lanette Lind, the same concert will be repeated at the Covenant Christian Church in Cary on November 13 at 3:00 p.m.

For tickets call RSO box office at 919-546-9755 or via email at manager@raleighsymphony.org. To receive a 20% discount to these performances, please identify yourself as a RAFA member when ordering tickets.

RAFA gratefully acknowledges the generous support of our 2005-2006 sponsors and contributors

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Checking your Flute's Physical Condition

Adapted, with permission, from an article by Nancy Shinn.

Many flutists play flutes which, with a little work, would play much better. Here are a few things you can do to check your flute's physical condition. After checking the following items, you can speak knowledgably with your professional flute technician (PFT) to explain any necessary repairs.

Headcork

The headcork in your headjoint should make an airtight seal. To test it, cover the end of the headjoint opposite the cork. Now, put your mouth completely over the embouchure hole and suck the air out of the headjoint until your mouth is kind of "stuck" on the embouchure hole by suction. Count to ten slowly. Your mouth should continue to be held onto the embouchure hole by suction, and when you pull away, make a little "pop". If, during the count to ten, your mouth comes un-sealed from the embouchure hole, it means the headjoint cork is leaking and needs to be replaced.

Pads

Use a magnifying glass to check for fraying, holes, or tears in the skin of the pads.

I never did anything to even look at my flute to see how it worked.
I just stuck it in my face and blew and blamed myself whenever I couldn't play something.

Leaks

Play down the scale from third space C to low C. Press the keys lightly, just enough to overcome the springs and seat the pads on the tone holes. Blow hard, but use a light touch. Your flute should play with a steady, clear sound all the way down to low C. If the sound starts to get fuzzy, or wobbles, or gets worse as you go down, you flute probably has leaks. It's easy to get into the habit of pressing keys with more pressure to force pads to close and seat properly, but it will slow down your technique, tire your hands, and generally discourage you from playing.

You can also test for leaks by using thin strips of cigarette paper, although this is more difficult to do. Cut a section of cigarette paper (not the part with the glue on it) about two inches long, but only 1/8 inch wide. Insert about 1/2 inch of the paper (let's call it a "feeler gauge") into the space between the pad and the tone hole. Pressing the key LIGHTLY while pulling the paper out, you should be able to feel that the pad is touching the tone hole by the friction on the paper. If there is no friction on the feeler gauge, then the pad is not seating properly and should be "shimmed" by a PFT.

A regular maintenance routine can make a world of difference in your playing and self-confidence.

Here's how a PFT shims a flute. The flute is disassembled and the pads are taken out of the pad cup. Little paper washers (shims) of a very particular thickness and size are placed into the pad cup, trying to match what the PFT thinks is the size and placement of the leak. Then the pad is put back into the key and the flute is reassembled and again checked with a feeler gauge. This is a time-consuming and meticulous process that you shouldn't try to do yourself. Careful shimming is what makes the difference between a poorly padded flute and a professionally padded flute.

Adjustment

Your flute will also play poorly if it is out of adjustment. For example, when you press the F key on your flute, you will notice that two other keys go down at the same time—the F# key and the key above A (the A# or Bb key). These two "extra" keys (F# and Bb key) are NEVER pressed directly by your fingers—they only close when you press another key. Other examples include pressing the E and the D keys; that same F# key closes at the same time. When you press the G key, the key below it ("lower G key") closes at the same time. When your flute is properly adjusted, these extra keys will operate in precise motion, seating and sealing at exactly the same time. You can check these ad-

justments visually and also by using the cigarette paper/ feeler gauge method described above. The fronts and backs of the pads on these "extra" keys should all have about the same amount of pressure on the paper.

Springs

Springs can be too tight, causing the key to require too much pressure to close the key. Springs can be too loose, causing the key to rise sluggishly after the key is pressed.

Oiling

If your flute is noisy, sounding "clacky", it likely needs to be oiled. Your instrument should be cleaned and oiled once a year.

Action

Check for any side-to-side motion in the keys by carefully holding a key at its side and trying to move it left and right. There should be no movement.

Pins

If any pins are not in tightly, the pads will not seat properly. The pins are the little steel things that stick out of your flute. You may have scratched yourself on one or caught your sweater on it.

Clutch or Back Connector

Ever wonder about the little rectangular object on the back side of your flute, to the right of the G# key? This is called the "clutch," or the "back connector." It is the point at which the right hand keys (D, E, F and F#) connect with the left hand keys (G, A, B and C). The back connector is what allows the Bb key to go down when you press the F key (another adjustment that needs to be perfect).

Adjustment Screws

Ever wonder what those tiny screws are? Not the ones at the ends of the rods, but the ones in the middle, near the D, E, F and Bb keys? Those are adjustment screws. Don't touch them! They are used to make the adjustments perfect. When your PFT screws IN an adjustment screw, it makes the screw press more against a little plate, so that when you press the F, for example, the adjustment screw hits the plate sooner, and the F# key is pressed down farther. Handmade flutes usually don't have adjustment screws; instead, little pieces of shims are used to make the adjustments.

I was fifty years old before I learned flute repair. In fact, I never did anything to even look at my flute to see how it worked. I just stuck it in my face and blew and blamed myself whenever I couldn't play something. Now I know to check my flute first, blame myself later! You will be doing yourself and your flute playing a big favor if you have your flute cleaned, oiled, and adjusted every year, and pads replaced or shimmed as necessary. A regular maintenance routine can make a world of difference in your playing and self-confidence.

I have heard flutists say, "I've owned my instrument for ten years, and it plays perfectly! And I never have any work done on it!" Often, what is actually happening is the flutist has learned to (1) compensate for shortcomings of the instrument by pressing harder on the keys, and (2) accept the sound the instrument makes as its "best" without realizing it could almost certainly sound much better. Have your instrument taken care of and it will serve you as it should.

—Nancy Shinn is a flutist and repair technician at Flutestar (www.flutestar.com) in Asheville, NC and serves as president of Mountains of Asheville Flute Association. She studied flute repair with Dr. Eldred Spell at Western Carolina University.

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Raleigh Area Flute Association

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