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Carl Berglund

**Admits He Plays Oboe
But Denies He's Crazy**

**3,000 Children
Hear Boy Oboist
in Symphony Solo**

*High School Musician Who
Won Contest Triumphs
in Concert.*

By Lorena A. Hickok

There was a most unusual symphony orchestra concert in Minneapolis Friday afternoon.

It was an unusual concert because the audience was composed almost exclusively of children—some 3,000 of

them, ranging all the way from the plumpish kindergarten age to the gangling high school age.

It was a most unusual concert, because the soloist was only 16 years old—and an oboist.

Contest Winner As Soloist

Plumped right down in the middle of the program, between the overture to *Martha*, and the *Bayadere Dance* from Rubinstein's opera, *Feramors*, was Carl Berglund, Edison high school junior, who carried bricks all last summer to earn his oboe and learned to play it in three months, whereas it takes the average aspirant two years.

The occasion was the fourth and last children's concert of the season given by the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra in the Lyceum theater. Carl was selected as soloist last December in a contest for Minneapolis high school musicians, conducted under the supervision of Henri Verbrugghen and the music department of the public schools.

Orchestra Is Accompanist

While the whole symphony orchestra furnished his accompaniment, and while Mr. Verbrugghen from the conductor's stand cast

him fatherly glances over his spectacles, every now and then Carl—all dressed up in his best grey suit and brown socks with green and yellow splashes on 'em and "high yaller" oxfords—played *Chant Pastorale*, for oboe and orchestra, by Gabriel Marie.

After which he shook hands with Mr. Verbrugghen, just like a Friday night soloist, bowed gravely three times to the audience and twice to the orchestra, and walked off the stage, somewhat red in the face, and, as he expressed it, "pretty shaky in the knees."

Takes Another Bow

"Pooshed" from behind, a la Webber-and-Fields, by Sam Grodnick, the orchestra's general factotum backstage, Carl went out and bowed again to audience and orchestra.

Then he retired to pack up his oboe in the dressing room assigned to Chaliapin, Sara Bernhardt, Marshal Foch, Rachmaninoff, Fritz Kreisler, Mary Garden and other important personages in days gone by.

"It's funny," Carl observed a little breathlessly, "how you'll work and plan for a thing for weeks and weeks, and then it comes off and only lasts a few minutes."

Really Played Well

Carl really played very well Friday afternoon. The orchestra and his 3,000 contemporaries signified this by their hand-clapping. Mr. Verbrugghen told him he did, and so did Sam Grodnick and the writer.

His facility and his tone aroused the enthusiasm of a group of orchestra members, who acted as judges in the contest last December. They predicted a brilliant future for him as an oboist. And that was after he had been studying only three months. He has had six months' instruction now.

Carl did not go on at the beginning of the program, of course. He had to wait half an hour. It is the custom of professionals appearing on the last half of the program, the writer has been told, to wait at the hotel and arrive in a limousine just a few minutes before they take their turn.

On Hand Early

But Carl was present before most his audience had arrived. What's the use of playing an oboe solo with the Minneapolis Symphony orchestra at the age of 16 if you don't get everything that's to be had out of the experience, we'd like to know?

Besides, Carl didn't come in a limousine. He rode down on the street car from northeast Minneapolis. He was excused from school all day, had a rehearsal with the orchestra in the morning and went home and took a nap before the concert.

Carl put in his half hour sitting on the edge of the sofa where John McCormack and Galli-Curci and Jascha Heifetz and—well, are there any famous oboe players besides Carl?—have rested between numbers.

He chatted intermittently with Sam Grodnick and the writer, tapped his foot and fingered his keys to the rhythm of the music, and sucked his reed.

Scared? Not a Bit

"I ain't scared," he assured the writer.

Sam Grodnick said he was—and Sam has been watching artists back stage for a long, long time.

"Of course he is," Sam said mildly. "They all are, from the biggest to the littlest."

The writer thought his sucking his reed might indicate at least a slight degree of nervousness.

But no—it seems that oboists have to keep

their reeds damp or what little space there is for exhalation would be closed up on them when the critical moment arrives.

During his half-hour wait, Carl entertained himself—also Mr. Grodnick and the writer—with conjectures as to how *She's My Baby* would sound if played by the Minneapolis Symphony orchestra and an indignant denial of the report that all oboe players go crazy.

Sure of His Subject

He exhibited a truly scholarly interest in the latter subject.

"They do not," he said warmly. "My teacher has been playing an oboe for 80 years and I guess he's far from crazy."

"That stuff about oboe players going crazy is an old one that's been handed down from the days when oboes had big mouthpieces."

"You see," he explained earnestly, "the mouthpiece of an oboe vibrates in the player's mouth. When they used to have those big mouthpieces, the vibration used to drive oboe players nutty. But a little reed mouthpiece like this won't." ❖

RIC LYNN: A Tribute

**By Robert S. Williams
Detroit, Michigan**

I sadly would like to report the death of Ric Lynn, age 49, last Friday, September 11, 1998 in Charleston, West Virginia. Ric worked as a key maker for several years at the Fox factory and worked on the pro models 201-601 bassoons. He designed the key work for the Fox split long joint option. Before working for Fox he spent 20 years at the Gemeinhardt factory. Most recently he was employed in Elkhart working for UMI mounting flute keys.

Ric loved to play bassoon and contra and was playing in several orchestras at the time of his death. These included the West Virginia Symphony, Kokomo Symphony, South West Michigan Symphony, Elkhart Symphony and the Maple City Chamber Orchestra.

Ric enjoyed driving and I ran into him several times at various bassoon events around the Midwest. He was always very enthusiastic about bassoon in general. He also raised African Cichlid fish.

Services were held Friday, September 18th, in Elkhart, Indiana.

Many of us are playing on horns that Ric worked on. He would always go out of his way to make a key feel right. If he didn't like the way a key turned out he would start again until it was up to his standards. We lost a great bassoon technician and I will miss him a great deal.