UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

# JAMES CHAMBERS: HIS LIFE, CAREER, AND PEDAGOGY

A DOCUMENT

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF MUSICAL ARTS

By

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Norman, OK
2011

JAMES CHAMBERS: HIS LIFE, CAREER, AND PEDAGOGY

A DOCUMENT APPROVED FOR
THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank those who participated in my study. Robert Chambers, Michael Chambers, Carol Collins, Myron Bloom, Julie Landsman, William Slocum, and David Wakefield were so generous with their time and willingness to share with me their stories about James Chambers. Without your help, there would be no document.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to my committee, which consisted of Dr. Eldon Matlick, Dr. Paula Conlon, Dr. Karl Sievers, Dr. William Wakefield, and Dr. William Beasley. Thank you for spending time with me, offering me your advice, and walking me through this daunting process.

To my father, Dennis White, I would like to say thank you for helping to shape me into the person I am today. Without your support and guidance I would not have the drive and work ethic you instilled in me. I would also like to thank my late mother, Patricia Meadows, who lost her battle with cancer when I was a young girl. She taught me wonderful lessons in courage, perseverance, dedication, and strength. I constantly think about her and hope that this document and my achievements would make her proud.

To my brother and his wife, Austin and Heather White. Thank you for your love and support. Austin, you have taken such good care of me and I want you to know how much I appreciate everything you have done and continue to do for me. You have always given me great advice, whether I wanted to hear it or not and without you pushing me, I do not think I would be where I am today.

My extended family is an amazing group of people. My parent-in-laws, Dana and Harry Meister, my sister-in-law, Becky Craig, my grandmother-in-law, Jeanne Craig, Karen Craig, Victor and Aimee Rook, Jarred Knudson, Jordan Knudson, Sarah and Jeff Bishop, Amanda Rook, Evie Rook, and the rest of the clan, thank you for being so supportive of me. You instantly took me in and have treated me with such love and respect. I could not have asked to marry into a better family.

My fabulous friends and colleagues have also helped me tremendously through this process. I'm afraid to even list some as I do not want to forget anyone, but alas I will try. Becky and Wes Ballenger, Lee Adams, Debra and Tom Traficante, Jennifer Fletcher, Jacob Hofer, Jenn Kauffman, Donna Love, Holly Fike, Stephen Bliss and Ashley Jones, Kevin Cashion, Eric and Amanda Hall, Brandy Pizzini, Andrea Lewis, David and Robyn Hilger, Brian and

Melesa Dobbins, Brian and Erin Wolfe, Dustin Jussila, Amy and Mike Mann, Matt Stock, Evan and Hannah Chancellor, Logan Fish, Emily Butterfield, Lori Wooden, Wayne Clark, and David Hanan, thanks for listening. Special thanks to Jessica Lada Browning and Allen Correll for thoughtfully helping me edit this work. Your support and friendship have been truly valued. You all have helped me grow through personal and professional battles and I can never repay you all for what you have given me.

I would also like to thank Dr. Virginia Thompson, horn professor at West Virginia University. You inspired me from my first day as a college freshman. Your passion for teaching, music, and the horn was part of the reason I wanted to pursue my advance degrees and become a college professor. I can only hope I can inspire my students as you have inspired me.

Finally, I must say a huge thank you to my husband and best friend, David Craig. Without you, none of this would have been possible. Ever since I met you, you have been with me every step of the way. No matter how daunting a task has been, you have had nothing but encouraging words to say. No matter how crazy I seem, you stand by my side. I thank you for joining me in this journey, and I look forward to the many journeys ahead of us. I love you.

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ABSTRACT

This study documents the life, career, and pedagogy of James Chambers. James Chambers (1920-1989) performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, and the New York Philharmonic. He taught horn on the faculty at the Curtis Institute of Music, Manhattan School of Music and The Juilliard School. The style of teaching he espoused developed in Leipzig, Germany with Friedrich Gumpert. Chambers assimilated this style from Gumpert's protégé Anton Horner at the Curtis Institute of Music. Many of Chambers' students have established fruitful careers as performers and university teachers across the United States. Former students continue to pass his legacy to others, thus keeping the lineage of this distinctive performance aesthetic and pedagogy intact from its beginnings in Leipzig.

This document includes appendices consisting of interviews, radio broadcasts, and an impromptu question and answer session with James Chambers from the 1970 International Horn Symposium at Florida State University that have not been published. Also available are transcripts of interviews with some of Chambers' former students and family members.

## CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

It is desirable that collegiate horn students become aware of earlier generations of horn players and pedagogues to understand the styles and techniques influenced by their major professors, many of whom are descendants of a distinguished lineage of performers or pedagogues. The present generation of horn teachers and students is most influenced by leading horn artists and pedagogues from the 1950s to the 1970s. These players were, in turn, influenced by the first generation of horn performers in America who immigrated to the United States in the early 20th century. Current horn students are often familiar with legendary horn players such as Philip Farkas, Dennis Brain, James Chambers, Lowell Shaw, and Hermann Baumann. It is important that students know details about how these figures influenced and contributed to the practice of horn playing. Of the five hornists listed, only Dennis Brain[1] and Philip Farkas[2] have had

[1] Stephen Pettitt, *Dennis Brain: A Biography*, (London: Robert Hale Limited, 1976).

[2] Nancy Jordan Fako, *Philip Farkas and His Horn*, (Elmhurst: Crescent Park Music Publications, 1998). and M. Dee Stewert, *Philip Farkas: The Legacy of a Master*, (Northfield: The Instrumentalist Publishing Company, 1990).

biographies published about their lives, careers, and pedagogical philosophies. Although James Chambers is well known to horn players born before the 1980s, due to his musical stature and influence as a teacher, there is little extant material about his contributions to horn playing.

## Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to document James Chambers' life, career, and pedagogy through interviews of family members and past students. James Chambers was principal hornist of the New York Philharmonic from 1946-1969, and became a significant figure in the musical world, influencing generations of horn players through his orchestral performance and distinctive pedagogy. His specific performance and teaching style led to what many refer to as the "New York" style of horn playing, which was characterized by a full-bodied, rich, sonorous sound with clear articulation. His most successful students gained employment in orchestras, sound studios, and universities across the country, taking these concepts with them.

The need for this study is due to the lack of published research on James Chambers. The only extant

information regarding his life and legacy resides in five short articles in professional publications and two academic dissertations. Although he is mentioned in other books about the horn, it is usually brief with little detail. For example, Fako's book on Philip Farkas only mentions Chambers once in reference to his attendance at the first and second annual International Horn Society workshops at Florida State University.[3] A study documenting his influences on horn pedagogy, literature, and equipment is long overdue.

James Chambers' decorated career as a full-time performer and teacher allowed him to share his pedagogy and thoughts on music with students who eventually obtained prominent positions with professional orchestras, chamber ensembles, and universities across the United States. Some of these prominent students include Myron Bloom, former principal hornist with the Cleveland Orchestra; Julie Landsman, former principal hornist with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra; William Purvis, hornist with the New York Woodwind Quintet and former member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra; and David Wakefield, hornist with the American Brass Quintet.

Chambers' approach to performance and pedagogy was

[3] Fako, *Philip Farkas and His Horn*, 191.

rooted in the German tradition, which was influenced by Frederick Gumpert and his student Anton Horner at the Leipzig Conservatory. Horner immigrated to the United States in 1894 and earned employment as the principal hornist with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Subsequently, he became professor of horn at the Curtis Institute of Music where James Chambers was among his students.

Chambers continued Horner's approach to horn study, focusing on fundamentals gleaned from his lessons. Though Chambers taught at The Juilliard School and the Curtis Institute of Music, where only advanced students were admitted, he stressed the performance fundamentals of the instrument early in their education, demanding students gain control of intonation, range, rhythm, dynamics, and finger dexterity before studying more complicated literature. As a former student stated: "Mr. Chambers' philosophy was that you do things the most difficult way first; once that was mastered, you had much more control over the instrument."[4] For example, Chambers would require students to play a Georg Kopprasch[5] etude entirely on the F side of the horn, creating more resistance than if

[4] Dan Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," *The Horn Call*, Vol. XIX, No. 2 (April 1989): 112.

[5] In Chambers' edition of the Kopprasch etudes, Kopprasch is listed as C. Kopprasch. This is a typographical error and research has determined that the composer's name is Georg Kopprasch.

students used the normal F and B-flat side fingerings. The reason there is more resistance on the F side of the horn is because the F side of the double horn is a longer tube, thus making the air column and standing waves traverse a greater distance. Moreover, since the overtone partials are closer together on the F side of the horn in this performing tessitura, the quest for accuracy and control is significantly more challenging. Therefore, when switching back to the normal fingerings on the shorter B-flat horn, the students would feel more secure in centering pitches. Lasting examples of his teaching and approach can be found through his former students now residing in the horn sections of the New York, Cleveland, Los Angeles, and Seattle symphonies.

Not only did Chambers instruct many highly skilled horn players, he also expanded the availability of horn repertoire by editing and compiling etudes for several books that are staples in current teaching literature. Published books include the Kopprasch *60 Etudes Book I*[6] and

[6] C. Kopprasch, *60 Studies, Book I.* Originally edited by Oscar Franz, revised by Albin Frehse, later edited by James Chambers, (New York: International Music Company, 1960).

*Book II*;[7] several editions of Gallay etude books, including *12 Studies, Op. 57, for Second Horn*[8] and *40 Preludes, for solo horn* ;[9] the four Mozart Concerti;[10] and the first detailed series of orchestral excerpt books[11] in the United States. In addition to his work on expanding repertoire, he also worked on developing new ideas for the equipment students used. He consulted with Giardinelli Mouthpiece Company to design a mouthpiece series, as well as with the Roth-Reynolds Musical Instrument Company to design a new horn.[12] Chambers also notably recorded an LP record consisting of standard solo literature. In addition, he can be heard on several New York Philharmonic recordings

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[7] C. Kopprasch, *60 Studies, Book II.* Originally edited by Oscar Franz, revised by Albin Frehse, later edited by James Chambers, (New York: International Music Company, 1960).

[8] Jacques-Francois Gallay, *12 Studies, Op. 57, for Second Horn.* Edited by James Chambers, (New York: International Music Company, 1960).

[9] Jacques-Francois Gallay, *40 Preludes, for solo horn.* Edited by James Chambers, (New York: International Music Company, 1968).

[10] Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, *Concerto No. 1 in D Major, K. 412*; *Concerto No. 2 in E-flat Major, K. 417*; *Concerto No. 3 in E-flat Major, K. 447*; *Concerto No. 4 in E-flat Major, K. 495.* Edited by James Chambers, (New York: International Music Company, 1958-1960).

[11] James Chambers, "*Orchestral Excerpts from the Symphony Repertoire*, Vol. 1-7," (New York: International Music Company, 1965-1970).

[12] James Chambers, "Playing the Double Horn." *Woodwind World,* Vol. 3 (June 1959), 13.

of orchestral literature that are still issued as references for present day students.[13]

## Biography and Background

Born on December 15, 1920 in Trenton, New Jersey, Chambers grew up surrounded by musicians. His parents were amateur musicians, his grandfather was an organist, pianist, choral director and teacher, and one of his brothers became a trumpet player and music educator.[14] He began playing horn at the age of ten and was playing with the Trenton Symphony by the time he was fifteen years old. After graduating from Trenton High School he traveled to Philadelphia to attend the Curtis Institute of Music (CIM) where he studied with Anton Horner. Upon graduating from CIM in 1941 he spent one season as third horn with the Pittsburgh Symphony, followed by five years as solo horn with the Philadelphia Orchestra, where, like his mentor Horner, Chambers served as a faculty member at the Curtis Institute of Music. In 1946 Chambers joined the New York Philharmonic as solo horn, a position he retained until

[13] Richard Decker, "A Complete Discography of Recordings Made by Philip Farkas, James Chambers, and Mason Jones," *The Horn Call*, Annual 1 (1989): 20-58.

[14] James Chambers, "James Chambers." Interview by Jeff Silberschlag, (New York Brass Conference for Scholarships, 1982): 1.

1969. He retired from playing at the end of the 1969 season due to health reasons and became the orchestra's full-time personnel manager. Concurrent to his positions as solo horn and personnel manager with the New York Philharmonic, he held a faculty appointment at The Juilliard School where he taught private lessons, as well as one of the most popular classes at the school, an orchestral repertory class for winds, brass, and conductors that was valued not only by horn players but by all orchestral musicians.[15]

Unfortunately, Chambers passed away in 1989 and can no longer provide detailed information about his career and pedagogy. Twenty-one years after his death, some of his students have also passed away and taken with them first-hand accounts of the influence of James Chambers. Before the horn world loses more students, colleagues, and family members of James Chambers who can provide information about his legacy, resources need to be gathered and assimilated in a published document.

## Review of Related Literature

Some of Chambers' pedagogical philosophies are

[15] David Wakefield, "James Chambers, A Life Remembered." *The Horn Call*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, (April 1989): 116.

revealed in two articles he wrote for the journal, *Woodwind World*. Chambers often switched to the B-flat horn in a different place than other horn players because of his desire to preserve the timbre quality of the F horn. In his article, "Playing the Double Horn,"[16] he discusses when to switch from using the F horn to the B-flat horn. Another article in *Woodwind World*, "Horn Tone and Technique"[17] illustrates his thoughts on what makes a great horn tone, asserting his position that "...the tone of the horn is its greatest virtue, and that technique is the natural complement, not an obstruction to a fine tone."[18] Both articles confirm that assisting students in developing a full beautiful tone was a priority in Chambers' pedagogy.

Two dissertations include information about James Chambers and his style of horn playing. One, "The Players, Performance Practice, and Traditions of the New York Philharmonic Horn Section since 1928,"[19] provides a brief history of the New York Philharmonic, a list of players that have occupied positions within the horn section, as

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[16] Chambers, "Playing the Double Horn," 11-13.

[17] James Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," *Woodwind World*, Vol. 4 (June 1962).

[18] Ibid., 11-12.

[19] Valerie S. Fuller, "The Players, Performance Practices, and Traditions of the New York Philharmonic Horn Section since 1928," (D.M.A. diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2004).

well as individual biographies and descriptions of playing characteristics. As one of five people to hold the principal position in the horn section since 1928, there is a brief biography and description of James Chambers' technique, sound, and pedagogy.

The second dissertation, "The Horn: A Discussion of the Nationalist Schools of Horn Performance and the Players and Composers Who Influenced Them"[20] investigates international styles of horn playing while including styles common to American horn players. In this particular study, Justin Hageman examines aspects that distinguish different aesthetics of playing including, "tone color, the use or non-use of vibrato, articulation, and the choice of instrument."[21] The chapter on American horn playing reveals styles that developed in different areas of the country, including the style associated with the New York Philharmonic. The study contains information about Chambers, confirming that he believed in a dark, rich tonal concept while striving to pass this philosophy on to his students.

The 10th Annual New York Brass Conference for

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[20] Justin Edward Hageman, "The Horn: A Discussion of the Nationalist Schools of Horn Performance and the Players and Composers Who Influenced Them," (D.M.A. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2005).

[21] Ibid., 5.

Scholarships in 1982 was billed as a tribute to Chambers and focuses more exclusively on his life and pedagogy. The commemorative booklet for that conference includes an interview by Jeff Silberschlag with Chambers.[22] In this interview Chambers responds to questions regarding why he chose the horn as his instrument, his teacher Anton Horner, some of his thoughts on pedagogy, and the equipment he used. At the end of the interview there is a partial list of Chambers' students, as well as a partial list of orchestral recordings for which he performed.

Chambers was involved with two other interviews, a question and answer session with students, and a radio broadcast, which provides information about his life and career. Oliver Daniels interview with James Chambers in 1979 includes information about Chambers' career and his experiences with conductor Leopold Stokowski. The second is a two-part radio broadcast of a New York Philharmonic intermission interview conducted by Martin Bookspan, which covers Chambers' career with the New York Philharmonic and his pedagogy. In 1970, Chambers was involved in a question and answer session at the International Horn Symposium at Florida State University. In the session Chambers answers questions about education, his career, and issues

[22] Chambers, "James Chambers," Interview by Jeff Silberschlag, 1-5.

surrounding professional orchestras at the time. Chambers' son, Robert Chambers provided recordings of the Bookspan interviews[23] and the question and answer session.[24]

In addition, there is a recording of a broadcast entitled *Profile of an American*, which aired February 4, 1961, in which James Chambers was the main subject. The *Profile of an American* series was created by the US Information Agency and broadcast on Radio Free Europe in order to help alleviate anti-American sentiment in Europe. The 15-minute broadcast segment covers aspects of Chambers' life and career. Robert Chambers provided a recording of the broadcast.[25] The Bookspan interview, question and answer session, and Profile of an American are important sources where Chambers speaks about details of his pedagogy and career and would have been lost over time had Robert Chambers not provided these crucial recordings and the subsequent transcripts been created.

In the International Horn Society's journal, *The Horn Call*, two articles appear as memorials for Chambers.

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[23] James Chambers, Interview by Martin Bookspan, (New York Philharmonic Intermission, WQXR, 1985) Appendix B, 105.

[24] J. Chambers, "Question and Answer Session", Appendix C, 114.

[25] Profile of an American, "James Chambers," Radio Free Europe, February 4, 1961, Appendix D, 139.

Former Chambers' students Dan Meier[26] and David Wakefield[27] provide first-hand recollection of lasting qualities Chambers offered to them and the horn world. In both articles, Meier and Wakefield present information about what it was like to study with Chambers and how he approached the individual student. These articles capture Chambers' strict views of teaching while offering heartfelt admiration for a teacher who provided guidance that played a prominent role in leading them to successful careers in music.

Another article in *The Horn Call* by hornist Lee Bracegirdle[28] describes the "New York" style of horn playing along with its development. Bracegirdle provides excerpts from Horner's writings about his personal progress under Fredrick Gumpert and Horner's professional career with the Pittsburgh and Philadelphia Orchestras, along with his development of the Horner model *Krüspe* horn. The article describes how Horner imported his approach to horn playing to the United States and how his students, including Chambers, perpetuated Horner's ideas that developed some of the most respected horn players in

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[26] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 112.
[27] Wakefield, "James Chambers," 116.
[28] Lee Bracegirdle, "The New York School; Its Development and its Relationship with the Viennese Style," *The Horn Call*, Vol. XIV, No. 2, (April 1984): 16-24.

America.

Other important sources provide insights for studying contributions to performance. Two such sources include "Philip Farkas: The Legacy of a Master"[29] and "Arnold Jacobs: The Legacy of a Master."[30] Both published works contain collections of letters from former students and colleagues of Farkas and Jacobs. While no personal interviews are present in the text, each book presents letters that share personal and pedagogical recollections of the students and colleagues.

In addition to the information gleaned from publications about Chambers, other sources were used to determine the procedure for the study. The dissertation written by David William Kutz, "Arnold Jacobs: Methods and Materials of Pedagogy,"[31] investigates Jacobs' methodology in private instruction and in master class settings with specific concentration on materials used. Kutz studied both primary and secondary sources along with interviewing five of Jacobs' former students to reveal Jacobs' teaching

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[29] M. Dee Stewart, ed., *Philip Farkas: The Legacy of a Master*.

[30] M. Dee Stewart, ed., *Arnold Jacobs: The Legacy of a Master*, (Northfield: The Instrumentalist Publishing Company, 1987).

[31] Kutz, David William, "Arnold Jacobs: Methods and Materials of Pedagogy. An Investigation Into His Methodology in Private Instruction and in Master Class Settings with Specific Concentration on Materials Used," (D.M. diss., Northwestern University, 2003).

philosophies. “Marcel Tabuteau. Pedagogical Concepts and Practices for Teaching Musical Expressiveness: An Oral History”[32] is a compilation of interviews by students of the famous Philadelphia Orchestra oboist Marcel Tabuteau (1887-1966). Like Chambers, many of Tabuteau’s students achieved prominent careers with professional orchestras and chamber groups. Stevens’ dissertation interview procedure uses specific questions for identifying Tabuteau’s pedagogical techniques and musical concepts. Former students and colleagues of Tabuteau provided interviews for the study. Lankford’s dissertation, “Lowell Shaw (b. 1930): His Musical Career and Contributions to Horn Ensemble Literature,”[33] includes biographical information about Shaw’s education, performing and teaching careers, compositions, and retirement. The study contains interviews of both Shaw and several of his former students and colleagues. However, no transcripts from the interviews appear in the document.

[32] Melissa A. Stevens, “Marcel Tabuteau. Pedagogical Concepts and Practices for Teaching Musical Expressiveness: An Oral History,” (D.M.A. diss., The Ohio State University, 1999).

[33] Lankford, “Lowell Shaw.”

## Procedure

Dissertations, articles, recordings, interviews, and reports from Chambers' students describe the life and pedagogy of Chambers. However, the primary source of information for this document is personal interviews and surveys with Chambers' former students, colleagues, and surviving relatives. A partial list of James Chambers' former students provided in the Silberschlag interview[34] supplied the initial contacts for interviews. Due to the significant number of Chambers' former students, interview subjects were limited to professionals who hold prominent solo, chamber, orchestra, or teaching careers; people who have written published articles that identified with James Chambers; and students or colleagues who had contact with Chambers at different points in his career.

David Wakefield, horn with the American Brass Quintet; William Slocum, professor of horn at Youngstown State; Myron Bloom, professor of horn at Indiana University; and Julie Landsman, former principal horn of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra were interviewed. In addition, three of James Chambers children; Robert Chambers, Michael Chambers, and Carol Collins also participated in the study.

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[34] Chambers, "James Chambers," Interview by Jeff Silberschlag, 4.

Chapter 2 begins with a description of the style of horn playing developed at the Leipzig Conservatory by Fredrick Gumpert. This chapter continues with a narrative about Anton Horner, one of Gumpert's students and successor. The chapter details his life and career in Philadelphia and his tenure at the Curtis Institute of Music where he met and influenced Chambers. Chapter 3 provides a biographical sketch of Chambers with emphasis on his education and career as a performer, teacher, and personnel manager of the New York Philharmonic. Chapter 4 reveals Chambers' pedagogy. Chapter 5 summarizes Chambers' importance and provides suggested topics for further research. The appendices include transcripts from interviews, radio broadcasts, and an impromptu question and answer session with Chambers from the International Horn Symposium at Florida State University in June, 1970; letters written to honor James Chambers; a letter from James Chambers' sister; a facsimile of an advertisement from Roth-Reynolds Company; a list of conductors with the New York Philharmonic during Chambers' performing tenure; and a facsimile of the program from Chambers' memorial at The Juilliard School on January 11, 1989.

## CHAPTER 2

## INFLUENTIAL TEACHERS

James Chambers once said successful professionals owe "a tremendous amount of what we achieved to our years with a great teacher."[35] This chapter focuses on the lives and careers of both Friedrich Gumpert and Anton Horner to reveal how they influenced Chambers' performance aesthetic and his approach to horn pedagogy. One can readily trace the influences that affected Chambers' performance and pedagogical philosophies back to Gumpert and his protégé Horner.

### Friedrich Gumpert

Friedrich Adolf Gumpert was born in Lichtenau, Germany on April 17, 1841. He studied horn with a local town musician by the name of Hammann, in Jena, Germany. Gumpert performed with a town band in Bad Nauheim, Germany, and with another in St. Gallen, Germany.[36] He

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[35] James Chambers, question and answer session, June 1970, Tallahassee, International Horn Symposium, tape recording, Appendix C, 5.

[36] John Ericcson, "Friedrich Gumpert (1841-1906) and The Performing Technique of the Valved Horn in Late-Nineteenth-Century Germany," *Brass Scholarship In Review: Proceedings of the Historic Brass Society Conference Cité de la Musique, Paris 1999* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2006), 223.

fulfilled his military service in Eisenach by performing in the local military band. Once released from military service he played in Halle, Germany from 1862 to 1864. Karl Reinecke, conductor with the Gewandhaus Orchestra in Leipzig, noticed Gumpert's musical ability and engaged him as the principal hornist with the Gewandhaus Orchestra in 1864. During the period from 1864 to 1898, Gumpert concomitantly taught horn at the Royal Music Conservatory in Leipzig. After his retirement he remained in Leipzig until his death on December 31, 1906.[37]

Debate exists concerning the correct spelling of Gumpert's name. In his many publications, and in some historical references, Gumpert's name is spelled "Gumbert," with a "b." There are several theories as to why his name is spelled differently. During this time there was a well-known songwriter and poet whose name was Friedrich Gumbert and it is suspected that the horn player Gumpert, "did not seem to mind being mistaken for him."[38] Since Friedrich was a common name at the time, and with their last names so closely resembling each other, it was easy to make the mistake. Another hypothesis indicates

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[37] Reginald Morley-Pegge and William J. Rogan. "Gumbert, Friedrich Adolf." Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/12023, (accessed 5 August 2010).

[38] Norman Schweikert, "Gumpert, no Gumbert!," *The Horn Call 1, No. 2* (May 1971): 45-46.

that during the same time there was another musician named Ferdinand Gumbert who had published many works. Since the misspelling mainly occurs in Gumpert's published works, one might postulate that the horn player Gumpert assumed a similar spelling because the already successful name may have increased the sale of his music.[39] For the purposes of this document, his name will be spelled as Gumpert.

Gumpert arranged, compiled, and composed repertoire for his horn students. All of Gumpert's publications reflect his pedagogy and provide insight into the performance practices of the horn during the mid-to-late 1800s.[40] Gumpert expanded the solo repertoire by transcribing a 44-volume collection of solos under the title *Lieder-Transcriptionen* (Leipzig: Forberg, n.d.), and he also expanded the chamber repertoire with four volumes of horn quartets. In addition, he composed etudes for his own method book entitled, *Practische Horn-Schule* (Leipzig: Forberg, n.d.).[41]

In addition to the aforementioned solos, etudes, and chamber music, Gumpert was the first to publish a collection of orchestral, opera, and chamber music excerpts for horn. The compilation contains thirteen

[39] Ericcson, "Friedrich Gumpert," 224.
[40] Ibid., 224.
[41] Ibid., 224.

volumes, several of which are still available for purchase through Southern Music Company, and remains one of the largest collections of excerpts ever published.[42] Gumpert also published an edition of Kopprasch etudes in collaboration with Albin Frehse, currently published by Carl Fischer. Using his publications along with a variety of other resources, Gumpert worked with students to develop technique, tone, and musicality. Moreover, students were to use the excerpts from his collection to acquaint themselves with the requisite literature they would experience when they entered the realm of orchestral performance.

During Gumpert's career, the valved horn superseded the natural horn. With the advent of the valve, Gumpert was concerned that students would lose knowledge about the performance practices of the natural horn, such as pre-valve right hand technique and different tone qualities using different crooks. Therefore, he required students to learn both the natural horn and the valved horn. If students were having difficulty with a technical passage on the valved horn, Gumpert would instruct them to go back to the natural horn in an attempt to solve the problem. Gumpert states:

[42] Ibid., 224.

> If one has a dull, rough, and fuzzy tone on the valve horn, he will do no better on the natural horn...If one desires a colorful, mixed effect, in which sounds can be advantageous, like the mutes of string instruments, so then the valves on the horn are no hindrance, because one can make just as much use of the hand on the valve horn as the natural horn.[43]

His student, Anton Horner, confirmed this form of pedagogy when writing, "Gumpert had me study without valves for several months to teach me the old hand horn playing."[44] By teaching natural horn technique, Gumpert was teaching the history of the instrument.

Gumpert believed knowledge of pre-valve right hand technique on the natural horn was essential for producing the desired color and shading in performance. He could employ the use of different crooks on his valved instrument with the belief that certain orchestral passages should be played on various tuning crooks because of their inherent tonal color. Gumpert, who performed on a valved instrument, would use the right hand position to shade a particular note in conjunction with using the valve.

> ...he did advocate changing crooks or slides to G, A, and B-Flat horn for some compositions. For instance, he played the Siegfried solo on the B-Flat horn, and the slow movement of the Second Beethoven Symphony on the A crook; [he] also played the Mendelssohn

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[43] John Humphries, *The Early Horn: A Practical Guide* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 21.

[44] Mason Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," *The Horn Call*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2 (April 1993): 92.

> Nocturne on an E crook. The old German conductors like Reinecke in Leipzig, Bühlow in Berlin, and others would not tolerate the thin, harsh quality of the B-Flat horn, unless the composers called for that quality in their compositions, when they wrote for the G, A-Flat, A, and B-Flat horn. Of course, we, of today, think these restrictions are splitting hairs, but that was the opinion that prevailed in those days.[45]

Gumpert was not averse to switching crooks on the valved instrument to achieve the desired colors to be found in different keys. He ultimately did not conceive the valved horn as a fixed pitched instrument. Consequently, a significant portion of Gumpert's pedagogy was based in learning and utilizing the natural horn.

Gumpert's style of teaching was well respected, which is evident from Henri Kling's forward in his own method book *25 Studies and Preludes.*[46] The method book, dedicated to Gumpert, contains several passages to be played on the natural horn as well as the stopped horn and valve mechanism concurrently. A designated fingering under certain measures indicates this intent. In the book's forward, Kling also supports Gumpert's thoughts on horn playing by stating students "can achieve total mastery and

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[45] Ibid., 91.

[46] Henri Kling, *25 Studies and Preludes,* ed. Lee Bracegirdle (New York: International Music Company, 1985).

command on the chromatic horn"[47] if they practice the natural harmonics of the instrument.

A major emphasis of Gumpert's teaching was placed on achieving a deep resonant tone and he ascribed several ideas contributed to the sound. They included a combination of equipment, aural concept, use and position of the right hand in the bell, effective use of the wind supply, and embouchure to produce the desired sound. A significant component of Gumpert's concept of sound was dependent on equipment. He preferred his students use a large-bore horn, with a large bell and large lead pipe, combined with an Austrian mouthpiece, which typically contains a deep cup and thin rim.[48] This combination of equipment and his pedagogy involving the natural horn and right hand position allowed the performer to create a rich sound. As his student, Anton Horner inherited these concepts from Gumpert and in turn, conveyed them to his students.[49] Gumpert's students admired his work and they desired to pass the same approach on to their students.

Gumpert had many students who distinguished themselves as orchestral musicians, and at the university level as horn professors. Three of his students, Max Hess,

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[47] Ibid., v.
[48] Bracegirdle, "The New York School," 17.
[49] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 91.

Max Pottag, and Anton Horner, immigrated to the United States. They brought the pedagogy and concept of sound acquired from their studies with Gumpert.

In addition to teaching, Gumpert was also an active performer. Along with his tenure as principal of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, he took part in various chamber concerts and solo performances. In a chamber program on February 15, 1878, along with Karl Reinecke on piano and Julius Röntgen on violin, Gumpert premiered the landmark *Horn Trio, Op. 40* by Johannes Brahms.[50]

The increasing complexity of horn parts in newly composed music ultimately caused Gumpert to leave the profession. During a visit two years after his retirement, Gumpert told his former student Anton Horner:

> ...composers like Wagner, and those of today like Strauss and Mahler really require a little motor in the horn to play the parts, and therefore, I retired.[51]

Gumpert, who played a single F horn, remarked on the difficulty of the music of Wagner and Strauss stating, "...there should be some kind of machine invented to help a player negotiate the technical problems he faced!"[52] It

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[50] Kurt Janetzky and Bernhard Brüchle, *A Pictorial history of the Horn*, trans. Cecilia Baumann (Tutzing: Verlegt Bei Hans Schneider, 1976), 231.

[51] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 93.

[52] James Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," *The Horn Call*, Vol. XX, No. 2 (April 1990): 57-58.

is no coincidence that his nephew Edmund Gumpert was involved with the creation of the instrument that would help solve those problems.

> Gumpert had considerable influence on the development of horn playing, first through his nephew, Edmund Gumpert, who teamed up with Eduard Krüspe to design the first double horn, and in the twentieth century through his pupils, Anton Horner, Max Pottag, and Max Hess, who played an important part in introducing wide-bore instruments to America.[53]

Unfortunately for the elder Gumpert, the double horn came to prominence after his retirement.

As stated earlier, many aspiring American horn students became acquainted with Gumpert's concepts of horn sound and performance through his former students who immigrated to the United States and held chairs in professional orchestras, as well as teaching positions at universities. One student, Anton Horner taught students about hand position, tone quality, and the use of a large bore horn with a deep-cup mouthpiece. By teaching these concepts Horner directly established the lineage from Gumpert to James Chambers.

**Anton Horner**

Anton Horner learned essential skills from Friedrich Gumpert such as playing style, teaching, and

[53] Humphries, *The Early Horn*, 101.

professionalism. Similar to his teacher, Horner was influential due to his position as a high profile hornist in a major symphony and a horn professor at an influential music school. Horner performed with the Philadelphia Orchestra for 44 years, introduced the double horn to the United States, and developed the concept of an assistant horn with the orchestra horn section.

Also, similar to his teacher, Horner was exceedingly strict with his students, but always equally proud of their accomplishments. James Chambers said during an interview that Horner loved music, enjoyed his work and wanted to pass that joy on to his students.[54] Music was Horner's passion, and he passed that enthusiasm on to students, colleagues, and audiences throughout his lifetime.

Anton Horner was born in 1877 in Grossengrün, Austria. When he was eight years old, his family immigrated to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Horner's father was a violinist who also performed on the piano, organ, and horn as his secondary instruments.[55] Horner's father was a key influence, having started his son's musical

[54] Anton Horner, Interview by James Chambers, Tallahassee, First Annual French Horn Workshop, Florida State University, 1696, Podcast available on International Horn Society website, http://www.hornsociety.org/en/multimedia/podcasts, (accessed 12 November 2011).

[55] Ibid.

education on the violin. Tragically, his father died in 1890 when the younger Horner was just 13 years old. Following his father's death, the family made the decision to move back to Austria, closer to their extended family. At this point, Horner's uncle offered him guidance as to a potential career path. When he asked what his nephew wanted to be, the young Horner replied, "I know more about music than anything else, so I will be a violinist."[56] Subsequently, the young Horner was given a violin and attended violin lessons twice a week.

A year after returning to Austria, Horner was admitted to the Royal Music Conservatory in Leipzig.[57] At the conservatory, students were required to play a primary and a secondary instrument in order to have an expansive education. Acquiring skill on a wind instrument was beneficial, especially if required to join the military, because he could enlist in the Army Band instead of going into combat training.[58] Initially, Horner wanted his secondary instrument to be the trumpet. However, his uncle convinced him that he should declare the horn as his secondary instrument, because good horn players were

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[56] Ibid.

[57] Barry Tuckwell, *Horn* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1983), 137.

[58] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 91.

scarce in America.[59] Following his uncle's advice, Horner chose violin as his primary instrument and horn as his secondary. As his first year of education progressed, he quickly discovered that his violin lessons were not advancing as well as his horn lessons and he began to feel as though he "...had a God-given gift for horn."[60] Consequently, the next year he switched his primary instrument to horn and his secondary instrument to violin.

Horner graduated in 1894, when he was 16 years old, and promptly returned to Philadelphia to obtain a job. His first engagement was to perform in the pit with the Warner Street Theatre in Philadelphia.[61] In 1899, Horner received a letter from Victor Herbert, the conductor with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, which informed Horner that the principal horn position with the symphony was vacant and that Herbert would like for Horner to audition for the position. It was the first and only audition that Horner ever took.[62] Horner was offered the position at 35 dollars a week. However, Horner wanted to be paid 50 dollars a week, telling Herbert that he did not "want men to say 'here's a kid who gets the job because he's cheap.'"[63] They

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[59] Horner, Interview by James Chambers.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 92.
[63] Horner, Interview by James Chambers.

finally compromised on 40 dollars a week and Horner accepted the position.

Horner performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra for three seasons. Fritz Scheel, the conductor with the Philadelphia Orchestra, attended a Pittsburgh Symphony concert during Horner's last season with the orchestra. Maestro Scheel was so impressed by Horner's talent that two weeks after the concert he offered Horner the principal horn position with Philadelphia for 80 dollars a week. Though Herbert wanted Horner to remain in Pittsburgh, his orchestra could not match Philadelphia's competing offer. Therefore, in 1902 Horner began his tenure with the Philadelphia Orchestra.[64]

As principal horn, Horner was concerned with preserving his lip during orchestra concerts. One of his students said, "He often spoke of his embouchure being delicate, saying that he had to watch his playing so he would not 'blow his lip out.'"[65] Due to the difficulty of the music being published at the time, as early as 1909, Horner was the first horn player in the United States to request the service of an assistant principal horn. The conductor of the Philadelphia orchestra at this time was Carl Pohlig. The service of the extra horn was approved

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 60.

when Horner stressed the advantages that the extra horn would offer to the entire horn section as well as to the solo horn.[66]

The assistant principal horn played a multifaceted role in the horn section. Sitting to the principal player's left, the assistant was responsible for playing loud passages as well as sustained notes to provide rest for the principal's upcoming solo passages. If another player was ill or unable to attend a concert, the assistant was also available to substitute for different parts in the section. This method proved so successful for Horner's Philadelphia horn section that many other major orchestra horn sections began to follow the same model. The use of an assistant principal position has prevailed into modern day, becoming a common designated seat for orchestral horn sections.

Concurrent to his position with the orchestra, Horner joined the Curtis Institute of Music's (CIM) faculty when the school was established in 1924. His presence among the faculty attracted many talented students, including Mason Jones, Arthur and Harry Berv, and James Chambers, all of whom would eventually play with major orchestras across the country.

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[66] Bracegirdle, "The New York School," 18.

Horner held a firm belief that in order to make progress, one had to have a natural ability on the instrument. He once said, "God makes some people horn players, others are not so fortunate."[67] When a student attended CIM, Horner believed the most important goal was to teach students how to produce a beautiful, characteristic horn tone. Carl Geyer, an instrument maker in Chicago who was reported to make some of the finest horns of the day,[68] called Horner the "father of the tone" since Horner emphasized this in every lesson.[69] Horner believed that the student:

> ...should continually carry in his mind's ear the ideal tone he wishes to attain to, his ear, mind, and heart are as much to the instrument as the horn itself.[70]

He also believed the hand position, embouchure, and choice of location to switch from the F horn to the B-flat horn affected the instrument's tone.

If Horner heard a muffled tone from his students, one of the culprits could be their right hand position. He believed the hand's position within the bell should be

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[67] Robin Gregory, *The Horn: A Comprehensive Guide to the Modern Instrument & its Music* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1969), 101.

[68] International Horn Society, "Carl Geyer," http://www.hornsociety.org/en/ihs-people/honoraries/50-carl-geyer-1880-1973, (accessed 23 September 2011).

[69] Horner, Interview by James Chambers.

[70] Gregory, *The Horn*, 63.

with the back of the right hand "on the bottom of the bell with fingers back against the bell, so the tone would not be directed into the clothing."[71] However, the right hand does not stay in a fixed position. He taught students to pivot their hand freely so they could easily adjust the intonation of the instrument and to master right-hand technique. Horner recognized the audience's perception of the horn sound within the hall was different from how the horn sounded on stage. While covering the bell with the hand to a greater degree might make the horn sound rounder to the player, the audience, fifty or more feet away, would not hear the same sound.[72]

Horner believed a student's embouchure could hinder the goal of producing a clear tone. There are two types of embouchures that Horner observed: *ansetzen*, which translates from German as "setting on" and *einsetzen*, which translates as "setting in." The *ansetzen* embouchure is formed when the mouthpiece is placed on top of both lips. When the tradition for high horn and low horn specialist existed, the *ansetzen* embouchure was ideal for high horn players. The *einsetzen* embouchure is formed when the bottom lip rolls out and the mouthpiece is placed on the inside membrane of the lower lip. This embouchure was

[71] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 56.
[72] Ibid., 57.

commonly used by low horn specialists and originated in Germany with the Bohemians in the first half of the 18th Century.[73] Horner notes in a letter:

> Several horn players in Germany advocated the *einsetzen* method, because you did not have to change the embouchure in going from the upper to the lower register. Gumbert [sic] contended that this embouchure did not give you enough endurance or power, especially in the modern works. He only accepted pupils with *einsetzen* embouchures only if they were willing to change...Gumbert [sic] was in this matter as positive as I was in accepting B-horn scholars. I would not accept them either at the Curtis Institute or in private, because they could not get the quality of tone I strove for in the middle and lower register.[74]

Similar to Gumpert, Horner believed the *ansetzen* embouchure was a more secure and efficient way of playing the horn, because the instrument was utilized in the middle and lower registers where a good tone is imperative.

Horner also spoke about a student's mouthpiece placement in the forward to his own etude book *Primary Studies for the French Horn*:

> He must be sure to place the mouthpiece on the lips as evenly as possible. By this I mean he should have as much upper lip as lower in the mouthpiece. A little more upper lip than lower is often good and permissible, but by no means should he use more lower lip than upper; because if he does, he will not be

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[73] R. Morley-Pegge, *The French Horn: Some Notes on the Evolution of the Instrument and of its Technique* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1973), 101.

[74] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 93.

> able to play down into the lower register evenly and smoothly later on.[75]

Horner thought lip placement and embouchure were important to achieve the desired tone.

Moreover, his students were never allowed to sit while they were in a lesson or when they were practicing and as a result, "...he never discussed diaphragmatic breathing. When one practices for hours standing, one learns how to breathe naturally from the diaphragm."[76] Horner also would not give detailed instructions on how to play, and students were never allowed to ask him too many questions.

> ...the student should analyze his own playing and work out the problems for himself. If the student were talented he would succeed, and the experience of conquering his difficulties would be of everlasting benefit.[77]

This approach focused on doing rather than explaining and avoiding numerous questions with unnecessary discussions, so more material could be covered during the allotted lesson time.

In addition, Horner never played to demonstrate ideas on the horn, he always sang. There were two reasons for this, he taught on Saturday afternoons and he needed to

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[75] Anton Horner, *Primary Studies for the French Horn* (Philadelphia: Elkan-Vogel Co., Inc., 1939), 2.

[76] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 60.

[77] Ibid., 60.

preserve his lip for that evening's orchestra concert. Horner also wanted the student to use the horn as an extension of the human voice and play a passage, as one would sing it. This was his approach to having students understand diverse rhythmic passages, as well as the effective production of a beautiful and smooth cantabile line.[78] Horner's students would only hear him perform in concert settings. By listening to him perform, they could learn valuable lessons about sound production, musical interpretation, and articulation.[79]

In addition to teaching, Horner also published his own etude book, *Primary Studies for the French Horn* in 1939.[80] Available today through Elkan-Vogel, Inc., the book is a set of studies targeting the beginning student. It includes a mixture of technical studies and tunes recognizable to most students of his era. In the preface, he states that these studies should:

> ...progress very slowly, [should be] tuneful enough to keep the student's interest alive, and gradually introduce varied rhythms and songs for musical development.[81]

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[78] Ibid., 63.

[79] James Thurmond's book, *Note Grouping: A Method for Achieving Expression and Style in Musical Performance*, is based on the musical interpretation used by Philadelphia Orchestra principals such as Anton Horner (Horn), William Kincaid (Flute), and Marcel Tabeteau (Oboe).

[80] Horner, *Primary Studies for the French Horn.*

[81] Ibid., 1.

He wanted beginning students not to move too quickly through his exercises in order to build a good foundation to their performance skills. In addition to explaining how to approach the etudes, he also indicated his ideal articulation by writing:

> Attack each note with your tongue as though you had a small hair or tiny piece of thread on the end of your tongue and wanted to force it out of your mouth.[82]

He was adamant that his students use a clear articulation in all music. This idea was confirmed by one of his students who said Horner:

> ...would practically spit in my face with his tongue between his lips until I attacked correctly. I soon began to tongue like mad to keep him from spitting at me![83]

He did not believe in adding too many techniques too quickly, and instead focused on the core fundamentals of horn playing.

Just before his audition with the Pittsburgh Orchestra, Horner received a letter from a friend in Germany that included an article from the *Deutsche Musikerzeitung* entitled, "*Hie F-Horn— Hie B-Horn— was ist recht*?"[84] Which translates to, "Here F-horn, There B-flat horn, What is right?" This article was split into three sections. The first section was an argument from Josef

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[82] Ibid., 4.
[83] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 56.
[84] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 92.

Lindner, teacher at the Royal Music School in Wüzburg, as to why the B-flat horn was a superior instrument compared to the F horn. The second section was a response from Richard Tornauer, horn with the Municipal Orchestra of Colongne, which explains the advantages of using the B-flat horn in the high range, but not the low range. Using the chamber music of Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, and Schumann as examples, Tornauer explains that these composers wrote for the instrument in a lower tessitura. He argues that because these composers wrote for the horn in the lower tessitura, the more appropriate instrument to perform with is the F horn. In response to the previous two articles, the third part introduced a compromise devised by Friedrich Gumpert's nephew, which combined the two different horns into one instrument. The new instrument was called the double horn.[85] This new instrument combined the best properties of both instruments within one piece of equipment. The double horn had a major impact on many performers since it is still used today.

Horner immediately ordered the instrument from the maker Fritz Krüspe in Erfurt, Germany. When he received his new instrument in 1899, he was the first in the United

[85] Hanz Pizka, *Hornisten-Lexikon: Dictionary for Hornists* (Kirchheim: Hans Pizka Edition, 1986), 279-291.

States to own one, which he premiered on his third concert with Pittsburgh.[86] Soon after acquiring the double horn, Horner went on tour with the Pittsburgh Orchestra to New York, where he received many positive reviews. However, he said many of "...the New York players tried to discredit my work by saying that I played on a freak horn."[87] The double horn was not well received at first and acceptance of the instrument remained slow. Many professional horn players continued to perform on their single horns until 1915 and later.[88]

As the first performer to exploit the double horn in the United States, Horner acknowledged that the instrument had limitations. He only used the B-Flat section of the horn in the upper range, because the tone in that range is not as vibrant on the F horn, as it is in the middle and lower register.[89] Horner taught his students to play the

[86] Horner, Interview by James Chambers.
[87] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 92.
[88] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 59.
[89] Gregory, *The Horn*, 45.

F horn up to d''.[90] Above d'' students were allowed to play on the B-flat horn. Students were never permitted to use the B-flat horn in the lower register except for the notes that were below the F horn register.[91] His reasoning for switching at this point was twofold; it made available easier fingering patterns in difficult passages and it provided a consistent tone throughout the registers.[92]

Horner enjoyed playing on his *Krüspe* instrument early in his career. He believed the instrument "could take a lot of punishment in *forte* playing; yet could still be easily controlled in *piano*."[93] Due to his fondness for the horn, he became the main importer of the instruments to the United States. During this time, he was in constant contact with the factory, suggesting changes as he saw

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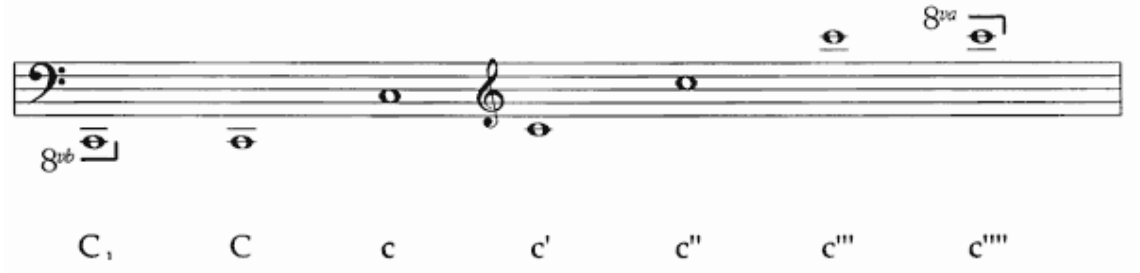
[90] This is the octave designation nomenclature used by the International Horn Society's professional journal *The Horn Call*, which is the one preferred by the New Harvard Dictionary of music and will be used throughout the body of this document.




[91] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 63.

[92] Presently, it is more common for hornists in the United States to switch to the B-Flat horn at a-flat'.

[93] Ibid., 57.

necessary. Based on his recommendations, the *Krüspe* factory introduced the Horner model.

> Later, *Krüspe* wrote me that he was experimenting with an all German silver metal horn; also a gold brass metal horn — here we call it copper brass. He wanted to know whether I was interested. I ordered one of each, and the first German silver horn he sent me was the one I used until my last day in the orchestra...For me, the German silver was the best, and that horn with a large bell with small rim, and string valves became the Horner model, which *Krüspe* himself named, not I.[94]

The Horner model was widely used in the United States at the time, though importing it to the country became a challenge during World War II, because the factory was in the Russian zone.[95] During this period, many companies attempted to copy the Horner double horn model. The most popular was created in the United States in 1936 by the C.G. Conn Instrument Company as their 8-D model. C.G. Conn "carefully measured and copied every detail of Horner's *Krüspe*."[96] The Conn 8-D became very popular with many prominent artists at the time, including James Chambers, and continues to be used by professionals and students alike.

Having had a decorated career, Horner gradually settled into retirement. In 1930, after twenty-eight years of playing principal horn, he stepped down to play the

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[94] Jones, "A Letter from Anton Horner," 93.
[95] Horner, Interview by James Chambers.
[96] Bracegirdle, "The New York School," 20.

third and forth horn positions for sixteen more years.[97] At the end of his career with the orchestra in 1946, he also retired from Curtis. In his retirement, he continued to attend every Philadelphia Orchestra Concert until his death in 1971.[98] Horner's love for music and his chosen instrument was prevalent even late into his life, when he told a former student he had never had the desire to do anything other than play the horn and he felt a touch of guilt when he got paid because he thoroughly enjoyed his job.[99]

[97] Horner, Interview by James Chambers.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 68.

## CHAPTER 3

## CAREER

James Chambers was the youngest of five children and grew up in a family with modest means. His father, Melville, worked as a bakery salesman and Millie, his mother, operated a grocery. Both parents were amateur musicians in their spare time. Melville was a tenor and Millie, a pianist. His parents were strict and dedicated to ensuring all of their children studied music. Ultimately, they wanted their children to receive solid educations at a university, which would lead to successful careers. All five children studied music and two made it their profession. Chambers older brother, Melville Jr., became a high school band director and James became a professional hornist.[100]

James was involved with music early in his life, playing drums and the bugle when he was seven. At the age of ten, James began to study horn without a teacher.[101] He chose the horn because he believed there was a dearth of talented horn players, as compared to musicians playing

[100] Caroline Chambers, letter to Michael Chambers, Appendix L, 191.

[101] Profile of an American, "James Chambers," Appendix D, 141.

other instruments such as the violin.[102] James reasoned that if he was talented enough to make a career in music, then he should select an instrument that few others studied and excelled. Among the three instruments that fit his criteria (oboe, bassoon, and horn), he chose the latter.

> I thought if I were [sic] going to play a musical instrument I might just as well pick one where if I were successful and became a good player, I would have some opportunity to make a living playing that instrument. In those days there were very few people studying the very difficult instruments like oboe, bassoon, and horn. Horn happened to be the first one that I picked up and I've stayed with it ever since.[103]

After making this decision, James, like many young horn students, had to borrow his first instrument. In James' case, his first instrument came from the junior high school. The instrument was a Czechoslovakian horn, which he was excited to take home and begin practicing.[104]

As a high school student, Chambers was involved with many activities. He was president of his school's National Honor Society, president of the Pythagorean Society, vice president of the Euclidean Society, president of the National Thespian Society, a member of the Historical Society, a student conductor with the school orchestra,

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[102] J. Chambers, "James Chambers," Interview by Silberschlag, 1.

[103] Profile of an American, "James Chambers," Appendix D, 142.

[104] Ibid., 141.

and participated in All-State Band and Orchestra.[105] He was a good student and graduated at the top of his class.[106] His early ambition was to become an engineer, however, music had always been a part of his life and it was something he desired to continue.

As a senior during the 1937-38 school year at Trenton High School in Trenton, New Jersey, towards the end of the Great Depression, Chambers was unsure of the direction he wanted to pursue. He debated about whether to pursue a career in science or music and applied to several institutions in both fields. Chambers was accepted to several institutions for science, including the Massachusetts Institute of Technology[107] and Princeton University.[108] Concurrently, he decided to audition for the Curtis Institute of Music (CIM), though he believed his chances of being accepted to such a prestigious institution were low.

> At that point in life, the Curtis Institute had such an exalted position in my mind that I didn't see how anyone coming from my position in life, with no real formal instrumental training at all, could ever be accepted for a position. I went there just thinking, 'well here, I'll try this,' knowing very well I

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[105] Donald P. Delany, "Philharmonic job puts him 'between 2 cymbals as they crash,'" Trenton Times, August 8, 1985.

[106] Michael Chambers Questionnaire, Appendix H, 180.

[107] Robert Chambers, Interview by author, 2 November 2010, See Appendix G, 174.

[108] M. Chambers Questionnaire, Appendix H, 180.

> couldn't be accepted. Well, I was very much surprised in April or May of that year, sometime after that audition had taken place, to receive notification from the Curtis Institute that I had been accepted. Of course from that moment on, I dropped all plans to go on in the field of science.[109]

Subsequently, in 1938, Chambers became a freshman at CIM, where he studied with Anton Horner until his graduation in 1941.

The summer prior to his first semester at CIM, Chambers still did not own a personal instrument; instead he borrowed horns from his school. Therefore, acquiring a personal horn was an immediate necessity. He received a scholarship from the Trenton Times, his local newspaper, which was supposed to be spent on tuition. However, CIM was tuition free, which prompted Chambers to persuade the paper to allow him to use his scholarship towards the purchase of a new horn.

> The horn I used in the high school band and orchestra belonged to the school, so when I graduated, I was lost. So I went to James Kerney at the [Trenton] Times and asked him if I could use the scholarship to buy a horn. At first he was not receptive to the idea. The Times Scholarship was supposed to be used for college tuition, he said. So it took several visits, and letters from people at Curtis, including Josef Hoffman (the world-renowned pianist who at the time was director of the school), to persuade Mr. Kerney to let me buy the horn.[110]

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[109] Profile of an American, "James Chambers," Appendix D, 142.

[110] Delany, "Philharmonic job."

The horn, a Conn 8-D, which he purchased from a local Trenton store, was the horn he used for the majority of his career with both the Philadelphia Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. He briefly used a Reynolds horn when he worked with the Reynolds Company to develop a Chambers model horn.[111]

Before he graduated from CIM, Chambers was selected by conductor Leopold Stokowski to perform with the All American Youth Symphony in 1940.[112] During the orchestra's

**Figure 3.1: Photo of James Chambers and other students working with conductor Leopold Stokowski. Photo courtesy of Robert Chambers.**

inaugural year, it toured the east coast of South America with Chambers playing fourth horn.[113] He received his degree

[111] J. Chambers, "Question and Answer Session", Appendix C, 128.

[112] J. Chambers, "Stokowski," Interview by Oliver Daniel, 12.

in the spring of 1941, after which he traveled on his second and final tour with the All American Youth Orchestra in the United States.

After his second tour, he was invited to perform with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra as third horn with conductor Fritz Reiner.[114] Chambers was hesitant to accept the position because, at the time, the Pittsburgh Symphony only had an 18-week season. However, he accepted the position after Mr. Reiner offered him a 20-week contract.[115] Chambers only spent one season with the Pittsburgh Symphony.

In December 1941, Japanese armed forces attacked Pearl Harbor, plunging America into World War II. Enlistment rates for military service increased overnight and many musicians signed up to fight in the war. Moreover, one of these musicians was Mason Jones, the principal horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra. Without their principal hornist, the orchestra needed an immediate replacement and Chambers was contacted about the opening.

> I received word from Philadelphia that Mason Jones...was going into the service and they needed someone to fill in the empty space. And I was asked

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[113] William Slocum, interview by author, 24 September 2010, Appendix E, 154.

[114] Profile of an American, "James Chambers," Appendix D, 143.

[115] J. Chambers, Question and Answer session, Appendix C, 116.

> if I would come to Philadelphia and audition, which I did. Incidentally playing a very bad audition. But having been very strongly recommended by Mr. Horner and some other teachers I had had at Curtis who were members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, I got the job anyhow. But I'll never forget that I played such a bad audition.[116]

Only 21 years old, Chambers auditioned for Eugene Ormandy, conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, and despite his bad audition was accepted into the orchestra to temporarily fill the void left by Jones' absence.[117]

After only a few weeks with the orchestra, an unnerving event occurred when the personnel manager asked Chambers to stay after rehearsal and play for Mr. Ormandy again. Chambers sat down on a darkened stage, alone, and was asked to perform several different excerpts from the orchestra repertoire. Chambers was nervous about the situation:

> I was scared. I was afraid I was going to be fired. I was called out onto a dark Academy of Music stage, with only a work light overhead. I knew Mr. Ormandy and other people were out in the auditorium. They put me through the roughest test I have ever experienced.[118]

Afterwards, as he was putting his instrument away, Mr. Ormandy and several of the orchestra's musicians, such as

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[116] Profile of an American, "James Chambers," Appendix D, 143.

[117] J. Chambers, "Stokowski," Interview by Oliver Daniel, 12.

[118] Delany, "Philharmonic job."

the concertmaster and other principal players,[119] came back stage to meet Chambers. When Ormandy asked if he would like to be the acting principal horn player, Chambers "...gulped, and blurted out yes."[120] After this impromptu audition, Chambers was considered a full member of the orchestra and he spent the next five years with them.

**Figure 3.2: Photo of James Chambers listed as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Photo courtesy of Robert Chambers.**


Chambers' performances with the orchestra were well received by audiences, colleagues, and guest artists.

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[119] J. Chambers, Question and Answer session, Appendix C, 124.

[120] Delany, "Philharmonic job."

Cellist, Emanuel Feuermann was scheduled to perform Anton Dvorak's *Cello Concerto in B minor, Op. 104* with the Philadelphia Orchestra. During a rehearsal, Chambers performed the horn solo so well that Feuermann stopped the rehearsal and asked Mr. Ormandy, "What am I supposed to do after that?"[121]

> He was, well in a humorous manner, I think alluding to the fact that it was going to be difficult to do much more than I had achieved with the horn. And for me, as a very young player at the time, for the great Feuermann to speak of my playing in that way was something that I treasured all the rest of my playing years and still do.[122]

As a young professional player, it was a high achievement to receive such a compliment from a distinguished artist.

At the conclusion of World War II, Mason Jones returned to the Philadelphia Orchestra to resume his position as principal horn. As Chambers was hired as a replacement for Jones, he was obligated to relinquish the position. Many worried this would create tension within the orchestra, but a fortuitous event happened in New York City that created another employment opportunity.

> It just so happened that year that Rudy Puletz left the [New York] Philharmonic section. All of a sudden, this problem with Philadelphia was somewhat self-contained in the fact that the management of the New York Philharmonic called Chambers up. He didn't have to play an audition, and he told me that they said

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[121] James Chambers, Interview by Martin Bookspan, Appendix B, 107.

[122] Ibid., 107.

> 'you are the person we want and don't be afraid to ask for money because we know who you are and what we are going to get.' So everything worked out.[123]

Consequently, in 1946 at the age of 26, Chambers moved to New York City to start a long-lived career with the New York Philharmonic.

Chambers performed as principal hornist with the New York Philharmonic from 1946 to 1969. He became known for his rich, resonant sound and passionate musicality, receiving praise from many of his colleagues. Legendary conductor, Leonard Bernstein said:

> You, Maestro Chambers, blew the nine Mahler Symphonies as I've never heard them blown. Of course you also blew Hindemith, intoned Brahms, caressed Ravel, whispered Debussy, made Stravinsky blaze and Shostakovich glow.[124]

He was able to captivate those around him with his artistic performances and could fill the room with a resonant tone.

> ...the sound of the horn is a color, let's say the color of the horn sound is green, when Chambers would play, the whole room would turn green. The sound would engulf everything. It would change the color of the sound of the orchestra. It wasn't being overpowering, it wasn't being a loud player, it was just the sound was so encompassing.[125]

Chambers was able to draw people into that sound and dazzle them with his performance ability.

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[123] Slocum, Interview by author, Appendix E, 148.

[124] Leonard Bernstein, letter to James Chambers, Appendix I, 184.

[125] Slocum, Interview by author, Appendix E, 149.

While he was known for being able to play loud, he was also able to perform delicate works with restraint.

> On the one hand,...he had this unbelievably big sound that was just gorgeous, but on the other hand he was a chameleon. He was able to play various styles of music exceptionally well.[126]

He knew when he should play out, but also when to blend and not overpower those instruments having more prominent lines.

**Figure 3.3: Photo of James Chambers within the orchestra. Photo courtesy of Robert Chambers.**

During this time, the orchestra's season was not a full 52-week season and many of the musicians were

[126] Ibid., 158.

required to find other ways to supplement their income. Several members of the orchestra, including Chambers, accepted recording dates in the various studios in New York City. Chambers enjoyed these commercial recording sessions because "...it was something that played off the severity of the Philharmonic."[127] He can be heard on records such as, *The Yellow Rose of Texas* (Philips Records), *Gold on Silk* (Columbia Records), and *Sinatra on Capitol* (Capitol Records).[128] Chambers also appeared on recordings with Doc Severinsen, Mitch Miller, and many others. After performing his first recording engagement he said:

> I thought this free-lance jingle music was really hard. I later found out that they had concerns for the part and that was why they had called me in the first place.[129]

During this time, he was also able to prepare a solo recording of horn repertoire, *James Chambers Plays the French Horn* (Grand Award Records), which inspired many students to play the horn and, subsequently, created the desire to study with Chambers.

Unfortunately, Chambers had health issues for most of his life. When he was a young boy he suffered from Rheumatic fever, which caused a heart murmur and plagued his health throughout his career. In 1960, he needed open-

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[127] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 4.
[128] Ibid., 4.
[129] Ibid., 4.

heart surgery and received a heart valve replacement, which was a risky procedure at that time. Following the surgery, other health issues arose such as hepatitis and a diminished lung capacity that affected his performance and teaching duties. Ultimately, Chambers realized he would not be able to accomplish as much as before.[130]

> In the old Carnegie Hall set-up, to leave the locker rooms you went down the hallway, down one set of stairs and up another set of stairs to get on the stage. I was walking with him to get on the stage from the locker room and he was very careful. I said to him "I notice that you did this in a very systematic way" and he said 'yes, I've played enough concerts where you sit down, the conductor comes out and turns around and starts conducting and I don't want to be even remotely out of breath when that happens.' When I look back on that I think that he was always aware that he had certain physical limitations that he had to keep track of. But when he played you would not have known he had any of those.[131]

He was aware of his limitations caused by health issues, and reluctantly made the difficult decision to retire from playing in 1969. After Chambers retired from the New York Philharmonic, he never played the horn again.[132]

Many in the Philharmonic were concerned with how Chambers would handle his retirement. He had options to teach at other universities, such as University of Michigan, but wanted to remain near the orchestra

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[130] R. Chambers, Interview by author, Appendix G, 172-173.

[131] Slocum, Interview by author, Appendix E, 157.

[132] M. Chambers Questionnaire, Appendix H, 178.

atmosphere.[133] Chambers was able to maintain his relationship with the New York Philharmonic by his appointment to full-time personnel manager.

> ...his position as personnel manager, a position he had while still playing in the orchestra, evolved into very much a full-time position in its own right.[134]

The personnel manager position had to be ratified by the members of the Philharmonic. As a testament to the overwhelming respect Chambers had among his colleagues, over 90 percent of the membership voted to award him this coveted position.[135] He was very humbled by this sentiment from the orchestra.

> Well, I know when the results of that vote were announced to me, I was just so pleased and found it almost impossible to believe that the sentiment of the orchestra was that strong in favor of me moving into that job. Because it's a very sensitive job and some members who were new in the orchestra did not know me that well and to me that was an overwhelming response and I was very grateful indeed.[136]

The job as personnel manager was delicate and complex and pulled Chambers in many different directions.

> I'm in a very tricky spot. I'm a member of the musicians' union, but I'm also a part of the management team. Sometimes I feel like I'm between two cymbals as they crash together.[137]

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[133] Ibid., 177.
[134] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 114.
[135] Slocum, Interview by author, Appendix E, 151.
[136] J. Chambers, Interview by Martin Bookspan, Appendix B, 108.
[137] Delany, "Philharmonic job."

The personnel manager had many responsibilities and duties to handle. Chambers once prepared a list for a presentation he gave to students about his job and realized everything he was required to do did not seem humanly possible.

> I start and stop all services of the orchestra, intervene to provide proper intermissions, etcetera. I do whatever has to be done to organize auditions because one of the primary roles of the personnel manager is to provide personnel whether it be by auditions, and arranging what is necessary there [for that process], or whether it's by [contacting] individuals as either extra personnel or substitutes for Philharmonic musicians who are ill or for some reason or another cannot play. It's my chore to look after attendance matters if they become a problem with members of the orchestra. I could go on and on, but that would get to sound like a drill sergeant and I don't look to myself that way and I hope I don't give that impression.[138]

Although Chambers was no longer playing the horn, his newly acquired position was complicated and required more of his time. However, he felt gratified about the service he provided to the Philharmonic as personnel manager.

> I have enjoyed it. A lot of very close friends of mine expressed concern, and I had some myself. When I stopped playing and moved into the personnel manager job, their concern was "how is he going to stand being away from the horn and not participating playing in the orchestra?" And I had similar thoughts to myself. But I was so rapidly challenged by the requirements of the job, and trying to do a good job, and trying to expand on the growing needs that were

[138] J. Chambers, Interview by Martin Bookspan, Appendix B, 109.

> being created for that position. That I found little time for any kind of nostalgia.[139]

Chambers held this position until 1987, just two years before his death.[140]

Concurrent to his position with the New York Philharmonic was his association with The Juilliard School as a member of the horn faculty. In addition, he conducted the orchestral repertoire class and ad hoc ensembles at Juilliard. Because of this experience accompanying the accolades, Chambers also had occasional opportunities to conduct the New York Philharmonic. When Zubin Mehta, music director with the New York Philharmonic from 1978 to 1990, was receiving medical treatment for an arm problem he asked Chambers to conduct the *Serenade, Op. 44* by Anton Dvorak during a concert in New York. The performance was well received and prompted Mehta to program the work again on a tour to Hong Kong. Chambers said, "Mr. Mehta insisted that I conduct it there, too. 'It's your piece,' he told me."[141]

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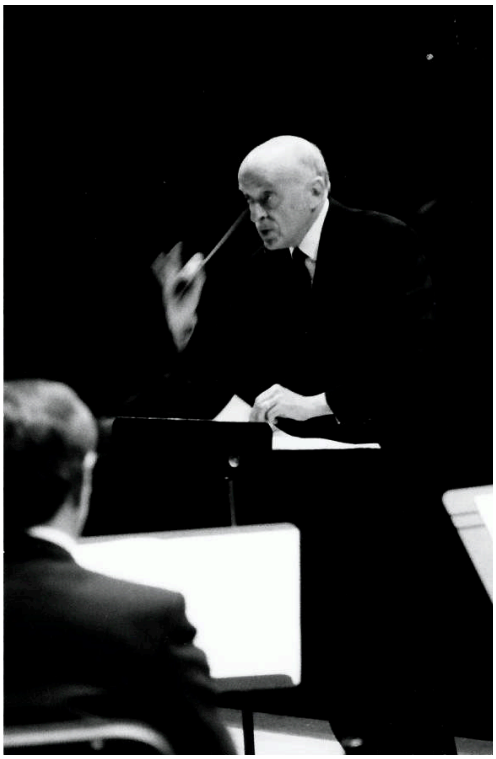
[139] Ibid., 109-110.
[140] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 115.
[141] Delany, "Philharmonic job."

**Fig. 3.4: Photo of James Chambers the conductor. Photo courtesy of Robert Chambers.**



While at Juilliard, Chambers taught about eight private students a year.[142] In addition, he also taught an orchestral repertoire class that was attended by his horn students as well as other brass, woodwind, and conducting students. For a period of time, he was also on the teaching faculty at the Manhattan School of Music.[143]

[142] J. Chambers, Interview by Martin Bookspan, Appendix B, 110.

[143] R. Chambers, Interview by author, Appendix G, 171.

**Figure 3.5: Photo of James Chambers working with a group of students. Photo courtesy of Robert Chambers.**

Chambers had a multi-faceted career: first as a performer, then teacher, and finally as personnel manager of the New York Philharmonic. Each facet of his career required different skills, all of which he handled with grace and passion.

> James Chambers loved music. He loved making music. He loved listening to music. There was something in him — something indefinable — that inextricably linked the very essence of who he was to that unexplainable, mysteriously, exhilaratingly emotional thing called music. To him, it was never just a job. It was his life.[144]

He passed on his love of music to many of his students, colleagues, and audiences with whom he made contact. Whether through performing, teaching, or as personnel manager, his passion for music was always apparent.

[144] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 114.

## CHAPTER 4

## PEDAGOGY

During James Chambers' tenure as principal horn, the New York Philharmonic produced many recordings and regularly aired live concerts on public radio.[145] Many young horn players could gain access to the radio broadcast performances and attempt to emulate the sound of the Philharmonic horn section. It was not surprising that many of them wanted to study with Chambers to learn how to play like him. Philip Farkas, principal horn with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (1936-1941, 1948-1960) and professor of horn at Indiana University (1960-1982), mentions in a letter:

> He [Chambers] was in a position to inspire us all with his superb horn playing, being on the air coast to coast every Sunday with the New York Philharmonic, and inspire us he did. A whole generation — maybe even more — have hurried to our practice rooms after hearing one of these concerts to 'see if we can do it like Jimmy just did' and, of course, we couldn't. But that was our goal just the same. So he inspired more than just his own students-who are legion; he

[145] In 1922 the New York Philharmonic became the first major orchestra to perform live on radio broadcasts. Recordings of these performances from 1922 to 1987 can be purchased on the New York Philharmonic's website. http://nyphil.org/buy/estore/itemDetail.cfm?itemnum=2&itemCategorynum=cds&itemdetail=yes [accessed 13 November 2011].

> inspired a whole continent of horn players – and a few thousand in Europe, too.[146]

Students wishing to emulate his sound and approach to horn playing would audition for either The Juilliard School or the Manhattan School of Music to vie for a coveted spot in his private studio. If accepted, his students were immersed in an intense program that had the possibility of leading them to productive careers as performers.

This chapter focuses on Chambers' pedagogy and is divided into the following categories: lesson structure, horn curriculum, musical editions, physical mechanics of performance (breathing, right hand position, the use of the B-flat horn), equipment, orchestral repertoire class, and his uncompromising aesthetic.

## Lesson Structure

Applied lessons with Chambers were 45-minutes in length. While shorter in time as compared to other studio teachers, his lesson encompassed a substantial amount of material.[147] During their lesson, students would cover two etudes, scales, and be given expectations for the next two

[146] Philip Farkas, letter to James Chambers, Appendix J, 185.

[147] David Wakefield, interview by author, 24 March 2010, Appendix F, 159.

etudes.[148] Chambers envisioned a path that he wanted students to take which would not overwhelm them with a vast assortment of issues. Rather, he would initially focus on an individual element such as articulation or tone. Once a student began to understand how to achieve a desired skill, Chambers would add additional techniques to practice.[149] Chambers was:

> By reputation, incredibly demanding, absolutely uncompromising, able to hear everything, and not willing to let anything slip by without comment.[150]

He was consistent and rarely strayed off subject, which made the atmosphere of the lesson intense.

Chambers was brutally honest with his assessment of a student's ability. If he thought students were not talented enough to make a career out of horn performance, he would inform them. Chambers stated:

> ...it's difficult sometimes to convince young people that they should give second thoughts to this idea of being a professional horn player. It's a tough racket and if you are not qualified and it's obvious on the outset there is going to be a long uphill fight with very slim chance of making the grade, then I say it's nonsense for a young person to spend 4 or 5 years of enthusiastic endeavor on a day to day basis when there is so little hope they can achieve what they hope to.[151]

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[148] Ibid., 164.
[149] Ibid., 160-161.
[150] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 112.
[151] J. Chambers, Question and Answer session, Appendix C, 121-122.

For those lacking the requisite talent, or work ethic, he felt that he was ultimately doing students a favor by being honest with them. He did not want them to exert a lot of energy and time into practice then not be able to achieve employment.[152]

Chambers approached his lessons in a manner similar to those he received from his mentor, Anton Horner. Chambers would have students imitate him as he sang.[153] Especially after Chambers retired from playing, the only way he could demonstrate phrasing, articulation, and tone was through singing. Similar to Horner, there was very little discussion between student and teacher about how to approach techniques or passages. He believed that students should attempt to solve a technical problem on their own, without discussing it.[154] He wanted to hear more playing and less analysis. In addition, one of Chambers' main interests was tone production. In an article about horn tone, Chambers stated:

> There has been a marked trend in recent years to over-emphasize the development of technique in horn playing. A good technique is, of course, a necessity, but a danger lurks in developing technique at the expense of the tone quality, for the outstanding quality of the horn lies in its unequalled depth and beauty of tone.[155]

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[152] R. Chambers, Interview by Author, Appendix G, 174.
[153] Wakefield, Interview by Author, Appendix F, 165.
[154] Ibid., 166.
[155] James Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," 11.

Consequently, much of Chambers' time was devoted to helping students create a sonorous sound similar to his own. Chambers' student David Wakefield states:

> ...there's a poetry to the way he [Chambers] played, a dignity to musicality. He had a wonderful way of communicating that approach. He was also exquisitely attentive to all detail about beauty of sound. The shape of the cut off, the attack, the shape of the note, never a burr, you couldn't have a burr at the beginning of an attack. You had to stay completely way from that. There were these things so emphatic and so detailed in making sure that every detail about your playing was just beautiful; really, really gorgeous. He was hugely influential.[156]

**Horn Curriculum**

James Chambers had a set curriculum that he desired students to follow, which was comparable to the material Horner used.[157] Chambers was more interested in tone production than facile technique.[158] Therefore, the methods he used were directed towards embouchure building exercises, musicality, and scales. He also used material, which he believed would give students complete mastery over the horn's expansive range. If a student could not master the range, he knew their chances of becoming a professional were limited.

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[156] Wakefield, Interview by Author, Appendix F, 165,

[157] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 1.

[158] J. Chambers, Question and Answer session, Appendix C, 135.

Several different method books, including Gabriel Pares' *Scales for French Horn*,[159] filled a large portion of Chambers' curriculum. Along with scales from the Pares book, students were expected to complete etudes from the Kopprasch etude books,[160] employing varying approaches. For example, the first etude in the book would be approached in four different manners: first, an octave lower, all slurred and fortissimo; second, an octave lower with the articulation as printed, sustained and fortissimo; third, as written with exaggerated dynamics; and finally the articulation as printed, and transposed to horn in A.[161] By performing each etude with varying parameters, students were ultimately gaining control of a particular register and learning to use firm articulation when appropriate for the circumstances. He believed that if students could play all of the etudes in the Kopprasch books well, they could play practically everything they needed to play as a professional.[162]

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[159] Gabriel Pares, *Scales for French Horn*, revised and edited by Harvey S. Whistler (Chicago: Rubank Inc., 1942).

[160] Kopprasch, *60 Studies*.

[161] Information from the files of Dr. Eldon Matlick provided by Jim Sours. This example shows four different approaches that James Chambers used with Jim Sours; it is possible that this etude could have more approaches depending on the need of the student.

[162] Slocum, Interview by Author, Appendix E, 152.

Once a student completed the Kopprasch etudes, Chambers had students work out of *40 Studies*[163] by Henri Kling, for continuing embouchure development and musicality.[164] He also used several different Gallay methods, which he believed would improve musicality. In particular, Gallay's book, *12 Studies, Op. 57*,[165] written expressly for the demands of a second horn player, was excellent for gaining control of large interval jumps throughout the registers.[166] In each lesson, students also performed from the Pares scale book. Chambers used these scales for developing varying types of articulation, especially staccato.[167]

His curriculum was drill training that focused on the fundamentals of articulation, intonation, and tone.[168] For several years, a student would concentrate solely on scales and two etudes each week. His student William Slocum states: [169]

> ...you did a lot of Kopprasch with Chambers. And when he studied with Horner that is what I refer to as the

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[163] Henri Kling, *40 Studies*, edited by James Chambers (New York: International Music Company, 1958).
[164] J. Chambers, Question and Answer session, Appendix C, 136.
[165] Gallay, 12 Studies, Op. 57, for Second Horn.
[166] J. Chambers, Question and answer session, Appendix C, 136.
[167] Ibid., 136.
[168] Wakefield, Interview by Author, Appendix F, 164.
[169] Slocum, Interview by Author, Appendix E, 154.

> "old conservatory approach," which was Pares' scales and the Kopprasch book. Only when you were practically a senior at Curtis would you get your hands on any music. And then you would play out of the Kaufmann *Twelve Solos for Horn*, which has little short pieces for horn. We think those are just little pieces for horn, but after spending 3 years on scales and etudes, that was like you had arrived at a new plateau.

Sometimes students would finish an etude over the period of a week, other times the same etude would be repeated over several weeks until Chambers thought the student had accomplished everything the etude could provide.[170] He also believed that in order to have a great high register a student needed to have a good low register. Therefore, if the low range did not sound good, students would spend the rest of the lesson working on that range.[171]

Students did not work on orchestral excerpts or solo literature in private lessons until much later after the fundamentals of technique had been established. A student gained knowledge of repertoire mainly through listening to recordings and score study.[172] In addition, many of the excerpts that typically would be covered in lessons were approached in Chambers' orchestral repertoire class.

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[170] Ibid., 152.
[171] Ibid., 154.
[172] Wakefield, Interview by Author, Appendix F, 164.

## Musical Editions

As noted earlier, during lessons, Chambers utilized the same combination of method books he had used when studying with Horner. He eventually created his own editions of these particular methods along with various solo materials he assigned for study. Chambers' edited methods and solos were published by International Music Company and remain available today. His editions include 11 etude books, 10 solo works, nine volumes of excerpt books, and one volume of horn trio music.[173] On this subject Chambers said, "Basically, I'm adding what I learned [from] my experiences playing and teaching, to what I had learned from Horner."[174]

Chambers also edited seven volumes of orchestral excerpt books, which are primarily dedicated to music from the 19th Century and early 20th Century. In addition, there are two specialized volumes with one dedicated to the symphonic works of Richard Strauss and the other dedicated to operatic excerpts and concert works of Richard Wagner. Selections in all of the excerpt books include practice material, before and after the excerpt to teach students the endurance necessary to make it through

[173] Anton, Reicha, *Six Trios, Op. 82, for Three Horns*, edited by James Chambers (New York: International Music Company, 1958).

[174] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 1.

the passage, dynamic changes, and tessitura changes.[175] All of the volumes also include selections for all four parts of the orchestral horn section, which encourages ensemble practice.[176]

In addition to excerpt books, Chambers expanded the solo repertoire for the instrument by editing several horn solos for publication that were not readily available. He also published editions of standard horn literature such as the four Mozart concerti and works by Dukas and Danzi. In regard to the Mozart concerti, Chambers' editions reflect the style and aesthetic of his training with Horner. Thus he would change patterns of slurred and staccato markings.[177]

## Physical Mechanics of Performance

### Breathing

The development of an efficient breathing foundation is essential for performers on wind instruments. Chambers believed, "...the sound of the horn was similar to [that of] the human voice, and breathing was important to

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[175] Doug Hill, *Collected Thoughts on Teaching and Learning, Creativity, and Horn Performance*, (Miami: Warner Bros. Publications, 2001) 159.

[176] Ibid., 159.

[177] Thurmond, "Reminiscences of Anton Horner," 63.

singers, thus being [equally] important to horn players."[178] The location of breathing within the musical phrase and how the air was released through the phrase was of concern to Chambers. He notes:

> A strong supporting air column is to tone as the foundation of a building is to its super structure. The pressure of the wind column must be unremitting – a constant steady flow. The habit of using individual puffs of wind for different notes in a phrase is a deadly musical disease. The wind column must be controlled by the diaphragm, passing through a relaxed throat directly into the instrument.[179]

The use of a well-supported, continuous air column can help resolve issues of poor articulation, tone production, and note fractures.

Chambers was specific on where he wanted students to breathe. He would think about how a passage would be portrayed musically and then would develop a plan for that music, even if it meant breathing in unorthodox places.[180] It was important to Chambers that the air column was intense enough to compensate for the resistance of sudden changes of valve combination lengths. For instance, William Slocum relates that when performing the second movement solo from *Symphony No. 3 in F major, Op. 90* by Johannes Brahms, Chambers "...would have way too much air moving, not just enough, but way too much air moving in

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[178] Slocum, Interview by Author, Appendix E, 153.
[179] J. Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," 12.
[180] Slocum, Interview by Author, Appendix E, 154.

the horn so it covered all the valve combinations"[181] as he moved through the ornamental turns. Chambers thought through all the possible scenarios, effectively using his air to help create desired sounds.

Chambers believed his students should perform with a sense of fearlessness. Though keenly aware that professional musicians encounter some measure of performance anxiety, they must take risks and play with confidence. In no small matter, effectively controlling one's ability to inhale and exhale aides the professional wind musician. According to Chambers:

> I...was at that time carrying on a tradition which had been started by my teacher, Anton Horner, who was himself for 28 years the solo horn with the Philadelphia Orchestra and who turned out many, many fine horn players ...many of them tried as much as possible to carry on his teaching...
>
> I think it's true that the school of horn teaching that I espouse is perhaps not fearless, because the player certainly does feel some fear, but we try to not let that show in our playing. It's based on a continuous stream of air on which all kinds of expression, articulation and so forth, are played and sometimes requires a great deal of courage because if you are going to produce something noteworthy, no pun intended, you have to be courageous and bite the bullet and go for it. And if once in a while you miss, there is no place to hide.[182]

As a former principal horn player, he knew the anxiety that his students would face should they become

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[181] Ibid., 150.

[182] J. Chambers, Interview by Bookspan, Appendix B, 106.

professional musicians. Chambers believed some amount of nervousness was good, but he had experience with students whose nerves were so bad it affected their breath control and inhibited their ability to perform. For those students, he recommended they avoid musical situations that would cause them to fail. For instance, if they were too nervous to perform the solo passages in the principal part, they should not audition for that position.[183]

**Right Hand Position**

Chambers once said, "...50% of horn playing is taking place where you can't see it."[184] He was referring to the right hand position in the bell of the horn. In general, Chambers' hand position was slightly different than other hornists. His hand placement was more clockwise (palm facing upwards) and more cupped.[185] He believed the right hand:

> ...should be inserted well into the bell resting against the outside of the throat. The full length of the fingers are never moved from this position; only the palm bends.[186]

[183] J. Chambers, Question and answer, Appendix C, 133.
[184] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 2.
[185] Ibid., 2.
[186] J. Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," 12.

The fingers should be flat against the metal, never curled. This allowed him to present the audience with a full, open tone that had no fuzzy quality.

For many students the placement of the right hand in the bell is a hard concept to grasp. In many cases, students fail to understand the importance of correct hand placement in the bell and how it can be used to help control the instrument. However, correct right hand placement in the bell affects the pitch of the instrument, increases stability of upper harmonic partials, and affects the tone of the instrument. Chambers noted:

> One of the most important factors to be considered in the production of tone on the horn is the use of the right hand...A raspy and unclear tone results from the player's hand being held too close to the outside of the bell. In this position, not only the entire hand must be moved in order to control the tone but the hand also closes the passages, thus obstructing the tone and cause it to sound muffled.[187]

Chambers believed the right hand was not an inanimate object just placed in the bell; on the contrary, it affected every aspect of horn playing. The subject of hand placement in the bell was always present in lessons and was not a subject that was fixed in one lesson and then never spoken about again.

According to Chambers, "...the hand changes position with regard to playing; loud or soft, ascending or

[187] J. Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," 11.

descending, and to temper the intonation."[188] Therefore, the right hand is constantly moving in regard to what the hornist is playing. Chambers wrote:

> For a warm lyrical passage such as the introduction to *Oberon Overture*, the palm is bent inwards the desired distance – always being careful to allow an unobstructed passage for the tone. For a brilliant passage like the Siegfried horn call, the palm is straightened to a position almost in line with the fingers. This method provides the player with an extremely flexible technique for gradations from completely closed to completely open.[189]

Different musical situations require the right hand to be slightly modified. The movement of the right hand should be gradual, as a hornist does not want sudden changes in the tone of the instrument.[190] For intonation adjustments, opening the right hand slightly will cause the pitch to rise. Conversely, closing the hand slowly will lower the pitch. Chambers was constantly surveying his students' hand position in order to help them achieve the best tone and intonation.

## The B-flat Horn

As stated previously, Anton Horner introduced the double horn to the United States. The new instrument gave horn players the ability to exploit the assets of both the

[188] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 2.
[189] J. Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," 12.
[190] Reynolds advertisement, Appendix M, 193.

F horn and the B-flat horn in one instrument. The instrument, according to Chambers, "...was a happy combination, possessing the virtues of the other horns with none of the defects."[191] Chambers believed the double horn was an advantage for future generations of horn players and said the double horn "...enables the player to use the virtues of both instruments effectively as well as to circumvent their weaknesses."[192]

The double horn combines the single F horn and the single B-flat horn with the connection of a valve operated by the left thumb. Dependent on whether this lever was depressed or not, the airway would divert into the F pitch channel or the B-flat pitch channel. Each particular side of the double horn offers distinct advantages and disadvantages. Since the F horn offers a longer set of tubing, pitched a perfect fourth lower than the Bb horn, Chambers believed the F horn:

> ...is capable of producing the full, rich tone so much desired by most players, but it also becomes quite stuffy and difficult to play securely in the high register.[193]

The B-flat horn's tubing is substantially shorter in length, which caused Chambers to believe the instrument:

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[191] J. Chambers, "Horn Tone and Technique," 11.
[192] J. Chambers, "Playing the Double Horn," 11.
[193] Ibid., 11.

> ...is at it's best in the high register where it requires less effort, but there is a noticeable loss of tone quality in its middle and lower registers.[194]

Another advantage of the shorter B-flat instrument is that when negotiating notes near the top of the treble clef and beyond, the harmonic series has wider spaced harmonic partials than the F horn. This offers the advantage of additional pitch security and accuracy for the performer along with a clearer tone.

Although the two different sides are referred to as the F side and the B-flat side, the instrument as a whole is considered in the key of F with the performer learning another set of fingerings for the pitches on the B-flat horn. This ultimately provides the performer with a set of alternative fingerings. Chambers' main concern, like Anton Horner, was finding a common location where one should switch from the F side of the instrument to the B-flat side.

Presently, the majority of beginning horn students are taught to engage the thumb valve, thus changing sides of the instrument at g-sharp'. This is considered a convenient location since the fingering is common for both instruments. Horner, however, wishing to use the F side in a higher tessitura, taught his students that the valve

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[194] Ibid., 11.

should be engaged at d''. Slightly different from Horner, Chambers believed that the location to switch sides of the horn was dictated by the musical situation. He did not believe in one set note for the students to engage the thumb valve, though his students were never allowed to switch before c''. This concept was something he strongly believed and he was unwilling to let his students do any other way.

> I remember his not so gently striking my thumb with a pencil when I pushed the thumb valve down at G-sharp (too low). He had told me for several months "don't use the thumb valve" and I did, so he felt a little bit of pain needed to accompany his admonition. [195]

Although this type of correction was unconventional, it illustrates his unwavering ideals on switching to the B-flat side. Chambers wanted to preserve the sound of the F horn while using the B-flat horn to facilitate upper register performance.

In Chambers' opinion, "...the nodal point for making the change from one horn to the other is on c'', c-sharp'', or d''."[196] Above these notes, students were to use the B-flat side, below them the F side. Two factors determined where he thought the change from one side to the other should occur. First, he believed, "...the fingering pattern dictated by the passage itself

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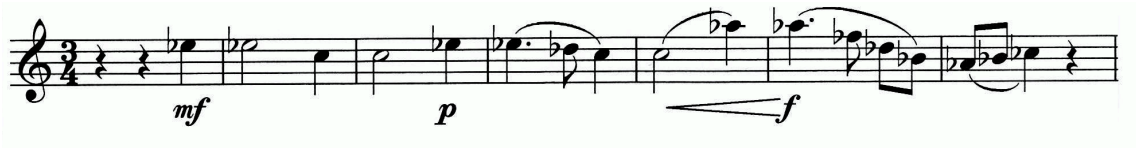
[195] Wakefield, Interview by Author, Appendix F, 162.
[196] J. Chambers, "Playing the Double Horn," 11.

determines the particular note on which the change should be made,"[197] and second, horn players should "...play ascending intervals by shortening the length of tubing used on the higher note."[198] To determine where to switch, students had to study the passage to see which factor needed to be followed.

In his article "Playing the Double Horn," Chambers explains where he changes to the B-flat and F sides with three musical examples along with reasons why he believed these were proper places to switch the side of horn.

**Example 4.1: Symphony in D minor, Movement II. Allegretto by César Franck, mm. 29-35.**[199]

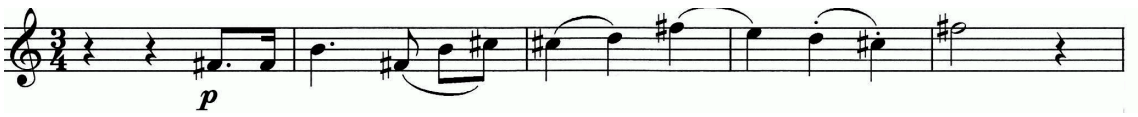



Example 4.1 is from the second movement of *Symphony in D minor* by César Franck. In this example, Chambers had students begin on the B-flat horn then change to the F horn on c'' in measure 30. Chambers believed c'' had better tone quality on the F horn and by switching back to the B-flat horn when the student ascends to e-flat'' on beat three in measure 31, the length of tube is shortened,

[197] Ibid., 11-12.
[198] Ibid., 12.
[199] Ibid., 11.

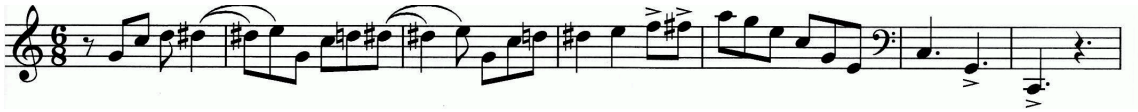
which reduced the chance of fracturing or completely missing the note.

**Example 4.2: Nocturne, from Midsummer Night's Dream, Op. 61, Con moto tranquillo by Felix Mendelssohn, mm. 1-4. Transposed from Horn in E to Horn in F.**[200]




Example 4.2 is from the Nocturne in the *Overture to A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Op. 61 by Felix Mendelssohn. Chambers wanted students to switch to the B-flat horn on c-sharp'' in measure 2 because the passage is ascending. By switching at this point, the length of tubing is shortened making the note less prone to split or miss.

**Example 4.3: Till Eulenspiegel, Op. 28 by Richard Strauss, mm. 6-12.**[201]



Example 4.3 is from the opening horn solo in *Till Eulenspiegel* by Richard Strauss. By following Chambers' logic, the initial switch to the B-flat side would occur at d'' in measure 6, allowing for successively shorter tubing as the notes ascend. This example also illustrates an alternative fingering in measure 10 that worked for

[200] Ibid., 11.
[201] Ibid., 11.

Chambers and many of his students, yet is not common practice. In this example, he recommended an additional switch to the B-flat horn on e' in measure 10, immediately returning to the open F horn for the conclusion of the passage. He believed the note e' in this setting was a more secure note when played on the B-flat horn. The traditional way of playing this passage is to rely on the F side of the instrument when playing the C major arpeggio, allowing all the notes to be performed on the open tube. Chambers maintained that by fingering e' in measure 10 on the B-flat side, the note would be more secure as the hornist would not be solely relying on the lips to place every note; instead the hornist would have the sudden B-flat horn fingering as insurance for attack accuracy.

There is a perception by some hornist regarding the B-flat side of the horn being more secure and stable when compared to the F side of the double horn. Moreover, some teachers recommend their students rely on the B-flat side to a greater degree. Chambers was against this style of teaching, as he believed the sole use of the B-flat horn hampered students progress. While it allows for greater pitch accuracy due to the widely spaced harmonics in a specific region of the B-flat horn as compared to the F

horn, it deprives a player from using the B-flat horn as insurance for challenging passages or when the player is fatigued. In an interview, Chambers stated:

> People think the B-flat horn is more secure but my contention is that it isn't really. The danger is if you play the B-flat horn all the time the embouchure is not developed to the same extent as it would be if you have been through a selection process. The process of selection is a learning process in which you have to learn how to produce pitches and make intervals. The player must refine the control of his embouchure so that he is in total control of the situation and not hampered by a lack of knowledge of the F horn. When you are playing exclusively on the B-flat horn you are depriving yourself of a safety margin. If you play something on the B-flat horn that you would ordinarily play on the F horn and on a particular day you're tired or must play an especially difficult piano entrance, that's the time to go to the B-flat horn. Use the B-flat horn as insurance.[202]

He knew not everyone agreed with his opinion on this topic. However, he also knew difficult passages could require more use of the B-flat horn. Ultimately, he desired students know both sides of the horn well, so they could have several options and be flexible to whatever challenges were presented.

When dealing with young students, Chambers believed they should play on a double horn early, but should be readily encouraged to explore the use of the F side of the instrument.[203] By playing on the F side for some time, young

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[202] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 2.
[203] Reynolds advertisement, Appendix M, 193.

students would learn to use more air to overcome the resistance of blowing through a longer length of tubing. Consequently, when they start adding the B-flat fingerings, it will seem easier because the shorter tubing creates less resistance. Also, by waiting longer to switch to the B-flat fingers, students are more apt to build a stronger embouchure early in their education.

The difference in tone between the F and B-flat sides are subtle and untrained ears may not perceive the variance. A note on the F-horn contains more harmonic partials when compared to the same note performed on the shorter B-flat horn. The resulting pitch is located higher within the overtone series of the F tube, creating a more complex spectrum of additional harmonic partials in the given note. Compared to the Bb-horn, this same note is located lower in the B-flat tube harmonic series and allows for less composite harmonic overtones on the given note when compared to the F tube. The additional overtone partials on the F horn create a subtle difference in richness that trained ears may discern.

Many horn players work hard to mask the change by keeping the tone as consistent as possible. However, Chambers was so aware of the nuances, he could immediately hear the difference. He said, “I’m constantly surprising

students by telling them, without looking, that they are playing B-flat horn."[204] He was always aware of this issue and never failed to catch a student who forgot to stay on the F side of the horn. Whether it was a student or a professional he was sensitive to the difference. Once, when he was manager of the New York Philharmonic, a rehearsal of Brahms's *Symphony No. 1 in C minor, Op. 68* was taking place. While listening to the horn solo in the fourth movement:

> He closed his eyes and listened intently as the solo was played, then a huge smile of gratification spread across his face. He looked up and said, 'That was beautiful, but, you know, it would have been even better if he had played it on the F-horn.'[205]

**Equipment**

As noted earlier, Chambers performed exclusively on a Conn 8-D with the exception of a short time when he worked with the Roth Reynolds Instrument Company to develop an instrument based on the 8-D design. The 8-D is a large bore, large throat horn, usually in nickel silver, and is capable of producing the dark sound that Chambers desired. The C. G. Conn Company produced a brass version of the instrument for a limited time, called the 28-D.

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[204] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 2.
[205] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 113.

In addition to the large horn, Chambers also advocated the use of a large mouthpiece with a deep funnel cup and a large bore throat entering the shank. He worked with the Giardinelli Mouthpiece Company to develop the mouthpiece series. This model series was designated as the C series, named for Chambers. It featured a deep funnel cup and was available in many throat-opening sizes, called bores. If he was unsatisfied with a student's tone, he would take account of the student's mouthpiece. If the resulting sound was particularly dull, he would request them to change to a larger size Giardinelli mouthpiece. However, he would never ask them to use a larger mouthpiece than they were capable of handling.[206] The large dimension mouthpieces he recommended required much more air and stamina from the player. Though the mouthpiece had less resistance, because of the larger cup and throat size, it required greater air direction and intensity to create a big resonant tone.

The largest version of the C series mouthpieces was a C1. Typical mouthpiece sizing systems use a series of numbers based on wire drill bit sizes, typically 1-18; the lower the number, the larger the throat hole entering the mouthpiece shank. While the substitution of a larger

[206] Wakefield, Interview by author, Appendix F, 168.

mouthpiece was not a total panacea to solving a substandard tone, it was an item of great interest to Chambers. It even put one student in a particularly embarrassing position with his teacher. While Chambers was giving a lesson to the student and was unsatisfied with the student's sound, he looked at the mouthpiece and was surprised to see him using the large C1. The student believed this was an opportunity to have some fun with his teacher, and joked that he had a bored out C1 mouthpiece at home. Intrigued, Chambers asked him to bring it to the next lesson. In the next lesson, the student "evidently had a good bit of explaining to do [since] he had no bored out C1 after all...."[207]

**Orchestral Repertoire Class**

The orchestral repertoire class that Chambers taught at the Juilliard School was a weekly class of woodwind and brass sections with a pianist covering the string parts.[208] The inspiration to teach an orchestral repertoire class in this manner stemmed from his own studies at the Curtis Institute of Music where he took similar classes taught by

[207] Meier, "James Chambers Remembered," 113.
[208] Wakefield, "James Chambers," 116.

Marcel Tabuteau and Sol Caston.[209] His class was offered to students by invitation only,[210] and Chambers' invitation was highly prized by many of the students, as it helped prepare them for a future as orchestral musicians.

The repertoire selected would reflect the upcoming season's program by the New York Philharmonic. The advantage of covering this literature in class and then having the opportunity to hear this same material regularly performed by the New York Philharmonic aided the students' understanding of appropriate performance tempi, phrasing, and performance style from a contextual knowledge of the repertoire.[211] Another valuable way Chambers would conduct this class was to draw from the richness of his experiences with the New York Philharmonic and the wealth of his expertise being under the baton of some of the world's most famous conductors. Chambers would repeat various passages using different interpretations gleaned from these various conductors; this gave students a wider knowledge of acceptable approaches to performing the literature. Chambers said:

> The thought is simply that the students at Juilliard sometimes avail themselves of the opportunity to attend a Philharmonic rehearsal or concert and when a

[209] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 3.
[210] Julie Landsman, Interview by Author, 19 February 2011.
[211] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 3.

> student hears a spectacular passage, or something obviously difficult, they'll have some idea of tempo, and phrasing. The student will know that they will have to seek out the part. This makes for a learning experience, everything ties together.[212]

In class, Chambers was able to focus on musical difficulties, balance, intonation, and ensemble playing.[213]

Chambers experienced many conductors in his tenure with the New York Philharmonic.[214] Moreover, Chambers was able to illustrate to his students the various interpretations of tempo and phrasing, by notable conductors. Chambers would repeat a musical passage several times and show the ways it could be conducted by different conductors he experienced with the Philharmonic during his 23 years there.[215] He would not inform students how he would conduct certain passages; but preferred to continually surprise them, because he believed it would reinforce the more difficult passages.[216]

**Uncompromising Aesthetic**

Chambers' pedagogy may be perceived as uncompromising. He followed a singular approach to horn

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[212] Ibid., 3.
[213] Ibid., 3.
[214] List of Conductors with the New York Philharmonic from 1946-1969, Appendix N, 198.
[215] Wakefield, "James Chambers," 116.
[216] J. Chambers, Interview by Silberschlag, 3.

performance and was steadfast in this belief. Little explanation was given during lessons, therefore it may have been difficult for some of his students to understand his particular reasoning as to why he recommended a particular approach. His philosophy was if a student came to study with him then he fully expected the student to learn to sound like him.[217] However, not all students fit into this particular model or agreed with everything Chambers espoused. He was resolute in his methodology, so those who did not meet expectations or questioned the reasoning found their period in his studio difficult.

The aesthetic by which Chambers instructed is sometimes referred to as the "New York" style of horn playing. Chambers wanted his students to achieve a dark sound, with control of dynamics. As noted earlier, the large-throated bell dimension of the instrument, the nickel silver alloy used in its construction, and the choice of a large deep funnel mouthpiece made possible an intense sound with great projection, while creating a composite tone rich in lower overtones. To some, this style is perceived as loud or overpowering. One of Chambers students stated:

> If you are playing a 1-bore mouthpiece on a Conn 8-D in a woodwind quintet, you're going to obliterate

[217] Wakefield, Interview by Author, Appendix F, 160.

> them...if I played that aggressively on a Conn 8-D with a 1-bore mouthpiece, the members of the group might think I am trying to destroy their efforts.[218]

The choice of such equipment tends to amplify one's sound, resulting in more difficulty performing softer dynamics and blending in more delicate groups, such as the woodwind quintet. While many of Chambers' former students adapted his basic philosophy, some made equipment changes in order to adjust to particular performance situations. Nonetheless, Chambers' approach to sound production, articulation, and musical phrasing has been retained.

[218] Slocum, Interview by Author, Appendix E, 149.

# CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This biographical study has served to document the life, career, and pedagogy of James Chambers. As the principal hornist with the New York Philharmonic for 23 years, and professor of horn at The Juilliard School for over 40 years, Chambers was in an ideal position to inspire many generations of horn students.

Chambers' career spanned three stages: performer, teacher, and personnel manager for the New York Philharmonic. He performed with the Pittsburgh Symphony for one year, the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra for five years, and the New York Philharmonic for 23 years. He can be heard on a commercial solo recording; *James Chambers plays the French Horn*, and on several jazz and commercial recordings. Many people, including his children, say Chambers' sound was so distinctive that it was unmistakably recognized.

He stopped playing the horn entirely in 1969 because of health reasons. Fortunately, he was able to continue his association with the music faculty at The Juilliard School as a teacher, and remain with the New York Philharmonic as their personnel manager. The personnel

manager assignment kept him immersed in the performance realm and offered new challenges that kept him busy.

As a teacher, the foundation upon which Chambers based his pedagogy was ingrained by an approach to horn playing that came to the United States from Germany. He was influenced by the style of Friedrich Gumpert, which had been passed directly to his teacher, Anton Horner. Taking what he learned from Horner, Chambers inspired and influenced succeeding generations of horn players, who later established their own distinguished careers as teachers and performers. Chambers' students have manifested his approach through their performing and teaching.

As a successful applied teacher, he worked closely with students who were subsequently offered employment in major orchestras, chamber ensembles, and universities across the country. His son wrote:

> He [Chambers] was grounded in the disciplines and rigors of classical musical training. He was keenly aware of the needs of all wind instrumentalists who aspired to orchestral playing, and developed his orchestral repertoire class out of that awareness and commitment to those needs. His philosophy of horn playing was based, fundamentally, on what he believed were the important qualities of the horn constituting its strengths and distinguishing qualities. He was committed to sustaining control of the entire register and range that the horn could command, choosing deeper cupped mouthpieces and favoring the F horn whenever possible.... His discipline as an instrumentalist was matched by a quality of

> fearlessness and complete commitment to the fullest measure of expression called for in any score.[219]

Though his approach at times was uncompromising, his former students speak highly of his pedagogy and how they incorporated his pedagogy into their playing and teaching.

He retired from performing in 1969, but still taught horn at The Juilliard School until his death on January 1, 1989. At his memorial service, many former students returned to offer their respect and honor the memory of their mentor. The memorial service included music performed by present and former students, as well as his colleagues.[220] In an article following the event, his student David Wakefield said:

> His [Chambers] significance in influencing style and approach to horn playing are monumental, but his life of amazing self-control and discipline, his example of preparedness, and his demand for the best effort from other musicians, and his respect for the individual, touched hundreds around him.[221]

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[219] M. Chambers questionnaire, Appendix H, 183.

[220] Program of James Chambers' Memorial Service at The Juilliard School, 11 January 1989, Appendix O, 208.

[221] Wakefield, "A Life Remembered," 117.

**Figure 5.1: Photo of James Chambers playing his horn. Photo courtesy of Robert Chambers.**

## Suggestions for Further Research

Given their direct influence on James Chambers, further study about the careers of Friedrich Gumpert and Anton Horner would be useful. Both championed advances in equipment with regard to the use of appropriate crooks and the use of the new double horn as their primary instrument, in addition to the development of a distinctive pedagogy and aesthetic. Gumpert influenced

several additional horn players who immigrated to the United States. The students passed on the principles of this German tradition, learned in Leipzig, to their students in America. Horner created the model of the modern orchestral horn section, and consulted with manufacturers to improve the design of the double horn. Additional study concerning both of these men would benefit musicians and historians pursuing additional knowledge about the history of horn pedagogy and the instrument.

Further biographical research on other significant horn teachers and performers of the mid-20th century should be explored, as their influences have molded the present generation of horn players. The primary source of information about these people will come from interviews of former students, colleagues, and family members. Therefore, this information should be gathered and published before knowledge from first-hand experiences is lost. Significant horn teachers and performers include Mason Jones, Max Pottag, Wendell Hoss, Ifor James, Eric Penzel, Roland Berger, Domenico Ceccarossi, Lucien Thevet and Louis Stout. Much can be learned from studying many of these great pedagogues of the horn.

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# APPENDIX A

## IRB Approval Letter

The University of Oklahoma®

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANT PROTECTION - IRB

**IRB Number:** 13571
**Approval Date:** September 09, 2011

September 09, 2011

Genevieve Leigh Craig
Music
500 W. Boyd Street, CMC 138
Norman, OK 73019

**RE: James Chambers: His Life, Career, and Pedagogy**

Dear Ms. Craig:

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I have reviewed and granted expedited approval of the above-referenced research study. This study meets the criteria for expedited approval category 6,7. It is my judgment as Chairperson of the IRB that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected; that the proposed research, including the process of obtaining informed consent, will be conducted in a manner consistent with the requirements of 45 CFR 46 as amended; and that the research involves no more than minimal risk to participants.

This letter documents approval to conduct the research as described:

Survey Instrument Dated: August 24, 2011 Family interview questions
Survey Instrument Dated: August 24, 2011 Student interview questions
Other Dated: August 24, 2011 Recruitment email and letter script
Protocol Dated: August 24, 2011
IRB Application Dated: August 24, 2011
Consent form - Subject Dated: August 24, 2011
Consent form - Other Dated: August 24, 2011 Information sheet

As principal investigator of this protocol, it is your responsibility to make sure that this study is conducted as approved. Any modifications to the protocol or consent form, initiated by you or by the sponsor, will require prior approval, which you may request by completing a protocol modification form. All study records, including copies of signed consent forms, must be retained for three (3) years after termination of the study.

The approval granted expires on September 08, 2012. Should you wish to maintain this protocol in an active status beyond that date, you will need to provide the IRB with an IRB Application for Continuing Review (Progress Report) summarizing study results to date. The IRB will request an IRB Application for Continuing Review from you approximately two months before the anniversary date of your current approval.

If you have questions about these procedures, or need any additional assistance from the IRB, please call the IRB office at (405) 325-8110 or send an email to irb@ou.edu.

Cordially,

Donald Baker, Ph.D.
Vice Chair, Institutional Review Board

1816 West Lindsey, Suite 150 Norman, Oklahoma 73069 PHONE: (405) 325-8110

*Ltr_Prot_Fappv_Exp*

## APPENDIX B

James Chambers Interview with Martin Bookspan
New York Philharmonic Intermission, WQXR 1985, Part 1

Transcribed by author on November 22, 2010 from CD
received from the son of James Chambers, Robert Chambers

**Bookspan:** In the time remaining for today's New York Philharmonic broadcast we're pleased to present a special post concert tribute to a member of the New York Philharmonic who's career with the orchestra is especially remembered for the masterful way he in which he performed the principal horn parts in the Philharmonic's great Mahler recordings and concerts of the late 1940's, through the 1950's and into the 1960's, as well as on many other memorable programs. I refer to James Chambers, principal horn of the New York Philharmonic from 1946 through 1969 and then for the past 16 years, the personnel manager of the New York Philharmonic. Jimmy Chambers is retiring at the end of the current season, after one of the most illustrious 40-year careers of any member of the New York Philharmonic. In just a moment he will be joining us here in our broadcast studio to reminisce about some of the highlights of his Philharmonic career.

Jimmy, I've already told the audience, but tell us it's not true, you're not retiring at the end of the season are you?

**Chambers:** Well, the time has come and it is true. I think 40 years is quite enough time.

**Bookspan:** Well, the 40 years seem to have flown by at least for those of us who have had the privilege of knowing you Jim.

**Chambers:** Well, likewise they've flown for me. But I'm not completely retiring in the sense that I continue my activities and will continue to teach at the Juilliard School.

**Bookspan:** And I'm sure we'll see you here in Avery Fischer Hall from time to time.

**Chambers:** Oh, I'll wander in I'm sure.

**Bookspan:** Great.

Jimmy, one of the present members of the horn section of the orchestra has told us that you single handily changed the way many of the horn players from the 50's, 60's, 70's and 80's approach playing the horn. He called you the first of the "fearless" horn players and as I understand it, until you came along, orchestral hornists invariably played it safe by holding back the air between the notes in a phrase. You would not do that. Instead you developed a way to move the valves and control your breath simultaneously. Have I explained that in any understandable way do you think?

**Chambers:** Well I think that is basically understandable for the general lay people who are not involved with playing an instrument. But I think it's a little heavier stress on my role. I'm simply and was at that time carrying on a tradition which had been started by my teacher, Anton Horner, who was himself for 28 years the solo horn with the Philadelphia Orchestra and who turned out many, many fine horn players as his students and many of them tried as much as possible to carry on his teaching. And of course I'm sure we amplified in our own individual way. I feel I did in some measure.

I think it's true that the school of horn teaching that I espouse is perhaps not fearless because the player certainly does feel some fear but we try to not let that show in our playing. It's based on a continuous stream of air on which all kind of expression, articulation and so forth are played and sometimes requires a great deal of courage because if you are going to produce something noteworthy, no pun intended, you have to be courageous and bite the bullet and go for it. And if once in a while you miss, there is no place to hide. When you are playing solo horn everyone in the hall will know it.

**Bookspan:** I want to come back to that fearless aspect in just a moment, but you mention Horner and the Philadelphia Orchestra, and you for a few seasons before coming to New York were the solo horn player of the Philadelphia Orchestra. I did not know until we sat down at these microphones that you were the solo horn in the Piatigorsky recording with the Philadelphia Orchestra of the Dvorak Concerto. And of course the second theme at the opening orchestral tutti of that has a gorgeous horn solo at the

beginning. I would like the audience to hear that…[recording plays]

Now, Jim, you, I'm sure, would let this just pass without mentioning something that I've heard, and I want you to corroborate it. Emanuel Feuermann came to Philadelphia to play the Dvorak Cello Concerto and at the first rehearsal after your solo, Feuermann turned to Ormandy, asked that the rehearsal be stopped, and then asked, "What am I supposed to do after that?" True or false?

**Chambers:** Well, that's true. The horn makes the opening statement of the theme, which is the main theme of the cello solo. He was, well in a humorous manner, I think, alluding to the fact that it was going to be difficult to do much more than I had achieved with the horn, and for me, as a very young player at the time, for the great Feuermann to speak of my playing in that way was something that I treasured all the rest of my playing years and still do.

**Bookspan:** Now, to that fearless aspect of the horn. The horn of course is a notoriously unreliable instrument. Am I overstating it if I say that?

**Chambers:** No, I don't think so.

**Bookspan:** Very difficult to control. And so as you said when a horn cracks, everyone knows it. What did that mean to you in all the years in being in perhaps the most exposed position as a member of a symphony orchestra?

**Chambers:** A difficult question to answer. My view of the role of a solo horn player in an orchestra like the Philharmonic is that you must present the best possible product to the orchestra, to the audience. And if I was going to do that, in order to express what I wanted to express, I just had to go ahead and take risks. And that's where the fearless aspect comes in. It's not really fearless because sometimes we're trembling when we are taking these risks. But I tell you the gratification that comes because of risks taken, the achievement is more than it could have been without the risk then it's something to treasure. It's something that when you leave a concert you say, "well I played almost as well as I would have liked too." And that is a rare achievement for a horn player to walk out of a concert and have that close of a feeling to being near the ideal for himself.

**Bookspan:** Jimmy, of course, in the many recordings of the symphonic repertoire in which you participated with the New York Philharmonic, do you have any particular favorite among them all?

**Chambers:** That's another difficult question of course. I don't know if I have any particular favorite. Of course I'm fond of Mahler as most horn players. Always enjoyed playing it and felt a sense of gratification. I think that one of the things we recorded that I felt was one of the best representations of my playing was *Kindertotenlieder* of Mahler. It requires a great expressivity, great control of dynamic range. And first of all, I love the piece, I love its substance, I don't like its subject matter because it's unhappy, but that's life.

**Bookspan:** I believe Jennie Tourel is the mezzo.

**Chambers:** That's correct. I have always cherished that recording.

**Bookspan:** Jimmy, I'm told that when you decided to give up your active performing career and apply for the position of Philharmonic personnel manager, a position that had to have the approval of the orchestra members themselves, that you won something like a 90 percent vote approval from your colleagues. What a tribute, that's I guess, almost unheard of in the orchestra world.

**Chambers:** Well I know when the results of that vote were announced to me I was just so pleased and found it almost impossible to believe that the sentiment of the orchestra was that strong in favor of me moving into that job because it's a very sensitive job and some members who were new in the orchestra did not know me that well and to me that was an overwhelming response and I was very grateful indeed.

**Bookspan:** Believe it or not the time has evaporated up from under us Jimmy and I hate to let you go. I will do so only on condition that you come back and we continue our conversation during the intermission next week.

**Chambers:** I'd be delighted.

James Chambers Interview with Martin Bookspan
New York Philharmonic Intermission, WQXR 1985, Part 2

**Bookspan:** During the intermission of this broadcast concert by the New York Philharmonic, I'm delighted once again to welcome James Chambers, for many years the remarkable solo horn player of the New York Philharmonic, for the past 16 years, the personnel manager of the orchestra. And sad to say, 1985-1986 season will be Jimmy Chambers last official season with the New York Philharmonic. Jimmy in our conversation last week, we just touched on your role as personnel manager of the orchestra. What exactly are the responsibilities and duties of the orchestra personnel manager?

**Chambers:** Marty, you love to ask difficult questions to respond to. I remember several meetings of the American Symphony Orchestra League; youngsters who were looking for careers in management, and we had seminars and had been asked on several occasions to speak to them. In preparation for this meeting one year, I started to write down what all the duties of the personnel manager were. And I had complete one long page and got half way through the second, and thought to myself and later told these young people, "This is just silly, because nobody can do all that." That gives you an idea of the range and complexity of the duties of the personnel manager. To get more specific, I start and stop all services of the orchestra, intervene to provide proper intermissions, etcetera. I do whatever has to be done to organize auditions because one of the primary roles of the personnel manager is to provide personnel whether it be by auditions, and arranging what is necessary there [for that process], or whether it's by [contacting] individuals as either extra personnel or substitutes for Philharmonic musicians who are ill or for some reason or another cannot play. It's my chore to look after attendance matters if they become a problem with members of the orchestra. I could go on and on, but that would get to sound like a drill sergeant and I don't look to myself that way and I hope I don't give that impression.

**Bookspan:** Well, you have given the impression all these years of thoroughly enjoying the job, was that true, or are you a terrific actor?

**Chambers:** No, I have enjoyed it. A lot of very close friends of mine expressed concern, and I had some myself.

When I stopped playing and moved into the personnel manager job, their concern was "how is he going to stand being away from the horn and not participating playing in the orchestra?" And I had similar thoughts to myself. But I was so rapidly challenged by the requirements of the job, and trying to do a good job, and trying to expand on the growing needs that were being created for that position. That I found little time for any kind of nostalgia. Once in a while, if I hear over my monitor in my office I hear a performance and I hear a horn solo coming, I will turn it up, and there will be a little twinge. But I must say, I have never had a feeling "oh my god, I made a mistake, I should have stayed with it." But it must be understood also that from the very practical and honest stand point that I had some health problems that would have intervened and I knew that was coming. So it was a very pragmatic decision to be faced. So I have had no regrets. I have loved both phases of my career. And I will be very unhappy, though the decision has been entirely mine, and it's a timely one, to make that final step away. I will try to find some way to keep a thread going.

**Bookspan:** You said the two phases of your career, there is a third on which we just briefly touched last week and that's James Chambers the teacher. You have been a faculty member at Juilliard for as long as anybody can remember.

**Chambers:** It's the like number of years. It's 40.

**Bookspan:** 40 years. Of course, you've seen horn players come and go in that period. Is there a difference in the young horn player of today as contrasted with the horn players who came under your wing 40 years ago?

**Chambers:** I think essentially not. I think there have been periods over the decades where there have been perceptible changes generally speaking in attitudes, but those are more social and attitudes towards society and so forth. I think in terms of abilities and talents. It's more of a question of individuals that are uncovered in the process of teaching a number of people and how they surface and they're going to flow to the top whether it was 40 years ago, or 30, or 20, or 10, or whether it be next year. And it's always a delight when you have people like that. And some years characteristically I will have about 8 students at Juilliard. There may be in some years out of the 8, 6 who are really outstanding material; other

years there may be just 1 or 2. It's been that way all through the 40 years, and I have observed that in other sections in Juilliard. I have an orchestral repertoire class working with winds and I see that the same way. There are cycles that go on. For 2 or 3 years one woodwind section will be just wonderful. And even if there is one replacement from year 1 to year 2 it's still very good. 4 years later, that section may not be as strong as some of the others.

**Bookspan:** And there's no accounting for that?

**Chambers:** No I don't think so. I think the one thing you can say is that from the standpoint of technical command; there has been an upgrade. I think people come better prepared, better facility, better assurance in terms of playing their instrument, able to play with great facility, and that's sometimes quite stunning to hear young players like that. And sometimes it involves certain aspects that have to be turned around because the emphasis is on the wrong foot. It's something I have to deal with as a teacher. But I find teaching very challenging, and of course it's what I look forward to in a kind of semi-retirement. The Philharmonic will be phased out, but Juilliard will still be there.

**Bookspan:** Jimmy, last week we peppered our conversation with illustrations from recordings of some of your solo playing and I want to do that on this intermission as well. For example, one of the best known and I guess maybe one of the most treacherous horn solos is at the beginning of Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel*. You've played that dozens maybe even hundreds of times.

**Chambers:** Too many to count.

**Bookspan:** And recorded it a number of times.

**Chambers:** Also, almost too many to count.

**Bookspan:** Well, we have the recording you made with Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic. So lets hear just the beginning portion. [recording plays]

Jimmy, there is also another side of your recording activity that I just discovered. It's a 1950's recording, long out of print, and it's called Gold on Silk, recorded on the Everest label. A rare example of Jimmy Chambers the

crossover artist. What do you remember about those sessions Jim?

**Chambers:** Well those particular session I remember with a great deal of fondness are those session which were solo pieces for various brass instruments against a background of strings, hence the name Gold on Silk. Trumpet player was Doc Severinsen, trombonist was Will Bradley, tuba player was Don Butterfield, and I of course did the horn thing. And they were just such wonderful players and it was such a joy to hear them to play and to participate in such a project was quite unique actually. And the arranger also conducted, did a wonderful job. It was not the only time I was involved with such matters. During those years, I was quite heavily involved in doing quite a bit of work, as we say in the Philharmonic, on the outside. That is in the freelance field, with recordings with Mitch Miller, and Winder Halter, and the golden oldies, and the Yellow Rose of Texas, and all kinds of things that kept me quite busy. Sometimes I would have to say to a contractor "I'm sorry, I can't do that, not because I have a conflict with the Philharmonic, but a conflict in my mind because I have a very important work to play at night and therefore I'm not going to tire myself all afternoon.

**Bookspan:** And I remember in a previous Intermission conversation you told us that among others Stravinsky sought you out and you made a number of recordings with the so called RCA Victor Orchestra, or Columbia Symphony Orchestra. Many of your colleagues from the Philharmonic, and of course you as solo horn in those. Any others that immediately come to mind?

**Chambers:** In those years, recording in this country was much more active. For instance RCA, at that time, did most of the operatic recordings for Manhattan Center.

**Bookspan:** Were you in any of those Jim?

**Chambers:** I was in virtually all of those.

**Bookspan:** You're kidding.

**Chambers:** There are many, many operas that were done with various conductors. I found all of them very, very enjoyable. So I was very busy.

**Bookspan:** Well I would like our audience to hear an example of Jimmy Chambers in the 1950's. Jim, what particularly would you like our audience to hear from Gold on Silk?

**Chambers:** Well I suppose, I'm not even sure if I remember them all that well, Stormy Weather might by suitable. [recording plays]

**Bookspan:** Jimmy what about these crossover albums of today? How do you feel about them? Do they bring listeners from one side of the tracks over to the other do you think? Or is it just a passing phase?

**Chambers:** I don't think there's much bringing the listener over from one field to another. I think there is a peripheral interest with people who are interested in any kind of music in what's going on. And when something from a broadly different kind of field of music is not so attractive to them, it is possible sometimes to at least get them interested in something that combines elements of both. This particular album that we're speaking of, Gold on Silk, is not so much crossover in that respect. There mostly quiet, jazz type pieces. The only thing that is a little bit crossover is it's unusual to hear such heavy strings in the arrangements and that's why this is one of the unique things and Ray Wright did a wonderful job.

**Bookspan:** Well I can't believe it, but the time has again just gone away from us. I think I'm safe in saying Jimmy that your career with the New York Philharmonic has been not just illustrious but really unmatched. You are going to be genuinely missed by a lot of us on both sides of the stage. Thanks for taking the time to talk with us and I must extract from you a promise that even though you are retiring from the orchestra you will be back visiting with us during these intermissions occasionally.

**Chambers:** That would be my pleasure.

## APPENDIX C

James Chambers Question and Answer Session
International Horn Symposium, Florida State University, June 1970

Transcribed by author on January 15, 2011 from CD received from the son of James Chambers, Robert Chambers.

Thank you, and good afternoon. I hope we are full and pleasantly comfortable. When I last saw a schedule for this workshop, which was perhaps a month ago, I noted I was to have the general session on Tuesday morning. I found, much to my dismay, on arrival in Tallahassee, that I was supposed to do this, this afternoon. So I come rather unprepared with any kind of format for this session, except that I think perhaps, it might be most effective if we establish some kind of dialogue between you and me. It has been suggested that since I am perhaps the one visiting artist who is in daily contact with the Symphony Orchestra professional horn playing scene, that perhaps, it might be advisable to kind of try to cover that part of horn playing since you will have other people who will devote time playing for you, and to discussing the instruments, and perhaps the freelance field, teaching, and so forth. So with that thought in mind I think it might be worthwhile for our purposes, if you would ask of me any questions about the nature of the profession as it is today or has been in the past. Perhaps any questions about the preparation that may be beneficial in leading to that ultimate goal that at least some of you may have in mind. So perhaps we can begin this session with any questions that you have and please don't feel inhibited in any way. Be free with your questions, and we need not limit ourselves to this area of discussion, if you have questions which cannot be adequately covered in your master lesson situation, please feel free to ask them here. Do I have any volunteers with questions?

**Do you expect players to take over the management and financial running of the orchestra soon?**

No I don't. No, I think we are a long way from that, and I think, as a matter of fact, we are getting farther away from that at the moment. Because the situation with the symphony orchestras now with lengthening season, the greater obligation to fill a financial commitment in order to keep an orchestra going, all of this presents a

problem. This is all beyond the capability of a musician to handle. We are facing a crisis right now in this regard. There are bills pending before Congress, in the Ways and Means Committee, having to do with foundations, tax exemptions for non-profit organizations, with a view to increase the tax liability on these foundations that may make a very serious problem for symphony orchestras as far as getting funds for continued existence. And this is something that is very immediate, its rather recent in development, and may go through Congress very shortly, and unless the public at large and more specifically the music committee is well aware of it, it may go through without us even noticing it until it's too late. I don't think the musicians are going to be active in the management-directing end of Symphony Orchestras, and related musical organizations. I believe this is beyond our ability and scope. I saw some other hands.

**What is the average salary that you receive in a professional symphony?**

Well it's going to be very difficult to state a figure as being an average salary. If you consider as a group the 4 or 5 major orchestras; Boston, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Chicago, New York; the minimum wage scale right now, provides about 250 dollars a week. No one in the orchestra makes less than that. In those groups, they have all achieved a 52-week season. That is they get 52 paychecks a year. The amount of vacation that might occur during that period varies, but the paycheck does not, it keeps coming in. I think on an annual basis, you can say the scale in any of the large orchestras, represents an earning annually of 15 to 16,000 dollars. Of course, as horn players, in many organizations, they earn above the minimum scale. And in the principal positions of 1st and 3rd that is apt to be considerably above scale, and some orchestras may even reach twice the minimum scale.

When you get beyond the 5 major orchestras, of course you have a reduction, which is not well defined. It's difficult to assess. Some orchestras have shorter seasons, and most of them have considerably lower pay scales. But the situation is not as bad right now as it was when I left school, and it proceeded to get worse after that. I'm talking now about the early 40's. At that time, as you know, most symphony orchestras had a season of about, the minor orchestras, 18 weeks was a fairly long seasons.

When I went to Pittsburgh the season of 41-42, it was an 18-week season. I had a 20-week contract because Reiner invited me to go directly from the Curtis Institute of Music. I told him I was not very anxious to go. He said, "well look here, it's an 18-week season, that's pretty good," and I said, "well yes, it's not bad." He said, "of course, we plan a 2 week tour at the end of season and that would make 20 weeks." I said, "fine, guarantee me the 20 weeks and I'll go." And that's what happened, I went and played 18 weeks and got paid for 20. So the situation now has changed considerably.

Most orchestra, even the minor orchestras, have longer seasons than that today. Orchestras like Kansas City, Saint Louis, Indianapolis, Cincinnati, once you get out of the scope of the 5 big league orchestras, are lengthening their season by leaps and bounds. So today, the picture financially for the young player in the orchestra is considerably better. Of course, we all know about the cost of living, but even so, the situation is much better than it was 20 years ago. I don't know how it's going to be in 4 or 5 years from now because in view of the problem that I just spoke about that looms before us, and we hope will be settled very soon.

Any congressional action that may take place might well have an adverse [effect on] many, many orchestras, including the big 5. The situation, the financial hardship is so great, that some orchestras, I'm sure you have read recently about plans and discussions taking place to constitute mergers of orchestras. This has been talked about a great deal with reference to Buffalo and Rochester. There are further talks now taking place regarding a possible merger of Indianapolis and Cincinnati. Whether these will take place or not, we don't know. Most of us who are very close to the field feel that this is not likely to happen. However, it does indicate the extreme problem that faces the managements and boards of these orchestras to keep them afloat. This is a long way from your original question but it perhaps related to it in trying to project the possibilities as far as they related to the next 5 or 10 years. Are there any other questions along that line?

**Mr. Chambers, I was wondering if you would illuminate for us a typical workweek schedule for the big 5 orchestras.**

Yes. The work schedule is fairly standardized during the main portion, that is the subscription portion, of the season. Suppose I just recite what it might be like in the Philharmonic. We have 4 concerts a week. In the case of the Philharmonic, that starts with the first performance of the week on Thursday evening followed by Friday afternoon, Saturday evening, and a hangover concert on Monday evening. We're not usually hung over, but that's what we call it. As far as services, we would ordinarily have eight services in a week. In our contract in the Philharmonic there is provision for an additional number of weeks, I think a maximum of eight, in which another service in the form of a rehearsal is permitted. That has to be worked out in advanced and they may not exceed a certain number.

So you see, a typical schedule for us would go something like this starting with Monday morning. We would have on Monday morning the first rehearsal of that week's program. On Monday evening, we would have the hangover concert. On Tuesday, which is extensively a free day, we will very often have an extra rehearsal should it be one of those weeks in which an extra rehearsal is permitted. This very often means we have a large choral work or a work of very large proportions, which can't be adequately rehearsed in the usual number of rehearsals. Or on that day, we might have our recording sessions. While that spoils that day off, it augments the income, so there isn't too much protest about that. On Wednesday, ordinarily there are two rehearsals. On Thursday, there would be a rehearsal in the morning, concert in the evening. Concert Friday afternoon. Concert on Saturday night. That's the normal workweek. I think while particulars to the days of week may vary and in some case the total number of services may vary slightly, that is essentially the work load represented in one of the big 5 orchestras.

Of course, if you move out of the main subscription series you have various projects similar to, for instance, our Promenades, which we just finished. That's four weeks of concerts with constancy. Perhaps the most difficult 4 weeks of the year for the standpoint of the number of services and the fact that we play concert after concert, five nights in a row, and very often coming back in the morning for rehearsal. So it gets a little bit like

playing a show and going in for an extra job in the morning. That's a rather rugged one from the standpoint of ware and tear on the musicians. Musically it's not as demanding. Then, of course, we have in New York, and you'll find similar programs elsewhere; we have 4 weeks of concerts in the New York City parks, which is a very commendable and very successful project. It's sponsored by the Philharmonic, by the city of New York, and by the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Company. To the tune of 7,500 dollars, so please drink Schlitz beer. This of course serves the function of bringing first class musical presentation to people, who otherwise, would have no opportunity to hear it. We have had attendance in excess of 75 and 80,000 people for a single concert. Just recently, they used the same potable facilities, which we use, to present the Metropolitan Opera in the city's parks, which is where we play. They opened, I've forgotten the opera, but it was a rather coolish night, but over 55,000 people turned out. So you see it's a very worthwhile project.

So in addition to the promenades in the parks, and the basic New York season, most years we would have a tour and of course most orchestras involve a certain amount of touring. In our case, it turns out to be generally speaking, some kind of tour in four weeks of length. This year it will be a tour in this country and next year it will be Japan and so it goes. I think, essentially this is the way most of the orchestras work. They are all involved with touring programs. They all have some kind of summer festival or summer home that keeps them busy. It has been necessary to do this in order to satisfy the relentless demand of musicians over a period of many years for 52 weeks of employment. I hope that answers that question. Yes sir?

**If someone, such as yourself, should aspire to record and release an album of solo literature, how would you find time to do it with the schedule you just outlined?**

Well it's extremely difficult and of course there is a reason why you see very little of that. In order to prepare and record something like a solo album many, many hours of painstaking preparation are required and frankly, with the busy schedule that we have, collectively and individually, we find it almost impossible to start out with any such project. Additionally, as horn players, there is the added problem of where do you get enough lip

after playing Mahler for 5 hours in a day, and then perhaps Mozart the next day and so forth. How do you recoup enough sensitively to see you through an enterprise of this kind? It's extremely difficult. I think that Mr. Tuckwell probably could answer your question from another viewpoint because he is one who has experienced it and he's lived the life as both an orchestra player and trying to carry on a solo operation at the same time. Right now it's more of a solo type of operation and I'm sure his views on that would be very illuminating for you.

**When did you record the album on the award series?**

Well, I would say that was probably about 12 years ago. In the mid-50s; 57, 56 something like that. But of course in those days we did have periods in the year, which were relatively free and as I remember that's when I did that. I just devoted a week or so toward preparing that and doing some run-throughs with the pianist. That's the way I handled that. I don't think it would be possible to handle it that way today. Yes sir?

**Do you have a new conductor for the Philharmonic?**

Yes, that's been a public announcement. You had not heard it; well you just answered the question for those who haven't. The new musical director effective the season 1971-72 and for a three-year period there after will be Pierre Boulez. It's a very exciting prospect. Now there must be many more questions, please don't be bashful.

**There are many young students here who might be aspiring to professional careers. What sort of steps would they have to take in order to perhaps, arrive at a point where they can play in an orchestra like the New York Philharmonic?**

Well, that's a loaded question. Lets get back to the formative years. I think that's where we would have to start to answer a question of that kind. Assuming a fair amount of talent, and lack of misguidance, I would say the next point of once having achieved the resolve and determination that this is probably what you want to do, then you should set your sights not so much for a school or a particular area, but for perhaps a particular teacher. It seems to me that most of us who have been somewhat successful owe a tremendous amount of what we

achieved to our years with a great teacher. I think this is something we all willingly and gratefully concede.

I have now been teaching for a good many years and I see the importance of the teacher. So my advice, very often when I'm asked about, "what school should I attend, should I go to a university, should I go to Curtis, should I go to Juilliard, should I go to Eastman?" My advice generally speaking is satisfy yourself as to what kind of playing you want to do. That is the type of horn playing you want to be involved with. If you admire the style as played in one locality and there is an immanent teacher who teaches that style, then by all means go there. It is a little foolish I think for people who admire one kind of playing to set their sights because there is a well known teacher elsewhere. For that teacher, unless they are flexible enough and understand that they are flexible enough and willing to change because it's really largely a waste of time. No teacher is going to bend his concepts beyond a certain point to meet the needs of a student. If we did that we wouldn't be honest to our own beliefs and to our own concepts. So I think very early in life as one begins to become enthusiastic about the possibility of playing horn as a career that decision has to be met. You have to decide well, "do I really want to go study in New York and play in the manner of the horn players of the Philharmonic, or will it be Boston, or Chicago." I think essentially you have to come to that decision and try to arrange your life, take the necessary auditions for the music schools.

I advise here, in view of my experience at Juilliard, that the earlier you do that, the better off you are. We have a program at Juilliard, whether it exists at other schools, I'm not certain, which allows for an advance hearing in the junior year, and I think it's very wise for those people who are able to arrange it, to come to New York, or some such place, if they have a school in mind or a teacher in a mind and play a year in advance so you get some evaluation and perhaps some clue as to whether or not you would be acceptable by the standards of that teacher or that school. Then the question of well "should I really go to a music school, will I be accepted, or will I be better off going to a university, or will I be better off being an engineer," it's perhaps a little better for you do decide that if you have played the year in advanced and the outlook has been rather dim and the professionals who have heard you have indicated there isn't much chance that

you would be accepted, then I think this is the time for sitting down with yourself and making that kind of an evaluation.

Also if those people are interested in going to schools or studying with an individual, plan to do it at the beginning of a school year after graduation from high school, they should make every effort to play for those people, especially the schools involved at an advanced point in the year. That is an early portion of the year. For instance, at Julliard, we have March examinations; we also have June examinations. I can tell you, that if any one of you is interested in playing, you should try to get to the March examinations because many decision are made there regarding the people who have played. They have to be notified whether they have been accepted or not. If many of them are accepted and there turn out to be at the end of the year, few vacancies for the following year obviously those people who come in June are at a disadvantage. Very often, we on the panel of people who listen are uncomfortable in the fact that we have to turn down people in June, who had they played in March would undoubtedly would have been admitted.

I think the essential thread of thought here has to be, at least in my view, “what kind of horn player do I want to be, what are my aims, what are my goals.” Obviously if you want to be involved in horn playing and music education I don’t think you should set your sights for Curtis or Juilliard. There are other places much better suited to that need. Perhaps that gives some kind of insight into the preparation. Now I don’t know whether you intended for me to go further into the matter of qualifications as far as the profession is concerned. Perhaps a word about that would not be amiss.

Many people go through 4 or 5 years of very intensive study at the college level and find themselves unprepared for the occupation they hope to a situate themselves in for life. In my view, this is very often not their fault; sometimes it’s the fault of the school. Some of those people should not have been admitted in the first place. Now these are harsh words and it’s difficult sometimes to convince young people that they should give second thoughts to this idea of being a professional horn player. It’s a tough racket and if you are not qualified and it’s obvious on the outset there is going to be a long uphill fight with very slim chance of making the grade then I say

it's nonsense for a young person to spend 4 or 5 years of enthusiastic endeavor on a day to day basis when there is so little hope that they can achieve what they hope to. This is why I, as an individual, am sometimes very harsh in my judgments in acceptance of people at Juilliard because it's just too much heart break for the young people and for me because by that time if we have spent 4 or 5 years together we're not only teacher and student, we're usually very good friends and it's a wrench when you realize this person has spent all this time and just isn't going to make it. I prefer to fend that off, and send them off on another track.

So I think you have to essentially also decide for yourself, "do I think, do I really feel secure in my ability, do I really want this above all else, and more importantly, am I convinced that I can do it." In that sense I think it's very important for you at every step of the way that you have the opportunity to get the opinion and evaluation of people in the field who can give you some idea as to what your chances are. The professional field is extremely difficult. It's a nerve wrecking tense business and those who are ill suited better stay away. All right, I don't mean to be pessimistic because those who are well suited and have the goods will have joy forever in their occupation but that's a requisite. Did I see a hand on that side? Yes, I think I did.

**I was just wondering how many orchestras in the United States have a 52-week season?**

Well if you say 52 weeks exactly, I don't think we can go much beyond five. There are others, which are about to join the 52-week club and others who have that in their sights and undoubtedly will, unless we run into this financing problem, which looms in the immediate future. Yes sir?

**Mr. Chambers, what weight does previous experience in an orchestra have on an audition for a major symphony orchestra?**

I think that depends very often on the personal philosophy of the conductor. Some conductors feel there is absolutely no substitute for experience, this does not happen to be my view, but many conductors can not be convinced or better some conductors need a lot of convincing. I can tell you there have been instances where people of very

little experience have been accepted. I would say this is not the norm, it's not the rule, because conductors feel very insecure when they engage of all people a horn player, especially should it be a first horn player who has had very little experience. But to cite an example for instance the Philharmonic finds itself this year in need of an associate first horn. After many auditions, screenings, and so forth, a young man was selected who spent most of his young playing years in the Marine Band, came out and was playing third horn in the National Symphony I think for only a season or two, and was unheard of. I didn't know about him, the other members who listened from the brass section of the Philharmonic didn't know of him, and he wound up with the job. So you see, it can't be ruled out. A tremendous degree of talent and musical sensitivity, musical intelligence, does come through, even under the terribly difficult and exasperating conditions of auditions.

Once in a while you will get a breakthrough of that kind. Then you get the lucky kinds. I put myself in that position. I was lucky. I was playing third horn in Pittsburgh, season of 41-42. You remember what happened in 1941, Pearl Harbor. So a lot of people were going from orchestras, as from elsewhere, into the service. One of those people was Mason Jones, who had to go into the service. He left in mid-season. Just about that time I finished my 18 weeks in Pittsburgh followed by 2 weeks of rest, paid vacation, unheard of in those days. I joined the Philadelphia Orchestra at that time, certainly not as first horn, but just to fill in a vacant spot in the section, they had reshuffled their personnel. It was only after spending several weeks in the orchestra that I was asked to play a second audition for Mr. Ormandy. Of course, having played only assistant first in the orchestra I thought, "well, now what have I done, I wonder what he doesn't like about me, he doesn't know my playing, because he hasn't heard me." I was thoroughly convinced that the audition was for the purpose of saying "well, we'll have to have someone else next season." So much to my amazement I stayed after rehearsal the following day after the request to stay for audition and after lunch I went back to the hall at the appointed hour to a dark stage with just a work light hanging over it and a completely dark hall and only one voice out there that I could recognize that of Mr. Ormandy who proceeded to put me through the whole French horn repertoire. From *Ein Heldenleben*, to *Nocturne*, all the Brahms Symphonies, all

the Beethoven Symphonies, *Siegfried Call*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, you name it, it was there. I was so busy I had no time to think about it. It was only after the audition was over, and I went backstage and awkwardly stood around, wondering whether I should go home and just leave my name or what. Mr. Ormandy came up with the entourage, which included the concertmaster Mr. Hilsberg, Mr. Caston, the solo trumpet, Mr. Tabuteau, and Mr. Kincaid, all the luminaries of the orchestra and just popped the question, "how would you like to play first horn?" So this is perhaps a little sidelight, I just gulped and said, "of course." So from that point on or the remainder of the season, which was very short, that was probably late March, the season ended in Ann Arbor I think with the May Festival, I think I was exposed to, perhaps that's the best way to put it, every major first horn solo in the repertoire. That was quite an indoctrination.

Getting back to your basic question of experience and ability. Many conductors do insist on experience. I've often said that the ideal according to many conductors is the young player about 19 or 20 years old that doesn't want any money and has at least 30 years of experience. [laughter] That would seem to satisfy most conductors. Yes?

**Do you have anything good to say about community orchestras?**

Oh, I have a lot of good to say about community orchestras. That's where I started. I started in my hometown as a youngster about 14 just filling in; eventually worked up to be first horn of that orchestra. By that time I was going to Curtis and I was applying what I learned at Curtis in the community orchestra. I think it serves a very useful purpose. Not only from the stand point of being a spawning ground for players who later will make it into the profession but also from the general stand point of involvement of people who have been exposed to music and who want to play. After all I think these are the people who enjoy music more than anyone else in the world. The people who are not committed to it as a means of making a living and supporting a family, but who are engaged in making of music, despite the fact that their business is some other occupation. These are the people who get the biggest kick of all out of music and I think it's marvelous. I think community orchestras should go on, and I hope for hundreds and hundreds of years we will have

community orchestras. I don't think it's a dying thing as some people think. Yes sir?

**Is there a difference between associate and assistant?**

Yes, it depends on what orchestra you are talking about. Usually the connotation of assistant means that this person filling that position ordinarily will not play any first horn at all except literally to assist the first horn player. There are variations of that arrangement however depending on the orchestra where assistants are in fact part time first horn players. For instance, in some orchestras, the assistant will play concertos or may play first horn in children's concerts. If you get into some of the larger orchestras that have extensive seasons you have now of course dual situation where you have two solo horn players. They may be on equal footing or one may be the principal and the other the associate. In any case, the workload then is divided and of course in those cases in addition you would have the assistant. In the Philharmonic this year we are moving two people into two of those positions. Mr. Singer remains as one of the solo horns, we're bringing in Mr. Kuyper, the gentlemen I spoke to you about a short time ago who played the audition this spring is coming in as associate principal, and a student of mine at the Juilliard school is coming in as assistant first. I think that's the prevailing arrangement in substance in the large orchestras today. Yes?

**Can you share a few words about a girl trying out for the orchestra?**

I think that first of all the number of girls turning to the French Horn is on the increase. This has been my observation it would seem to be bore out by the number of young ladies I see here. I have had several very good girl students and they have been successful in their careers. None of them have achieved any great reputation as a solo horn player, they just haven't made it into those positions, although, I feel as far as ability they in some instance well could have. The problem with girl horn players is apt to be one, which occurs later in life. That is of marriage and children. Marriage in itself may pose a problem, sometimes the husband is in the same orchestra and this is not always a wholesome arrangement as far as the management or the orchestra is concerned. Then with the advent of children of course is the interruption of service and the rather dim prospect of getting back into

it because it usually means being away and it isn't something like school teaching where there's always another spot where they need your services. So this does, I think, pose a problem for the girl who looks ahead for marriage. As to ability, there seems to be no reason, I certainly haven't experienced any, why girls cannot advance as far on the horn. It's amazing, we think of the physical aspect of playing horn and the great demands it does make and we are aware of those demands. However, in some case girls are fully equal to those demands and are able to cope with them. So I see no reason why a girl shouldn't set her sights in that direction as long as she is fully aware of the complexities that arise later on in life.

**Do you see any signs of things being done with construction or use of the horn in addition, perhaps not just in symphony work, but other types of playing such as electronic [incomprehensible]?**

No I don't see anything as extreme as modification involving electronics. There have been occasions in the Philharmonic in the avant-garde series with Bernstein a year or so ago in which every instrument in the orchestra including the French horn had a contact mic on it. The sound was fed through a computer like device controlled by an operator. I'd like for you to judge for yourself what the results of that were sometime. But I don't think there is going to be any serious modification of the basic structure of the horn. If this is another aspect of your question. We have had a rather strong ground swell developing in certain professional circles in recent years, especially in the freelance field toward the use of, some, well they're smaller horns, I might as well bring out the name, which is most prominent, Paxman horn. Many professionals in New York are now using the Paxman, especially that model which is essentially a B-flat horn with a high F descant. It's a double horn but with the F horn pitched an octave higher than that normally seen on a double horn. In their particular field I can well see why they might move in that direction. I am not myself at the moment convinced that this is permanent. I think that perhaps in accepting these horns as immediate as the benefits may seem to be they've at the same time created a monster because their ability now to go up in the tessitura register with a greater degree of assurance has availed the arrangers and the composers of additional material, and they're using it. So if you walk into a

freelance gig today you may have to start using your own computer to count ledger lines. So it gets a bit wild. But I think this is the most significant, I think, development in recent years, the rather growing use of this type of instrument.

**What do you think about amplifiers, like for guitars?**

I see ads, I think it's the King company, is it not? That advertises amplifiers for trumpets and so forth. I suppose they could be used for horn but I have no idea why they would want to. I could imagine if it were in a rock group or something of that kind, but in the symphonic field, certainly not.

**Do you use several different horns in the literature you play?**

Almost never, did I use any other horn then the basic horn that I was using and that's been with one exception been the same horn since 1938. When I say the same horn, I mean the same instrument. I play a Conn 8-D, which I acquired upon going to Curtis and I have stayed with that horn with the exception of a period when I worked with the Reynolds company, which has since changed hands. During that period, I developed for them the Chambers model Reynolds, which I think was a contribution. I'm sorry to say I'm no longer associated with that company, it has changed hands, and that model has been discontinued at least as far as the use of my name in connection with it. I have not found it very practical, and this is perhaps an individual viewpoint, I have not found it practical even to use a descant type of horn except on a few rare occasions for passages of extreme difficulty in the high register. Usually I'll start out with the idea that I may use that little horn and I'll prepare it and in the end I come back to the view it's still very difficult to play up there, I still have to play the notes, and I really am happier with the sound and the feel of my own horn and I usually wind up playing it on my 8-D. Yes sir?

**I've had a Conn for quite a number of years and it seems that the sound has spread, have you replaced the bell or mouth pipe, or anything on this horn of yours?**

I have replaced the bell because it was in danger of collapsing. It was in danger of total collapse even after many patches had been added. So some years ago, perhaps 15

years ago now, I did replace the bell without any noticeable affect on the instrument whatsoever. I'm inclined to think that given reasonable care, and the choice of the bell and placing it on the horn that you're not going to experience much change if it's a Conn bell the same dimensions as another Conn bell which is not worn out. I don't find that there are substantial changes to be anticipated there. It can happen, but it's not usually the case. I have not for any permanent period changed the lead pipes. I have done experimenting, chiefly when I was developing the horn for Reynolds and that can be a very interesting study of its own. I'm sure that questions presented to Mr. Geyer would bring forth some rather interesting observations.

**What do you think of the triple horn?**

Heavy isn't it? I'm really not qualified to say because to me it is only a concept. I have not experienced the horn; I saw one briefly a few months ago. You're talking now about an F, B-flat, high F horn are you not? In theory this is fine, I have a feeling however, that there are certain compromises involved that may become troublesome. Such as intonation, inequality of response, changing color of sound going from one horn to another, which is difficult enough on a double horn to smooth out. I have an idea that this might be a little bit more complex than I at least would want to handle.

**In your opinion what is the best American horn?**

Ah, well I don't think there is a best American horn, I can only say that for my purposes, for the kind of work that I do, and with my particular philosophy about horn playing, the Conn is perhaps the best suited. But I have played on other horns which would do equally as well under most conditions, and perhaps better than the Conn under other conditions. I don't think we can say that there is one best American horn anymore than we can say there is one best horn in the world. They all, assuming excellent quality of workmanship, and knowhow in the construction and design of the horn, they all have their qualities. I only wish we could take the good qualities of all and put them in one horn. So far, that's not been possible. European horns? Well of course, you have the old standards and a few new names; you have Alexander, Schmitt, Krüspe.

**[incomprehensible]**

Yes you can. And also, they are apparently are becoming available, and this is something to check, I believe Alexander has representatives here. I have seen among students at Juilliard now, solid nickel silver horns, which is a rather new thing to me. I think it always existed in the catalogue, but I think they are turning them out in more numbers today. But most European horns are available in some degree or another. *Krüspe* is a little difficult to get because of its locations. There are new names also the *Miraphone*, Paxman, and others, and I think there, you have to be guided by your own experience with them and perhaps the recommendation of professionals and teachers who know something about those horns.

**Has the price of horns gone up?**

Like everything else, they most certainly are. Yes, way up. Conn price list now is in the neighborhood of 800 dollars and I guess the Paxman, certain models are over 1000. So it's certainly going up.

**[incomprehensible]**

Well it could very well be. Especially that triple horn must at least be that much.

**Would you speak to style and concept of tone as you see it as it differs in this country and the New York Philharmonic sound as opposed to some other styles?**

Well I could, I think perhaps that's a scenario that might better be discussed in a master class situation. If we get in that area, we're liable to spend the rest of our time on that subject. While I'm willing to do it I'm afraid we might eliminate other areas of discussion. Yes?

**Can you discuss the differences and demands of the different horn parts?**

Are you speaking of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th? Yes, in a general way. Let's start with the low end first with the 4th horn. Obviously, one expecting to play 4th horn must have a fully developed, controlled lower register, with absolute control of dynamic range. With special attention to pianissimo, because this is where 4th horn players are apt to suffer. They are playing in an awkward often-

hesitant register of the horn and pianissimos are difficult to control, so this is one absolute qualification for 4th horn. They should be able to play loudly, but even if they do, they play loudly in circumstances where they whole section is playing loudly and the whole orchestra is playing loudly, and no one is going to hear them anyhow so they can get away with something at that end of the dynamic scale. Obviously, also with 4th horn they must be fluent with bass clef. Intonation for a 4th horn player is as critical as any spot in the section because very often he forms the bass and without that in its proper places then the rest of us are hard pressed to put our notes where they belong.

Moving up to third, of course, third is in the bulk of Romantic literature is really another first horn and so written by many composers such as Brahms, Schumann, so forth. So the demands on him are in many ways parallel to the demands on the first horn except it's not as continuous type of a demand. They do get exposed very frequently in solos of considerable substance. They like every other member of the section must have complete command of the horn register. I think there is a general misconception that I would certainly not want to enhance that it is quite all right to play first and third horn and you can do it if you have no low register. I think that's very far from the truth. Any first and third horn player today, must have a full register throughout the complete range of the horn. You take for instance the D major solo from Till Eulenspiegel. Without those last three notes, if he can't play them, he has to resort to using the fourth horn and this immediately makes complications of balancing sounds, dynamics and so forth.

Going up to second horn. Perhaps in some ways the most challenging spot in the section because you get frequent exposure on your own, little incidental solos. You are always playing in reduced orchestra situations where you have Haydn, Mozart and those parts are extremely difficult where you have tremendous demands on you where you are jumping from one register to another especially in that repertoire where you constantly skipping to the upper octave to join with the first horn. Also you have the absolute demand that you tenaciously follow what the first horn player is doing. This goes for dynamic, it goes especially for intonation because you know if the two are not in tune it's never the first horn player who is out of tune it is always the second horn player who is out of

tune, so he has to be very flexible in this regard. Also, the second horn player has to have a great deal of endurance because he is called upon to play all of the time. He almost never gets a rest.

Of course, when we get to the first horn player, it's rather obvious; you are met with every conceivable type of situation. You must have a completely controlled range in all registers of the horn; you must have a very strong, firm rhythmic control because in this regard the rest of the section is going to depend on you for leadership. Nothing has to be spoken but you have to be the leader with rhythmic emphasis and precision. This is an essential ingredient in my view for a first horn player. The other qualities of a first horn player involve the obvious ones, instrumental ability, musical sensitivity and intelligence, and then there is that additional something, which we use the word artistry loosely to describe, and I think that's a little harder to describe.

Assistant first horn, of course, is very much a workhorse. Appreciated by almost no one except the first horn player and a good assistant is absolutely invaluable and cherished by a solo horn player. He is literally his left arm. There are solos that we cannot possibly approach or get through without the proper use of an assistant. And as some of you learned this morning, it was our good friend and teacher Mr. Horner that brought the concept of an assistant first horn to this country and perhaps to my knowledge it may have been the first anywhere. He saw the necessity for relieving the tremendous demands of the embouchure of the solo horn player and of course today that situation is doubly aggravated and saw the necessity for relief, instance relief, to be there at all times and was able to prevail upon conducts and the orchestras to engage an assistant. And we've all been grateful ever since because without this today I think we would all be in a state of collapse.

**Are there foods that you avoid before playing a concert, like not drinking milk for instance?**

Martinis. That I'm sure is an individual affair. I know that most of us will avoid certain foods, which are bothersome to us. Some people cannot eat highly spiced food because it disturbs their stomach; of course anything that does that is not going to be appreciated when you get to concert time. It's going to be bothersome. Some of us

avoid foods which are terribly hot because they believe whether it's a justified fact or not, it doesn't really matter, that it swells their lip, their lip gets off, and they lose control. Other people for much the same reason avoid foods like fried chicken, which you pick up and eat this way and where you are inclined to get a coating, a film of grease on the lips. They feel very uncomfortable that way. So each man I think has to decide for themselves. Many people just don't pay any attention to it and they just play and that's perhaps the healthiest state of all. But if you really have a problem, a digestive problem, something which gives you trouble then I think wisdom says yes avoid those foods.

**Any advice on smoking?**

Don't. Don't smoke. Do play horn.

**[incomprehensible]**

I would say that among my acquaintances there are perhaps only one or two horn players who still smoke. Most of them smoked five to ten years ago. Most of them have now given it up. It's very much the same trend that is being observed by doctors. Very few now smoke. I certainly recommend that anyone smoking first of all should give it up and certainly if you are going to play horn you should give it up. Now, how about some questions from the rear portions of the hall.

**Is there such a thing as tenure in a major orchestra?**

Not as such, but in effect it almost amounts to the same thing.

**[incomprehensible]**

Yes, that's what I meant. We have in lieu of a tenure arrangement; most orchestras have some kind of dismissal procedure, usually ending in the final stages in arbitration, which would be binding. This is a prospect though, a prospect of argumentation and litigation over such an issue is one which neither management, nor musicians, nor their union would embark upon without much thought. Usually there are other solutions, not always. We for instance we have had in the Philharmonic a dismissal procedure now for perhaps 15 years, and I cannot remember except in the cases of gross misbehavior or alcohol

problem, something of that kind, that men have been dismissed. And of course, in those cases, there is no argument. By that time, it's obvious to everyone that there is a problem and that person just eventually has to go.

But getting back to the question of the Martinet and he doesn't like the way you part your hair. This situation is not prevalent anymore. There was a day, and I'm sure Mr. Horner remembers it well, when the conductor was absolute monarch in his realm and it was not even a question of waiting until the end of the season. I myself remember in Pittsburgh with Fritz Reiner on several occasions just indicating, "Out!" and that was it, the man was finished as of that moment. He may have been able to collect a week or two of pay and that was the end, but that odes not exist today. Today we have a strong hand with the unions and I think it would really take a very clear case of incompetence to get rid of a man totally outside of the orchestra picture. You might have situations where they're moved around but not fired this is very rare today.

**[incomprehensible]**

I'm sorry I can't hear you.

**How do you recommend getting rid of effects of nervous tension both before and during a concert?**

If I had an answer to that, I'd make a million. I don't think it's entirely wise to be free of all symptoms of nervousness. I think a certain amount of nervousness with any performer is good. It's only when it begins to interfere with your functioning and you begin to lose control that it becomes a serious problem. Otherwise, it very often has the effect of putting a sharply honed edge on everything you do, and you're right there on your metal all of the time. As to how to combat extreme nervousness, I think perhaps you'd be better to ask that question of a psychologist or one who deals with that problem from day to day. I don't know any real remedy for that. I've had students who have had this problem and have not been able to lick it and my advice to them is to avoid those situations in which you would be called upon to play things, which will really tax your anxiety factor. Just stay away from them. Stay away from first horn, stay away from third horn, don't get yourself in a situation where you're going to be exposed to the point where it's going

to break you up. I really don't know the answer to that question as far as a remedy.

**[incomprehensible]**

A horn ensemble, no. You're thinking of an ensemble or something like the horn club in Los Angeles. No, there has been talk of it in the past, but nothing has materialized. Most horn players in New York are so busy and running around to so many different places, I'm sure that's equally true in Los Angeles, but for some reason or another they've never been able to quite make that jump.

**How about [incomprehensible]**

Well, what would you like to know about it?

**I would like to know if it's easy or hard to get into it?**

It's extremely hard to get in and stay in because there is limited amount of work and too many players trying to get that work. And I think perhaps men like John Barrows and Arthur Irv can further amplify anything I might say on the subject because this is something they have had a great deal of experience in, much more than I have. I can simply say, the situation as it is today, there is much less of that kind of work then there used to be. People, who used to depend almost totally on freelance, studio work for a living and did very well, now find themselves of necessity playing a show, which is not terribly pleasant. You go to the theater and play the same book every night, but they find that they must do it in order to have a base of income. It's extremely difficult, there's inclined to be rather cliquish strong well-knit group, which controls most of the studio work, and it's very difficult to break into.

**Is it possible to become a professional without going to college?**

Is it possible to become a professional without going through the intermediate step of going to college? Are you classifying conservatory type institutions as colleges?

**[incomprehensible]**

Well I think it's entire possible in any case. It's possible to become a professional without having attended

any school beyond high school and that's not even a requirement. It's only, I would think a bit more difficult. Here again, I go back to the original statement I made concerning teachers. I think if you are able, and this in itself is a problem, if you are able to secure a teacher who could provide you with the time on the same basis he would provide it in a school and if you were equally well able to provide yourself with playing experience in groups there's no reason as far as your instrumental ability why you should not be able to advance as rapidly. Of course, there are other areas such as ear training, general music knowledge, and so forth that would not be kept up with pace with that. But there is no reason, and it has been done of course. I see no reason why a person would have to go to college.

**[incomprehensible]**

Oh yes, I think so. There are quite a few if you look through the lists in the orchestras. Yes, quite a few. Yes?

**I was wondering if you might comment on any particular method books or excerpts books that you use or recommend that your students use?**

Well, I can give you perhaps a fast run down. I hear lots of paper rattling and pencils coming out. Now this is something again, which will vary with a teacher and a degree of emphasis on certain aspects. I'm going to recite a list of material, which will seem very familiar to our good friend Mr. Horner because it's essentially the same material he used to an augmented degree.

I think the basic reference material when we come to working material is Kopprasch. Now I'm assuming of course you're dealing with people who are fairly well advanced because this has been my experience in teaching, I almost never get a beginner. We have serious problems, I think at beginning stages and intermediate stages before we reach the Kopprasch degree of difficulty. Perhaps a leader up to the difficulty of Kopprasch you might consider Meifried etudes, which are essentially the same general approach but not quite as difficult. Kopprasch, both books of course, and along with any good set of scale studies and these must be done varying types of articulation, emphasis on staccato, especially in the scales.

The *Kling Etudes* I find very worthwhile from the standpoint of general embouchure building and also at the point people have just about had Kopprasch and they are ready for something that's a little bit more engaging musically. That is they enjoy playing there's more melodic interest, more tunes, and more variations on those tunes. Then after that, the various Galley methods, rather etudes books. I'm not sure I that remember the opus number. There is opus 13 and 57 probably. One of those is a book of 12 studies for second horn. That name has been deleted in some of the present day publications but that's what it originally was, they are exercises for second horn and they involve that characteristic jumping around that's required so much of the second horn. Those are very worthwhile.

There are studies by Belloli and Gugel, which are not used by many people. I will use them or not depending on the degree of advancement and the need for further strengthening of the embouchure. The Belloli exercises are extremely taxing, very long, some of them 3 and a half pages in length, and for goodness sake if you do them, take frequent rests. Don't try to do a marathon.

There are the Maxime-Alphonse books, which I myself use almost never because in my teaching emphasis is not primarily technique and I find these etudes, especially in the more difficult books, are especially good for the development of very facile technique and lightness in play, which is admirable in itself but I find I don't care to spend quite that much time on it. I'm more interested in the tonal aspects of the horn.

There are additional Galley books of measured and unmeasured preludes, some brilliant etudes. Most of Galley is extremely worthwhile and enjoyable for the player. When it comes to other material, if you talk about orchestra studies, of course we have the old Gumpert studies, which were the stand by for many, many years. Unfortunately, much of the material that you find in those books is no longer played and while it's of interest it has very little practical value as far as learning repertoire. So there have been attempts made in the more recent past to update that.

There have been books of French material; there is a series, which I recently finished my work on. I won't be doing anymore, that will end with a 7th volume. The sixth

has just been released and we've been able, fortunately, to get in quite a bit of material, which previously was thought unavailable, composers like Hindemith, Stravinsky, so forth. So that you can use material of that kind.

I saw this morning an interesting publication, which had in complete form all the first horn parts of all the Brahms' Symphonies. I think this is also very worthwhile. Many times, people in community orchestras for instance, know they're going to play Brahms' 1st Symphony and they've never seen it before, and it really takes quite a bit of homework to go in and feel prepared. This gives them a chance to go over it bar by bar, note-by-note, including all the transpositions so I think that material is very worthwhile. If there are any further specific questions about that sort of thing, I'd be happy to answer it but I think I've covered it generally. Yes sir?

**What about contemporary studies?**

Contemporary studies. There are a few European ones which are not to well known in this country, I'd be at a lost at the moment to provide you with the names, I've seen a few. In this country, I think most of you are probably familiar with Verne Reynolds studies, which are very good, exceedingly difficult, especially should you attempt them at the metronome markings indicated. [laughter] I've never attempted them, and I doubt that many of us could carry it off at those markings. However, that doesn't in any way diminish their value as far as meter changers, peculiar intervals; the sort of thing we're encountering today on almost on a daily basis.

There's a series, rather a short book by Gunther Schuller of unaccompanied studies, which I find excellent for that sort of thing, interval studies, especially, which are intervals of the unusual variety and constant surprises. I would like to see actually more written in that vein. We have quite a bit of material which is tradition horn writing, it's only a question of that which you select for your own purposes but we do not have much to choose from in contemporary style of writing and I think this is a substantial field for people who have an interest in writing. Is our time about up? All right, perhaps we take one more question and then we'll have to call this session to be at an end. Yes, young lady in the white dress?

**Would you comment on mouthpieces, or what you recommend?**

Well, I'm afraid that's a question you might save for your smaller sessions. So we'll take one other question, this was the young lady I was going to ask, yes?

**What kind of emphasis do you place on warm up with your students in their lessons?**

Warm up and what?

**Warm up in their lessons, do they set up their own type of warm up, do recommend a certain kind of warm up?**

I recommend that each student develop his own according to his own needs. I am not particularly partial to the arrangement of a set warm up procedure except to the extent that in itself that procedure can be flexible according to the needs of the moment and the day and the weather and everything else. That's a highly complex situation. I simply find that I and most professionals, and this goes for most brass instruments as well, they do have a warm up procedure but it is not totally stereotyped. It is not 5 minutes of this, 5 minutes of that. They will begin perhaps characteristically with a few long tones, moving on into arpeggios usually legato over a limited range gradually expanding, later on moving in to staccato and so forth and the amount of time they spend on each of those areas depends on the individual and the needs as he finds them according to the condition of the embouchure on that particular day. Thank you all very much; I'm afraid we have to close the shop down.

[applause]

## APPENDIX D

Profile of an American
Aired February 4, 1961, Radio Free Europe

Transcribed by author on March 31, 2011 from CD received from the son of James Chambers, Robert Chambers.

[Introductory Music]

**Narrator:** Profile of an American. A candid, intimate look at the people of the United States. On this program, the last in this current series of 13, you will meet another representative American who will talk about his work, his leisure time, and his home life. He is a musician in America's oldest symphony orchestra, the New York Philharmonic. This is a profile of an American named James Chambers.

The name James Chambers may not be familiar to many who regularly attend concerts of the New York Philharmonic at Carnegie Hall in New York City. But the music he plays as a member of the Philharmonic is known to millions through radio, television, recordings, and concert tours. James Chambers has been with the New York Philharmonic since 1946 when he was engaged as French horn soloist at the remarkably early age of 26. The horn is recognized along with the oboe and bassoon, as one of the most difficult and temperamental instruments in the orchestra. James Chambers' achievement in mastering this instrument can be best appreciated by listening to samples of his work. Here is a portion of a famous passage for the solo horn from Tchaikovsky's 5th Symphony.

[Music]

James Chambers is one of about 5,000 professional instrumentalist regularly engaged in symphony orchestras in the United States. Only a few of the most prominent orchestras provide their musicians full-time employment. Most orchestra members supplement their income by teaching or other activities. Of course, this does not take into account the great number of amateur and semi-professional musicians who play community symphonies all over the country. As a member of the New York Philharmonic, James Chambers is one of 106 musicians who work and perform under the supervision of the music director and conductor Leonard Bernstein. Russell Stanger recently joined the

orchestra as assistant conductor. He has already come to know the musicians well. Mr. Stanger is favorably impressed with James Chambers.

**Russell Stanger:** He is what a lot of conductors wish they have. First of all, he not only plays his instrument impeccably, beautifully, and with wonderful tone and wonderful sense of what you as a conductor want, but he has an amazing attitude in the orchestra. If he has any question in his mind, he asks you very simply, he straightens out problems in the rest of the horn section, he is not a troublemaker, he just plays. He's just very inspiring and wonderful to work with.

**Narrator:** William Vacchiano has been a member of the Philharmonic for 25 years, the last 18 as solo trumpet. For several years he and James Chambers commuted to New York together from their suburban homes in near by Long Island.

**William Vacchiano:** We spend an hour each way, so we got to know each other very well. Chambers, he is what we call an American product. Formerly, all of our horn players and brass players were European, but as it is today because the schools train musicians right here. We have the finest musicians in the world train in this country and Chambers is one of the proofs of this. He's a wonderful personality for the position. I enjoy working with him very much.

**Narrator:** James Chamber sold his home on Long Island six years ago and moved to New York City. In view of the hours absorbed by the Philharmonic and by his work as teacher of the French horn at two music schools in New York, he found it more convenient to rent an apartment in central New York City. He has lived in his present apartment with his wife and children a little over a year. Two rooms are utilized by Mr. Chambers for practice and for giving private music lessons. Next-door neighbors of the Chambers family, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Davidson, said that Mr. Chambers' music practice and teaching are not the annoyance that one might expect.

**Mrs. Davidson:** We have heard him instruct pupils but we have found it very entertaining. We have not found it an annoyance and of course the type of building in which we live conduces to quiet so it is not a disturbance and we have found Mr. and Mrs. Chambers very charming neighbors.

**Mr. Davidson:** My wife and I have felt very fortunate to have the Chambers as neighbors.

**Narrator:** Mr. and Mrs. Chambers were married in 1943 and have two boys and two girls. Like her husband, Marjorie Chambers was born in Trenton, New Jersey. Before marriage, Mrs. Chambers taught in a primary school. She now teaches the 1st grade at a private school for children who are employed as professional actors, actresses, or models, and other talented children who are preparing for a career in the theatre, music, or the ballet. Mrs. Chambers still finds time to do her own housework and care for her children except for when she is at work. She is very interested in her husband's career and attends the concerts of the New York Philharmonic once a week. In her eyes, James Chambers has many admirable traits and few faults.

**Mrs. Chambers:** He knows what he likes and what he doesn't like. He knows what he wants, and nothing that the children need is too much trouble for him. He accepts people exactly as they are and gets along with them. I enjoy being married to him.

[Music]

**Narrator:** James Chambers was born and raised in Trenton, capital city of the state of New Jersey, located on the Atlantic coast, midway between New York City and Philadelphia. He was one of five children in a family of very modest means. His father drove a delivery truck for a bakery. Young James became interested in music early in life, an interest that received impetus from other members of the family. His father sang in amateur choral groups, his mother played the piano, and an older brother played the trumpet. James learned to play the bugle in a drum and bugle corps while in primary school. At the age of 10, just after entering Junior High School, James Chambers began to learn the rudiments of the French horn without the help of a teacher and on a borrowed instrument.

**Chambers:** The horn belonged to the Junior High School, public High School. I think they had just imported horns at the time from Czechoslovakia. It was on that kind of a horn that I first began to play. A very exciting day when I took the horn home for the first time."

**Narrator:** James Chambers chose the French horn because he knew there were fewer good horn players than good violinist or good pianist.

**Chambers:** I thought if I were going to play a musical instrument, I might just as well pick one where if I were successful and became a good player, I would have some opportunity to make a living playing that instrument. In those days there were very few people studying the very difficult instruments like oboe, bassoon, and horn. I finally narrowed the two possibilities for myself down to oboe and horn. Horn happened to be the first one that I picked up and I've stayed with it every since.

**Narrator:** In secondary school, James Chambers was an exceptionally bright student in science and mathematics. He seriously considered the study of chemical engineering and received offers of scholarships from several major universities. He might be a chemical engineer today had he not made application to another school, The Curtis Institute, a privately endowed school of music in the city of Philadelphia. The Curtis Institute accepts only a limited number of students of voice, piano, composition, conducting, and the orchestral instruments. No tuition is charged, but only applicants who demonstrate unusual musical talent and proficiency are admitted. Upon applying for admission to Curtis, James Chambers was required to play the French horn at a trial performance or audition.

**Chambers:** At that point in life, the Curtis Institute had such an exalted position in my mind that I didn't see how anyone coming from my position in life with no real formal instrumental training at all could ever be accepted for a position. I went there just thinking, "well here, I'll try this," knowing very well I couldn't be accepted. Well, I was very much surprised in April or May of that year, sometime after that auditions had taken place, to receive notification from the Curtis Institute that I had been accepted. Of course, from that moment on, I dropped all plans to go on in the study of science.

**Narrator:** At the Curtis Institute, James Chambers studied the French horn under Anton Horner, soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra for over 30 years and teacher of many of the finest horn players in America. He studied at the Curtis Institute from 1938 to 1941.

**Chambers:** Before graduating, I was fortunate enough to be selected by Leopold Stokowski to be a member of the All American Youth Orchestra, which in the summer of 1940 made a tour of the east coast of South America, which I remember very fondly. That was a wonderful experience for me. I was at that time 19 years old. The following summer, he organized another youth orchestra and we that summer toured the United States. At the end of that summer and beginning of that fall season I went to Pittsburgh, where I played third horn in the orchestra under Dr. Reiner. Near the end of their season in Pittsburgh, I received word from Philadelphia that Mason Jones, the solo hornist of the Philadelphia Orchestra, was going into the service and they needed someone to fill in the empty space and I was asked if I would come to Philadelphia and audition, which I did. Incidentally playing a very bad audition. But having been very strongly recommended by Mr. Horner and some other teachers I had had at Curtis, who were members of the Philadelphia Orchestra, I go the job anyhow. But I'll never forget that I played such a bad audition.

**Narrator:** James Chambers remained with the Philadelphia Orchestra for five seasons. In the fall of 1946, he was hired by the New York Philharmonic as French horn soloist. The New York season of the Philharmonic usually extends from early October to late April or early May. Four regular concerts are given during each week, on Thursday and Saturday evenings and Friday and Sunday afternoons. Young people concerts, special concerts, television concerts, and recording sessions are fitted [sic] in around this busy schedule. During this period of about seven months, James Chambers works seven days a week. In addition to the time devoted to the Philharmonic, he spends ten hours a week teaching students of the French horn at his home or at the Juilliard and Manhattan Schools of Music. From his position in the Philharmonic, James Chambers earns about 17,000 dollars a year. His teaching and other professional work brings his annual income up to between 21 and 22,000 dollars a year. While his income is high, federal income taxes absorb between 20 and 25 percent. He pays about 4,000 dollars a year for an apartment.

**Chambers:** I used to live on Long Island and used to commute and our schedule has become so heavy and my obligation so great, that I found it was absolutely impossible to continue on that basis. Also, as you know, I have a large family, we have four children now, and I was

a stranger to them and they were to me. I would get home very tired, late at night, and I would be up and out of the house in the morning, very often before they were awake and were out of bed. And we just had several family conferences and decided that in spite of the fact that out there we owned a home, which we don't here, we live in an apartment, that the disadvantages outweighed the advantages. And we moved into town, so that in order to preserve some kind of family life it has been necessary to come to this kind of arrangement.

## APPENDIX E

Interview with William Slocum

Transcribed by author on October 1, 2010.
Approved to be printed by Mr. Slocum on October 15, 2010.

*William Slocum has performed with the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Cleveland Orchestra. Currently he is a member of the faculty of the Dana School of Music at Youngstown State University, he serves as the Music Director of the Dana Symphony Orchestra, Professor of French horn, and a member of the Dana Faculty Brass Quintet.*

**What years did you study with James Chambers and for what degrees?**

I studied with him on two occasions. I studied with him at the Aspen Music School in the summer of 1957. Then I studied with him the academic year of 1959-60 at Juilliard, the result of which was a diploma. But I was in touch with him from 1957 onward. When I studied with him in the summer of 1957, I really wanted to come work with him full time, but he knew I was half way through the undergraduate degree program. He said, "don't come now, finish your degree." So I took his advice, and during those next two years I was in touch with him by letter and phone. Then I went to Juilliard and had one full year with him.

**Why did you want to study with James Chambers?**

It's somewhat complex. In 1952, I went to Aspen and studied with Ross Taylor. Ross was a great player, and was a Chambers student right after the Second World War. Ross was one of the many players that came back on the GI bill and went to Juilliard. Ross studied with Chambers, and then became the 4th horn with the New York Philharmonic. While with the Philharmonic he got the 1st horn position with the Cleveland Orchestra. So when I studied with Ross in the summer of 1952, he had just started with the Cleveland Orchestra. When I had lessons with him he talked about Chambers all of the time. Ross held Chambers in very high esteem. So my real interest in working with Chambers started there. I already knew who he was, and listened regularly to the Sunday broadcast of the New York Philharmonic, so I already knew his playing. That was much

earlier, from the late 40's when I was still in middle school, just beginning my interest in the horn. So I had known a lot about Chambers. When I was a senior in high school, the New York Philharmonic came to Albuquerque, where I grew up, and it was just an overwhelming experience. Mitropoulos was the conductor and they played Mendelssohn's Overture to the Wedding of Camacho, Prokofiev's 5th Symphony, and Brahms's 2nd Symphony. This was a big program for the horn and Chambers was spectacular! That was the first chance that I had to meet him; up to then he had just been a name. I went back stage, and he was a very cordial, very warm person and I had a very nice conversation with him. A couple of years after that I studied with him at Aspen, and a couple years after that at Juilliard.

**What was it like to study with him?**

First of all he was a presence. When you went in to work with him, he was comparatively 'low key' but he had this inner intensity and was a very intense player. Though, I don't know if he would have the following today that had then. He was one of those players that could make the concert so exciting; he would play 6 notes out of a solo and change the whole tenor of the concert. He was like that in the studio as well. He talked about everything concerning being a horn player. He took that part of teaching extremely seriously. He would tell students "don't go to that audition unless you wear a shirt and tie," or "don't go unless you shine your shoes." He took that idea of integrating the student into the world of being a professional horn player very seriously. He didn't macro or micro manage your world, but he would have without question a big influence on you all of time just from the force of his personality.

**What are Chambers teaching philosophies?**

I'm going to give you an example or two that have influenced me virtually every day of my life. I studied the Kling etudes with him. This was at the end of my time with him at Juilliard. I was playing from his edition. The first thing he did when I was playing the first etude was mark a breath mark. I asked "how come you didn't put that breath mark in your edition?" and he said, "some wouldn't understand." I know that is very abstract, but that was the world he lived in. He was the person who was influencing things around him all of the time, but he knew

there were things that he could fix and change, but he also knew there were things he could not and he didn't try to do anything about that. If it was beyond where he could do good, he just wouldn't get involved.

Breathing was a big issue all of the time. It's very important thing to me because the main bulk of my adult life has been lots and lots of horn students. What I realized after about 30 years of teaching is how much I learned from him. When I first started to play I went to the Buffalo Orchestra out of Juilliard, and every day when I went to rehearsal the light bulbs went off in my head like "Oh, well I know why he said that" or "I know why he told me to do that." Sometimes when you are a student, a teacher tells you to do something you think, "maybe yes, maybe no." When I got into the real world, virtually everything he taught me worked. It was an unbelievable experience, very profound, and has really influenced my adult life as a person teaching the horn on a day-to-day basis. He would breathe in unorthodox places. This is one thing that is misunderstood about him; his breathing spots were always for musical purposes. When he taught the second movement solo from the Frank d minor Symphony, it's kind of touchy because it's in the high range, and the clarinets are in their perfect range, and we're playing in unison with them. He would have you breathe just before you go up to the a-flat. When I was a student at Juilliard, I thought, "what is this all about?" Then the very next year I had to play this piece about 15 times in Buffalo, and it worked every single time.

So when people ask who was Jimmy Chambers? Well he was unbelievable. He was a great player. While I was playing with the New York Philharmonic I went to a dinner party and there was a discussion on an Italian horn player Domenico Ceccarossi. The discussion was on how you've never heard Ceccarossi on a recording; you've only heard the real Ceccarossi in the concert hall. Someone who knew how close I had been to Chambers asked if that was true of Chambers? Well he has made some wonderful recordings, but there was once when he performed Bruckner 7 that I don't think there was at that time recording equipment that could have captured that unbelievable golden sound on stage. It was wonderful. When people say that, they have reason to say that. There was also an Irving Kolodin review from when he played Brahms 1st symphony. Kolodin was tough on horn players. Kolodin's review stated he had heard one of the greatest performances of the Brahms he

had experienced in his life. He said the entire orchestra was encompassed within the sound of James Chambers. That's pretty high praise for a horn player. Those were the kind of things he could do. He could play with the kind of sound in which it is hard to imagine anybody being able to do it any better than that.

I refer to him as Jimmy. That was the real James Chambers. I would say "Mr. Chambers, Mr. Chambers." After my third week at Juilliard I came in and played extra horn with the Philharmonic and he came up to me after that and said, "now you call me Jimmy."

**Speaking of that sound, James Chambers has been called the "father" of the New York style of horn playing, why and what is that style?**

It is not currently in as much vogue as it was for a very long time, yet we know it was there. There were some really great players in the horn world. Mason Jones, after the war, came back from military service to Philadelphia. Chambers had been playing for Jones in the Philadelphia orchestra and had been made a full member. After the war, everyone who came back was supposed to be able to come back to their former jobs after their military service. Everyone knew that this might be a touchy situation since Ormandy had made Chambers a full member. It just so happened that year that Rudy Puletz left the Philharmonic section. All of a sudden, this problem with Philadelphia was somewhat self-contained in the fact that the management of the New York Philharmonic called Chambers up. He didn't have to play an audition, and he told me that they said, "you are the person we want and don't be afraid to ask for money because we know who you are and what we are going to get." So everything worked out.

What I'm leading up too is the thing Chambers had was this unbelievably "big sound." He played on a 1-bore mouthpiece, and the sound was incredible. What's important about this is subsequent generations of horn players have tried to emulate that. But if you play a 1-bore mouthpiece and you have to play the Mozart A Major violin concerto where you have to play 28 high b's, a Conn 8-D with a 1-bore mouthpiece can be a dangerous instrument. But he could do that. His sheer skill of playing; he could do anything with it. In addition you have this big sound, and after people heard that for a while, that was the New York sound. My former student Phil Myers, before he went to New

York was at Minnesota. Meyers had a conversation with Boris Rybka who was 1st horn at the City Center, either the Ballet or Opera, where he told Phil, during those years (the 1950's and 60's) the horn sections from other orchestras were terrified to come into New York and play because they were going to be compared to Chambers. He would come onto stage and play these unbelievable performances of Brahms, Tchaikovsky, and Bruckner. He recorded Mahler's 5th with Bruno Walter. I saw that recording one summer when I lived in Chambers' apartment, where Walter wrote "To James Chambers, the hero of this recording."

Yes, there was a New York school and James Chambers was at the center of it and yes, it influenced hundreds of players. There was a period of time where most of the orchestras had former Chambers students in them, either as principal or section players; that was true when the working laws outside of the country were a little more relaxed as well. It wasn't just in America, it was all over. When I went on tour to Europe with the Philharmonic in 1985, there were Chambers students in German orchestras and also in Mexico and South America. He was a huge influence. For instance, Ross Taylor, had a sound that was very close to Chambers. When he took the position with Cleveland as the first horn, he was offered the second horn job in Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra. Everybody who knew Ross felt that it might have been better for him to take that job, because he had a terrible time with Szell. He was a part of that whole Chambersiean world and I know Chambers thought very highly of him because he exemplified the New York school. I was a Chambers student, and I had a long-time influence on Phil Meyers who did not come from that background. Myers has said he worked with me for 18 years, which of course was off and on, but I felt that I was the link of that New York school for him, because when he came to me that's what I worked with him on most of the time. That was the big sound; the importance of the horn sound being big and round and beautiful to listen to. When I try to express this to students, I say "the sound of the horn is a color, let's say the color of the horn sound is green, when Chambers would play, the whole room would turn green." The sound would engulf everything. It would change the color of the sound of the orchestra. It wasn't being overpowering, it wasn't being a loud player, it was just the sound was so encompassing. If he played the trio in the second movement in Brahms 1st symphony where the horn is with the oboe and

violin, he wouldn't cover the oboe or violin, he would just enrich his tone to make it sound better.

**How did he achieve this sound?**

In today's world of horn teaching, all of us are very mindful that you have to get the air in the horn and that sounds easy. But at the time he was teaching that was a comparatively new idea. The other thing is about breathing, for which I gave you the examples of the Frank and the Kling study. He had a way of doing certain things where he would have the necessary air to do the things he wanted to do musically. There are a few things he would hammer home all of the time. For example, every grace note was accented. He said that to me a thousand times. As a student playing Mozart and you play the grace note and he said, "everybody misunderstands, if you don't accent the grace note it won't come out on the horn." He had thought it through, and he figured this is what you have to do to make it work. If you are playing Brahms's Symphony No. 3, his idea there was to have way too much air moving, not just enough, but way too much air moving in the horn so it covered all the valve combinations as you move through the turn. Big issue to him.

**Do you think there are disadvantages to this school?**

Of course, unless you have a conductor who can understand you and appreciate you, you are an endangered species. I'm very realistic about that since I've been playing the horn for 61 years. I've had to make a lot of alterations. I don't play a Conn 8-D anymore; I play an Alexander, but I still play with a 1-bore mouthpiece, which is a big mouthpiece. Is that harder to play? You bet, it's a lot harder, and it excludes me from doing certain kinds of things. But when you get to be my age you can pick and choose a little bit about what you play. So I gear what I do more to what is better to that, meaning I get to choose the repertoire. It's a dangerous world. If you are playing a 1-bore mouthpiece on a Conn 8-D in a woodwind quintet, you're going to obliterate them. I've done a lot of chamber music, after my time in Cleveland I played only chamber music for four years in two woodwind quintets and two brass quintets. This is when I switched to the Alexander, because I could play somewhat aggressively and still be part of the quintet. But if I played that aggressively on Conn 8-D with a 1-bore mouthpiece, the

members of the group might think I am trying to destroy their efforts.

There are plenty of downsides. I've given a bunch of clinics in my life. You go to a clinic where there are 400 horn players and you say "listen, you're going to have to play big or you're never going to get a big job" and then you have a whole group of people who want to kill you because they do not want to hear that. But I feel that I owe it to them as a professional player over a long time, who has had his own career and has helped many others have a career. I feel like I got that from Chambers. The downside is you have people who say, "if you study with Bill Slocum all he does is tell you to play loud." I feel that's unfair and unjust. There is nothing I love more passionately than a beautiful, supported pianissimo dynamic. Which incidentally Chambers could do unbelievably well. Frightening well. Chambers was frightening. He would play a passage and everyone in the orchestra would just freeze. But it's always at a price. I have actually left a couple of jobs because I was working under a conductor who didn't have any appreciation for what I was trying to do at all. So I thought in the long run it wouldn't be the best thing. I was very fortunate in my first job in Buffalo because the conductor liked the New York style. This conductor said to me "Slocum, a horn player like James chambers only comes every 100 years." I think he was right. You only get a player like that once in a great while. It was such a rare and unique talent.

I'm hoping you can use this to paint the picture of an extraordinary person. He enjoyed universal respect in the orchestra. The whole orchestra. A flute player was talking about some statesman who was doing something wonderful for the world and he said to me "he was a Jimmy Chambers kind of guy." That was the kind of respect Chambers enjoyed. When he quit playing principal horn, they invited him to be the personnel manager of the orchestra. This had to be ratified by the orchestra and more than 90 percent of the orchestra voted for him. That tells you what kind of respect he enjoyed.

He was also very protective of his section. He was a consummate professional, but he was a very warm human being. I remember a conductor who came in and was abusive to one of the section players. Chambers got out of his seat and said, "I'm sorry," to the conductor "this man asked you a perfectly reasonable question and you answer

him like that?" The conductor apologized; he knew he had to, he knew he had no choice. Chambers was careful to not cross certain lines and had wonderful stories to tell us. He told me "you're probably better off if you don't have a fight with a conductor, because you may think you are going to win, but you never win." So he understood very well. He understood how important it was to handle people and deal with people. But he could be very forceful if he thought an injustice had been done.

**Did he ever speak of Anton Horner's influence on him?**

Of course. Anton Horner was a factor in all of this. He had pictures on his wall in the room where he practiced. These pictures were of various conductors and various musicians with written tributes to him with their portrait. The one of Anton Horner said "to Jimmy Chambers, my pride and joy." So Horner knew who and what Chambers was. So yes, he talked about Horner a lot. In my particular relationship with Chambers, he emphasized how noble Horner was in the sense of being such a great horn player and devoting his whole life to playing the horn. So when Horner thought he could no longer play horn in the Philadelphia Orchestra at the level that he wanted to play, he moved himself to third horn and he did that for a few years and then moved himself to fourth horn. He did that, no one ever asked him to do that. Those were some of the ways in which Chambers expressed how much respect he had for Horner.

Let us talk about curriculum that comes from the Horner world. The Horner world was Kopprasch, Kopprasch, and Kopprasch. Chambers said to me "if you can play everything in Kopprasch, you can play practically everything you're going to have to play as a professional player." He was saying that to me in the fall of 1960 and the world has gotten more complex. I have talked to various professionals from all over the country over this period time and many of them have that same general consensus. With all the analysis that goes on, we still don't know why the Kopprasch etudes are so good. We don't know what there is in them, no one has analyzed them into that level of scientific properties to know exactly why they work so well. But all of us who play and have taught people to play them are pretty convinced by them. So you did a lot of Kopprasch with Chambers. And when he studied with Horner that is what I refer to as the "old conservatory approach," which was Pares scales and the Kopprasch book.

Only when you were practically a senior at Curtis would you get your hands on any music. And then you would play out of the Kaufmann *Twelve Solos for Horn*, which has little short pieces for horn. We think those are just little pieces for horn, but after spending 3 years on scales and etudes that was like you had arrived at a new plateau. That was the style of teaching that went on at the Conservatory.

Both Chambers and Ross Taylor were really into that. With both of them I studied the Pares and the Kopprasch extensively. Ross Taylor also taught the *Concone* vocal exercises. I didn't get that as much with Chambers. Chambers had me play that in my first lesson at Juilliard and then he mapped out a plan. By that time it was a lot of orchestral repertoire. He taught the excerpts and worked on them until you could play them very well. He would go through a whole symphony with you. He knew that my first season with the Buffalo orchestra I would play Mahler's 4th symphony, so he took me through that entire piece and told me how to play everything. In other words, he had a plan, but it was always what he felt the student needed. If you had a problem he thought, "we ought to fix it."

We as students had so much respect for him; we would have done anything he asked. Maybe some of that was a fear factor, but you never felt that in the studio. If you did something that was not the smartest move in the world he would always handle those things humorously. He would turn you and say "I hope you don't do that out in public." That was the way he would handle lots and lots of things. It was not the world of four Kopprasch etudes this week and four next week. You spent time studying those etudes. You might work on one for several weeks, maybe longer that, until he felt you had gotten out of it what was there.

**What was the way he approached those etudes?**

A lot of breathing. Prominently on his shelf in the room where he had the photographs there was a book about Caruso. He felt that the sound of the horn was similar to the human voice, and breathing was very important to singers, thus being very important to horn players. I think that was the origin of the *Concone* exercises. You needed to develop a beautiful, singing sound.

I feel like I've emphasized this big sound so much. There are some things I want to share with you to show you how versatile he was. That year I studied with him at Juilliard was the year of the big Mahler Revival. After Mahler died in 1911, his music wasn't played very often. In New York, when Mitropoulos was leaving and Bernstein was coming in, it had been 50 years. Mahler had made this prediction that it would take 50 years for people to appreciate his symphonies. Thus, these conductors had a big Mahler festival. What that meant for me, as a student at Juilliard is that I got to play with the Philharmonic a lot. So that let me into that world where you are in the locker room with the players, getting a feeling for everything going on.

Music was a big issue. So when you ask, how did he arrive at things? He would think it through, and then he would develop some kind of a breathing process that allowed him to do what he wanted to do musically. When I went to the Cleveland orchestra, I played my audition for George Szell and he had me play the Brahms 3rd symphony solo and after I played it he said "nice try" and I thought that was not very charitable. So he had me take a breath in an unorthodox place. I would have never thought to take a breath there because there is a big ligature over that. If you played with Szell for a while you came to appreciate that. He conducted the New York Philharmonic frequently. His statement on his photograph to Chambers was "to James Chambers, the young genius of the horn." I think Chambers influenced him on breathing and then he passed that on. When I went to the Cleveland Orchestra I was away from Chambers for almost a decade but when I went in to play for Szell I was hearing things that were similar to some of the things I heard from Chambers.

**It sounds like he had quite the impact on everyone.**

He did. He was a force. He had a presence. When he played in the orchestra everything was different. He did a lot of freelance playing in New York in his free time from the Philharmonic because that was a way to make extra money. He would always try to sit at 4th horn, but they would never let him. He would say "well can I play 4th," and they would respond "no Jimmy you'll have to play 1st." He was very easy going about those things. When he was a young player, in 1940, Stokowski organized a group called the All American Youth Symphony. He went on that tour in South America and got to play 4th horn on that.

Incidentally, he felt strongly about that. He felt that you could never develop a great high register until you had a good low register. So he worked on your low register all the time. He made you really work down there. And if you brought in something that was wishy washy from middle c down to low c, you were probably going to spend the rest of that lesson fixing that range. You get to the point where you finally get a high range and a way low range, but that mid-low range we always have to work on that. You never get to the point where you're not working on that range. He would just make you practice that. Of course Farkas understood that too. The thing about Chambers though is that he didn't write a book or a treatise on playing. It doesn't mean he didn't think about these things all of the time. He did. He did think about them, and he thought about music and he thought about what matters. He was not big on practicing the horn all day. He felt that the important thing about practice is that you work hard. He had steely blue eyes. And he would be sitting right next to you, teaching you and telling you what to do. He said "you know, most of the time when I was developing as a player I rarely practiced more than an hour and a half a day." So I took all this in, and he turned and looked at me with those eyes and said "but I worked! When I practice, I work!" Very intense. Could scare you to death. That is a very vivid memory. That has not left me in 50 years.

**Did he have a philosophy on the preparation for becoming a professional?**

Yes. There are several facets to it. I'll use myself as exhibit A to give you first hand knowledge of his teaching. That first day I went in for my first lesson of what was going to be a whole year of study. He had me do a whole lot of different things. Sitting down in retrospect, I realize he was mapping out a whole plan. At the end of the lesson he said "well you'll have a job in a year." That blew me away, I thought I had moved all the way from New Mexico and I came to New York. But that's how he sized things up. He listened to me play, and he knew so much about playing the horn. Incidentally an audition for him was pick up your horn and play third space c up to high c. If you did that reasonably well then he thought you had a chance for certain things. He didn't recommend that everyone have a horn career, but part of what he said about that was that you have to realize what you are getting yourself into. All of us have that as a huge

responsibility all the time. For many reasons the horn is very attractive. But a lot of times people don't know what a big problem it can be at times to learn to play the horn well. That was true of everyone of that generation. That was true of Chambers. That was true of Gunther Schuller as well. In his book on horn technique Schuller says the same kind of thing "if you are going to be a professional horn player you are going to spend 18 months to two years of ditch digging work." When I was at Juilliard I knew I was going to be doing a certain amount of that.

The other thing is he also wanted to get you into the orchestra as soon as possible. On many occasions he said to me "remember the orchestra is the finishing school." One reason I had so much opportunity when I went there to study with him is because I played in the orchestra in Albuquerque and El Paso, so he knew I had played a lot of standard repertoire. This was another one of his standard remarks "the notes of the Beethoven's 5th symphony are the same in New York, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Berlin." It's a good insight.

I studied with him before the 60's. Julie Landsman studied with him during the 60's. There is a famous story when she took a lesson with him, and after was walking down the hall and he came to the door and said "and Julie, don't come to another lesson unless you're wearing shoes. I will not teaching you another lesson unless you are wearing shoes." He felt there was a certain protocol that you should live up to as a bare minimum. Of course the world changed during the 60's and there was a revolution. I think he got through that very well. I got to see him when I went on tour with the Philharmonic in 85. It was interesting; we had dinner several times to reminisce about everything that had happened. The world had changed. I went on a Japanese tour with the Philharmonic in 1961; there was not one woman in the Philharmonic on that tour. It was all men. Then I went on tour with them to Europe in 85, more than half of the orchestra was women. That's how much it changed in 25 years.

**I've read that he retired because of health reasons; do you know what those health reasons were?**

I was very close to him. I spent a lot of time with him when I was at Juilliard, and then I went on that Japanese tour. There was a group of 8 diverse players (flute, trombone, Jimmy and Me, ect.) in the orchestra who broke

off from the rest of the tour and stayed at Japanese Inns. I already knew him pretty well, but during that time I got to know him very well. The health reasons all go back to the Second World War. He had a serious congenital heart problem, which prevented him from being in the service. During that time there was so much pressure to join the army people would always lie about their eyesight or whatever health problems they might have had, but his heart issues were serious enough to keep him from joining. So he was bothered with that problem for a very long time. He had several operations.

He was an extremely well organized human being, and he learned as a young man what his limitations were. But on the stage with the horn in his hand, he was a tiger; he was unbelievable. He did some interesting things though. At the time when I was doing all this playing with the Philharmonic, while I was at Juilliard because of the Mahler festival, the orchestra still played in Carnegie Hall. In the old Carnegie Hall set-up, to leave the locker rooms you went down the hallway, down one set of stairs and up another set of stairs to get on the stage. I was walking with him to get on the stage from the locker room and he was very careful. I said to him "I notice that you did this in a very systematic way" and he said "yes, I've played enough concerts where you sit down, the conductor comes out and turns around and starts conducting and I don't want to be even remotely out of breath when that happens." When I look back on that I think that he was always aware that he had certain physical limitations that he had to keep track of. But when he played you would not have known he had any of those.

**I've also heard he almost went to MIT and always thought through that kind of stuff.**

Having known him closely, I heard him say a number of times that he could have been a great statistician. He probably could have done a number of things well. But when you heard him play, you thought he was probably born to play the horn. This was a golden age. It really lasted from '43 when he went to Philadelphia, and in '46 when he went to New York, and it was pretty much over by '66 or '67. He was still in the orchestra, but he played less and less. Some great years in human activity, like a great writer or great poet, doesn't last very long. That's the category that I put Chambers in; he was rare and unique.

One thing about his ability to adjust. That big sound was so associated with him that we just thought that was the way of life and that's how he played everything. Stokowski came in to guest conduct the Philharmonic and I was out in the hall listening. He opened the program with the Mozart G minor Symphony and you could hear the horns, but just barely, perfect, but barely. I couldn't wait to go downstairs during the intermission to ask him why he played it like this? He said "Stokowski said don't play too much on this." In other words, this idea that he only played loud is very erroneous; he could do anything on the horn. On one hand, I would like to give you the idea that he had this unbelievably big sound that was just gorgeous but on the other hand he was a chameleon. He was able to play various styles of music exceptionally well. I know that he thought about that a lot because he talked to me about it a lot. He could do things with his sound, and in all fairness to this, he had some great people around him that contributed to that. Harold Gomberg was the principal oboe player. During that year, either Harold or Chambers would do something so unbelievable that how ever much you paid to get into the concert was well repaid, because they would do something that was just unbelievable. After all these years, I can still remember some of the things they were able to play were lifted to just incredible levels of artistry.

He's more real to me now than he was when I was working with him 50 years ago. Things that he said and things that he did influenced me more and more after I left. This is virtually 100 percent as a player. It took me a while to see how big his mind was; how far out he was reaching because with a few words he could lay down a whole lot.

**Thank you for your time.**

You're welcome.

## APPENDIX F

Interview with David Wakefield

Transcribed by author on April 11, 2010.
Approved to be printed by Dr. Wakefield
on November 13, 2011.

*David Wakefield teaches at the Aspen Music School, the Juilliard School, and the Hartt School. He is the hornist with the American Brass Quintet, is principal hornist of the Little Orchestra Society, and has performed with the New York, Vienna, and Brooklyn Philharmonics, Houston Symphony, the Orchestra of St. Luke's, the New York City Opera, and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.*

**What were James Chambers' teaching philosophies?**

When I began my studies with Chambers, which was Fall of 71, I was a transfer student from the University of Houston, spending only my freshman year in Houston, Texas. After arriving at Juilliard, I studied Mr. Chambers for 6 years, Fall of 71 until Spring of 77. I did 3 years in my undergraduate, 1 year in the Masters program, and the Doctorate was a two-year matriculating program. I have found myself wondering if I have studied with him longer than anyone else, since he taught only at Juilliard. That might be true except for perhaps in his early years of teaching. He had an exclusive contract with Juilliard, and he did not teach any private lessons outside of his students at Juilliard. He was the personnel manager at the New York Philharmonic and very busy and just didn't feel that he had any more time in his schedule to teach other than his students at Juilliard. He usually had five students at a time.

The lessons lasted 45 minutes. To my knowledge, everyone else in the school got hour lessons but we only got 45-minute lessons. But Mr. Chambers' intensity level was high during the 45 minutes and we played so continuously --he would stuff more in 45 minutes than most teachers would fit in an hour – so we felt no sense of being denied anything. He was always focused and intense in lessons. I had studied with Phil Farkas for a few weeks in Aspen, Doug Hill, John Cerminaro, and Paul Mansur, and with all of my previous teachers, lessons began with a 'hi how are you, where are you from" and bit of small talk. I remember my first lesson, walking in and I sat down, Chambers

opened up Pares scales and we got to work immediately. There was no small talk. I remember feeling after a few weeks, he's not getting to know about me at all, so I tried to come in and talk about myself and he said "don't Talk" intensely.

My work with him then proceeded in that manner for most of my years with him. Later on he got more liberal with talking about a few things other than the technical issues of this week. Once, he told me that when Mason Jones went off to the war, Chambers filled in for him in the Philadelphia Orchestra, and when Mason Jones came back, the orchestra conductor reluctantly gave the position back to Mason Jones. It was illustrative of how much they admired the playing of Jimmy Chambers. I believe that he joined the NY Philharmonic shortly after that, so since 1946 until he retired in the late 1960's he was in the NY Phil. I am not sure when he began teaching at Juilliard but he taught there until his death and was certainly the senior teacher. His philosophy was "if you come to Juilliard to study with me I fully expect that you came in order to sound like me," so his goal in teaching was to help students to develop his beautiful rich sound. This goal was not so easy for all students. There were some who didn't fit physically into making that sound or making that kind of sound wasn't in their ear. Had I been in a position to advise them at that time, I might have advised such a student to switch teachers. It was a couple of years before he slightly reluctantly accepted my sound, which was slightly lighter than his. But there was a mouthpiece change or two. So it was about sounding like him.

Of course, the use of the F horn up until C-sharp was very inherent in that philosophy. He could hear if you had the thumb valve down and he would stop you from doing it even if his face was turned. Saving the sound of the low F horn was a big mission in his teaching and it seemed to be inspired by Anton Horner, his own teacher. Horner's teacher was important in overseeing the invention of the double horn and Horner himself played the double horn starting in 1899. Because he grew up during a time when there was controversy in which horn to use (F or B-flat single horns), the double horn was a great invention to get the best of both worlds. But Gumpert (Horner's teacher) leaned strongly in the F horn direction, so he adopted the practice of changing to the B-flat horn on the

double horn starting at C-sharp. There was a philosophically strong position about that.

He had a teaching philosophy, which was systematized. He did not burden you with all of your problems at once. But rather worked on things in a certain order; not encumbering you with issues that you weren't ready for, yet. I felt like articulation and sound was all I was working on at first. And maybe in March or April he started working on some other things because sound and articulation were starting to settle in okay. I remember realizing that it was amazing that he listened to me do certain things for months and would not talk about it because he gave me what I was able to coupe with. There was a progression of what technical things I needed to work on.

Once perhaps in my final year of studying with him, in one lesson he apologized he didn't feel like he was so focused. He was waiting on a phone call to find out whether his son's child survived a difficult childbirth. He apologized that he didn't feel like he was totally focused. But that was the only occasion that his focus anything less than riveted.

By the time I was in the doctoral program, perhaps my last 5 months of studying with him, we were able to chat and I was able to ask him about some things. "Mr. Chambers I'm interested in the pedagogy of the horn and can I ask you a few questions:" One question I was able to ask was about why he wanted the turns in Kopprasch a particular way. I was able to ask several other things — which etudes in which order he used and why. What was most interesting about his answers was that he followed the model of his own teacher Anton Horner.

**Why did you want to study with James Chambers?**

I didn't really know that much about horn teachers, or their styles, when I was a high school senior in Durant, Oklahoma. I didn't really know about schools of horn playing. I did play an 8-D that the Durant High Band had bought. When I went to Aspen, John Cerminaro, who had studied with James Chambers, said, "that's a great horn, wow, you should offer your high school a brand new Conn for it, in exchange for that 8-D." My dad owned a music store, so I actually got a pre-war 8-D for wholesale cost of a new Conn 8-D, which was probably about 400 dollars at

the time. This was my second year of coming to Aspen so it was between my senior year of high school and my freshman year of college. I was already going to the University of Houston. Cerminaro said, "Why aren't you coming to Juilliard? You could get into Juilliard and you should come there and study with Jimmy Chambers." So in March I auditioned for Juilliard and got in and I transferred. I do remember my father ordering a whole bunch of music for horn and piano that had been on a record. The *James Chambers Plays the French Horn* is the name of an old LP. It was a part of an artist series and Alphonse Leduc published the entire repertoire on that and they probably sponsored the recording. I remember going to district and state contests several years in a row playing pieces from that album. Bernhard Heiden was maybe the biggest piece on that album. So I did know about the Chambers sound from that particular recording (even though during my time with him, Chambers admitted that he was never happy with the sound that the recording engineers got in that recording). Paul Mansur, my teaching in high school, played a Geyer, but he didn't push me stylistically in that direction. When I went to the University of Houston, I studied with Ceaser Lamonaca, who had been a Chambers student. That was my second direct influence from the Chambers style (Cerminaro, being the first) and approach to horn playing. Except for high school I was very much in the middle of the 'American' style of horn playing.

**What's it like to study with James Chambers?**

Very intense. Very disciplined. He was two minutes late for a lesson once during my six years of studying with him. At that time, he asked if I had been there on time, and I said "yes." So he went over the designated time by two minutes. I was late only once that I can recall, by only 3 minutes or so. I was horrified to keep him waiting.

**Did he ever speak of Anton Horner's influence on him?**

He did speak of Anton Horner. He would talk about Horner in regards to horn sound, and changing to the B-flat horn at C-sharp. I remember his not so gently striking my thumb with a pencil when I pushed the thumb valve down at G-sharp (too low). He had told me for several months "don't use the thumb valve" and I did, so he felt a little bit of pain needed to accompany his admonition. He did speak fondly of Anton Horner. When I got to ask him later about his pedagogical things, I always was curious why he

requested that the turns in Kopprasch be played with the eighth note tied to the first of a sextuplet and the rest to fill out the sextuplet. I was always curious about that so that was one of the things I asked him. “Why do you ask your students to do it that way?” I got more of a glimpse of him that was less intellectual and more of his own satisfying the authority over him. He said, “it’s because that’s the way Anton Horner requested that I do it.” I asked: “That’s interesting. Do you think that it has more to do with opera being a bigger part of Horner’s career and a turn like that might more be done by a opera singer?” And he said “perhaps.” His answer surprised me. I thought I was going to get a juicy history of the turn and I didn’t get it at all. It was the way he was. His formality, and his quietness, and his shyness caused you to take larger significance into what things were. When I got to know him a little bit, I realized that Anton Horner didn’t tell him the whys. He said well, “that’s what he said to do, so I’m making my students do it that way.’ But I realize that there is something valuable there. I was getting a certain oral tradition passed down from a horn player who adopted the double horn in 1899. Even if those traditions are currently out of fashion, an intelligent student should figure that out.

**Did he ever talk about his early years in horn playing?**

He spoke very little about his early years of horn playing. One of the funny things in studying with him was that he did not play in his lessons. I never heard him play live. In the 6 years I studied with him never heard him play live. He sang. He sang what you should be playing in the proper octave. And he had a voice that imitated the sound of the horn so you knew exactly what he was after. Interesting that one of the major things about studying with him was sound, but you never heard him play. Cerminaro pushed me to listen to Chambers’ recordings; more specifically of the NY Philharmonic with Mitropoulos conducting Mahler Symphony No. 5. That apparently was the earliest recording of Jimmy Chambers playing Mahler 5. He was younger, and was at his best.

The archive department of the New York Philharmonic is going to have extensive recordings. John Cerminaro can also take this list and add to it if he is willing too.

**If there was one thing that you would want to pass down to young horn players about James Chambers, what would it be?**

I think I've made it a point to tell all of my students the story about him insisting on the F horn until C-sharp. I don't insist on that with my own students at Juilliard, at least not all of them. Some I might for a period of time if I feel like their concept of sound of the horn is suffering a bit. And I'll say, "look lets do it the way Chambers did it for a while." I think, especially Louis Stout students were taught the opposite with a predominant use of the B-flat horn. Some students don't have a clue about that legacy. So I feel it's important to pass that on to my students at Aspen even though I only have them for a maximum of 9 weeks: his concept of sound. I feel it's still important to pass on that tradition. It's about sound quality; there's a poetry to the way he played, a dignity to musicality. He had a wonderful way of communicating that flare and approach. He was also exquisitely attentive to all details about beauty of sound. The shape of the cut off, the attack, the shape of the note, never a burr, you couldn't have a burr at the beginning of an attack. You had to stay completely away from that. There were these things so emphatic and so detailed in making sure that every detail about your playing was just beautiful; really, really gorgeous. He was hugely influential.

**What materials did he use for lesson preparation with students?**

He had a curriculum. You did Kopprasch, and then you did Kling. So he had a list of etudes that you went through. He would mark on your etude a star, or an S or another letter. And that would be the two etudes you prepared for this week. And you did Pares scales until your articulation was okay. And he would mark on the music what you would do. You walked in, you played your two etudes and then you read through the other two etudes where he gave you his expectations of showed you how you were going to prepare the other two etudes. That dominated the lessons for three years. It was drill training. I would schedule my own recital and bring in a piece and he would somewhat reluctantly help me with the piece, therefore pushing aside the etude work. Excerpts occurred later, maybe after three years. I never touched an excerpt with him until three years into it. It was about training and being able to technically play the horn that was the

foundation. As for your knowledge of repertoire, you can listen to records, and you can talk to other people; there are a variety of sources for that information. But the basic training of the sound of the sound and articulation, the style of playing on the horn, that's what he kept his focus on for such a long time.

**How much material were you expected to cover in a lesson with him?**

Two etudes and my Pares scales. Those 45 minutes were filled with it. Intense. And he never missed a thing. He would talk about technical things like if you missed a note because it's the first note on the next line. So he would pencil that note in at the end of the previous line. Another example is that he would talk about approaching a difficult technical passage and in your mind to think of the passage minutely slower to assist in playing it accurately. He would help with some mental games on how to be disciplined to be more accurate and more dependable with your playing. But most of it was "that note was to short, that articulation needs to be this way, your intonation, you're playing middle C, you need to play that note with a more closed hand position." All that was just bang, bang, bang; it was training, it was stupendous, it was so consistent. That's what it was about. Later on, when excerpts were also covered, it was still efficiently covering the material.

**Describe his philosophy on preparation needed to becoming a professional?**

He talked little about it directly. He was much more about training you how to play the horn. He also conducted the orchestral repertory class once a week. His knowledge was fantastic. He would say, for instance, on the big solo at the end of the first movement in Brahms Symphony No 2, "now we're going to do it the way Stokowski did it, now we're going to do it like Bruno Walter did it, and now . . . ." With cold steely eyes, everyone was absolutely quiet and still and listen intently to every word he said, because the amount of valuable information coming out of his mouth and baton was unbelievable. His musicality was fantastic as well.

**What was his approach to dealing with technical and/or musical problems with students?**

It's interesting; technique was mostly learned by imitating him as he sang. He did not go into great depths of explaining about tongue position or what you do with your body in order to achieve something. He did not talk about two kinds of breathing and he didn't talk about a tight gut. I asked him about that later on also. He said that his own playing was a fair amount of instinctual and he wasn't entirely sure how he accomplished things. He also said "if the student can achieve it without talking about it, then why talk about it." I have felt differently about that. I have felt if a student wasn't able to achieve what I was asking them to achieve I felt like it was my responsibility to peel back a layer or two if I can. So I observed more how I'm doing something, and I read, and I questioned whether that was the right way to do something and started discussing it with students. And I can get much more verbal about how to do things. I don't necessarily go there right away, so I'd say Chambers has influenced me. Some students get too analytical so maybe that was the reason he was doing that. Part of the discipline also, talk about articulation and sound, he certainly was a big stickler for rhythm right from the get go. If you rushed during an etude he would tell you that, and he would ask you to watch it. So very disciplined about those kinds of things.

He didn't analyze music and talk about interpretive depth or anything to me. I did a lot of recitals. I probably played 6 or 7 recitals in my 6 years there. I liked doing recitals, it motivated me to practice and prepare a little bit better. I think I have a pretty musical approach innately and maybe he didn't feel like he needed to address it so he didn't talk so much about that. But when he sang, he certainly sang musically, so there was always a model.

**What aspects of his artistry, preparations and work ethic were most admired by his peers and music directors?**

It's hard to say. I remember Rainer De Intinis telling me that Jimmy Chambers said very little to the section. He just did it and everyone fell in line. It was very clear what his stylistic approach was so everyone imitated. De Intinis talked about his leadership in the section was unquestioned and clear without talking. Interestingly, I

am only vaguely aware of Chambers work as admired by conductors.

**Is your teaching style similar or dissimilar from James Chambers? Why?**

Because the students coming to Aspen are studying with a different teacher from their four-year degree program, I have had a less demanding approach in terms of sound. Students need to find their own sound that is efficient and suits their own taste and physiques. I don't feel a sense of fitting them into the Chambers mold. Also, I haven't played a Conn 8-D for the last 4 years. I'm now playing a Ricco Kuehn triple. Yet that sound, a dark and a rich beautiful sound is what I'm trying to achieve out front. It doesn't necessarily sound exactly the way the 8-D sounds especially close up, but I feel like it projects much more and has a nice warmth. So I'm still in that mode just achieving it by different means in my own playing. In my own teaching, I feel students need to hear me verbalize about technique where he was very reluctant to verbalize about something. I am also much more transparent about explaining goals behind doing certain etudes and Pares scales. He didn't talk much about the why of it.

**Did he relate any interesting stories or anecdotes regarding his studies or career as a performer?**

He certainly did in orchestra repertory class, but it had more to do about the music, Bruno Walter did this, or he'd ask for an extra breath here and there. He was a shy guy. He was not very personable; there was a formality about him. He was most comfortable dealing on that basis. He pulled back the veil a few times here and there in my later years of studying with him. I wouldn't say I interacted with him completely differently later on. He was still mostly formal, yet he revealed some things that surprised me. One Christmas his wife served chili and he invited his students over. He had a party once, so he wasn't entire void of socializing. I don't have a lot of memories about what he talked about at such a rare social gathering.

**James Chambers has been called the "father" of American horn playing, why?**

It might be debatable if Chambers was that "father" instead of Anton Horner. Certainly Chambers' influence

teaching at Juilliard and established the New York Style of playing epitomized in his own style is certainly closer to us historically. But sometimes we loose perspective. I think the guys in Chicago would take great offense if you described the Chambers style as the American style. I feel more comfortable for the sake of accuracy in calling Chambers as the father of the New York style of horn playing. Conn 8-D's have been on a bit of a decrease in usage. There are several North American makers who have refined the Knopf/Geyer style of horn design. By comparison, Conn, even though they have come out recently with their "Vintage" model, the production consistency and lack of innovation has perhaps contributed to the decline of the 8-D and New York style of horn playing

**What are some aspects of the "New York" style of horn playing?**

Certainly dark. A dark, velvety kind of sound is the main thing. It's often accompanied with a heaviness of articulation perhaps. Though I have to say Chambers himself pushed students to avoid woofiness, or a covered sound. He would often ask people to open their hand position. The horn is going to produce that sound. He emphasized the need to think of the sound slightly brighter under your ear, so that the end result would be dark and rich in the audience. The Conn 8-D's contribution to that style: It's not the bore size of the Conn, but rather the throat size of the bell and the free blowingness of it with a deep-throated mouthpiece. He did not push me to play a C1. He did pull out the C cups, but his philosophy was you didn't go bigger than you needed. But that would have been his first instinct, to go to a bigger bore size. Another interesting thing about him is that he admitted he never really had a good lip trill and that he would have his assistant play lip trills. He also admitted that he didn't have much of a double tongue, but he had a very fast single tongue. But it illustrates that some people that we consider to be iconic and legendary were actually quite human. It also shows that at that time, there were fewer players and that such artists as Chambers still stood out in spite of his limitations in terms of today's technical talent.

**Is there something I'm not asking that I should be?**

You might be talking to some people who maybe feel like they were, at least for a period of time, a causality of

the “New York“ style of horn playing. You might ask “what are the strengths and weaknesses of the New York Style of horn playing from your perspective?’ Some might say that that style of playing was responsible for the short career of Chambers (from 1942 to about 1968, roughly a career of 26 years). I have heard it said many times that the inefficiency of the New York style of playing has shortened careers. Phil Myers has moved to a much more efficient horn, the E. Schmid triple.

When I studied with him, he had hepatitis at one point and was in the hospital for some weeks. His doctors loved to talk to him because he was quite technical with his understanding of his condition and medication. He said that he had considered a career in the field of science as a young man, before he decided to play the horn. It shows that he had a very technical mind; he could have easily been a doctor or medical researcher.

**Thank you for your time. It’s been a pleasure to talk with you.**

Thank you.

## APPENDIX G

Interview with Robert Chambers

Transcribed by author on November 15, 2010.
Approved to be reprinted by Mr. Chambers
on November 4, 2011.

*Robert Chambers is the son of James Chambers.*

**Did he ever share with you stories from his professional experience with the Philharmonic or at Julliard?**

No, not really. Some of the teaching took place in our home. But that was always his time with his students. So I knew some of his students. Stories, no, he was not a big storyteller.

**Did he keep his professional life and his family life separate?**

Pretty much. It's a strange situation, well not normal situation, when you grow up with a father who is a performer who leaves for work at 10 o'clock in the morning and gets home at 10 o'clock or later at night. It's a much different life than a 9 to 5 job. He would be playing Mahler's 5th one night and it would be a day like any other. There were no nerves apparent in his home life.

**Did he have any non-musical interests or hobbies?**

Well he collected a lot of records. Most of which I gave to Juilliard when he died. He liked to fish. Musically, no. There was a period of time when the Reynolds Company approached him about having a Chamber's model horn and he was involved with that for a while. He was interested in the mechanics of horn construction in terms of design and mouthpiece design. In the early years when we were living on Long Island I remember him practicing. But as time went on, he did not practice at home at all. He would just go in and warm up and perform the concert and he figured that was enough. I have memories of being in the club-room at Carnegie Hall, which in those days was a smoke filled room, and he'd be warming up and playing scales before he went on stage. There weren't really outside things. He was in the horn society. One of the things I have is a copy of a recording from when he was invited to be a speaker at a horn symposium at the University of Florida. He answers a

lot of students' questions about what it means to be a professional horn player, the audition process, and the qualities to look for in students. They told him he was going to speak on Wednesday, and showed up Tuesday so they just put him on and he was totally unprepared and handled it goldenly. It's very interesting to listen to.
He enjoyed teaching. I don't know if you know this, but he also taught at the Manhattan School of Music. He taught at both for a while. He had lots of students who went on to be horn players. Like John Carabella, and Bob Johnson, and many others. There was a girl that I remember because she used to take care of me when I was a kid. Her name was Pat Larkin, I think she went on to play with Washington. She's an artist and I still have a picture on my wall here of a horn player walking along that has this brace thing that's holding the music in front of him. He's practicing and stumbles over a rock and it says below "practice makes perfect, practice makes perfect."

I was born in 1946, when he was first chair when he was in Philadelphia. This is when Mason Jones had to leave for the war. Philadelphia called my dad to take that spot since he was not able to go to the war. My dad had Rheumatic fever as a child, which resulted in a heart murmur, which eventually killed him. Mason Jones came back from the war and wanted his job back, which is normal and then the New York Philharmonic hired dad. We were living in Long Island. He would teach in the morning at Juilliard or Manhattan, and do the rehearsal or concert, which ever was required by the particular day. In those days because they did not have a 52 week season, they played a lot of recording gigs, as many as they could get their hands on to supplement their income. For example, he played with Guy Mitchell on the Yellow Rose of Texas, and played a lot of commercial gigs. He was getting royalty checks after that, in fact we still do, from some of the films he did like for Manhattan with Woody Allen. There was a scene for Saturday Night at the Movies that he recorded, every time that was played on Saturday night the cash register rang. It was kind of funny, but it was a much different lifestyle than it was later.

I frequently got dragged along to those concerts. I was about 8 or 9 or into my teens at those concerts. I would hang around backstage and fool around with the percussion section. Sit there for the concert backstage, and then we would go home to Long Island. I know he loved to teach. I know Horner was a rough, brusque, Germanic kind of

teacher. I don't think he was easy by any stretch of the imagination. I think my dad picked up a lot of that. I think, he enjoyed it, and like the students, but if students didn't know their stuff he would let them know. If he had a student who he did not think were good enough to make a living, he would let them know. He would tell them they should go teach or do something else, but that performing was a job that wasn't for them. It's a philosophy I have taken with me. People who weren't good enough to make the grade he felt that he was doing them a favor by telling them that. But you have many more questions.

**From the concerts you attended what do you remember the most about them?**

On one hand I can remember sitting with my mother in the audience and being bored to tears. Then I can remember the times I got to hang out backstage, where I got interested in what happened back there and what I spent the rest of my life doing. I got interested in the mechanics and why they did things certain ways, spoke with stage managers, and that was just me. It was just your dad doing his job. Just as if your dad worked in a hardware store, you just hung out with your dad in the store. As a young person, you don't really understand the talent, and that was there, but you just don't. It wasn't until later, maybe after dad died, that I realized. [William] Vacchiano came up to me one time and said "you know, your Dad's specialty was guts, he had no fear about making the leap to a note." You listen to recordings and say "well yeah, that's my dad." It's distinctive. Playing Till Eulenspiegel the way he did, you just don't appreciate that as a kid. By the time I started to appreciate that he stopped playing. As a kid, you don't quite grasp that, and take it for granted. It's a small world, your world, so that was something I couldn't talk about with friends. It wasn't like he was on the Top 40 chart. It was just what he does.

**When he stepped down, I've read because of the health reasons, was that his personal choice or was that doctors orders?**

I think it was a little bit of both. In the 60's somewhere, I was in college, so it was post 1964; he had open-heart surgery and had a heart valve replacement as a result of the Rheumatic fever. In the mid 60's the heart valve replacement was a very daring step.

Then there were other problems, like he got hepatitis and generally was not well. He was having lung capacity problems and was aware of the fact that he wasn't able to do as much as he once was able to. When he stepped down there was a lot discussion about going to the Indiana University and taking a position there, and then the opportunity to take the job as personnel manager came up. He opted to do that, and I think it was the right thing for him to do because he liked being where the action was. And even if he couldn't do it, he was going to be near it.

It was tough because there were a lot of advantages to the University position because there were 3 more children to pay for college and if he took that position the kids could go to college for free. So there was a lot of discussion. The personnel job in the Philharmonic is an elected position, and the orchestra membership actually voted that person into the job. When they voted him in, that pretty much did it, he was honored and pleased they did that, and I think he wanted to be where the rubber meets the road.

**I can't imagine how hard it would be to let go of playing.**

Well, yeah. And he became more involved, when he stopped playing, in programs at Juilliard, like the orchestra class that he did there. And he enjoyed doing that too. So he found other ways of being involved. I think that helped. When he died in 88 that heart valve just gave out. But he found ways to stay active and in the groove.

**Did he require you or anyone else in your family to be involved in music?**

No, it was absolutely up to us. I took drum lessons, but practicing was just not my thing. First of all, I have no natural ability in music, I'm not tone deaf or anything, but I just did not have the urge to do it. The practice was just mind numbing and I just couldn't deal with it. My brother played trumpet, but no longer does. My older sister still plays violin and still plays in a string quartet. It's an amateur thing, where they play concerts in churches and stuff. That's Carol. She still plays and both of her kids play. One of them is in school to get her degree to teach music. The youngest one, Patricia, is more like me and couldn't deal with the practice thing.

It takes a level of dedication, and if you don't have that level of dedication then you are wasting your time. As far as, would dad require us to do that, no. Dad would always tell me "being a musician is a hell of a way to make a living." And he's right. It's just a tough, tough way to make a living. The jobs are few and far between anymore. I started in Atlantic City in the entertainment department as a stage manager in 1973 and we had a 18-piece house band. Within 5 years in was down to 6 and a few years after that it was canned music. It's just the way the industry has gone. It's very hard to fight the technological progress, and the result is that a lot of musicians are working at Sears selling washing machines. It's tough. Especially when playing French Horn. It's not a rock instrument, and recording dates are not prevalent anymore. Musical scores are even less and less.

**How did he meet your mother, and what was their relationship like?**

They both lived in Trenton N.J., which is where they were both born. My dad's mother and father were both musicians, though not professionally. He was an opera singer, and she played piano. I know there was an upright piano in the house because whenever we went to visit I would always go over and bang on it. They were involved in music. Growing up, he played trumpet in the high school band, and decided to try the French Horn because no one else was playing it. They were poor. He was the youngest of five. He had 2 older brothers and 2 older sisters. And he used the school instruments, and so he started on the horn because no one else was doing it. He graduated and got a full scholarship to MIT, and to the Curtis Institute of Music. At this point he had been studying off and on with Horner. He had to borrow a horn to go play his audition to Curtis.

He had a friend, Jim Thatcher, who went to war and came back and worked for US Steel in Pennsylvania, and he was courting a girl who had a sister named Marjorie. And they double dated, and eventually Marjorie became Mrs. Chambers. He had a motor scooter and he used to go pick her up to go on a date on this motor scooter. So he went to Curtis and studied with Horner and when he graduated he got his first job. My parents were married in 1945 I believe, I'll have to look that up. And they lived in Philadelphia when I was born. I had an original income report where he was making like, 8,000 dollars a year, which in 1946 was a lot of money. There he was playing

principal, making 8,000 dollars a year, making big big money. My mom was a schoolteacher and taught the first part of their marriage. Pretty much until we moved to Manhattan, which was around 1954. Before lived on Long Island. A lot of orchestra members lived outside of Manhattan because it was too expensive and they didn't want to bring their kids there. My parents decided it wasn't too bad and moved there when I was 8, and I was the only child at the point. The first place we moved was between Madison and Park right by the Carlisle Hotel. And it was a very nice hotel. My mom had stopped teaching and might have been pregnant with my brother at that point. At that point it was a conglomeration of neighborhoods and I went to school about 10 to 15 blocks away. I walked to school everyday. I knew every shop along the way. It was great. A lot of stuff you couldn't do today.

The orchestra went on tour to Russia in '62 or '63 somewhere in there and then Bolshoi Ballet came to New York afterwards and were performing, and we invited the orchestra brass section to our house. At that point we were living in a building called the Apthrop, which I don't know how they managed this, but it was a wonderful building. It was a huge apartment, and the living room and dining room where huge rooms with marble fireplaces, which were great for entertaining. So we invited the brass sections from the orchestras and they all came over with their Russian ponders, KGB guys. So this is in the 1960s and we're at war with these people. Do you know those living human models, my brother was interested in medicine, and we gave that to someone whose son was going to medical school. The other thing that I had was a norma pencil, a pencil with the 4 pieces of lead; which were black, red, blue, and green. That pencil fascinated those people because they had never seen anything like that. The Russians kept saying "you can't live in a place like this because you are a horn player." In Russia they got a one-bedroom apartment, and couldn't believe this was our home. They thought it was provided by the state for that occasion. It was interesting.

Growing up, what I remember a lot about was dad was going off on tour. I remember going down to the port of New York and waving goodbye to him when he was on the Queen Mary or Queen Elizabeth. This was before air travel. And I remember the first time they went on an airplane was on a Constellation, which is a 4-engine turbo prop airplane. It was a big deal. I remember stories of their South American

tour where they would go out after the concerts to clubs and play. It was one of the best brass sections in the world and they would go play in these jazz clubs and play just for fun, which is contrary to the classical musician kind of image.

My mom was always supportive of my dad. It's a tough life to be married to a performer or somebody in the entertainment industry because of the schedule. It's so at odds of everything that is normal. I can relate to my mom because of what my wife and I have been through. I leave for work at 10 in the morning, and she leaves at 7 and gets home at 4 and I get home at 11 at night, and we pass paths. It's tough to come home to an empty house and wait. There are things you miss out on. You miss out on children's recitals, baseball games, and soccer games because you are working. Those schedules are built around normal schedules. It caused some problems. It affects any marriage that has to operate under those conditions. It's hard, people fight, and all that. It happens in every relationship to some degree but it really challenges people in those types of schedules.

He kept his work separate from his home life. And I don't know if that's the right thing to do or not, to be honest. I did it probably because my dad did it. You don't want to bring all of those things home with you.

**I've discovered two articles that he wrote in *Woodwind World*, do you know if he published any other writings.**

Not that I'm aware of. I'll Xerox and send to you what I have. I know there's an article in Life Magazine, and I have notes from Bernstein and stuff like that. To Bernstein he was "my Jimmy." I'll go through the stuff that I have and copy what I can.

If I went to Juilliard today and went to the horn students and asked do you know who Jimmy Chambers was, half of them would know. That's normal. They all know who Phil Meyers is because that's their teacher. It's kind of rewarding to have someone interested in my father.

**Well thank you so much, this has been incredibly helpful, and very humbling, so thank you for speaking with me.**

You're very welcome.

## APPENDIX H

Questionnaire filled out by Michael Chambers.

Approved to be reprinted by Mr. Chambers
on November 4, 2001.

*Michael Chambers is the son of James Chambers.*

**Did Chambers ever share stories of his professional experiences with the Philharmonic or at Juilliard?**

My father was, in many regards, a very private man, and not given to talk much about his professional life, I do not recall his talking much about his professional experiences in general. He also had a strong personal code of professional demeanor; he was never boastful, and with one exception (remarking on some "prima-donna" qualities of another soloist) I do not remember ever hearing a disparaging remark about a peer professional. One of the most important and lasting lessons I learned from my father is that the most gifted and disciplined artists are typically humble; they have no need, and know better than, to tout themselves.

You may find that my siblings have more knowledge of his professional experiences; we lived in Teaneck from the time that I entered fourth grade until we moved back to Manhattan when I entered the 11th grade. I distanced myself from the family from the age of 19 to about 28, and then moved to Oregon at age 31. Thus, prior to 1963, I do not have much opportunity to hear my father speak of his professional experiences, and for the years of his maturity as personnel manager, I was not around.

The years we lived in Teaneck coincided roughly with the years that he began to have trouble playing the horn. I don't remember specific details, but do remember that he was quite active on the Orchestra Committee during those years. I also remember quite well a family meeting during which he disclosed to the family his increasing difficulty playing. It seems apparent to me now that his income had probably reduced (he was by then "Co-Principal" with Joseph Singer rather the "Principal"). He spoke of entertaining offers from the University of Michigan (faculty position) and the San Antonio Symphony (conductor).

My mother was somewhat less reticent, and so I know from her that my father experienced some stress and anxiety before performances or recording sessions his whole life. It was my mother, I believe, that shared that Dad was unanimously approved to assume the position of Personnel Manager when Joe DeAngelis retired.

**Did his colleagues or students ever share stories about Chambers in a professional setting with you?**

I had virtually no contact with my father's students, with the exception of those who became active with the philharmonic as well (Ranier "Dinny" DeIntinis and Bob Johnson). These were family friends, and I don't recall any discussions concerning professional matters. Dad did conduct private lessons in the apartment in the Apthorp building in the years before we moved to Teaneck, and then while living in Teaneck, but we were taught to make ourselves quiet and scarce when Dad was teaching, and so I didn't really meet the students.

**Describe what Chambers was like when he was away from his professional life.**

My father, in my opinion, was in some ways never away from his professional life. He loved the orchestra and his teaching, and identified as an artist to the end, though he had not played the horn for years when he died. (It was notable, if not remarkable, that when he put the horn down, he never picked it up again).

My parents were very much of their generation, and so I think that my father's notions of what fatherhood means changed over the years. My memories of times spent with my father in my early years continue to be deeply affecting and treasured. I was a troublesome child, and so our relations were somewhat strained at times, but never unloving from either end.

My father taught me to use a camera while I was with him at a horn players' conference in Sarasota, Florida. I was 16. Photography has been my passion and my anchor from that time to this day.

After my mother died, he visited me in Oregon, and I will long remember an afternoon spent at Cascade Locks waiting for our return train that was late. We sat in silence for hours, but in complete and profound company. Whereas

expressing his feelings in personal terms of communication never came easily to him, there can be no doubt that he made the sincerest and most touching of efforts. There also can be no doubt of the depth and capacity of his feelings and emotional life; it exudes in his recordings. No wonder Bernstein signed my father's copy of his Mahler symphony set, "To Jimmy — without whom none of these would be worth a damn." If that's not a perfect quote, it is very close — I believe my brother has that recording set. At home, he was quiet.

**If you were able to attend his concerts, what do you remember most about them?**

I did not attend many. I have listened to recordings far more than attended concerts — recall if you will where we lived during my schooldays. What I remember most about his recordings, and find still today (I can most generally pick out my father's playing from the crowd when I hear broadcasts of recordings) is a quality of commitment in the moment, and an unmistakable quality of fearlessness. This again is one of the great lessons I learned from my father, and one, which I did not completely understand until well into my adulthood and my own life interests in theatre and photography.

**How did he get started on horn? What was the motivation? Did he play any other instrument prior to his association with the horn?**

I am most pleased to be able to provide you with two documents that fairly thoroughly answer these questions:

"Aunt Caroline's letter to Mike Feb 1995.pdf," and "James Chambers Interview.mht"

The first is a letter from my father's sister Caroline, with whom I corresponded in the mid-90's until she passed away. I was eager to learn something of my father's childhood. I made the same effort with my mother's sister. My parents were never given to talk about their childhoods. I am sure that they (especially my father) lived in poverty. I suspect that they may both have been self-conscious in their adult lives as urbane New Yorkers about their modest Trenton roots.

Past the information provided in these materials, I am not certain, but think I recall that my father may have spent a brief time with the trumpet before taking up the horn.

**Did he pursue private study on the horn while in public school? If so, with whom did he study? Any anecdotes regarding this come to mind?**

This is a most interesting question. I have remarked to myself that I never heard my father talk about his music training in high school. I know for certain that he went on tour to South America with the All-American Youth Orchestra under Stokowski. I do believe that this was during his late high school years, but I am not certain. Perhaps he had started at Curtis by that time. I believe also that he was playing with the Trenton Symphony while in high school, but am not absolutely certain of this, either.

There is one anecdote of interest. My father was an excellent student, graduating in first or second place as I recall from his high school class (of considerable size). He declined a full scholarship to Princeton University, and suspect that he had second thoughts about that decision his whole life. He had some ambition to be a chemical engineer, I believe. He was awarded a scholarship from his high school to attend college, and had to obtain special permission to use those funds for the purchase of a horn as Curtis had no tuition. He played that horn that he purchased with that scholarship money for the duration of his career.

**Was there an influential family member or family friend that created an interest in music for Chambers?**

Here again, please reference:

“Aunt Caroline's letter to Mike Feb 1995.pdf,” and “James Chambers Interview.mht”

**Did he participate in a public school music program? Do you remember any anecdotes regarding his experiences there?**

He did, obviously, but I do not recall any anecdotes except that his home was apparently a favorite gathering place for classmates after rehearsals and such.

**Did Chambers have any non-musical interests or hobbies?**

My father had two hobbies: woodworking and photography. Both began in high school. There was a photo album from high school, and another from the South America Youth Orchestra tour. I don't know that these have survived. I think not. I have his enlarger that was in a small darkroom in the basement of the house in Teaneck. He had a workbench in the same house. He liked crossword puzzles and collected first date of issue US stamps. He also enjoyed fishing, but there was not much opportunity for that once the beach-house on Long Beach Island had been sold. I have two books on ocean fishing and some flies that he tied (probably fished for trout during summers spent at the Aspen program).

**I've discovered two articles that he published in *Woodwind World*; Horn Tone and Technique and Playing the Double Horn. Did he publish any other writing?**

I'm sorry, I don't know about this. I'd love to see these!

**Some students describe Chambers as a shy, quiet, but very serious man. Was he like this at home?**

I believe I have answered this as part of my reply to a question above.

**Were you required to be involved in music?**

I don't know that either Bob or Tricia ever undertook musical training.

I was not required to be involved in music, but was certainly supported in my involvement. My sister Carol is the most accomplished musician of the children; she plays both violin and flute, and continues to play in string quartets to this day. My sister studied violin with Dorothy Delay, who was, I believe, acquainted with my father from the South America Youth Symphony tour. I studied trumpet with John Ware from middle school or earlier and was active in band and orchestra until we moved back to Manhattan, when I became involved in vocal music, and sang in choirs and choruses. Carol and I spent two summers at the New England Music Camp. When we had moved to Manhattan, I studied voice with Dan Marek, a student of Cornelius Reed and a Metropolitan Opera chorus member.

As much as he supported our musical training, he never pressured us towards any professional ambition; on the contrary, he cautioned us that the world of professional music was difficult and competitive. He was well aware of his own ability and good fortune in his career, and equally aware that both these were not the norm for aspiring musicians.

**How did he meet Marjorie? What was their relationship like?**

My parents met on a blind date arranged by my father's sister-in-law Marian (wife of Melville). She was a classmate of my mother's at Trenton State Teacher's College, I believe. When as children we asked how they met, they would say that it was a blind date and that they met on top of the elephants (their date was an outing to the zoo).

My parents remained married until their passing, and had a deep bond. My father was hospitalized when my mother was dying – both of them at Lenox Hill. She passed away days after Valentine's Day. Amongst my father's effects when he passed away was found a very large and fancy Valentine's Day card; he was never able to give it to her.

My mother worked all her life, and was very proud of having gone to college. With a fourteen-year spread between the oldest and youngest child, their marriage and our family had distinguishable periods. (It was rather unusual for a woman to bear a child at the age of 40 at that time). My brother and youngest, for example, have memories of times and conditions that I had no real experience of. Being so very much of their generation, I can feel sure that their long marriage may well have been affected by general cultural changes in gender roles. I feel certain also that the years in Teaneck were difficult in many ways, and may have caused some strain. My mother was quite seriously ill during those years, first with a throat tumor and later with conditions that eventually led to a hysterectomy. There was much worry, I am sure. My father was troubled with heart problems caused by having had rheumatic fever as a child. These were another source of worry.

I have no doubt whatsoever that my parents loved one another their whole lives. My mother attended concerts

regularly (subscription to the Pension Fund concert series, I think).

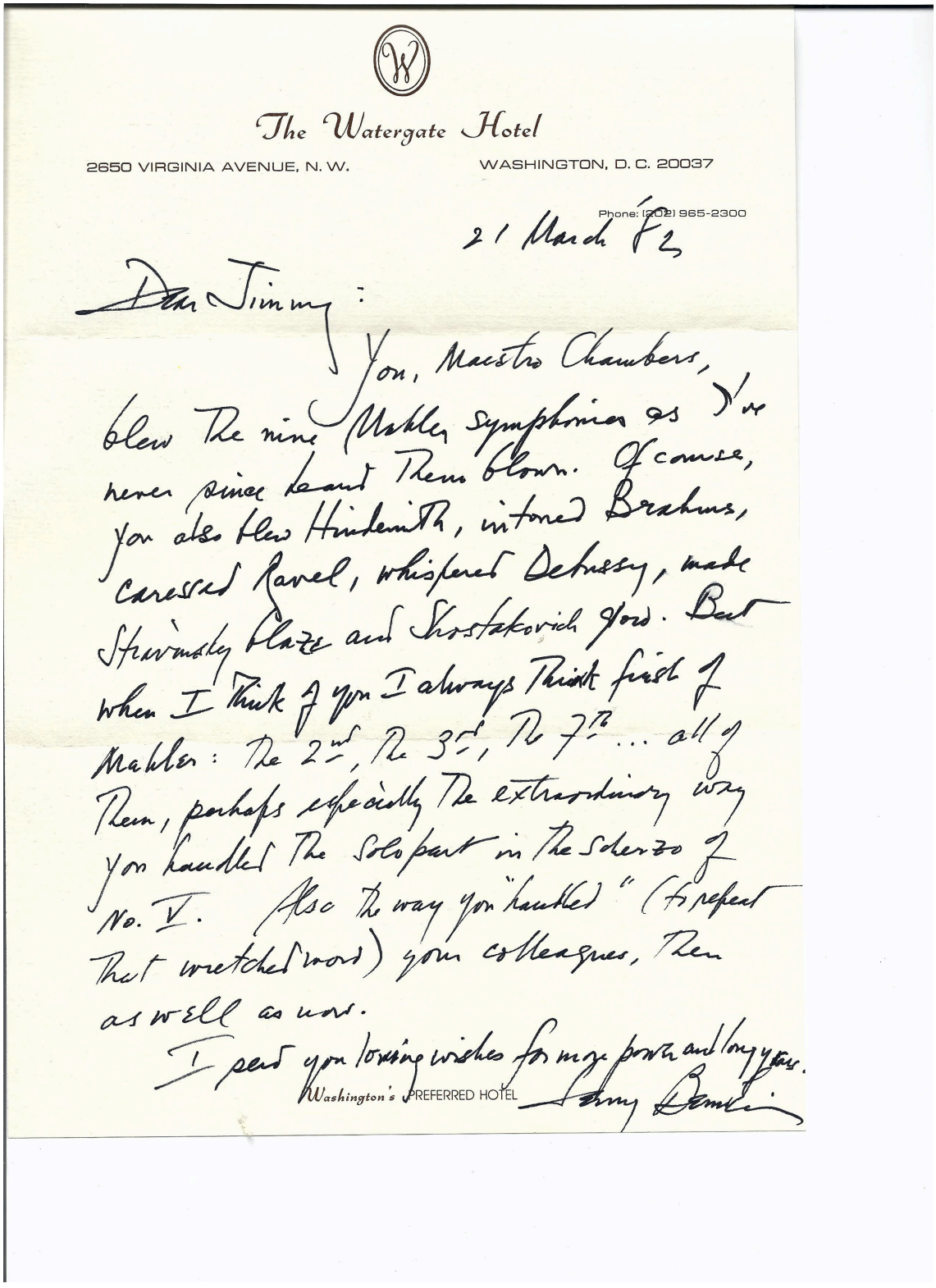
**If there is one thing that you would want to pass down to young horn players about James Chambers, what would it be?**

James Chambers' career spanned years of great change for musicians. His teacher Anton Horner had begun by playing a valveless horn ("hand horn"). He was grounded in the disciplines and rigors of classical musical training. He was keenly aware of the needs of all wind instrumentalists who aspired to orchestral playing, and developed his orchestral repertoire class out of that awareness and commitment to those needs. His philosophy of horn playing was based, fundamentally, on what he believed were the important qualities of the horn constituting its strengths and distinguishing qualities. He was committed to sustaining control of the entire register and range that the horn could command, choosing deeper cupped mouthpieces and favoring the F horn whenever possible. (His standard warm-up always included the well-known horn solo from "Tales of a Merry Prankster."

His discipline as an instrumentalist was matched by a quality of fearlessness and complete commitment to the fullest measure of expression called for in any score.

**APPENDIX I**

Letter to James Chambers from Leonard Bernstein



The Watergate Hotel

2650 VIRGINIA AVENUE, N. W. WASHINGTON, D. C. 20037

Phone: (202) 965-2300

21 March 72

Dear Jimmy:

You, Maestro Chambers, blew the nine Mahler symphonies as I've never since heard them blown. Of course, you also blew Hindemith, intoned Brahms, caressed Ravel, whispered Debussy, made Stravinsky blaze and Shostakovich roar. But when I think of you I always think first of Mahler: the 2nd, the 3rd, the 7th ... all of them, perhaps especially the extraordinary way you handled the solo part in the Scherzo of No. V. Also the way you "hautbed" (to repeat that wretched word) your colleagues, then as well as now.

I send you loving wishes for more power and long years.

Washington's PREFERRED HOTEL

Lenny Bernstein

## APPENDIX J

Letter to Charles Colin, Chairmen of the New York Brass Conference for Scholarships, to Honor James Chambers from Philip Farkas

NEW YORK BRASS CONFERENCE FOR SCHOLARSHIPS

315 West 53rd. Street New York, New York 10019

(212) LT 1 - 1480



SALUTE TO JAMES CHAMBERS
Sunday, March 21, 1982

The name James Chambers brings instantly to my mind two images: "the horn in all its glory" and "the gentleman in every respect". He was in in a position to inspire us all with his superb horn playing, being on the air coast to coast every Sunday with the New York Philharmonic, and inspire us he did. A whole generation - mayber even more - have hurried to our practice rooms after hearing one of these concerts to "see if we can do it like Jimmy just did" and, of course, we couldn't. But that was our goal just the same. So he inspired more than just his own students- who are legion; he inspired a whole continent of horn players - and a few thousand in Europe, too.

Although I can't be with the Brass Conference this year, I will stand at attention and give my most cordial salute to James Chambers, even though it be in the privacy of my own home.

Congratulations, Jimmy, for a much-deserved salute!

Phil Farkas

## APPENDIX K

Letter to Charles Colin, Chairmen of the New York Brass Conference for Scholarships, to Honor James Chambers from Tony Miranda

ANTHONY MIRANDA
43-07 39th PLACE
SUNNYSIDE, N.Y. 11104
March 8,1982

Dear Mr. Charles Colin,

Thanks for the invitation to a "salute to James Chambers" There is very unfortuhately a performance of the opera "I Puritani" beginning at 1 p.m. and ending at 4 on Sunday March 21st at the State Theatre at Lincoln Center and since it is a first performance I am oblidged to be there.

I have many fond memories of the many times I worked with "Jimmy" both inside and outside the symphonic field. Jimmy mentioned a few of his dates outside the Philharmonic but he played many more. I recall playing the Perry Como Show with him, he also played all the 'Nat King Cole' dates and many others that are now forgotten. We always appreciated having him around not only for his exemplary horn-playing but also because he was good company and and fun-loving. It is perfectly true as he stated that he always took the fourth chair and the real reason was that he did not want to embarass or show up any commercial player who made his living only by playing dates. Jimmy Buffington and John Barrows both dear friends now not with us, often spoke of Jimmy Chambers and appreciated his playing and friendship.

In addition to the so called "outside-dates", I often worked with Jimmy as an extra horn in the Philharmonic and to this day recall his magnificent horn-playing in the monumental Strauss works, Bruckner and Mahler Symphonies. These were the works that called for extra horns. Walking into a rehearsal with the Philharmonic when he was the solo first horn was a humbling experience. I played recordings and shows all week long with smaller groups and in general lighter playing was called for. After an hour at rehearsal in Carnegie Hall with Chambers holding sway, I would literally slink out feeling

that I needed a larger mouthpiece, different horn and in fact did make those changes.

All of us admired Jimmy's ability to play the entire range of the horn from the lowest note to the highest with equal tone quality anf full horn sound. Who else can play those long passages fom Ein Heldenleben as he did?

And to this day one of my greatest musical thrills was playing the Domestic Symphony with Chambers playing first horn and Bill Vacchiano playing first trumpet!!! I believe Bruno Walter conducted. Was that ever a concert. Jimmy played the famous passage up to the high A with such momentum that the entire 9 or 10 horns went on his back for the ride!! That was a horn and a trumpet delight.

Jimmy, I am sorry that I cannot be here to honor you in person but I send you this short letter to thank you for many thrills and your friendship for these many years.

Sincerely,

Tony Miranda

## APPENDIX L

Letter to Michael Chambers from James Chambers' sister Caroline

Feb. , 1995

Dear Mike:

I know it has been quite awhile and that you must be waiting to hear from me with some family information. I am currently working on putting together list of Chambers families with dates of births, deaths, weddings, etc but nuch of it will have to wait until I get up to New York. I am putting the information I have on tapes on my word processor so that I will have permanent records.

We are leaving here via Auto-Train on April 17, arrive at Stanton, VA the next day and on to Millie's for a couple of days and then to our New York address which in case you don't have it is: 92 Golf Club Road, Candor, NY 13743, and telephone 607-659-7176.

I have spent a good deal of time looking at a lot of old pictures and know that you don't want all of them but thought you could copy the ones you want and then return them to me. Certain of these, particularly of my parents and the ones of Carleton, Melville and James which shows the musical ability runs in the family. Did you know that my mother was a beautiful pianist ad was my grandfather (Grandpop Newmann)who was also an organist and that my father had a beautiful tenor voice and was when young, "end man" in the Trenton Minstrels.

My parents were two very loving but strict parents who early on in our lives or before we were born decided that by all means we should have good educations and also musical training. It "took" with all of the children except Louise who took a few clarinet lessons but gave up--however, she did enjoy music.

I hope all is well with you and that you will at least enjoy seeing these pictures - love to both of you.

Incidentally, Carleton played violin in the orchestra and suzaphone at Syracuse University. H entered the Air Force prior to finishing at Syracuse and after earning his "wings" went to Princeton where he graduated as a civil engineer. I presume you know that Melville began on the cornet and played in several orchestras and I played piano and organ.

Aunt Caroline

1

Melville Otto Chambers was born on Bridge Street , I believe, in Trenton, New Jersey and Millie Neumann Chambers was born in Morrisville, PA. When Daddy's mother passed away, he and his father, Albert, plus brother Russell, sisters Helen and Myra were taken in by Albert's sister, Annie Dickinson in Trenton, NJ. Daddy was about 12 years old at that time, had left school and was working along with his father at the rubber mill in Morrisville, PA which was right across the Delaware River from Trenton.

One story concerning my father was the fact that he reiterated many times his experience of seeing a long, cigar-shaped machine hovering a little above the river early one morning while crossing the bridge on the way to work.

While working at the Acme Rubber Mill,he met and worked with Alfred W. Neumann; consequently met his daughter Millie. They were married on Nov. 11, 1991 when she was 20 and he 21. They originally lived in Morrisville and shortly after getting their own home, it burned down to the ground. Carleton and I were born in Morrisville after which they moved to Trenton, We were baptized in the Presbyterian Church. Melville, Louise and James were baptized in the Broad St. Park Methodist Church. That is where we moved while Carleton and I were very small.

For several years, we lived across the street from a sand "dump" and Melville and Caroline used to always play there. Mamma said if she called one of us, both heads would pop up--we stayed close through our teen years. He took me with him quite often to the dances where he played his cornet.

After a few years there we moved over to a larger house on Mary St. and Aunt Clara, Uncles Bert and Alvin eventually moved in with us until they married. We all went to school at Rowan, then Willey, then Lalor and eventually Carleton and I attended Junior and Senior High Schools in Trenton. Incidentally I attended Trenton High the first year it opened in 1932. Melville, Louise and James attended a Junior High closer to home on Lalor St. and then the new Trenton High.

After a few years there, our parents moved back again to Rennie Street in half of a new house - Aunt Clara and Uncle Jack lived in the other half. This is where Aunt Clara's son, John was born. Mamma at that time started a small grocery, ice cream, etc. store in the front lower level of the house where she made lunches for the fellows who worked in an automobile machine shop across the street. It was there that Carleton learned to drive. The men loved my mother and her store but then, everybody loved her and she loved everyone

To go back to when we were quite small, we were taught manners, to tell the truth, to mind our parents. I do not remember Daddy ever spanking anyone else but once he gave me a good licking for sticking my tongue out at my mother. It was so unusual that I have never forgotten it. Mamma never really spanked but occasionally, when we deserved it, she gave one good slap on the bottom. And even though they were too busy working and taking care of all of us, every Sunday we were bathed, dressed and sent off to Sunday School. Every year Mamma took all five of us and two or three other children along with a stroller via trolley car to the Fair.

Daddy always worked as a bakery salesman,getting up and leaving for work about 3 a.m. driving a truck on his route--early on working for Ward Co., then Freihofer, and finally Drake. At one point he had a serious accident in his truck and was quite seriously hurt and laid up for quite awhile.. As he grew older, he had a lot of trouble with his legs--we believed hopping up and down in the truck probably caused a good bit of it. They both worked very hard all their lives. The only outside work Mamma ever did was run her little store in addition to caring for all of us and being a wonderful cook with many German dishes appearing, We were extremely poor as Daddy did not make a great salary and Auntie Dickinson helped out with extra things like fruit, butter, eggs, etc. and clothes for the kids.

We finally moved up to Broad Street near Lalor in a house which Mamma dearly loved. However, Auntie took sick and Mamma and Daddy took her and husband and Aunt Myra in until Auntie died. Her husband ended up in a nursing homeand and later Myra married Fred Wieland. Auntie left her house up in the city to daddy and his sisters and because they couldn't sell it, we moved into it. It was on Lafayette St. right in the middle of the city and across from the new Memorial Building. Mamma hated it and when finally they could sell it, they moved back to the same house on Broad Street where they stayed until they went to work for the NY State Hospital where they lived until Mamma died after a long bout with diabetes and then pancreatic cancer. While there, they cooked and ran the farm which housed the inmates who were able to work on the farm. When Mamma passed away, Daddy went to live with Aunt Myra who by then was a widow. He was in poor health at that time and mostly bedridden, and passed away not too much later.

We finally all grew up, had our educations and married and moved away. Carleton stayed in Texas where he married Harriet, Caroline went to Candor, NY with Rod, Melville and Marian went to California, Louise and Ernie to Florida and James stayed in New York City.

To begin, I wish to say that my parents, Melville and Millie Chambers were two of the most caring, loving (and strict) parents one could possibly have. Their whole lives were committed to each other and us five children: Carleton, Caroline, Melville, Louise and James and seeing that we were properly fed, clothed and educated. Both parents loved music. Mamma's father had been an organist on Long Island and she was a very good pianist. I remember very often hearing her long after we children had gone to bed, playing softly and sometimes my father singing along with her. He had a beautiful tenor voice, sang in the Trenton Minstrels as "End Man." I can still hear him practicing his scales while he was dressing or shaving and how we used to imitate his "la, lay, lee, lo, lou"

Carleton studied violin and while a student at Syracuse University played in the college orchestra and had their first sousaphone which he played in the SU band.

I studied piano, first with my mother's former teacher who was at least 80 and very cantankerous, who occasionally used a ruler on my hands and once shoved me off of the piano stool. I must have really aggravated her with my playing. After the stool episode I convinced my parents to let me have another teacher who was a local young lady, very lovely and kind and had just finished studying in Europe. I eventually played piano accompanying the Trenton High School symphony orchestra and later when I attended Rider College I played for their orchestra as well.

Melville learned to play the cornet at Junior High School and also Senior High School; then went on to New Jersey State Teachers' College where he majored in music. During his high school and college years, he did a lot of playing in dance bands and I believe also the Trenton Symphony Orchestra. The dance jobs helped pay some ot his expenses. He eventually became a high school music teacher and also at one time owned a music store. He was still playing in a symphony orchestra and a dance band in the weeks before he passed away.

Unfortunately, Louise had none of the musical talent nor the inclination to study music except for a short stint of lessons on the clarinet which did not "take". She became a nurse instead.

Then there was James. your father. I can remember very well when he was born and he was always tooting or singing or humming as I remember him and was also at times very funny. He used to come down the street after school imitating a comedian who always said "Do you wanna buy a duck?" The comedian was Joey Pender but you probably do not remember him or never heard of him. But James sounded just like him. James did not play the French Horn until he was in junior high school and his teacher said he was a "natural" musician. Before he finished high school he applied for a scholarship at Curtiss Institute of Music and was accepted. When he finished at Curtis, he then played with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, later with the Philadelphia Symphony and then first horn with the New York Philharmonic where he also acted for some years as Personnel Director.

At this point I would like to tell you how dedicated our parents were to all of us getting college educations in spite of their lack of funds. They always encouraged us to take advantage of any opportunity. First of all, I believe Carleton had a scholarship to Syracuse University to study civil engineering. While there he lived in an undertaking establishmentas as a night watchman and to answer the telephones to pay for his room. He also worked some for his meals. After about two years of this, he decided to enlist in the Air Force and after two tries - the first time he was about 1/2 inch too short--he exercised and was finally stretched to the right height and accepted. He graduated as a 2nd Lt.and was leading a group of pilots to the East Coast before going off to Africa when he was diagnosed as a diabetic and his flying career was ended. He then went back to college at Princeton University; graduated a civil engineer and taught at Univ. of California at Long Beach, CA

I was looking for a job after graduating from high school and one morning Mamma woke me as there was an ad in the local paper for a girl to attend classes and work in the office. She insisted that I answer the ad and I did so with the result that I got that job, working half a day and going to school the other half. After I finished I got a very good job as secretary for the NJ Bell Telephone Co. in their So. Div. Office in Trenton, just two blocks away from home where I stayed until I married two years later .

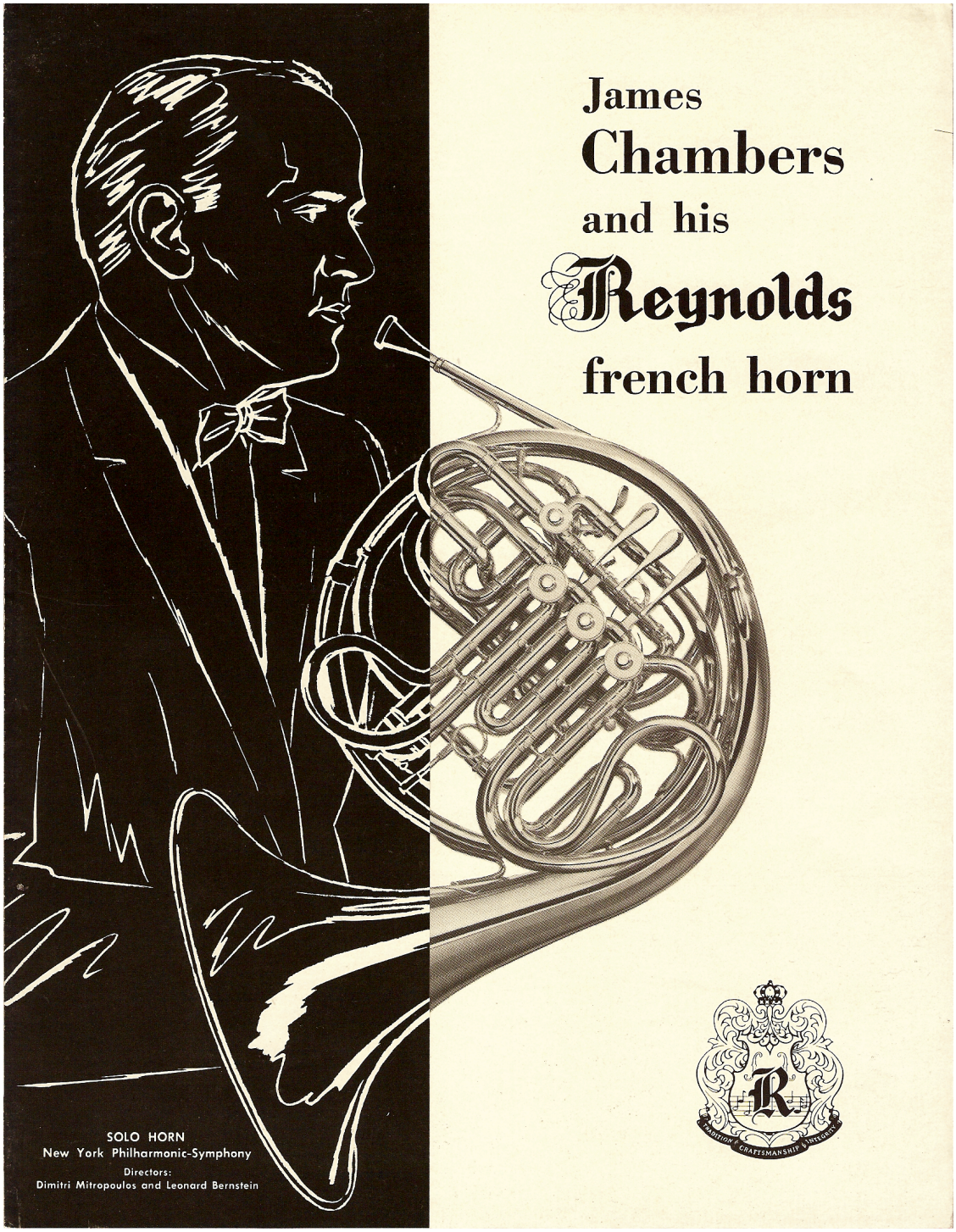
Melville decided he would study music since he was a very fine trumpet player and he was accepted at New Jersey State College and graduated and become a teacher. All that time he either had or played in a dance band to earn money to help with his educationAs. In addition to teaching, he owned and operated a music store. .

Then along came Louise who was not particularly interested in music. She did try clarinet but that didnt last long. She wanted to become a nurse which she did by training at Mercer Hospital in Trenton, NJ. She stayed in nursing, first at Mercer and then at Bayfront Medical Center St. Petersburg, Fl where she later became head nurse of the Intensive Care
Division.

James and his French Horn was the last one to get educated and he provided all the skill that was needed as he earned a scholarship at Curtiss Institute of Music. After graduation he first played in the Pittsburgh Symphony, then Philadelphia Symphony and lastly as French Horn soloist in the New York Philharmonic Orchestra. I believe he became Personnel Director in his last years with the orchestra.

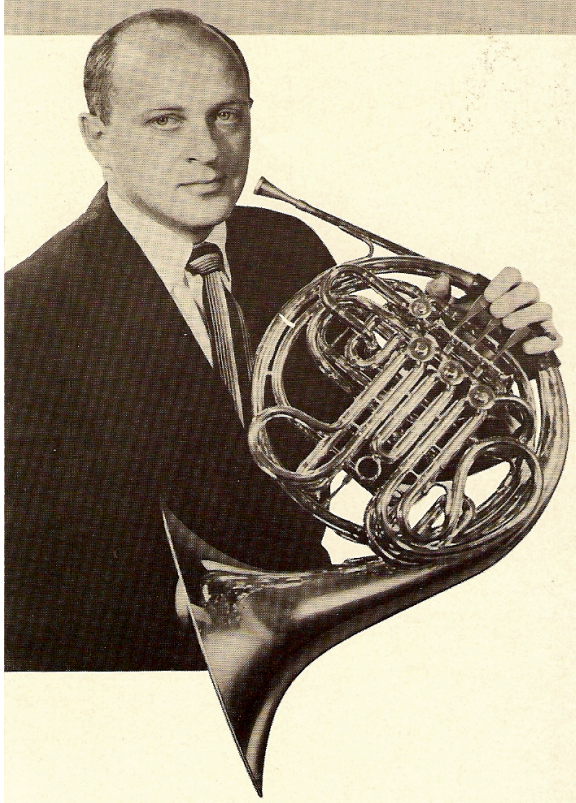
**APPENDIX M**

ROTH REYNOLDS ADVERTISEMENT



# THE MAGNIFICENT Jan

**internationally famous soloist • concert and recording artist • clinician • instructor**



## WHY I PLAY REYNOLDS:

During the past two years I have collaborated with Roth-Reynolds' skilled designers and French horn craftsmen in the development of a new and vastly improved double french horn. The resulting instrument has exceeded all expectations. It combines maximum playing quality with an ease of response not generally associated with horns capable of producing such a full rich tone.

Here, at last, is an instrument fully capable of satisfying the most exacting requirements of the professional while retaining those characteristics which make it the ideal choice for the student.

Today I am using the Reynolds Chambers Model Double French Horn exclusively in my symphony, ensemble and solo playing, my recording work and teaching. I enthusiastically recommend this horn for all types of playing.

James Chambers

# ıes Chambers

## and his Reynolds

## french horn

The fabulous James Chambers, solo French horn player of the New York Philharmonic, has achieved world-wide recognition as one of the outstanding French horn artists of all times.

Discarding an early ambition to be a chemical engineer, Chambers' natural talent led to his acceptance of a scholarship for the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia. This fortunate decision for the music world led to his study there under the famed Anton Horner. While still a student, Chambers served as solo horn in the Trenton Symphony and played with accomplishment in the renowned All-American Youth Orchestra which toured both the United States and South America under Leopold Stokowski.

Upon his graduation, Chambers joined the Pittsburgh Symphony under Fritz Reiner and the following year was engaged as solo horn of the Philadelphia Orchestra where he remained for five notable seasons. During this period he appeared as soloist with the orchestra under guest conductors Eugene Ormandy and Dimitri Mitropoulos.

Further laurels came in 1945 when he was engaged for his solo post with the fabulous New York Philharmonic Symphony. His debut as soloist with the orchestra was in Mozart Concerto, George Szell conducting.

In addition to his busy orchestral duties, James Chambers has achieved note as an eminent teacher. Formerly on the faculty of the Curtis Institute, he has taught at the Juilliard School and also at the Aspen Music School. In 1957, he joined the faculty of the Manhattan School of Music where, in addition to teaching horn, he conducts a class of winds and percussion in orchestra repertoire.

James Chambers also has an enviable record of accomplishments as a concert and brass ensemble soloist. He has appeared with the Budapest Quartet, and is a member of the New York Philharmonic Brass ensemble which has a record of successful concert tours and clinics in New York, Iowa and South America.

Chambers has been honored by his selection as either a clinician or soloist in the American School Band Directors Association Convention in 1955, the American Bandmaster's Association Convention in 1957, and the American Symphony Orchestra League Convention in 1957.

**39** INTERNATIONALLY FAMOUS CONDUCTORS WITH WHOM CHAMBERS HAS PERFORMED AS SOLO HORN INCLUDE —

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ANSERMET | JOHNSON | PREVITALI |
| BARBIROLLI | KATIMS | REINER |
| BEECHAM | KOSTELANETZ | RODZINSKI |
| BERNSTEIN | KRIPS | SCHIPPERS |
| BOULT | KUBELIK | SOLOMON |
| CANTELLI | KURTZ | STOKOWSKI |
| CASTON | MILHAND | STRAVINSKY |
| CHAVEZ | MITCHELL | SZELL |
| CLUYTENS | MITROPOULOS | TOSCANINI |
| DE SABATA | MONTEUX | VILLA LOBOS |
| GOLSCHMANN | MUNCH | VON KARAJAN |
| HENDL | ORMANDY | WALLENSTEIN |
| HILSBERG | PARAY | WALTER |

In the popular field Chambers has been associated with such outstanding figures as —

D'ARTEGA MORTON GOULD SKITCH HENDERSON
PERCY FAITH MITCH MILLER HUGO WINTERHALTER

# *Primary Considerations in*

## THE DOUBLE HORN IN F AND B♭

There is little question that the double horn in F and Bb is the preferred choice of most professional and student players. The single horns in F or Bb have their own distinct advantages and disadvantages. The horn in F is capable of producing the full rich tone so much desired by most players but becomes quite stuffy and difficult to play with security in the high register. The Bb horn requires less effort on the part of the player and is decidedly easier to play in the upper register. However, there is a marked loss of tone quality in the middle and low registers. Fortunately, in the high register where the F horn loses quality and accuracy, the Bb horn is at its best, providing a full clear sound and much greater security.

Since the individual merits of the F and Bb horns have been so successfully combined in the double horn, it is apparent that it is the ideal choice for most players. The change from one horn to the other is accomplished by means of a thumb valve thus enabling the player to make rapid changes at will. Even in those situations where long hours of high strenuous playing would indicate maximum use of the Bb horn the player will find it a distinct advantage to have the F horn at his disposal.

I recommend that even the beginning student, whenever possible, avail himself of a good double horn. For purposes of embouchure development he should confine his playing at first to the F horn, progressing to the Bb horn only when the playing range expands to include notes in the top octave.

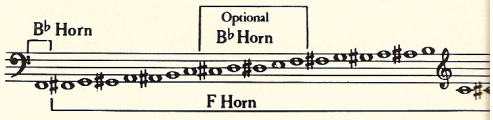
Any discussion of the double horn must include some specific recommendations as to where the transitions from one horn to the other should be made. Eventually all players evolve their own system which seems to work best for them. In any case most professionals employ a somewhat flexible arrangement which takes into consideration the nature of the passage to be played. It is sometimes advisable for reasons of intonation, security, flexibility, etc. to play isolated notes on the Bb horn in a register which might normally be considered F horn range, and vice versa.

Below is a chart which shows a fairly typical arrangement for combining the F and Bb horns.

## EMBOUCHURE

While it is certainly not within the scope of this article to enter into a detailed discussion of the embouchure, I believe a few observations may prove helpful.

The player should avoid the type of embouchure formed by pulling back the corners of the mouth with the cheek muscles. Inevitably this kind




**21** MAJOR SYMPHONIES WITH WHOM CHAMBERS' STUDENTS HAVE PLAYED

Former students are now playing or have formerly played with the following organizations

*(Symphony orchestra unless otherwise indicated)*

| | |
|---|---|
| BALTIMORE | CITY CENTER OPERA CO. (N. Y.) |
| *BUFFALO | CITY CENTER BALLET CO (N. Y.) |
| *CLEVELAND | *LITTLE ORCHESTRA SOCIETY (N. Y.) |
| *COLUMBUS | *NATIONAL (WASHINGTON, D. C.) |
| *DENVER | *NEW ORLEANS |
| *DETROIT | NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC |
| HOUSTON | L'ORCHESTRE DE LA SUISSE ROMANDE |
| INDIANAPOLIS | PITTSBURGH |
| KANSAS CITY | RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL |
| MINNEAPOLIS | *SAN FRANCISCO |
| | *VANCOUVER, B. C. |

Also numerous Broadway productions, ballet and chamber music groups.

(*Indicates solo horn)

# *he study of the French Horn*

of embouchure will result in harshness of tone, lack of flexibility, limitations in the high register and excessive fatigue. Rather the player should relax the cheek muscles slightly and contract the lip muscles to form a firm cushion of flesh in the center of the lips. The sensation should be much the same as in whistling except that the pucker is less pronounced and muscle tension is greater resulting in a very firm cushion upon which the mouthpiece is placed. An embouchure of this type should produce optimum tone quality together with a great degree of flexibility. Since in the middle register the lips are not taut, a gradual contraction of the lip muscles combined with slightly increased pressure of the mouthpiece against the lips should result in a solid upper register.

Placement of the mouthpiece is a subject of great importance to the beginning student. The mouthpiece should be placed in the center of the lips. There are, of course, exceptions to this general rule but nearly all are due to malformation of the lips or teeth. The mouthpiece should be placed at least one-half and not more than two-thirds on the upper lip. It will be noted that among professionals the usual proportion is two-thirds upper lip and one-third lower lip. The successful exceptions to this average setting are rare indeed.

## PLAYING POSITION

Due to the increased weight of the modern double horn as well as a changed conception of the horn tone, most players find it most practical to rest the bell of the horn on the right thigh rather than to support the weight of the instrument with the right hand. This position is less fatiguing, provides greater support and the proximity of the bell to the body is helpful in ridding the quality of undue brilliance. However, care should be taken not to turn the bell in toward the abdomen as this position would rob the sound of some of the higher overtones and produce a dull, lifeless quality. Most players will find that by placing the right leg to the right of the chair with the knee to the right of the corner and with the weight supported on the ball of the foot, a comfortable playing position will be achieved. As the right foot is brought more to the rear the thigh will be lowered permitting adjustment to the players' physical characteristics as well as to chairs of varying heights.

## POSITION AND USE OF RIGHT HAND

A subject of great importance to the horn player is the placement and use of the right hand.

The beginning player is often perplexed by pitch problems which arise directly from improper placement of the hand in the bell. Since placing the hand properly in the bell will lower the pitch considerably, manufacturers make an allowance by building the horn somewhat sharp. Ignorance of this fact is responsible for the frequent complaint that the instrument is too sharp.

The hand should be placed in the bell in the following manner. The fingers should be straight and together with no space between them. Now cup the hand slightly placing the thumb on top of the first finger and in the same plane. Place the hand well into the bell with the backs of the fingers in contact with the sides of the bell throat. The fingers should not be allowed to curl across the throat as this obstructs free passage of sound. The hand should be in a plane midway between vertical and horizontal and should occupy that segment between the three o'clock and six o'clock positions with the horn in playing position. In this position that hand will be at right angle to the plane in which the horn is held while in playing position. Using the large knuckles as a hinge it will be possible, without changing the position of the fingers, to swing the heel of the hand through an arc from a flat, open position to a completely closed or stopped position.

The extent to which the hand is inserted in the bell depends on several factors such as the size of the bell throat, size of the player's hand, tonal characteristics of the particular instrument, etc. If the tone seems too dull and thick, remove the hand somewhat; if too brilliant, place the hand farther into the bell.

The degree to which the heel of the hand should be closed is also dependent on these same factors and again the ear must be used to guide the player.

It is wise to establish the basic hand position while playing in the middle register as changes of register will involve slight variations in the hand position.

The right hand should be completely flexible, as it is used very subtly and almost constantly to make desirable adjustments while playing. In general, the following rules will apply:

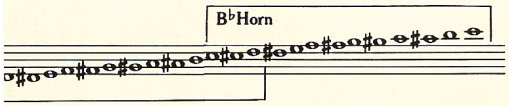
Open the hand gradually when entering the high register and close gradually when descending into the lower register. These movements must be gradual and smooth in order to avoid any sudden change of quality. Indeed the reason for the changes is to preserve sameness of quality throughout the complete range of the instrument.

The hand position should be more open when playing loud passages than when playing soft.

Articulated passages will require a more open hand position than legato passages.

Minor adjustments of intonation can be made by opening the hand slightly to raise the pitch and closing to lower the pitch.

To produce an extreme pianissimo it is sometimes possible to close the hand severely, compensating for the lowered pitch by adjusting the tuning slide the necessary amount.




**14 RECORDINGS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO HORN PLAYERS ON WHICH CHAMBERS HAS PERFORMED INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING —**

James Chambers Plays the French Horn — Award Artist Series 704
The N. Y. Philharmonic Brass Ensemble — Golden Crest 4003
Symphonies #1, 2, 3, 4—J. Brahms—N.Y. Philharmonic—B.Walter
Symphony #5—Tschaikowsky—N.Y. Philharmonic—Mitropoulos
Siegfried's Rhine Journey—Wagner—N.Y. Philharmonic—Stokowski
Symphonies #1, 5 — Mahler — N. Y. Philharmonic — Walter
A Midsummer Night's Dream — Mendelssohn — N. Y. Philharmonic — Szell
Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks — Strauss — RCA Symphony Orchestra — Reiner
Symphonies #3, 9 — Beethoven — N. Y. Philharmonic — Walter
Symphony #6 — Beethoven — N. Y. Philharmonic — Szell
Symphonies #5, 10—Shostakovitch—N.Y. Philharmonic—Mitropoulos
A Musical Joke—Mozart—Members of N.B.C. Symphony—Reiner
Firebird Suite — Stravinsky — N. Y. Philharmonic — Bernstein
Oberon & Der Freischutz Overtures — Weber — N. Y. Philharmonic — Szell

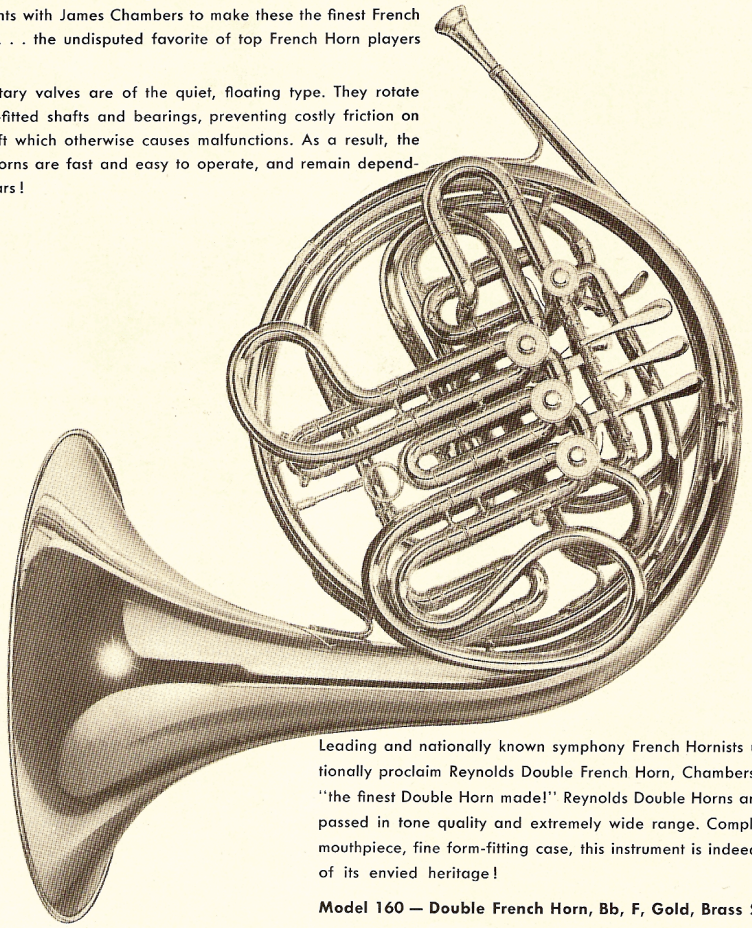
Typical of the outstanding clinics conducted by James Chambers, the American Symphony Orchestra League Convention, Sioux City, Iowa, where he acted as clinician in 1957.

# Reynolds FRENCH HORNS

## *made by Artists for Artists*

Roth-Reynolds has spared no expense in the development and building of these superb instruments. Skilled designers and craftsmen have combined their arts and talents with James Chambers to make these the finest French Horns of all time . . . the undisputed favorite of top French Horn players everywhere.

Precision made rotary valves are of the quiet, floating type. They rotate on long, precision-fitted shafts and bearings, preventing costly friction on the vital rotor shaft which otherwise causes malfunctions. As a result, the Reynolds French Horns are fast and easy to operate, and remain dependable over the years!



Leading and nationally known symphony French Hornists unconditionally proclaim Reynolds Double French Horn, Chambers Model, "the finest Double Horn made!" Reynolds Double Horns are unsurpassed in tone quality and extremely wide range. Complete with mouthpiece, fine form-fitting case, this instrument is indeed worthy of its envied heritage!

**Model 160 — Double French Horn, Bb, F, Gold, Brass $575.00**

**Model 161 — Double French Horn, all nickel silver .... 675.00**

***band instruments of distinction***

ROTH-REYNOLDS
1729 SUPERIOR AVENUE • CLEVELAND 14, OHIO

## APPENDIX N

List of Conductors with the New York Philharmonic
1946-1969

Published in *Philharmonic: A history of New York's Orchestra*, pg. 530-716

1946-47

**Conductors**

Efrem Kurtz
Charles Münch
Arthur Rodzinski
Manuel Rosenthal
Leopold Stokowski
George Szell
Burno Walter

**Assistant Conductor**

Walter Hendl

**Young People Concerts**

Rudolph Ganz

**Guest Conductor**

Leopold Stokowski

1947-48

**Conductors**

Burno Walter
Dimitri Mitropoulos
Charles Münch
Leopold Stokowski
George Szell

**Assistant Conductor**

Walter Hendl

**Young People Concerts**

Leon Barzin
Walter Hendl
Leopold Stokowski
Bruno Walter

1948-49

**Conductors**

Bruno Walter
Dimitri Mitropoulos
Charles Münch
Leopold Stokowski
Leonard Bernstein

**Assistant Conductor**

Walter Hendl

**Young People Concerts**

Leon Barzin
Igor Buketoff
Walter Hendl
Leopold Stokowski
Bruno Walter

1949-50

**Conductors**

Leopold Stokowski
Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
Victor De Sabata
Leonard Bernstein
Walter Hendl

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**Young People Concerts**

Leopold Stokowski
Igor Buketoff
Dean Dixon
Franco Autori

1950-51

**Conductor**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
Victor De Sabata
George Szell
Leonard Bernstein

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**Young People Concerts**

Igor Buketoff

1951-52

**Musical Director**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
George Szell
Guido Cantelli

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**Young People Concerts**

Igor Buketoff

1952-53

**Musical Director**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
George Szell
Guido Cantelli

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**Young People Concerts**

Igor Buketoff

1953-54

**Musical Director**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
George Szell
Guido Cantelli

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**3 Special Saturday Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Young People Concerts**

Wilfrid Pelletier

1954-55

**Musical Director**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
George Szell
Guido Cantelli

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**3 Special Saturday Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Young People Concerts**

Wilfrid Pelletier

1955-56

**Musical Director**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Bruno Walter
Pierre Monteux
George Szell
Guido Cantelli
Max Rudolf

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**3 Special Saturday Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Young People Concerts**

Wilfrid Pelletier

1956-57

**Musical Director**

Dimitri Mitropoulos

**Guest Conductors**

Leonard Bernstein
Paul Paray
Max Rudolf
Georg Solti
Igor Stravinsky
Heitor Villa-Lobos
Bruno Walter

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**4 Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Young People Concerts**

Wilfrid Pelletier

1957-58

**Principal Conductors**

Dimitri Mitropoulos
Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Ernest Ansermet
Andre Cluytens
Aaron Copland
Rafael Kubelik
Fernando Previtali
Thomas Schippers
Robert Shaw

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Associate Conductor**

Franco Autori

**3 Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

1959-60

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Eleazar De Carvalho
Paul Hindemith
Dimitri Mitropoulos
Fritz Reiner
Thomas Schippers
Leopold Stokowski
Bruno Walter

**Young People Concert Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Young People Concert Guest Conductor**

Howard Shanet

**Special Holiday Series**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Assistant Conductors**

Seymour Lipkin
Stefan Bauer-Mengelberg
Kenneth Schermerhorn
Arnold Gamson

1960-61

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Karl Boehm
Carlos Chavez
Aaron Copland
Vladimir Golschmann
Paul Paray
Hans Rosbaud
Thomas Schippers
Stanislaw Skrowaczewski
Alfred Wallenstein

**Young People Concert**

Leonard Bernstein

**3 Special Saturday Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Assistant Conductors**

Gregory Millar
Elyakum Shapira
Russell Stanger

1961-62

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Nadia Boulanger
Josef Krips
Paul Paray
Thomas Schippers
George Solti
William Steinberg
Leopold Stokowski
Alfred Wallenstein

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**3 Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelantz

**Assistant Conductors**

John Canarina
Seigi Ozawa
Maurice Peress

**Naumburg Foundation**

Werner Torkanowsky

**Lincoln Center Student**

Izler Solomon

1962-63

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Sir John Barbirolli
Karl Boehm
Paul Hindemith
Lrin Maazel
Thomas Schippers
George Szell

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Assistant Conductors**

Serge Fournier
Yuri Kransnopolsky
Zoltan Rozshyai

1963-64

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Josef Krips
George Szell

**Lincoln Center Student**

Lukas Foss

**American Conductors Project**

Robert La Marchina
Amerigo Marino

**Pension Benefit**

Alfred Wallenstein

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Assistant Conductors**

Claudio Abbado
Pedro Calderon
Zdenek Kosler

1964-65

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein(sabbatical leave)

**Guest Conductors**

Josef Krips
Lorin Maazel
Thomas Schippers
William Steinberg

**Pension Fund Benefit**

Danny Kaye

**American Conductors Project**

George Cleve
Elyakum Shapira

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Assistant Conductor**

Seiji Ozawa

1965-66

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Lukas Foss
Thomas Schippers
William Steinberg
George Szell

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Assistant Conductors**

James Depreist
Edo de Waart
Jacques Houtmann

1966-67

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

William Steinberg
Lorin Maazel
Alfred Wallenstein
Charles Münch

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Assistant Conductor**

Sylvia Caduff
Juan Pabo Izquierdo
Alain Lombard

1967-68

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

William Steinberg (Principal Guest Conductor)
Claudio Abbado
Thomas Schippers
Sir John Barbirolli
Leopold Stokowski
Seiji Ozawa
George Szell

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

**Lincoln Center Student Concert**

Alfred Wallenstein

**Assistant Conductors**

Paul Capolongo
Helen Quach
Alois Springer

1968-69

**Musical Director**

Leonard Bernstein

**Guest Conductors**

Pierre Boulez
Seiji Ozawa
Colin Davis
George Semkow
Carlo Maria Giulini
Stanislaw Skrowaczewski
George Szell

**Young People Concerts**

Leonard Bernstein

**Special Saturday Night Concerts**

Andre Kostelanetz

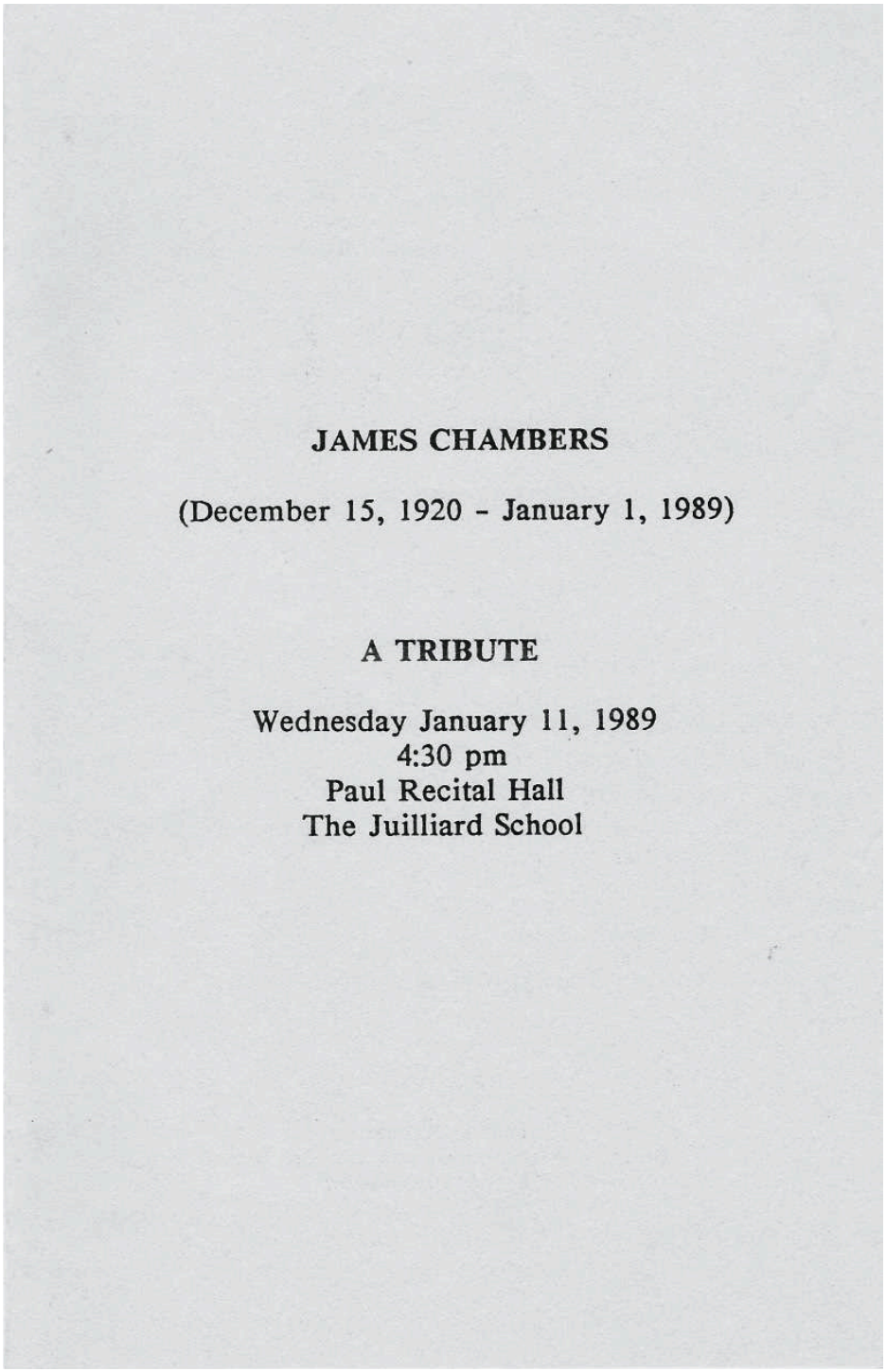
**Assistant Conductors**

Boris Brott
Francois Huybrechts
Gaetano Delogu
Farhad Mechkat

**APPENDIX O**

Program of James Chambers' Memorial Service at The Juilliard School, January 11, 1989

Provided by Robert Chambers.



JAMES CHAMBERS

(December 15, 1920 - January 1, 1989)

A TRIBUTE

Wednesday January 11, 1989
4:30 pm
Paul Recital Hall
The Juilliard School

**- PRELUDE -**

**Verdi/Martinet** **Manzoni Requiem and Kyrie**

Horn Octet
Lisa Aplikowski
Derek Delaney *
Ilana Domb *
Ann Ellsworth *
Emily Gorlin *
Michael Ishii *
Tracy Leonard
Peter Schoettler

**- WELCOME -**

Bruce MacCombie
Dean, The Juilliard School

**- TRIBUTE -**

Joseph W. Polisi
President, The Juilliard School

**J. S. Bach/E. Ralske** **"Air"**

Horn Octet

**- TRIBUTE -**

Albert K. Webster
Executive Vice President and Managing Director,
New York Philharmonic

**Clerisse** **Chant, Sans Paroles**

from the Award Artists Series recording:
"James Chambers Plays the French Horn"

**Brahms/Fennelly** **Three Chorale Preludes**

I Es ist ein Rosensprungen
II Herzlich tut mich verlangen
III O Welt, ich muss dich lassen

The American Brass Quintet
David Wakefield,* french horn
Chris Gekker, trumpet
Raymond Mase, trumpet
Robert Biddlecome, trombone
Michael Powell, trombone

**- TRIBUTE -**

Ranier C. DeIntinis
Hornist, New York Philharmonic
Faculty, The Juilliard School

**Bakaleinikoff** **Cavatina**

from the Award Artists Series recording:
"James Chambers Plays the French Horn"

* Students of James Chambers