

All Things Recorder: *The Recorder Music Center celebrates 10 Years*

By Mark Davenport, Denver CO

The Recorder Music Center (RMC), at Regis University in Denver (CO), celebrated 10 years of operation in service and support of the recorder world, since first opening its doors to the public in July 2005. The banner year kicked off in September 2014 at “**Recorder-Fest in the West**,” an international festival and conference hosted by the RMC and Regis, and co-sponsored by the **Denver Recorder Society** (celebrating its 50th anniversary), and the **American Recorder Society** (celebrating its 75th anniversary)!

A capacity assemblage of participants, from 24 states and three countries, worked with some of the country’s finest recorder faculty who led them in four exciting days of coached playing sessions, technique classes, recorder orchestras and master classes.

Two sold-out concerts capped the festivities: the **Baroque Chamber Orchestra of Colorado**, with guest recorder soloist **Paul Leenhouts**; and the **Festival Faculty Concert**, which provided a performance opportunity

for the full faculty. Highlights of the faculty concert can be viewed online (www.YouTube.com, search for “CollegiumChannel” with no spaces). Selections there include *Tico Tico no Fubá* by Zequinha Abreu, and Bob Dorough’s *Eons Ago Blue*, possibly the first American jazz piece written specifically for recorders (1962) for a commission by Bernard Krainis, a pioneer in the 20th-century American recorder movement.

Two special exhibits commemorating the occasion offered four display areas in the Dayton Memorial Library at Regis, with selected materials from RMC archives. Exhibit highlights included a display of recorders in the RMC Recorder Instrument Collection, including **Erich Katz**’s two Peter Harlan recorders he used in Freiberg, Germany, during the 1930s; historical photographs and issues of *American Recorder*; and the launch of **Martha Bixler**’s *The American Recorder Society and Me: a Memoir*, describing the inner workings of the ARS through historical records, letters, photographs and the author’s personal recollections (free download at www.americanrecorder.org/docs/ARS-And-Me-140820_FINAL-2.pdf).

The Archives and Special Collections presented *All About “Love”*: an exhibit of covers and scores from the **David Goldstein** Collection of Popular Music. **Stephanie Douglas**, a technical Services Assistant who selected the materials, writes that “the lyrics from the 1920s and ’30s reflect the changes in many cultural attitudes about sexuality, gender roles, motherhood, and a relaxed view of domestic abuse. However, through artwork, lyrics and scores, the joy of romance reigned supreme!”

The leadership of the **Denver Recorder Society** (DRS) in running the conference activities of “*Recorder-Fest in the West*” helped to ensure that the event was a financial success as well, with the chapter board of directors voting to donate 100 percent of its festival profits to the Center. In gratitude, the RMC presented its very first “Special Recognition Award” to the DRS for its co-sponsorship of the festival, its generosity, and for supporting the efforts of the RMC in “fostering the education, preservation, and recognition of the recorder in America.” The award was presented to **Jon Casbon**, DRS president, at the group’s semi-annual “Rocky” recorder workshop in Estes Park, CO, in May 2015.

Also in May, **Dr. Reeves Shulstad**, an Associate Professor of musicology at Hayes School of Music in North Carolina, conducted research in the

***Do you have recorder music, recordings or instruments that you would consider donating to the RMC? For information about donating or about the RMC, please contact:
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Archival Recorder Music Collections of the RMC, working with the Katz Collection and the institutional records of the ARS. She is currently working on a book about microtonalist composer **Tui St. George Tucker**. Tucker was associated with the New York recorder scene in the 1940s-60s and composed several works for recorder. She even published a chart for the alto recorder that demonstrates quartertone fingerings. In an obituary that appeared in the September 2005 issue of *AR*, Bixler remembers Tucker as “a truly remarkable woman—talented, creative, clever, funny, generous to a fault, and marvelously kind.”

In July 2015, the RMC awarded its “Special Projects Grant” to **Fredrika Gilbert** (*photo, previous page*), a Dean’s List student at Regis working towards a dual degree in vocal performance and French. For her summer grant, Gilbert completed the year-long project of inventorying the large **Shirley Robbins** Collection. Robbins was a leader in the Southern California recorder movement; for a time, she directed the longest-running recorder workshop in the U.S.: Canto Antiquo Early Music and Dance.

A significant new acquisition is the **Joel Newman** Music Collection.

Newman, who passed away at the age of 96 on December 17, 2014 (see the Spring 2015 *AR*), was a major figure in the early years of the recorder movement in America and in the ARS. He first studied recorder with Krainis in 1950 and then became a prominent musicologist and long-time faculty member at Columbia University. He edited the *ARS Editions* for many years, and in 2007 was presented with the **ARS Distinguished Achievement Award**. The recorder world will perhaps remember Newman best as co-owner of the **Provincetown Bookshop**, which held one of the largest inventories of published recorder music.

In June 2015, I traveled to Massachusetts to help Newman’s nephew, **Philip Swayze** (*left, with me at right*), sift through and package the large collection of sheet music, still housed in the backroom offices of his celebrated bookstore. We shipped eight large boxes to the RMC. The process to inventory this important collection has only begun.

Other significant donations have included a Roland digital harpsichord and 15 additional boxes of music from former ARS president **Connie Primus**, to be added to her existing collection. Luckily for the RMC,

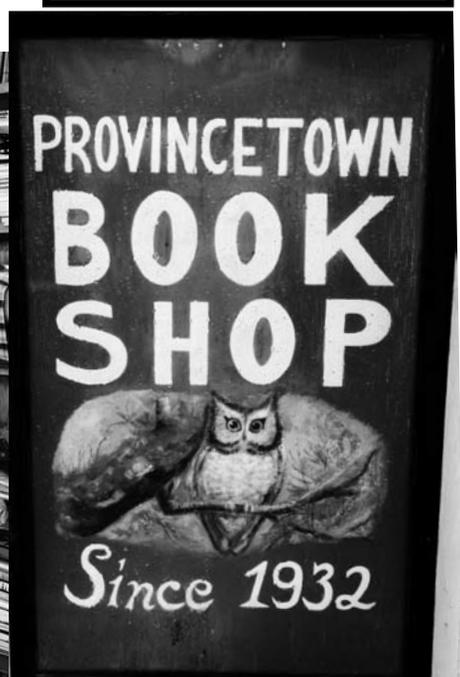
Friends, are you **just sick** of being insidiously and invidiously bombarded by unconscionable and unscrupulous advertisers telling lies to scare you into buying their despicable dystopian products and **conforming** to some revolting idea of what **real women & men** ought to be? Yes? OK, then one more can hardly matter to you:

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“Ridiculously mellifluous, ridiculifluous?”—
unidentified VGRT user



the alcove and lending stacks on the third floor of Dayton Memorial Library were expanded last year to accommodate the growing amount of cataloged recorder music.

ARS members are encouraged to take advantage of the services provided by the RMC. The catalog of recorder music can be accessed at www.libguides.regis.edu/library (click on “Books & More” and search using the keyword “recorder” to get started). Of course, the cataloged editions (about 1,400 items) only represent a small fraction of approximately 18,000 scores. Of these, about 5,000 have been “pre-inventoried” by student staff members. There is currently an initiative to make the inventory more accessible; we are working with members of the ARS Board to develop this.

Dr. Mark Davenport is the founder and director of the Recorder Music Center at Regis University, where he is an Associate Professor and director of the Collegium Musicum, the performing arm of the RMC.

Passing Notes

Francisco Rosado died September 23 of a heart attack. The recorder professor taught in his native Portugal, and organized numerous events and festivals—the last one set to start a few days after his untimely death. Known for his kindness, he was always more interested in teaching and promoting the recorder than in his own career.

At the age of only 19, he had to leave his country for France because of his opposition to the Marcelo Caetano dictatorship. After the peaceful coup called the “Carnation Revolution” ousted Caetano, he was able to return to Portugal. He remained a foe of social injustice, poverty and power abuses.

In North America, recorder players may have known him mostly by his Facebook posts. He was also a frequent contributor of interviews and reports to the *The Recorder Magazine* in the UK.

Adapted from a memory by Marie Dominique Berthier, recorder teacher, Paris, France

Tom Zajac (1956–2015)

The “RecorderFest in the West” festival faculty concert will be remembered with bitter sweetness among colleagues and friends of **Tom Zajac**, who passed away on August 31 after battling Grade II Atypical Meningioma for three years; the 2014 festival marked one of his last events.

Tom studied early music with my father, LaNoue Davenport, at Sarah Lawrence College in the 1980s. My father adored Tom, and I came to do the same. He went on to become one of the most versatile and accomplished early music performers as a long-time member of Renaissance wind band

Piffaro (recipient of the 2015 ARS Distinguished Achievement Award), as well as a frequent guest with the **Folger Consort**, **Newberry Consort**, **Boston Camerata**, and others. With his own group **Ex Umbris**, Tom played 14th-century music at the Fifth Millennium Evening in the Clinton White House and 18th-century music for the score of Ric Burns’s historical documentary for PBS, *New York*.

Tom’s appetite for learning new instruments was insatiable. In addition to recorders, double reeds, brass and percussion, he also played hurdy gurdy for American Ballet Theater, bagpipe

for an internationally-broadcast Gatorade commercial (and as a pre-recorded wake-up call for astronauts on a 2001 space shuttle mission), and serpent in a PDQBach work on NPR’s *A Prairie Home Companion*.

I know I speak for all of us in the recorder world when I say that Tom was a dearly loved treasure who will be deeply missed.

Mark Davenport, at right below, with Zajac to his right and other “RecorderFest” faculty (l to r) Anne Timberlake, Vicki Boeckman and Cléa Galhano. More info is at www.facebook.com/lilli.nye/posts/510418529112808.

