

## FROM THE DESK OF JOHN SAMPEN

While spring has eluded northern Ohio this year with endless rain and cold temperatures even into May, the faces of our students and faculty are happy as we near vacation time and the official start of summer. Our College of Musical Arts remains strong and healthy with basically the same core of artist teachers. We will miss retired professors Paul Kennedy and Warren Allen (both passed away this spring) and there are some upcoming changes as David Saygers (tuba), Marty Porter (concert office), Greg DeNardo (Music Education/Graduate Coordinator) and Jeff Lyman (bassoon) prepare to leave. However, the applicant pools are impressive and we are receiving solid support from President Ribeau in filling these important positions. Since January, we have enjoyed the part-time expertise of jazz saxophonist Jay Miglia, a graduate of North Texas, who currently freelances in central and northern Ohio.

My nineteenth season at BGSU has been exciting and productive. Perhaps a highlight of my teaching career was the opportunity to observe Russell Peterson win the top prize at the International Geneva Concours! The competition occurs once every twelve years and is the most important saxophone competition in the world! My other travels on tour led me to Texas, Louisiana, Kentucky,



*John Sampen "On Tour" in the swamps of Louisiana.*

South Carolina, New York and Michigan where I played many recitals and presented at least seventeen masterclasses. Additional events included special guest performances at the New England Saxophone Symposium (Amherst, Mass), the New Music Festival of the Crane School in Potsdam, NY and a recital in celebration of the Saxophone's 150th Year (New York City).

Marilyn and I continue our summer residency at Interlochen Arts Camp, returning this June for our seventh season, while our daughter Maria travels to Aspen and our son David plans summer hockey activities. I am also "tuning-up" for the twelfth BGSU "Super Sax Camp"

where enrollment looks very strong with 30 campers; thanks for your support in making this an annual success. In between summer camp activities and the usual painting of my house, I hope to finish work on a new compact disc ("The Electric Saxophone") which should be available next fall.

As always, send me your cards and letters and don't forget Stan George's pledge to "practice your 6497 scale patterns every day."

Sincerely,

Dr. John Sampen

## MEMORIES

Here are a few treasured BGSU saxophone memories. Send me your favorites for next season's publication.

Remember John Alpeter (1979 BM) and his famous car which actually broke in half while enroute to a job in Michigan? Then there was Marco Albonetti (1996 MM) who drove a cab from Cincinnati to Columbus because the taxi driver was drunk and sleeping at the wheel. No one can forget the 1986 Courtyard Environmental Sculpture concert with our core of soprano saxophon-

ists playing forty-five minutes of repeated high C's on Terry Riley's composition *In C*; the rest of the studio (especially Brent Cejda, Brian Thomas, and Mike Dianich) presented theatrics. How about the 1980 saxophone studio "football victory" over the Ohio State team (the only time BGSU has beaten OSU in football). And of course there was Chris Corde's concerto performance in 1993 when a spotlight exploded during his cadenza — Chris was unfazed and played "flawlessly." There are great memories of our 4H camp experience as Richard

Schnipke (1982 BM) led us through problem solving "bonding" activities which included wall repelling and high wire tree climbing. Does anyone remember the famous photo of "Murph the Surf and the Lonesome Losers" (Joe Murphy, Barry Hartz, Greg Karpoff and Dennis Sichner) (c.1980)? And, of course, there was the John Cage premiere in Italy (1992) when the Italian stage hands of the Rossini Theatre could not understand our English or our intent to perform from the hanging balconies.

## AND THE WINNER IS ..... RUSSELL PETERSON

Russell Peterson, a twenty-six year old saxophonist and recent graduate of BGSU (MM 1995), won the equivalent of an Olympic gold medal in the 51st International Geneva Concours last September in Switzerland! The eleven-day competition annually rotates instruments, with saxophonists (under the age of 30) competing once every ten to twelve years. Over 125 of the world's best young saxophonists gathered in Geneva for this musical "decathlon" which required the technical mastery of ten exhausting pieces, the knowledge of diverse compositional styles, and the ability to play very fast, extremely high and incredibly soft.

Russell was the only American to progress past the second round. The three finalists (Peterson, a German and a French saxophonist), each played the Milhaud Scaramouche and the Martin Ballade. The Geneva Concours has a history of not awarding a "first" prize (none was given in 1970 and 1982) and 1995 was no exception. The judges named two second prizes and one third prize; however, the second prize winners were "ranked" and Peterson won the top award, along with \$8500, a recording with the Swiss Romande Orchestra, and several appearances with other European orchestras!

When asked what he felt, Russell relates that "winning the competition was just a fantastic, incredible surprise." However, he was certainly prepared for the experience. Besides practicing 8 hours a day all summer, Russ had previously studied the concert saxophone with James Umble (another BGSU alumni), Jean-Marie Londeix and, of course, John Sampen. He also was no stranger to the art of winning competitions. Peterson was the woodwind winner of the 1995 national Wurlitzer Collegiate Competition (MTNA) and winner of the BGSU's concerto competition. As a member of the Transcontinental Saxophone Quartet, he shared the spotlight when the quartet won the



*Russell Peterson: Top Prize Winner of the International Geneva Concours*

1995 national Wurlitzer Collegiate contest (MTNA) and 3rd prize in the 1995 Fischhoff National Chamber Competition.

What has he done for an encore? During this past school year, Peterson served as instructor of saxophone at Toledo University and continued his position as bassoonist with the Youngstown Symphony. He also toured throughout the USA, presented

concerts in Germany and Russia, and is preparing for another European tour with the Transcontinental Quartet. And, perhaps most exciting, next fall he will be the new professor of saxophone, bassoon and jazz at Concordia College (Moorhead, MN), filling one of only three saxophone positions for the new year. Congratulations, Russell Peterson, on a "fairytale" success story.

## ALUMNI UPDATE

**Amanda Blevins** (1993 BM) is teaching music at the Bishop Waterson High School in Columbus. **William Bousfield** (1991 BM) is engaged and is planning an August wedding. **Guido Baumer** (1995 MC) and **Klara Aradottir** (1995\*) are now married and living in Luzern where Klara teaches at the Berne Conservatory and Guido teaches at a music academy. **Beth Bousfield** (1989 BM) is teaching at Grass Lake Schools and Albion College (MI) and her husband works in the family ice cream business in Mason. Besides her teaching activities at Norwalk Middle Schools, **Sandy Bowman** (1987 BM) is also an athletic coach! **Valeri (Conley) Brokow** (1986 MM) and **Doug Brokow** are now in Malaysia where they teach Music and English at a missionary school in Dalat! **Eric Fairhurst** (1981 BM) has moved to Wooster, OH where he works with the Young Life Christian Mission and teaches saxophone/music part-time. **Beth (Ogden) Heidenreich** (1989 BE) has completed five years of English teaching at Watkins High School and is the school's theatre director, having recently produced "Les Miserables" and "You Can't Take It With You." Former BGSU saxophone professor **Lou Marini** reports that he still teaches about 20 sax/clarinet/flute students each week as well as his activities



*Dr. Sampen with former graduate assistants Russell Peterson (1994-96), James Umble (1982-84), Shannon Ford (1992-94) and Marco Albonetti (1995-96).*

with the Al-Louis Big Band. **Amanda Materne** (1994 BM), an English master's candidate at Los Cruces, NM, has enjoyed great success presenting her paper "Narcissizing the Saxophone: Constructing Our Sexual Repression Through Linguistic and Musical Discourse" at professional conferences throughout the country. **Wes Miller** (1989 BM), **Brian Thomas** (1987 BM) and the **Black Swamp Quartet** teamed up with **Matthias Gubler** (1988 CM) in presenting their own saxophone camp in Switzerland during July of 1995 and 1996! **Joseph Murphy** (1982 BM) is the new Chair of the Music Department at Mansfield University. He also continues his

saxophone teaching and performance. **Kirk O'Riordan** (1994 MM) and **Holly Roadfeldt** were "finally" married in May of 1996. Rumor has it that **David Rice** (1993 BM) is leaving the music profession to work in the stock market. **Greg Ruffer** (1987 BM) just recently finished his masters degree from OSU; he continues teaching choral music in Washington DC. **Richard Schnipke** (1993 BM) has moved to Archbold, OH where he is choral director at Archbold High School. Optometrist **David Shilling** (1989) takes care of the Sampen/Shrude family's eye problems in Bowling Green. Recent graduate **Keven Towner** (1996 BM) was married to Jodi in June of 1996. **Beth Shirk** (1986 MM) was married last year to a geologist in Urbana, IL. **Yiannis Miralis** (1996 MM) is teaching public school in Nicosia, Cyprus. **Kristy Weyand** (1994 BM) is band director at Tuscarawas Valley Local Schools. Our "prolific" saxophone alumni are proud to announce new babies—these include a son named Kevin for **Kelly (Coffman) Lewis** (1989 BM), a daughter for **Jason Yost** (1993 BM), a daughter named Kayleigh for **Stanley George** (1989 BM), a second daughter named Hanna for **Diana Schmid Goodwin** (1987 BM), a daughter named Erica for **Dennis Lindsay** (1987 BM), a daughter named Kira for **David Rice** (1993 BM), and a daughter named Alissa for **Zavaan Johnson** (1983 BM).



*The "Long-Haired" class of 1978. The first sax alumni to correctly identify each person in the photo wins a Sampen compact disk.*

## CURRENT EVENTS

As the school year winds to a close, the saxophone studio celebrates another great season! The current class consists of twenty-three students (including five graduate candidates) with individuals from Georgia, Alabama, Illinois, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio, New York and Italy. Graduating students include Marco Albonetti, Kevin Towner and Joel Gronseth. While these people will be sorely missed, the new 1996/97 class looks exciting with an incoming graduate student from Taiwan and Germany, an undergraduate national merit winner, a student from Israel, and many other talented young saxophonists.

Donald Sinta was our special visiting guest artist—he provided an inspiring masterclass and performance in conjunction with Keiko Abe. We also welcomed to our faculty part-time jazz saxophone instructor Mr. Jay Miglia! A recent graduate of the University of North Texas and member of their 1:00 jazz band, Jay brings to Bowling Green his wonderful jazz sound, his rich performing experience, and his warm and personal teaching style. He has performed with such jazz greats as Michael Brecker, Louie Bellson, and Lou Marini and was recruited to join the Columbus-based Black Swamp Saxophone Quartet (with alumni Wes Miller and Brian Thomas).

BGSU was "blessed" with four student saxophone quartets this season—each with its own unique and self-imposed name. The "Irresponsible Quartet" is perhaps best remembered for its inspiring choreography, dancing, and extraordinary tempo on the annual courtyard concert. "Saxophone Fantastique" offered a short tour in Cleveland and a fine BGSU performance of Francaix's *Petit Quatuor*. The "Mondiale Quartet" was active in student recitals and presented a two-day tour in the Dayton area. Finally, the "Killians Quartet" (you can guess where this title originated) toured Ohio, Kentucky, South Carolina, and Georgia. They were also featured performers at the na-



*The Killians Quartet in concert at Toledo's Manor House (Marco Albonetti, Bryan Polacek, Chris Scinto and Todd Gentzel)*

tional meeting of the North American Saxophone Alliance, playing *Five Sketches* by the group's tenor saxophonist Christopher Scinto.

Many of our past and present BGSU saxophonists joined in a unique commissioning project last December. Pulitzer-prize winning composer John Harbison was approached by a non-profit organization (World-Wide Concurrent Premieres and Commissioning) to compose a new sonata for contributing participants. The project sought to involve one hundred saxophonists, each paying \$250, who would then have the honor of "premiering" the composition (entitled *San Antonio*) on December 3, 1995. Congratulations to the following people who joined the commission and presented the premiere in locations all over the world: Guido Baeumer (Germany), Marco Albonetti (Italy), Yiannis Miralis (Cyprus), Bryan Polacek (Georgia), Kevin Towner (Ohio), Joel Gronseth (Minnesota), Russell Peterson (Ohio), Beth Bousfield (Michigan), James Umble (Ohio), Joseph Murphy (Pennsylvania), Susan Cook (Illinois), Craig Young (Ohio) and John Sampen (Ohio).

Continuing in the congratulations department, we are proud to recognize

Kevin Towner with his 1st prize at the national solo competition sponsored by the North American Saxophone Alliance in Gainesville, Florida (\$1000 and new saxophone)! Kevin also won the state university division of the MTNA competition in Columbus. Philip Wells won concertos this year (one of only three collegiate winners) and soloed with the BGSU Philharmonia Orchestra on Russell Peterson's arrangement of the Desenclos *Prelude, Cadence and Finale*. Bianca Sharkus was the 1995 Outstanding Senior Women Marcher and everyone in the studio won (or passed) their scale juries! Finally, Russell Peterson won top prize (\$8500) at the International Geneva Concours in Switzerland.

Our social activities were a little less active—perhaps because of the incredible accomplishments of our students. Several of the saxophone health fanatics (or perhaps health misfits) continued to "stumble around" on the basketball court at the impossible hour of 8:00 am. We were unable to schedule our annual "bowling in Bowling Green", but a couple of our graduate students (Albonetti and Scinto) won 2nd place in the intramural soccer tournament!