

# MD Clarinet News

Maryland Clarinet Society

7/14/20

Edition 2; Volume 3

## Maryland Clarinet Society

I hope everyone is staying safe and healthy during this global pandemic. Remember that the "MD Clarinet News" includes member stories, recitals, upcoming events and other important information. With the help of several of my current UMD students and ICA members I have been able to prepare another interesting newsletter. Thanks to everyone that contributed as well as friends that have proofed and read the draft. I look forward to receiving your submissions in the future and working with you. Remember the MD Clarinet Society is member based and members submit everything in the newsletter. We encourage our members to be part of the International Clarinet Association.

As the State Chair I wanted to let you know some exciting programs that are in the works. After our State Chairs

meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup> we set in motion many exciting initiatives. The first I can share with you is the start of an online database of master class and clinics that will be happening online. These classes will be open to members to drop in on and listen to what universities and schools are up to. Invitations for these will be required so please look out for more information. Second, we will be creating a virtual tour of the University of Maryland International Clarinet Association Library that is housed in the special collections area. We the help of head librarian, Stephen Henry we will be create a video to give you a first hand look at what is available to all members. Currently the collection contains more than 10,000 titles. Finally we are going to be launching several new initiatives to help younger middle and high school students in need of funding to

## Reed Myth No. 3

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The more reeds you carry with you the better chance you have of finding a good one!

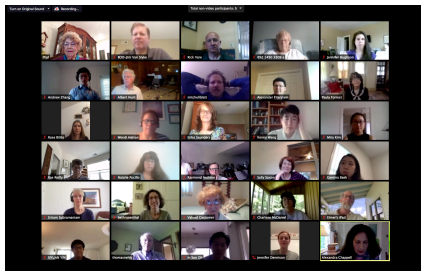
It is difficult to predict when a reed will be ready for a performance. For years I tried to plan my reed breaking in process down to the day, around concerts and even auditions. I would open 10 boxes of reeds, pick the best 20 and start a fifteen day process of breaking them in. To my dismay, some seemed ready after a day or two and others took months. Because I could not predict the outcome I would carry hundreds of reeds with me with the hope that one of them would be good. It really just made me more confused and I never knew which reed was which. I did this for years until I decided to stop the madness. I made a promise to myself then that I would always try to have eight reeds in performance condition. Eight seemed like a number I could handle easily and that it in my reed case. As each reed started to near its end I would select a new reed to replace it. This has taken the stress away from reeds for me and allowed me to focus on music. I keep each reed dated and clearly labeled to help this process.

become members of the ICA including scholarships for membership.

If you have any ideas or comments you would like to share with the ICA please email me anytime at: [rdilutis@umd.edu](mailto:rdilutis@umd.edu). Thanks again for all of your support and I look forward to seeing you soon.

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## The Sidney Forrest Clarinet Competition 2020 Went Virtual!



The fifth annual Sidney Forrest Clarinet Competition 2020 was performed in an online virtual format, Zoom, on Saturday, June 6, from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. due to the COVID-19 crisis. It had been originally scheduled for April 5th at the Clarice Smith

Performing Arts Center in College Park as an annual event during the University of Maryland Clarinet Symposium, until the closure of the university. The university's clarinet professor, Robert DiLutis, led the planning of the event on Zoom and managed all of the technological aspects of the format, including the finalists' sound check the day before the event and the competition finals. It was exciting to see nearly 60 virtual guests attend the event from across the country and a few out-of-country attendees as well!



Not only was it the first time that the competition was held online, but it was also the first year that the competition had two divisions: high school and college. All of the finalists were determined in the preliminary round Youtube performances. The three high school division finalists were Rose Bittle of Charlottesville, Virginia;



### Historical Artist Snapshot

#### David Weber

David Weber was born in Vilna in present-day Lithuania and came to the United States in 1921. His family settled in Detroit. His parents were not musical, but he liked the sound of clarinet and took it up at the age of 11. While in high school, he studied under Roy Schmidt and Alberto Luconi, principal clarinetists of the Detroit Symphony. In 1933 Ossip Gabrilowitsch, then conductor of the Detroit Symphony, was impressed by Weber's playing and helped him get a New York Philharmonic Scholarship. This allowed Weber to study without fee in New York with Simeon Bellison, the New York Philharmonic's principal clarinetist. Around the same time he also studied with Daniel Bonade, principal clarinet with the Columbia Broadcast System Symphony.

Mira Kim of Fairfax, Virginia; and Michael Wang of Potomac, Maryland. The five college finalists were Chae Yoon (Gemma) Baek of Baltimore, Maryland; Insoo Oh of Baltimore, Maryland; Kenny Wang of Ellicott City, Maryland; Siyuan Yin Yin of Baltimore, Maryland, and Andrew Zhang of College Park, Maryland.

We thank our competition judges for the final round: Jennifer Hughson, Dr. Albert Hunt, and Rick Vare, and Alexander Bedenko, who assisted with the preliminary round. Their biographies are posted on the competition website.

Paula Forrest, Sidney Forrest's daughter and clarinet competition founder, created the event in memory of her father's highly acclaimed career as a clarinetist—both artist and teacher. Sidney Forrest had been a student of Simeon Bellison, one of our country's clarinet forefathers. Mr. Forrest taught at the Peabody Conservatory for 40 years, the Interlochen Center for the Arts for 45 years, and the Catholic University of

America for 50 years. Joining Paula this year as a benefactress was her daughter, Dr. Erika Saunders, who studied clarinet with her grandfather, Sidney Forrest. The Forrest family shared memories of Sidney Forrest and told the audience of how proud he would have been of the innovation of the online competition. Dr. Saunders announced the high school division winners: 1st place, Mira Kim; 2nd place, Michael Wang; and 3rd place, Rose Bittle. Paula Forrest announced the college division winners: 1st place, Siyuan Yin; 2nd place, Insoo Oh; and 3rd place to Chae Yoon (Gemma) Baek. The prizes were the same in high school and college divisions: 1st place winners received \$750; 2nd place prizes were 5 boxes of Robert DiLutis clarinet reeds; and the 3rd place prizes were \$100 gift certificates to Luyben Music.

To learn more about Sidney Forrest and the Sidney Forrest Clarinet Competition, please visit [sfclarinetcompetition.com](http://sfclarinetcompetition.com).

*by Alexandra Chappell*

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## Staying Motivated During Quarantine

During these unusual times, you may feel that there is more time to practice and improve your playing, but it is not always easy to focus or to feel inspired. Since this article is related to clarinet playing, I will focus only on my musical journey during these past four months and won't go into trying to walk 15,000 steps a day or attempting to finish Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (I'm on page 990).

The first few weeks I listened to great players of the past. There are many wonderful historic recordings available on YouTube. I came across two recordings of Yona Ettlinger that captured my attention. While I have heard his recordings of the Mozart and Brahms Quintets, I have not come across these two recordings before. Ettlinger was an influential clarinetist in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and was the teacher of my teacher, Eli Heifetz.

The two Ettlinger recordings are one of his own arrangements of Handel's *Concerto in G Minor* and a

recording of the Burgmuller Duo for Clarinet and Piano with the wonderful pianist Pnina Salzman.

In Handel's concerto (which was recorded live in 1978) Ettliger almost invents a new instrument, sounding both old and modern at the same time. The expression is pure and honest, and the trills, ornaments, articulation and scale passages are very crisp. In some ways the clarinet fits this music very well. There is much to admire in Ettliger's playing here, especially the radiant sound and inspired phrasing. Towards the end of the piece, Ettliger sounds ecstatic.

In the Burgmuller, Ettliger and Salzman perfectly capture the slightly melancholic and romantic mood of the piece. Ettliger shapes the phrases so beautifully that when people talk about "singing" in instrumental playing this is what they mean. Ettliger's intonation here is impeccable. When notes are repeated in other octaves they are matched both in tone color and intonation. There is significant drama in the playing and a large dynamic range. There are a few key moments where the tone color

change in combination with timing are simply breathtaking (for example in 4:16-4:17). The sense of rubato is very natural and balanced, and you feel the arc of the entire piece.

I also used this time to revisit Rose 40 Etudes (Book 2) and Jean Jean's Vade-Mecum and to learn the Jean Francaix Concerto for the first time. It's important to be challenged in order to make progress, and for that reason, I picked something that would push my technique to its limit (like the Francaix). It's also important to balance the virtuosic with basics in order to have a solid foundation (this is where the Rose 40 and Vade-Mecum are essential).

I hope this quarantine time has been productive for you and that you are staying healthy and safe. Hopefully, when we come back to normal life, we will have acquired new skills, new repertoire, stronger technique, and renewed excitement and energy for making music.

*by Alexander Fiterstein*

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**NEW!**

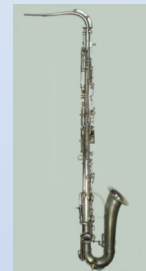
## **Puzzler of the Month!**

### **Clarinet trivia!**

**Can you identify the following 3 objects related to the clarinet?**



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3