

## A Typical Monday Night at Nancy's House

An account of bassoon class at Carnegie Mellon University

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If you're ever in Pittsburgh and are searching for something exciting to do on a Monday night, feel free to stop by **Nancy Goeres'** house and join in the fun. What I'm referring to is the bassoon studio class that occurs on a weekly basis, led by Nancy Goeres, principal of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra. What we do varies from playing standard excerpts to discussing stage presence to eating pizza.

So far this year, we have had two classes on the Mozart *Bassoon Concerto*; one concentrating on the first movement and the other class on the second and the third movements. We were all given the opportunity to play parts of the concerto while mainly focusing on the expositions. We are currently working on our own cadenzas ... although some of us are further along than others! In addition to that, we are each being assigned a recording of the Mozart *Concerto* by a bassoonist of our choice. We are required to analyze their style and prepare examples of the individual aspects of their playing and interpretation to share with the rest of the class.

Another class we have had this year dealt with our favorite etude composers (I don't know if "favorite" is exactly the word I'm looking for ...) We are asked to bring information about a particular composer, and as it was sometimes difficult to find data about the composers, some of us used the Internet to acquire our information. Another interesting session we've had included listening to Nancy Goeres and **Phil Pandolfi** (second bassoonist in PSO) play an excerpt from the Brahms *Piano Concerto*. After hearing what it was supposed to sound like, we each paired up and played our own versions of the excerpts.

Just recently, **Carlton Jones**, contra bassoonist for the PSO, also stopped by to add to the typical festivities and gave a master class. He played for us, demonstrated new fingerings and listened (or critiqued us rather!) as we played various contra excerpts. One of our earlier classes was devoted



(L to R) Arion Linarez, Will Genz, Mike Davis, Stephen Story, Paige Belcher, Julie Balch, Nancy Goeres, and Phil Pandolfi.

entirely to articles from the IDRS publications. We were each required to bring in an article, summarize it, and explain its significance. This worked quite well as we were able to find very beneficial and unique subjects. For the future, our class is planning a trip to Cleveland to hear a Cleveland Orchestra concert (preferably with lots of bassoon stuff!) before the year is over.

The Carnegie Mellon bassoon studio also has an annual performance at our school's convocation seminar, which is a designated hour every week for the entire music department to attend. This year, we played works from J.S. Bach (namely the *E Major violin concerto* for four bassoons, contra and a solo bassoon arranged by Ryohei Nakagawa) to PDQ Bach (Peter Schickele's *Lip My Reeds*).

Well, we thought we'd let other studios know what we've been up to, and perhaps persuade others to share their own creative ideas. We'd love to hear from them!

*Happy Bassooning!*